

Acción Andina 2022/2023 Final Season Report May 2023



Queuña Raymi Community reforestation event in Cucani, Vilcanota, Peru. December 2022. Credit: Gregorio Ferro

[Global Forest Generation](#) (GFG) is enormously grateful for your support for [Acción Andina](#). Your generous donation this *Acción Andina* season allowed GFG to provide strategic management, financial and technical support to **12** on-the-ground implementing partners in **4** countries to:

- Reforest **1,558** hectares (3,850 acres): **80** plant nurseries located in **66** local communities to plant **2,703,420 native trees**;
- Expand local project capacities: Trained and supported **21** on-the-ground restoration leaders and **83** nursery technicians;
- Provide community benefits: Roughly **20,000** people are actively involved in *Acción Andina* activities, with **99** local communities participating and benefiting through new income generation and provision of services addressing sustainable natural resource use and contributing to food and water security.

ABOUT ACCIÓN ANDINA

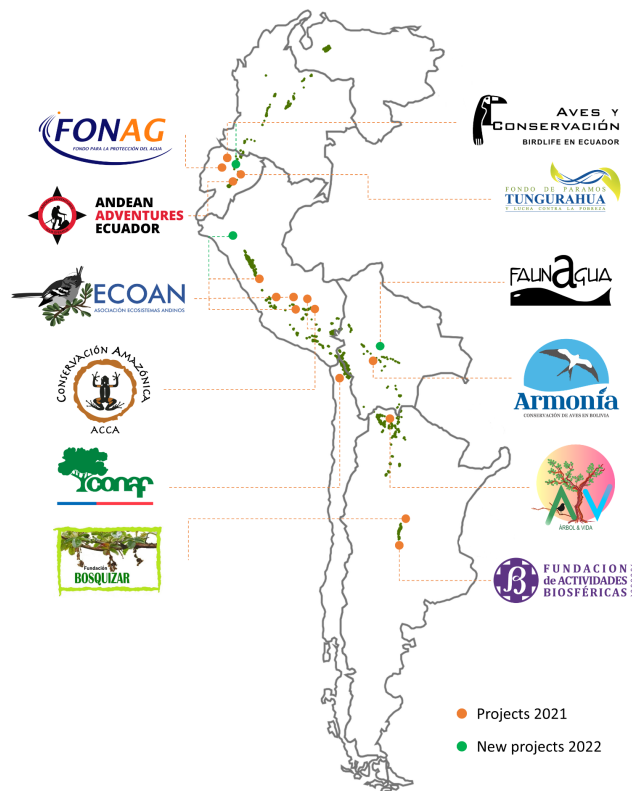
Launched in 2018 jointly by Global Forest Generation and [Asociación Ecosistemas Andinos](#) (ECOAN), *Acción Andina* aims to protect and restore one million hectares of critical high Andean, native *Polylepis* forest ecosystems spanning the seven Andean countries over the next two decades. It is the first multi-country, large-scale initiative to restore high altitude, native forests in this region of the world. Our growing partnership is led by dedicated on-the-ground conservation leaders that have established deep bonds with local and indigenous communities.

Acción Andina was born from the replicable community reforestation model of indigenous Peruvian conservation leader and President of ECOAN, Constantino (Tino) Auca (**2022 recipient of the [UN's Champion of the Earth award for Inspiration and Action](#)**). Tinos' model of harnessing the ancient Inca principles of "Ayni and Minka", a deep commitment to work together for the common good, is the unique approach key to the success of *Acción Andina*. Tino's community forest conservation model - driven by and for local and indigenous communities, with benefits shared by all - has resulted in enduring multigenerational relationships with the people growing and protecting native forests. In 4.5 years, *Acción Andina* has grown from one project in Peru to one of the largest ecosystem restoration initiatives in South America.

ACCIÓN ANDINA 2022 - 2023 RESULTS

Acción Andina is organized and administered by 15 month seasons, from January through March of the following year. *Acción Andina's* holistic approach to forest ecosystem restoration and conservation includes diverse activities in reforestation, protection of existing forests, local leadership development, and local community engagement and support.

In the 2022-2023 season, *Acción Andina* included 11 local partner organizations implementing projects in 18 high Andean forest landscapes. All projects can be viewed on the Explorer.Land mapping and storytelling platform. **We encourage you to view individual project locations, descriptions, and impacts on the platform [here](#).**



Local Leadership Training and Development

Local conservation leaders are the backbone of *Acción Andina*. GFG was founded to identify and support local conservation leaders, addressing the critical lack of support for leaders that impedes long-term, effective ecosystem restoration results. 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.

USD \$287,038 was disbursed to help support 21 conservation leader salaries this season, while *Acción Andina* administration also provides webinars throughout the year on relevant topics. This season's webinars covered: Finance and accounting (11 participants); Advances on *Polylepis* species identification (hosted by scientist Dr. Tatiana Boza with 58 participants); *Polylepis* propagation from seeds (knowledge sharing webinar hosted by *Acción Andina* partner Fundación Bosquizar from Argentina, with 23 participants); Developing partnerships with local communities (hosted by an expert from Peru's National Service for Natural Protected Areas with 24 participants); and Monitoring protocols (22 participants).

Acción Andina regularly facilitates knowledge-sharing opportunities among partners, while ECOAN often provides expert advice based on more than 20 years of experience working in high Andean forest ecosystems. For example, when Aves y Conservación in Ecuador experienced problems with an attacking fungus, ECOAN taught them how to create a natural treatment to control the fungus, a technique that has now been taught to all nursery technicians in Aves y Conservación's projects.

2022-2023 Acción Andina Restoration Results

2,703,420 native tree species were grown and planted in Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru, reforesting **1,558** hectares (3,850 acres). Most partners intersperse a mix of native species among the dominant *Polylepis* species of the project area. Planting generally takes place during the Andean rainy season, between October and March. The planting season varies by location due to climatic conditions (for example, if rains begin a little earlier partners can start planting, if the rains come later they may choose to wait to start reforestation campaigns) and the time required to produce viable seedlings. This season all trees were planted between September 2022 and April 2023, as rains began late in some landscapes (particularly areas of Argentina, Peru and Ecuador). Table 1 details *Acción Andina* local partners, project locations, and number of native trees planted.

Thousands of people participate in *Acción Andina* reforestation events, from indigenous communities in Queuña Raymi tree planting festivals in Peru and university students in Argentina, to volunteers from private businesses in Ecuador and military brigades in Ecuador and Bolivia. *Acción Andina* projects brings all of these people together to restore a uniquely important ecosystem responsible for the water security of the continent. Through ongoing engagement with all of these participants throughout the season, their commitment to the initiative's goals grows.

Table 1. *Acción Andina* Local Partners, Projects, and Native Trees Planted

Country	<i>Acción Andina</i> Partner	Project Location	Native Trees Planted	Hectares Reforested ¹	Species planted (%)
Argentina	Fundación Bosquizar	Córdoba, Central Argentina	150,000	60	100% <i>Polylepis australis</i>
	Fundación Actividades Biosféricas (FAB)	Córdoba, Central Argentina	150,718	39.66	100% <i>Polylepis australis</i>
	Árbol y Vida	Jujuy, Northern Argentina	50,000	14.35	99% <i>Polylepis australis</i> , 1% <i>Polylepis tomentella</i>
Bolivia	Asociación Armonía	Tunari National Park, Cochabamba, Central Bolivia	200,000	72.26	35% <i>Polylepis subtulsabida</i> ; 65% Other high Andean species (<i>Schinus molle</i> , <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> , <i>Jacaranda mimosifolia</i>)
	Faunagua	Tunari National Park, Cochabamba, Central Bolivia	102,000	40.8	100% <i>Polylepis pacencis</i>
Chile	National Forest Commission (CONAF) ²	Arica y Tarapacá, Northern Chile			
Ecuador	Aves y Conservación	Pichincha, North-central Ecuador	102,000	51	83% <i>Polylepis pauta</i> ; 17% <i>Escallonia myrtilloides</i>
		Imbabura, Northern Ecuador	109,055	28.43	100% <i>Polylepis pauta</i>
		Yanahurco, Central Ecuador	50,000	24	100% <i>Polylepis pauta</i> , <i>Polylepis incana</i>
	Andean Adventures	Riobamba, Central Ecuador	220,000	32.2	100% <i>Polylepis reticulata</i>
	Fondo Páramos de Tungurahua (a water protection fund)	Tungurahua, Central Ecuador	178,100	171.73	11% <i>Polylepis reticulata</i> ; 14% <i>Polylepis sericea</i> ; 18% <i>Polylepis incana</i> ; 12% <i>Polylepis pauta</i> ; 30% Other high Andean species (<i>Gynoxys buxifolia</i> , <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> , <i>Oreopanax ecuadorensis</i>)

¹ All *Acción Andina* partners also create shapefiles for reforestation sites. These can be provided by GFG separately from this report and contain more precise data.

² Government changes in 2022 prevented CONAF, a government institution, from participating in *Acción Andina* implementation this season. ECOAN and GFG have maintained communications and will determine together what CONAF's continued participation in *Acción Andina* will look like in the future.

	Fondo para la Protección de Agua (FONAG - a water protection fund)	Pichincha, North-central Ecuador	310,414	588.98	17% Polylepis spp.; 83% Other high Andean species (Buddleja incana; Gynoxys acostae; Myrcianthes hallii; Oreopanax ecuadorensis, Escallonia myrtilloides, Eugenia sp., Inga edulis, Morella pubescens, Erythrina edulis; Alnus acuminata, Alnus nepalensis, Cedrela montana)
Peru	Asociación Ecosistemas Andinos (ECOAN)	Vilcanota, Southeast Peru	545,000	122.65	100% Polylepis spp.
		Ccorca, Southeast Peru	60,000	13.5	100% Polylepis spp.
		Nor Yauyos Cochas, Southwest Peru	112,000	36.55	100% Polylepis spp. (P. racemosa, P. incana, P. reticulata)
		Aquia, Western Peru	202,760	186.1	100% Polylepis spp. (P. incana, P. racemosa, P. weberbaueri)
		Cajamarca, Northern Peru	10,000	4.81	50% Polylepis spp., 50% Other high Andean species
	Conservación Amazónica (ACCA)	Q'ero, Southern Peru	50,761	20.6	35% Polylepis serrata, 65% Other high Andean species
		Challabamba, Southern Peru	100,612	50.1	47% Polylepis spp. (P. serrata, P. incana, P. sacra); 53% Other high Andean species (Alnus acuminata, Siphonandra elliptica, Morella pubescens, Oreocallis grandiflora, Symplocos baehnii)
TOTAL			2,703,420	1,557.72	



Military lined up to help with reforestation events in Chimborazo, Ecuador. March 2023. Credit: John Paredes

High Andean Forest Conservation Highlights

As a restoration *and* conservation initiative, *Acción Andina* also works to protect existing high Andean forest ecosystems. The 2022-2023 season was the first where all local *Acción Andina* partners included conservation activities in their budgets, from establishing new protected areas to installing protective fencing and providing hands-on forest fire prevention and management training to local communities.

Some local *Acción Andina* partners already work in legally recognized protected areas, while others are working to establish them. *Árbol y Vida*, for example, have signed an agreement with the government of Jujuy province in Argentina to collaborate on managing the Potrero de Yala Provincial Park, first established in 1952 and covering 4,300 hectares (10,625 acres). *Aves y Conservación* and FONAG, both in Ecuador, have been working in partnership to maintain and protect Ecuador's first water protected area, Water Conservation Area Ponce-Paluguillo, established in 2018 and consisting of 4,260.63 hectares (10,528 acres). *Aves y Conservación* also successfully completed the establishment of a new water protected area in its Imbabura project this season, consisting of 1,836.56 hectares (4,538 acres) and home to the Andean bear, Andean condor, Puma, among many other endangered animal and plant species. ECOAN established a new protected area

as part of its Vilcanota project, which contains nine other protected areas, which will be managed by one community and consists of 1,809.43 hectares (4,471 acres). Legally protected areas take, on average, three years to successfully establish. These two mentioned are the ones finalized within this particular *Acción Andina* season.

After several successful forest fire prevention workshops last season, where local communities enthusiastically participated and requested more support, *Acción Andina* partners across projects provided practical workshops and equipment to community, volunteer and municipal forest fire brigades this season. In Peru, ACCA outfitted three community fire brigades, while ECOAN involved 60 people from two communities in a workshop in Ccorca, over 120 people across two workshops in Vilcanota, and provided equipment to community brigades in Nor Yauyos Cochabamba. Armonía in Bolivia installed 6.5 kilometers (4.5 miles) of fire lines along with conducting community workshops. In October 2022, a forest fire took place in Tunari National Park where Armonía operates, not specifically where they work and thus not affected reforestation sites, but in a community next to the Laphia community with whom they do work. Thanks to the equipment and training volunteer firefighters in this community and the greater Cochabamba municipality have received, the forest fire was controlled and prevented from spreading.



Artisanal clean cookstove distribution in Huilloc community, Vilcanota, Peru. Nov 2022. Credit: Jhon Cansaya

Community Engagement and Impacts

All *Acción Andina* local partners engage with local community leaders as well as government and educational institutions throughout the year to plan and execute project activities, ensuring support for the initiative. This engagement includes signing agreements with communities to protect existing forests and reforestation sites and creating jobs and providing training in community nurseries. This season, USD \$348,555 was disbursed to 83 nursery technicians and part-time day laborers across the initiative. They also collaboratively determine which services *Acción Andina* partners will commit to providing to communities, and provide educational workshops and events.

Table 2 on the following page summarizes community services and environmental education contributions of *Acción Andina* local partners in each project. The diversity seen in this table demonstrates one of the main reasons why *Acción Andina* really works - local partners and community members truly work together, where local communities have a voice in planning restoration and conservation activities, and in choosing the products and services that will make the biggest impact on natural resource use in their particular environment.

For example, in Ecuador and Bolivia, local partners build and maintain water catchment systems, wells and reservoirs for local communities. These systems are currently helping safeguard water resources for hundreds of families in water-scarce areas. Also in Ecuador, local communities working with *Acción Andina* partner Páramos de Tungurahua requested support to increase their food security. Páramos de Tungurahua set up 30 agroforestry systems in seven communities, where native trees and shrubs are integrated into crop and animal farms to provide shelter and improve soil health and water quality. It also distributed organic garden kits to 200 people from one community, where each kit includes 21 species of seedlings for agriculture production including cabbage, lettuce, broccoli, cauliflower, beet, onion, turnip, medicinal mint, rosemary, blackberries, medicinal lemon balm.

Another prime example of local partners responding to community needs is in Bolivia, where *Acción Andina* partner Faunagua [started a literacy program](#)³ after discovering that some women were hesitant to participate in restoration activities and training because they couldn't read or write. In other cases, *Acción Andina* partners are working in national parks and much more sparsely populated areas, such as Fundación Bosquizar and FAB in Córdoba province, Argentina. These two partners dedicate significant time and resources to environmental education, regularly holding workshops with schoolchildren, teaching courses at local universities, and hosting public events. Their educational work also results in including [wide networks of hundreds of volunteers](#)⁴ in reforestation campaigns.

³ Link to article (Spanish) published in Bolivian newspaper *Opinion* in February 2022. It mentions the literacy program as well as women nursery workers and reforestation organizers part of Faunagua's project.

⁴ Link to the University of Córdoba Faculty of Natural Sciences page about its involvement in *Acción Andina* (Spanish), where FAB teaches a course and faculty and staff volunteer in project activities.

Table 2. *Acción Andina* Local Partner Community Engagement and Services Summary

Country	<i>Acción Andina</i> Partner	Project Location	Community Product & Services Provided	Community Impact	Environmental Education	Participants
Argentina	Fundación Bosquizar	Córdoba, Central Argentina	Nursery materials donation for educational purposes	Donated materials in one community	20 workshops	800+ university students, public
	Fundación Actividades Biosféricas (FAB)	Córdoba, Central Argentina			8 workshops	500+ university, schoolchildren, public
	Árbol y Vida	Jujuy, Northern Argentina			10 workshops	6 with 120 community members 4 with schoolchildren from 1 community
Bolivia	Asociación Armonía	Tunari National Park, Cochabamba, Central Bolivia	Agroforestry plots Irrigation tubing Water reservoir construction	17 plots in 5 communities Provided to 3 communities 1 constructed in 1 community		
	Faunagua	Tunari National Park, Cochabamba, Central Bolivia	Irrigation tubing Irrigation (sprinklers) Literacy program	44 families in 1 community 80 sprinklers in 3 communities 15 women from 1 community	19 workshops	With community members and one with 20 schoolchildren
Ecuador	Aves y Conservación	Pichincha, North-central Ecuador				
		Imbabura, Northern Ecuador			3 workshops	30 community members
		Yanahurco, Central Ecuador	Andean berry cultivation	20 people from 1 community		
	Andean Adventures	Riobamba, Central Ecuador	Water catchment systems Water reservoir infrastructure	400+ members of 1 community Donated cement to 1 community Donated a printer to a community center		

	Fondo Páramos de Tungurahua (a water protection fund)	Tungurahua, Central Ecuador	Organic gardens Agroforestry systems	40 garden kits to 200 people in 1 community 30 plots set up in 7 communities	2 Workshops Publishing a book	300+ participants including schoolchildren
	Fondo para la Protección de Agua (FONAG - a water protection fund)	Pichincha, North-central Ecuador	Water catchment systems Livestock management	4 improved in 4 communities Constructed cattle crossing to avoid water contamination	28 workshops 22 field trips	6 with 454 schoolchildren; Public (Avg 45 participants) 400 schoolchildren
Peru	Asociación Ecosistemas Andinos (ECOAN)	Vilcanota, Southeast Peru	Clean Cookstoves Vilcanota Trek (ecotourism)	400 to 400 families Maintenance impacting 11 communities	1 Workshop	20 Community leaders
		Ccorca, Southeast Peru	Irrigation tubing	Provided to 2 communities	2 Workshops	2 communities
		Nor Yauyos Cochas, Southwest Peru	Water Infrastructure (Dam building)	Dam infrastructure in 1 community		
		Aquia, Western Peru	Irrigation system	Irrigation tubing to 1 community	Workshops & Field Trips Educational competition	84 participants including schoolchildren 193 children from 9 schools participated
		Cajamarca, Northern Peru				
	Conservación Amazónica (ACCA)	Q'ero, Southern Peru	Local Livelihoods Support (livestock) Water Wells	4 Alpacas to support 1 community Well maintenance in 1 community		
		Challabamba, Southern Peru	Irrigation (sprinklers)	Impacting 360 families in 2 communities	1 workshop	102 community members

Challenges

There are several ever-present risks to working in these landscapes, a few of which impacted projects this season. Explained in more detail in a previous [quarterly update report](#), protests in Ecuador affected project progress in June 2022, delaying nursery construction and maintenance for some partners. Peru also experienced significant political unrest at the end of 2022 and into 2023. While roadblocks prevented or delayed local partner staff from accessing projects, local communities in these remote, high Andean landscapes continued to carry out project activities.

Severe drought also impacted several projects, particularly in Argentina and Peru, pushing reforestation campaigns forward. For this reason planting continued into the month of April, when rains finally arrived. We expect these impacts to continue and increase as the effects of climate change are felt across the world, and will need to adapt planting methods, locations, and timelines accordingly in an effort to build climate resilience in the region, particularly for water security.

PHOTO & VIDEO HIGHLIGHTS

Please access this [google photo album](#) for a collection of photos and videos showcasing *Acción Andina* activities in the 2022-2023 season.

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

Global Forest Generation and *Acción Andina* regularly promote the initiative's work nationally, regionally and internationally. Below are a sample of media articles and videos about *Acción Andina* and local *Acción Andina* partners published during this season.

- [Salesforce-produced "The Ecopreneurs" documentary episode about Acción Andina](#)
- *Sky News* interviews with *Acción Andina* President Constantino Auca ([here](#), and [here](#) - starts at 6:09)
- [Peruvian government article on Acción Andina co-founder ECOAN's work in Nor Yauyos Cochas \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Interview with Acción Andina President Constantino Auca in Bolivian Newspaper Opinión \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Article about Acción Andina partner Faunagua's work in Bolivian newspaper Los Tiempos \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Article about Acción Andina work in Argentina in El País newspaper \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Article about Acción Andina partner Aves y Conservación in Ecuadorian newspaper El Universo \(Spanish\)](#)

ACCIÓN ANDINA CO-FOUNDERS

[Global Forest Generation](#) (GFG) aims to make ecosystem restoration work locally and at the scale necessary to confront our global climate crisis. GFG builds locally-led restoration initiatives, establishing robust networks of supported, grassroots conservation leaders across large, shared ecosystems. GFG provides the technical, management, and finance mobilization support to local partners needed to effectively manage, monitor and scale these efforts, filling a unique role as specialized project developers and capacity-builders. We provide key communication and reporting capacities, serving as the main point of contact for international funding and strategic partners.

[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.