



INTERNATIONAL  
LAND CONSERVATION  
NETWORK

## Conservation in Action: The V National Meeting of Private Natural Reserves in Argentina

Hernán Mladinic – Regional Representative for Latin America  
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From November 23 – 25, 2023, the V National Meeting of Private Natural Reserves convened in Tigre Argentina, just an hour from the bustling city of Buenos Aires. Organized by the [Argentine Network of Private Natural Reserves](#) (Argentine Network), the event brought together a diverse group dedicated to conserving natural and cultural values on privately owned lands.

Every two years, the national meeting serves as a gathering point for partners and collaborators of the Argentine Network from across the country. Attendees include owners and administrators of private reserves, authorities, technicians, park rangers, nature guides, and members of the public committed to conservation. The meetings aim to disseminate projects, strengthen the work of member reserves through knowledge and experience exchange, and provide training for private reserve managers on various topics.

This year's discussions covered a wide range of issues, from environmental education and operational planning to forest fire prevention, wildlife care, and interpretive trail development. The last day was dedicated exclusively to working with network partners, who celebrated the annual Ordinary General Assembly, and to electing new authorities.

Representatives from 42 Natural Reserves and seven organizations, including The Nature Conservancy Argentina and Fundación Vida Silvestre Argentina, participated in the meeting, along with 122 individuals representing various stakeholders. During the opening inaugural session, Hernan Mladinic—the International Land Conservation Network's (ILCN) regional representative for Latin America—together with Rafael Picco, President of the Network, highlighted the objectives of the ILCN and emphasized the importance of formalizing a Latin American private conservation network.

The Argentine Network has its roots in the early 2000s when civil society organizations and private reserve owners recognized the need for a unified platform to promote conservation efforts on private lands. After years of planning, the network was officially launched on June 2, 2014, with the mission to integrate, strengthen, and expand voluntary initiatives for conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and cultural heritage on privately owned lands in Argentina. The network has a Steering Committee, an Executive Coordination (similar to a general coordinator), and an Assembly of members responsible for electing the management structure every two years. It also has provincial and regional nodes for local work between members.

Private Natural Reserves in Argentina are established by individuals, families, companies, clubs, universities, cooperatives, or civil society organizations driven by a shared desire to protect the natural resources on their lands. These reserves play a crucial role in complementing the conservation efforts of the state, which currently protect only 13.29 percent of the continental surface. With approximately 80 percent of the territory in private hands, involving landowners in conservation efforts is vital for preserving biodiversity in Argentina.

One of the unique aspects of private reserves in Argentina is their compatibility with sustainable productive activities. 68 percent of private landowners who establish reserves on their properties engage in activities such as nature tourism, agriculture, livestock, or forestry operations, making valuable contributions to wildlife conservation and ecosystem health.

The Argentine Network currently comprises 105 private nature reserves, conserving 173,091.7 hectares (about 427,719 acres) of land. Through an agreement with the Ministry of Environment, 347 private initiatives were identified at the national level, conserving 914,394.9 hectares (about 2,259,500 acres) of natural and cultural heritage. That is about 0.33 percent of the country, putting Argentina ahead of most other Latin American countries in terms of area protected by this type of initiative. Despite these accomplishments, 60.4 percent of private reserves lack legal recognition, highlighting the need for continued efforts to formalize and support conservation initiatives.

The V National Meeting of Private Natural Reserves in Argentina showcased the dedication and commitment of individuals and organizations working to conserve the country's natural and cultural heritage. By promoting collaboration, sharing knowledge, and fostering sustainable practices, these stakeholders are making significant strides in conserving Argentina's biodiversity for future generations.

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