

Global Forest Generation Final Report
Acción Andina 2021/2022 Season
May 2022



Community reforestation in Tacllapata community, Vilcanota, Peru. Jan 2022. Photo: ECOAN

SUMMARY

[Global Forest Generation](#) (GFG) is providing strategic, management, financial, and technical support to our on-the-ground [Acción Andina](#) partners in five South American countries to protect and restore a uniquely important forest ecosystem.

In the 2021-2022 season, **12** partners in **5** countries have:

- Reforested **1,160** hectares (2,866 acres): Helped build or maintain **67** plant nurseries and planted **2,153,565** native trees;
- Expanded local project capacities: Trained and supported **21** on-the-ground restoration leaders and **126** nursery technicians, project coordinators and assistants (See p. 7-8);
- Provided community benefits: Over **15,000** people participated in *Acción Andina* restoration activities, with **90** local communities benefiting through new income generation and the provision of services addressing drivers of deforestation and sustainable natural resource use (See p. 4-6).

The lack of ecosystem restoration capacity and leadership on the ground is the most significant obstacle to achieving the global climate, conservation and sustainable development targets through nature-based solutions. There are simply not enough long-term supported quality projects available to date to have a significant impact globally, nor to absorb the growing funding available for forest restoration projects in a way that will yield long-term sustainable results.

Acción Andina is a holistic initiative addressing this obstacle by creating multi-country and multi-stakeholder partnerships where grassroots conservation organizations and local communities lead the implementation of high-quality, long-term ecosystem restoration programs. It delivers on a range of national and international climate, conservation, restoration and sustainable development priorities and engages with and supports developing partnerships with local, provincial and national government institutions, universities, private sector organizations, and regional and international donors and strategic partners to support scaling impacts and results. To date, 3.7 million native trees have been planted over five countries (Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, Argentina, and Chile) with dozens of local communities to accelerate natural regeneration, and provide protection and restoration of native ecosystems. **In 2022-23, *Acción Andina* implementing partners aim to grow 2.5 million trees, provide direct support to 22 conservation local conservation leaders collectively managing 1,300 hectares (7660 acres) of reforested land, and continue providing vital community services.**

ACCIÓN ANDINA 2021 - 2022 SEASON RESULTS - January 2021 through March 2022

The *Acción Andina* season is approximately 15 months long, from January through the following March. These results are for the 2021-2022 season.

***Acción Andina* Partners and Landscapes**

Argentina: Two implementation partners in the Sierras Grandes of Córdoba province in central Argentina and one implementation partner in Jujuy province in northern Argentina.

Partners: Fundación Actividades Biosféricas, Fundación Bosquizar, Árbol y Vida

Bolivia: One implementation partner in Tunari National Park and other municipalities in Cochabamba, central Bolivia.

Partner: Armonía

Ecuador: One partner in Chimborazo province, one in Tungurahua, and two partners in Pichincha, one of which also operates in Imbabura.

Partners: Andean Adventures, Fondo Páramos de Tungurahua, Aves y Conservación, FONAG (Ecuador Water Protection Fund)

Peru: Two implementation partners in southeast Peru, one with projects in Vilcanota, Ccorca, Nor Yauyos Cochabamba and Aquia, and one partner in Challabamba and Japu Nación Q'eros.

Partners: Asociación Ecosistemas Andinos (ECOAN), Conservación Amazónica

Chile: One implementation partner in the northern regions of Arica and Tarapacá.

Partner: National Forest Corporation (CONAF - 2 entities)

Native Trees and Species Planted

2,153,565 native tree species planted in Argentina, Chile, Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru (see Table 1), reforesting 1,160 hectares (2,866 acres). As the aim of *Acción Andina* is to restore and protect native Andean forest ecosystems, most partners intersperse a mix of native species among the dominant *Polylepis* species of the project area. On average, *Polylepis* species made up about 80% of species planted in *Acción Andina* projects this year.

Planting Season

Planting generally takes place during the Andean rainy season, between October and March in the northern Andean countries. The planting season varies by location due to climatic conditions and time required to produce viable seedlings. This season all trees were planted between September 2021 and April 2022.

Table 1. Native Trees Planted

Country	Partner	Project Landscape	Total Trees	<i>Polylepis</i>	Other Native Species
Argentina	Fundación Actividades Biosféricas	Córdoba	102,844	102,844	0
	Fundación Bosquizar	Córdoba	144,500	144,500	0
	Arbol y Vida	Jujuy	30,000	21,000	9,000
Bolivia	Armonía	Tunari	140,080	37,515	102,565
Chile	CONAF	Arica and Paricanota	1,850	1,850	0
	CONAF	Tarapacá	1,382	10	1,372
Ecuador	Aves y Conservación	Pichincha	130,500	120,000	10,500
		Imbabura	115,000	85,000	30,000
	Andean Adventures	Chimborazo	200,000	200,000	0
	FONAG	Pichincha	284,467	94,067	190,400
	Páramos de Tungurahua	Tungurahua	110,000	80,000	30,000
Peru	ECOAN	Vilcanota	530,850	530,850	0
		Ccorca	54,800	54,800	0
		Aquia	100,000	100,000	0
		Nor Yauyos Cochas	100,000	100,000	0
	ACCA	Challabamba	77,292	17,437	59,855
		Q'eros	30,000	15,000	15,000
TOTAL			2,153,565	1,704,873	448,692

Species Planted

Polylepis: *Polylepis australis*, *Polylepis tomentella*, *Polylepis subtusalbida*, *Polylepis incana*, *Polylepis pauta*, *Polylepis subsericans*, *Polylepis lanata*, *Polylepis racemosa*, *Polylepis microphylla*

Other high Andean native species: *Schinus areira*, *Acacia visco*, *Prosopis ferox*, *Alnus acuminata*, *Buddleja coriacea*, *Kageneckia lanceolata*, *Tipuana tipu*, *Erythrina falcata*, *Schinus molle*, *Acacia visco*, *Jacaranda mimosifolia*, *Gynoxys buxifolia*, *Escallonia resinosa*, *Morella pubescens*, *Escallonia Mirtylloides*, *Clusia aff. alata*, *Hesperomeles latifolia*

Acción Andina Environmental and Community Impacts

Four years into *Acción Andina*, the initiative now includes two water funds as implementing partners, both in Ecuador. Other partners are also increasingly working with water agencies. Aves y Conservación, also in Ecuador, is working with the Ministry of Environment, the Otavalo municipal government, and the public water service agency to establish a protected water area, and Fundación Bosquizar in Argentina recently established a partnership with a water cooperative from Río Ceballos, a municipality in Córdoba province in central Argentina.

Restored forests in these project areas will also help improve soil conditions and connect habitats, forming natural corridors for native fauna. Aves y Conservación is working with the National Institute of Biodiversity on baseline studies to identify best conservation practices for biodiversity conservation in the protected area. Excitingly, their research collaboration resulted in the discovery of two new mouse species and a new flower species. *Polylepis* themselves are rare and threatened species too. ECOAN in Peru recently carried out a reforestation campaign specifically for *Polylepis microphylla*, a particularly threatened species, in order to help reestablish it in its natural range.

Acción Andina directly impacts local communities through job creation for some of the most vulnerable in the population as well as supporting gender equality in the community. Training for nursery workers, mostly women, for example, is designed to not only help women develop skills relevant to the project but also to create new income streams. *Acción Andina* also impacts communities by helping them develop their own land management plans. In Bolivia, Armonía created a sustainable forest management plan with one community that would allow its members to cut down and use exotic tree species for wood that had previously been planted in Tunari National Park in exchange for reforesting with native trees. Such plans and agreements involve communities in forest management and protection, especially in protected national parks, where they have historically been excluded.

Community Involvement and Income Generation

Community involvement and environmental stewardship are the foundation of the *Acción Andina* initiative. This season, 90 local communities participated in reforestation activities, representing a total of 15,000 people including community members, staff and volunteers.

USD \$317,988 was disbursed for the salaries of 21 project leaders and supporting staff, representing vital income for local conservation leaders to carry out and sustain quality restoration projects. *Acción Andina* also supports approximately 126 jobs, mostly part-time, in nurseries and reforestation campaigns. USD \$189,268 was disbursed this season for part-time nursery technicians, who are typically community members, mostly women, who take turns working in the nurseries, and project coordinators, who organize nursery work and logistics and community relations for reforestation activities. All partners provide continuous training to nursery technicians, whether paid or volunteer. Additionally, implementation partners working with community-owned nurseries pay for the native trees to be planted. In Ecuador, FONAG and Páramos de Tungurahua purchased over 80,000 saplings locally while ECOAN bought 585,850 native trees from the community nurseries ECOAN has helped communities construct over the years, disbursing a total amount of USD \$98,566 to local community nurseries.

***Acción Andina* Conservation Leadership and Community Engagement Highlights**

Acción Andina conservation partners bring together local stakeholders to achieve consensus on common goals and ensure maximum participation. This includes driving local participation in reforestation activities, developing micro-businesses within the communities and providing products and services that address drivers of deforestation and sustainable management of natural resources. *Acción Andina* is perhaps unique in that, unlike top-down administered initiatives, each partner works together with local community leaders to determine which activities and services are most needed in their communities. These priorities are included in the *Acción Andina* budget. Highlights from this season include the notable diversity of stakeholders involved in *Acción Andina* projects, the signing of conservation agreements with communities and private landowners, and the provision of community services:

Thousands of people participate in *Acción Andina* each year, from remote indigenous communities to private sector volunteers and university students. In Argentina, for example, Fundación Actividades Biosféricas involved over 1,200 people in their reforestation campaigns, including three communities, staff from other NGOs, members of the forest defense group Defensa Verde, corporate volunteers from Volkswagen, and student and university staff volunteers. Árbol y Vida in Jujuy, northern Argentina, has involved students and staff from the National University of Jujuy in their work through educational workshops and visits, as well as citizen volunteers from four municipalities. Árbol y Vida held 10 workshops this season in five communities targeted at community members, especially youth, with a total of 97 participants, which represent important opportunities to promote the project, garner support, and learn from participants in order to better plan project activities. Fundación Bosquizar in Argentina held seven workshops with 180 total participants, while ECOAN in Peru held three workshops with leaders representing 21 communities. ECOAN's project in Nor Yauyos Cochas involved not only the local communities they are working with but also the local municipality and over 200 volunteers from two universities. Also in Peru, new partner ACCA produced radio programs on forest restoration, protection and biodiversity for public broadcast.

In Bolivia, Armonía involved volunteers and staff from the National Service of Protected Areas-Tunari National Park in their reforestation campaigns, as well as community members from three municipalities, volunteer firemen, university students, and soldiers from the 7th Army

Division. The inclusion of the military in *Acción Andina* projects represents a unique, positive interaction and growing relationship between civilians and the military. Armonía began working with this division during the pandemic, as did partner Andean Adventures in Chimborazo, Ecuador. The No. 11 Galápagos Calvary has now been working alongside Andean Adventures and community members in reforestation campaigns for two years.

The signing of conservation agreements with local communities and landowners is critical to ecosystem restoration success. These agreements are signed for a minimum of five years and are tracked by *Acción Andina* management and flagged for renewal. In addition to setting out concrete terms for reforestation activities, maintenance and protection of reforested sites, agreements represent an important, growing bond between local conservation groups and the communities in which they operate. New to *Acción Andina* this season, Fondo Páramos de Tungurahua in Ecuador signed 10 such agreements this season, and went beyond the five-year minimum to sign 10-year agreements. Also new to *Acción Andina* this season, *Árbol y Vida* in Argentina is gratified that local indigenous communities are enthusiastic about *Polylepis* forest restoration as the people are extremely cautious in welcoming outsiders. The five agreements signed are thus of particular significance and further demonstrate *Árbol y Vida*'s commitment to these forests and the people that inhabit them.

A variety of products and services are provided to communities each season, with two major issues addressed this year including water management and forest fires. In Bolivia, Armonía distributed 32 sets of firefighter equipment (including lanterns, boots, helmets, jackets, pants, and water packs) to five communities and the Municipality of Tiquipaya. This activity was added this season as community members reported that they did not have the equipment necessary to put out forest fires that have destroyed forests in recent years during the dry season. Armonía built three wells in three communities with a total capacity of three million liters, and delivered 546 sets of water tubing to communities to improve water systems that currently depend on two catchment systems.

Partners in Ecuador also focus on water management, where FONAG installed five more water catchment systems this season and Fondo Páramos de Tungurahua provided maintenance on three. In Bolivia. In response to major forest fires caused by burning agricultural waste, ECOAN held workshops on forest fire prevention and management for multiple communities in the Vilcanota area.

ECOAN's distributed 330 clean cookstoves to 330 families in Peru's Vilcanota mountains. These cookstoves are produced in the Platería - Puno community, located near Lake Titicaca and known for ceramic production, representing another community business supported by *Acción Andina* activities even though it is not in the immediate vicinity of the project. Meanwhile, ACCA contributed three alpaca and three llama stallions to three communities in Japu Nación Q'eros, as part of their growing relationship with these communities.

***Acción Andina* Training and Capacity-building**

GFG is committed to investing in capacity building at all levels: we identify and help equip our local partners with the right tools to manage and grow their projects, and enable local leaders to pursue their conservation careers. We connect projects across ecosystems and streamline their models,

approaches and impact, leveraging their management capacities and enabling and blending diversified funding that no group alone could ever access.

While most of this work happens during day-to-day collaboration with the *Acción Andina* management team and partners, *Acción Andina* administration also provides webinars throughout the year on relevant topics. This season’s four webinars covered: *Polylepis* propagation, Community nursery implementation, Government relations, and ArcGIS and geographic information. These webinars serve to help *Acción Andina* partners develop competencies that improve the quality and sustainability of projects.

Finally, after two years of Covid restrictions, *Acción Andina* was able to host, in March, an in-person retreat for all partners. Twenty-four representatives from almost all *Acción Andina* partner organizations met in Cusco, Peru to attend a three-day workshop on community engagement, monitoring, and plant production, the latter focusing on a bare-root propagation and planting method. In most reforestation projects, plants are propagated in individual plastic bags at the nursery that then need to be transported to the reforestation site. In addition to the generation of plastic waste being at complete odds with protecting ecosystems, there are also practical considerations. The added weight from the soil in the bags means more trips back and forth between nurseries and reforestation sites. The bare-root method used by ECOAN allows plants to be transported in greater numbers and without resorting to plastic. After attending this session, Andean Adventures in Ecuador is planning to adopt this method for 250,000 *Polylepis* saplings and Armonía in Bolivia for 100,000 *Polylepis* saplings in the 2022/2023 *Acción Andina* season.



Saplings in plastic bags. Credit: ACCA



Bare saplings ready to be planted. Credit: ECOAN

GFG and *Acción Andina* have also been working with local implementing partners to grow their own fundraising capacities. Local partners contributed 18% of the *Acción Andina* budget in 2019, 27% in 2020, and 31% in 2021. Partners report growing relationships with local businesses and other civil society organizations, such as Aves y Conservación’s collaboration with Baca group, an automobile maker (including Peugeot, Suzuki) in Ecuador. Also in Ecuador, Andean Adventures is focusing on creating strong relationships with the private sector while continuing to strengthen community and government partnerships developed in the last three years.

As part of and complementary to fundraising efforts, *Acción Andina* partners are developing more institutional relationships. These partnerships open doors for national government and international funding as well as contribute to the long-term impacts *Acción Andina* projects seek to create, (for example by helping to establish protected areas), solidifying each partner's and the initiative's credibility nationally and regionally. Most partners are already working with municipal and state governments; Argentina's Fundación Bosquizar recently signed agreements with two state agencies, the Secretariat of the Environment of Córdoba and the Department of National Highways and Parks, to collaborate on identifying strategic restoration sites, reforestation activities and maintenance. In addition to working with the municipal government, Armonía has an agreement with the National Service of Protected Areas and recently signed a cooperation agreement with fellow NGO Faunagua, which is joining *Acción Andina* as its second Bolivian implementation partner in the 2022/2023 season.

Maintenance and Monitoring

Acción Andina partners carry out maintenance and monitoring activities throughout the season. Partners conduct weeding and fence installation and maintenance of newly and previously reforested sites. This maintenance pays off, as ECOAN found in the Vilcanota project that areas with fencing showed higher survival rates, with unfenced sites showing survival rates of up to 30% lower. Overall, they found an average survival rate of 84% across sites reforested in 2018 and 74% in sites reforested in 2019. Monitoring of reforestation sites from 2019 and 2020 in Ecuador found a survival rate range of 69% to 90%. All partners have established permanent monitoring plots, representing 1-5% of each reforested site, for 2021/22 plantings. GFG and *Acción Andina* recently determined a final list of metrics and monitoring protocols to be used across all *Acción Andina* projects and will continue reporting on its rollout through the 2022 season.

Challenges in 2021

COVID-19 continued to present challenges to project activities in 2021, although less so compared to 2020. Many reforestation campaigns across projects had to be rescheduled or carried out with smaller groups over more campaigns. Educational workshops planned with schools also had to be canceled in some project landscapes.

Acción Andina grew substantially in the 2021 season (from January 2021 to March 2022), from eight local partners in eight project landscapes to 13 partners in 17 project landscapes. This means significantly more work for the *Acción Andina* management team, who provide careful financial and project management supervision of all projects as well as liaison with initiative partners on a regular basis, helping to resolve issues as they arise.

In the 2022-23 season, GFG and *Acción Andina* are focused on consolidating the initiative, strengthening internal systems, improving monitoring protocols and processes, and testing new technologies, such as drone monitoring, in select projects to determine the most cost-effective and efficient way forward for project monitoring.

Photo album

We invite you to access this [link to a photo album](#) highlighting 2021 *Acción Andina* activities.

Acción Andina Co-Founding Partners

[Global Forest Generation](#) is the lead strategic partner of *Acción Andina*, providing technical, management and finance mobilization support to all on-the-ground partners to bring the initiative to scale. GFG guides long-term growth through capacity building, donor relationships, international communications, and agile conservation design that establishes a clear path towards long-term stability and a viable scaling model for the initiative. GFG's greatest strength and role in forest conservation is our focus and investment in long-term capacity-building of grassroots leaders and their organizations, followed closely by our ability to communicate effectively to and among all levels of forest conservation stakeholders to align goals, priorities, and resources needed for the greatest impact. We approach the often poorly understood realities of small, grassroots organizations with the effectiveness, tools, systems and practices of modern international conservation management.

[Asociación Ecosistemas Andinos \(ECOAN\)](#), a leading conservation organization with 20+ years experience, is the coordinating agency in all *Acción Andina* projects and implements its own projects in Peru. Its President, Constantino Auccha Chutas, is the President of *Acción Andina*. ECOAN ensures quality project management, data collection and monitoring, and coordinates local partner communications to resolve day-to-day operational challenges and facilitate information exchange among partners.