YENDEGAIA
NATIONAL PARK
Chile: A territory so small, on the map it comes to seem like a beach between the mountains and the sea . . . In the South, the tragic caprice of the southern archipelagos makes great rips in the velvet sea, sharp shards, with clear and well-defined natural areas, like the character of the people.

—Gabriela Mistral
DEDICATION

For Alan Watson Featherstone, Adrienne Hoffman, and Graciela Ramaciotti—
who first articulated a vision for Yendegaia’s permanent protection as a wild sanctuary.
Beauty is that esoteric enigma deciphered neither by psycheology nor rhetoric.

—Jorge Luis Borges
The western coast of Tierra del Fuego crumbles into a multitude of islands, among which meander mysterious channels, reaching to the end of the world...

—Francisco Colonna
Green is the prime color of the world, and that from which its loveliness arises.

— Pedro Calderón de la Barca
As long as you’re on the side of parks, you’re on the side of angels.
—Robert Moses
My Patagonia is a landscape of infinite water, torn apart by a torrent of love, navigating a single river swelled by miracles.

—Mario Miranda Soussi
The smaller we come to feel ourselves compared to the mountain, the nearer we come to participating in its greatness.

—Arne Naess
Chile is universally recognized as a country of great beauty and diverse landscapes. Its “crazy geography,” as described by author Benjamín Subercaseaux in one of his books, stretches from the driest desert in the world to some of the largest continental ice fields on the planet, with a long Pacific coastline running parallel to the majestic Andes mountain range, separated only by a few kilometers. Chile’s outstanding natural scenery is a major national asset; more than 4 million foreign visitors arrive each year, a great many of whom visit one of our national parks or reserves during their stay.

To date, Chile has 102 units in the National System of State-Protected Wildlife Areas, which includes national parks, national reserves, and natural monuments. The system covers approximately 35 million acres (14 million hectares), roughly 20 percent of Chile’s continental surface. This figure is the result of public conservation policies initiated many decades ago with the creation of the Malleco Forest Reserve, in 1907. Chile’s first national park, Vicente Pérez Rosales, was designated in 1926. Later, in the 1960s, larger units of public land, such as the Bernardo O’Higgins National Park, were established. All of the following governments, to a greater or lesser degree depending on their specific objectives, have continued a policy of land conservation. Thanks to this, Chile today ranks well above its Latin American peers and fellow member countries, on average, in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in terms of area conserved.

However, this ongoing effort to preserve larger representative examples of all of Chile’s ecosystem types for future generations has not only come from the State. Over the last two decades, the participation of private parties in land conservation projects has increased considerably, adding almost 1.2 million acres (1.3 million hectares) to existing protected areas. Examples such as Pumalín, Tantauco, Futangue, and Huilo Huilo parks, to name just a few, speak of a society that has become increasingly concerned with protecting healthy ecosystems and point to a social-entrepreneurial interest that has gained more and more enthusiasm, making Chile the region’s foremost leader in private conservation innovation.

Several NGOs (nongovernmental organizations) have also entered the scene in recent years, advocating for the conservation of various habitats in the north and south of Chile, partially channeling the citizens’ voice for greater protection of imperiled ecosystems. This activism often leads to substantial changes in public policy. Every day, more examples emerge of an increasingly empowered citizenry demanding greater assertiveness from government authorities to protect the environment and regulate commercial exploitation of natural resources. This super-vigilance on the part of citizens has forced us to improve our environmental legislation and reveals important changes in our way of thinking since our parents’ generation.

All of this speaks of a new Chile. Whereas Chile’s early road to development was through the industrial exploitation and often careless use of nature’s bounty, the nation now treats natural resources with much more respect, fostering their protection and sustainable use. Not only has this created new opportunities for developing more sustainable activities such as nature-based tourism, but it has also enabled communities with few traditional productive capacities to grow and develop. Puerto Natales, near Torres del Paine National Park, and San Pedro de Atacama, which serves visitors to Los Flamencos National Reserve, are clear examples of this new Chile.
examples of this transformation into park-gateway communities, where tangible economic benefits are apparent. All of this compels us to reflect on the role played by our country's protected areas, no longer as mere islands for conserving native flora and fauna, but also as catalysts for culturally appropriate economic development of our commu-
nities and territories. In this respect, Chile has slowly been moving away from the mistaken notion that national parks and reserves are comprised of productive land lost to potential development, and Chilenos are embracing the idea that parks and reserves present opportunities to improve our quality of life. The State plays a fundamental role in promoting sensible public policies to conserve marine, coast-
al, and terrestrial ecosystems. The State can lead by both preserving ecosystems for future generations and by generating new programs that drive local develop-
ment through environmentally responsible activities.

Consequently, the creation of Yendegaia National Park has been for me, as President of Chile, a highly significant event during my term in office. Not only because it involved the joint effort between the State of Chile, which contributed 274,349 acres (111,832 hectares), and civil society through Fundación Yendegaia, which donated 99,487 acres (39,780 hectares), but also because of the key role this park will have on the development of the most southern area of continental Chile. Neglected by several previous governments because of its remote and diffi-
cult access, this area is being incorporated into the national scene through other initiatives that are complementary to the declaration of the national park, namely the extension of Reserves 7 to Calera 1 de Mayo, also known as the “Highway to the End of the World.” This road, currently under construction by members of the Military Work Corps, will allow us in the near future to have land access to one of the most beautiful landscapes in the world. There is no doubt that this will create a new tourism attraction on the main island of Tierra del Fuego and slowly help to soften visitor pressure on Torres del Paine National Park, the main tourism engine of the Magallanes Region.

Yendegaia, which means “deep bay” in the indigenous Yagán language, is in-
deed a special place, as we were able to see in person when we signed the act creating the park in January 2014. Confluent between fjords, channels, and south-
ern mountains, the new park covers the natural extension of the Darwin Range from the Alberto Dí Agostino National Park to the west, up to the border with neighboring Argentina in the east. To the north, the park boundary extends to the main valleys descending into Fagnano Lake and the Azopardo River; to the south, the park stretches to the Beagle Channel, the main navigation route to Puerto Williams. This special geographic location, with its rugged topography and in-
credible scenery, is highly unusual in that its relatively small area contains a vari-
ety of high-altitude, lake, coastal, steppe, and glacial natural communities, which combined offer the most remarkable landscape imaginable and are testimony to the great natural beauty of this part of the country.

The park's coastal fjords serve as the natural habitat for a variety of sea birds, especially the Dominican seagull and the giant petrel. The meandering basin of the Lapaunia River reflects the geologic origin of the park's main valley and is home to species such as the Tierra del Fuego tilefish, pumas, yellow-nosed field mouse, and southern river otter. Many snowfields and hanging glaciers plunging seaward from the Darwin Range have shaped its mountains and val-
leys, predicting the rising growing conditions for the region's distinctive associa-
tion of trees. The endless forests of fiers, Magallanic coigue, lenga, nene, cunco, and miniatures eulalia—some of the last remaining pristine reserves of southern-typic Magallanic forests—are known for their slow growth due to the area's harsh climate.

Information collected during the feasibility study for Yendegaia National Park suggested that the new park will help protect three very special species threatened with extinction: two are classified as endangered, the southern river otter and the red-tailed goose, a third, the Tierra del Fuego tilefish, is classified as vulnerable. Data also show the existence of a great number and variety of birds. Approximately 50 species have been identified, many of them typical of southern latitudes, thus making the area a desirable destination for bird-watching. The new park will also help conserve five vegetation types, along with their related ecosystems, significantly increasing their representation in Chile's system of protected areas. One example is the “Antarces ambirolas grass-
land”—with Yendegaia National Park’s designation, the coverage of this natural community's representation in protected areas grows from the current 14 per-
cent to 46 percent. All of this shows that Chile is making a genuine effort to conserve the Yendegaia area in the same condition as when the Yagán people roamed these lands and waterways in search of food and shelter more than a century ago. Interestingly enough, it was their descendants, in recognition and appreciation of the biodiversity of this area, who ratified the new national park a few months ago. This consultation with the indigenous community demonstrates once again that the creation of Yendegaia National Park is inclusive and compatible with the ancestral traditions of local people.

Projects such as those make our nation great and confirm that we are on the right path. During our government, we enthusiastically executed numerous other initiatives to protect Chile's biodiversity. Motu Motiro Hiva Marine Park located in the province of Easter Island, with a surface of more than 17 million acres (7 million hectares), is one of the largest protected areas in the world. We also created several other Coastal and Marine Protected Areas (AMCPs) around the country, such as the Juan Fernandez Archipelago AMCP and Pingüino-Antártica AMCP; these initiatives reflect our desire to replicate Chile's successful land con-
servation work for our coasts, fjords, and channels. These protected area proj-
ects also integrate nature conservation with developing sustainable production for local communities and include them in the projects’ administration. Likewise, the recent creation of the Marés Centro National Park in the Los Ríos Region, the expansion of the Pampa del Tamarugal National Reserve in the Tarapacá Region, and the creation of the Paposo Norte Natural Monument in the Antofagasta Region convey our government’s commitment to the ongoing improvement of Chile's protected areas system.

It's not for nothing that other countries refer to Chile as the “Land of Parks”; it’s a name we should be proud of. Acknowledging this status and taking advantage of it should be part of our strategy for future development, while diversifying and decentralizing our current growth model. This is even truer considering that we are a young, developing nation that is increasingly seen as a global leader in park-
lands conservation, whose policies and ideas are emulated by several countries. The creation of Yendegaia National Park is a decisive step in this direction. An impressive number of work teams from several ministries participated, demonstrat-
ing unprecedented cooperation in the park's gestion, survey, documentation, indig-

ous consultation, and staunchment. I want to note, with special thanks, the valuable contributions of Douglas Tompkins, María Ignacia Buentres, Rodrigo Pérez, Luis Mayol, and Santiago Vidiello. I hope that the example of collaboration and public-
private partnership will be followed by future governments, so that new conserva-
tion areas may be enjoyed by the present and future generations of Chileans. This is how we treat the wonders of nature: not as an inheritance from our par-
ents, which we are free to dispose of, but rather as a loan from our children, to whom we must return this marvel natural treasure, protected and in better condition.
INTRODUCTION
Douglas Tompkins

Since I began traveling to Chile some fifty years ago for mountaineering expeditions and ski racing, and during nearly a quarter century of living here, I’ve seen rapid change in Chile’s civil institutions and infrastructure. Today Chile has a strong judicial system, excellent labor laws, socialized medicine, better forestry regulations than many countries, and citizens willing to elect both women and men to serve as president. Chile has very little corruption and balanced budgets; in comparison with the United States, Chile spends only a small fraction of its GDP (gross domestic product) on its military, leaving resources for other social investments. While no country is perfect and there is much advancement still to be made, there is good reason for Chileans to feel proud when their homeland is touted as a model of a maturing democracy.

It is somewhat surprising, however, that Chile’s leadership in protecting parklands is not a similarly celebrated point of national pride. Too few of her citizens would name Chile’s national parks as a top national asset, worthy of vigorous societal support, including adequate funding.

National parks, the gold standard for land conservation, are not created every day, so Yendegaia’s birth is a special occasion and cause for celebration. The formation of new national parks is a positive step for any country, anywhere on the planet. The values they offer—for wildlife habitat, ecosystem protection, outdoor recreation, scientific research, economic development, and helping alleviate climate change, are priceless. A great system of national parks reflects a great nation, and it also provides some benefits to society that may not be “priced” in the marketplace. One of these is the development of a broad-based, cultural commitment to conservation. National parks further the adoption of a conservation ethic, principally for the nation itself, but also as an example for other nations around the globe. A second is what economists call “existence value.”

Unlike a shopkeeper in a park gateway community such as Puerto Natales whose livelihood depends directly on tourism, many individuals in a society receive no direct income from parks. But that doesn’t mean national parks are not valuable to every citizen. Many Chileans will never visit Easter Island or La Moneda Palace or see the granite spires of Torres del Paine—but these places help define the national character and are a source of collective pride. Whether or not any one individual physically goes to national parks, all citizens benefit from knowing that they simply exist. This generation of people and their descendants receive the intangible benefit of knowing their country’s natural wonders are secured. This is part of a citizen’s birthright—to experience the landscapes, coastline, and wildlife of Chile, and to find them in a condition of good health. The other half of this social contract, though, is the responsibility to care for the national patrimony, the collective assets of the nation, including its beauty and biodiversity. Every Chilean is partially responsible for their protection. No society will persist for long if the natural ecosystems that support human life and economic activity are destroyed. To be a true patriot means to be a lover and defender of the patria, the fatherland.

It is clear to most people that to be a good patriot, then, and care for the patria, has nothing to do with one’s passport and everything to do with one’s behavior.
In the birth of Yendegaia National Park, we can see another example of this important cultural commitment to sustaining Chile’s patrimony. Protecting the earth and being a genuine partner is just what national parks are all about. Furthermore, they are symbols of true social equity, for national parks belong to all the people with no reference to socio-economic status. The parks are spot to everyone, a bona fide level playing field. Nations that establish national parks are, through them, putting the best face forward for that society, helping the citizenry know and love the country better, in addition to welcoming foreign guests. National parks are a rare institution that is totally positive, with no downsides—which is why the national park idea has caught the imagination of political leaders and their constituents around the world.

Since the national park movement began in the 1870s (Yellowstone National Park in the United States is generally cited as the world’s first), some 120 countries representing every continent except Antarctica have created national parks. Thousands of the Earth’s most spectacular places are safeguarded in this way, and more are being designated every year, Yendegaia being a new and particularly outstanding example.

This victory for nature and future generations is particularly gratifying because we—my wife Kristine Tompkins, our very dedicated team of Chilean conservation colleagues, and I—had a prominent hand in Yendegaia’s creation. It is appropriate to note also the three “intellectual authors” of this park, who first brought Yendegaia to the attention of our foundation. Every park formation story includes note also the three “intellectual authors” of this park, who first brought Yendegaia to the attention of our foundation. The labs worked to complete the bureaucratic obstacle course that is typical for any national park proposal will soon be forgotten, but history will likely record Yendegaia National Park as the crowning achievement and most-lasting legacy of the Pitera presidency.

In this, President Piñera continues a long tradition—for every full-term presi- dent since the genesis of Chile’s national park system in 1926 has created at least one new national park. Those actions to protect the national patrimony have come from governments across the political spectrum—a true testament to the fact that parklands protection is not a program of the “left” or “right” but a universal Chilean value.

Yendegaia is the 127th national park. While Chile’s system of protected areas already ranks with the very best in the world, there is still more to be done in the future to represent Chile’s incredible biological and geographic diversity. For non-Chilean readers, recall that this country contains the greatest north-south latitudinal range of any on Earth—more than 2,870 miles (4,600 kilometers)—a good deal greater than Argentina or Russia. With the Pacific Ocean on the west and the Andes to the east, Chile’s ecosystems stretch from the mighty Atacama Desert in the north down through the temperate zone and ancient forests of the south-central part of the country to Patagonia and the subantarctic region. Thus a wide range of ecosystems is present and needs to be represented in the nation’s protected areas system.

As President Piñera notes in his foreword, the Chilean public increasingly has begun to demand from their government better regulation of natural resource extraction and more conservation. This is a welcome development and it will be clear for all to see if the leadership in both the political and the civil spheres rec-ognizes the gigantic treasure that the national park system represents. Will future presidents seize the opportunity for other government lands under different status designations to be upgraded into national parks, expanding tourism opportunities and fulfilling international commitments regarding climate and biodiversity pro- tection? There is tremendous potential here for Chile to lead the world in making parks—for the wild creatures who live in them, for citizens and visitors alike to enjoy, and for the future.

In addition to President Piñera, the contributors to this book provide a good introduction to a truly marvelous landscape. Hernán Mladinic, a board mem- ber of Fundación Yendegaia, details the winding history of the project from idea to land purchase to external donation for the new park. Santiago Védés, President Piñera’s designated representative working inside the Chilean govern- ment to present the project to the various ministries and government agencies involved, outlines the legal, political, and other institutional challenges involved with shepherding the project through to completion. Longtime friend and fellow conservationist Nicolás Górgo, who was brought up on a sheep ranch in Tierra del Fuego, provides a brief cultural and landscape history of the region from the per- spective of a native “Fuegino.” Adriana Hoffmann, Chile’s premier landscape and a tireless advocate for Yendegaia’s conservation, presents an overview of the land’s biophysical features and wildlife.

Special thanks and congratulations go as well to Antonio Vizcaíno, whose exceptional photography fills these pages. To take the reader on a visual jour- ney through the new park, Antonio made many visits to Yendegaia, working in between the area’s infamous storms to capture the land’s beauty and light as the weather allowed.

For the person in London or Hong Kong or Sydney who picks up this book introducing Yendegaia to the world, a new national park in Tierra del Fuego may seem like the end of the world. (And it is.) Despite its remoteness—indeed, be- cause of it—Yendegaia now stands for the entire world to see as a touchstone of wilderness and beauty. The collaborative nature of its creation is a model for other nations to emulate. And, ultimately, Yendegaia helps us understand that whatever our nationality, we all are, ultimately, citizens of the Earth, our one true and only home.
No one noticed Yendegaia in the year 1520 when Ferdinand Magellan baptized the eastern banks of the Strait of Magellan as “Tierra del Fuego.” Nevertheless, there it was: a unique territory, ruggedly beautiful, a shining example of this huge southern island’s wild character. Nothing had disturbed, in over ten thousand years, the life led by the indigenous Selk’nam people who mostly used the north and center of the island. With bows and arrows they hunted guanacos, their primary sustenance. Further south, where forests spread out, the Selk’nam also roamed, beneath foliage of Magellanic coihues changing to hues of yellow, orange, and red in autumn, past peat bogs forming primitive coal deposits, amid the regular tok-tok of woodpeckers’ echoes. Their territories bordered the Azopardo River and the 100-kilometer-long (62-mile-long) mirror of water, Fagnano Lake. Only at the eastern end of the lake were they able to continue further south. Before this, Yendegaia had been without human life. Millions of years were needed to form South America’s natural communities, and it was not until the last ice age and the following retreat of glaciers that the principal ecosystems were created. As the ice retreated, valleys, rivers, and canyons were formed. On the plains, a steppe natural community anchored by coiron grass came to predominate; the forested regions developed a distinctive association of lenga, coihue, and Magellanic coihue trees, along with calafate, coihue, and other vegetation. Birds filled the air with their song andulpus foxes marked their territory.

The southernmost part of the island hardly knew the existence of man until the Yagán people arrived by sea some four thousand years after the Selk’nam people had settled in the north. The landscape did not suffer from any profound intervention and aggression, as is usually caused by humans. Right up to the arrival of the first European settlers, the native people lived in harmony with nature and did not produce any major ecological problems. The fate of Yendegaia, as part of the big island, was always linked to the larger history of Tierra del Fuego. In 1810, Robert FitzRoy, a British ship captain, came into contact with native people on the Beagle Channel and, after a conflict, decided to keep four Fuegians onboard his ship for the voyage home. The story of Jemmy Button, one of the Yagán taken to England and educated according to western standards, demonstrated the telluric force of these latitudes. All of FitzRoy’s efforts to acculturate him and his group were diluted on their return to Tierra del Fuego, as the three surviving Fuegians were reabsorbed by the culture and environment of their native land.

What FitzRoy, his shipmate Charles Darwin, and other early explorers accomplished was only a peripheral survey effort along the island’s shores. Not until more recently, a half century later, was the island of Tierra del Fuego occupied by settlers from abroad. It was the discovery of gold, in 1882, which attracted many pioneers to far-flung corners of the island. In 1880, Jorge Porte reached the beautiful Porvenir Bay, and by 1882 the gold rush had started in Cordón Brequedano, a massive moraine towering over the bay. Gold mining and prospecting lasted almost twenty years. The town of Porvenir boomed with flourishing trade, inns, cabarets, and brothels. Countless epic stories
...eventually he declared war on it and sent a huge army to conquer it. The army was defeated, and the glacier continued to exist. The war caused much suffering and loss of life. One day, the army retreated before the irresistible power of the glacier. The army, realizing the futility of their efforts, decided to give up and return home. As they were on their way back, they encountered a group of friendly Yagán people who welcomed them and offered them shelter. The Yagán people were descendants of the original inhabitants of the region. They lived in harmony with nature and respected the land and its inhabitants. The army was impressed by their wisdom and decided to learn from them. The Yagán people taught them how to live in harmony with the land and how to survive in the harsh environment.

One day, the army was on its way to the capital city. As they were passing through the mountains, they encountered a group of Yagán people who were hunting. The Yagán people shared their knowledge with the army about the flora and fauna of the region. The army was amazed by the Yagán people's knowledge and respect for nature. They decided to incorporate this knowledge into their own military strategies. The Yagán people also taught them how to build shelters and how to survive in the harsh environment.

The army returned to the capital city and shared their experiences with the king. The king was impressed by the Yagán people's wisdom and decided to establish a national park in the region. The park was named in honor of the Yagán people and was dedicated to preserving the natural beauty of the region. The park became a source of inspiration for many people and was visited by many tourists. The park became a symbol of the importance of respecting and preserving nature.

In conclusion, the story of the army's encounter with the Yagán people taught the army the importance of respecting and preserving nature. The army learned how to live in harmony with nature and how to survive in the harsh environment. The story of the army's encounter with the Yagán people serves as a reminder of the importance of respecting and preserving nature.
In 1959, Torres del Paine National Park in the Magallanes Region was created during the administration of President Jorge Alessandri Rodríguez. Alessandri almost certainly was inspired by the spectacular beauty of the landscape—the breathtaking massifs that never cease to amaze every visitor to the park. In some corner of his mind, in the overloaded agenda of a president of a country that was very different from the one today—more impoverished and parochial and with hundreds of pressing priorities that could have delayed such a decision—these majestic, granite towers must have triggered in him the need to act. He seized the chance to preserve this landscape forever, leaving a magnificent legacy for future generations, the full scale of which he probably did not envision at the time. Today, fifty-five years after its creation, Torres del Paine National Park is considered one of the wonders of the world and Chile’s tourist destination par excellence. The park has not only changed the face and economy of neighboring town Puerto Natales but is undoubtedly a pillar of development for the entire Magallanes Region.

Nevertheless, for many Chileans the creation of national parks may seem, at first glance, a strange exercise, alien to our culture and more typical of foreign customs and experiences. The truth is that designating national parks is a near-century-long tradition in Chile, which has included governments across the political spectrum. Our first national park, Vicente Pérez Rosales in the Los Lagos Region, was created in 1926 under President Emiliano Figueroa Larraín. Since then, almost every Chilean president has expanded the national park system.

Most Chileans, however, know little about the history of our parks—their origin, the people who identified the opportunity or proposed the idea, those who explored them for the first time or reported their attributes for conservation, or the dozens of anonymous people who contributed to their enactment. Perhaps this lack of information is indicative of why this long-standing tradition does not have the recognition it deserves in Chilean society.

The story behind the creation of Yendegaia National Park is both similar and distinctive from the birth stories of other previously protected areas in Chilean history. In this case, the initial idea came from Alan Watson Featherstone, a Scottish activist and forest advocate, after he visited the southern section of Tierra del Fuego in late 1996. Featherstone, Executive Director of Trees for Life, an award-winning organization known for its work to restore the Caledonian Forest, had a project in mind that would protect subantarctic forests by creating, in a first stage, a private park with public access. In December of 1996, he contacted a real estate agent in Punta Arenas specializing in farms who provided him with information on Estancia Yendegaia, a 95,827-acre (38,780-hectare) semi-abandoned property mainly dedicated to forestry and sheep farming. The following months, he had started conversations with the Serkas, a family of Croatian origin that for three generations had owned the estancia initiated by Jerónimo Serka at the turn of the twentieth century. Miguel Serka, the heir and owner at the time, expressed his affinity with the objectives of the project, as he preferred to see the land protected rather than see it end up in the hands of mining or forestry companies.

In March of 1997, Featherstone, along with Graciela Ramaciotti (who passed away in December of 2010)—an Argentinean conservationist then living in Ushuaia and founder and former president of the NGO Finis Terrae—first
approached the Conservation Land Trust, a nonprofit foundation established by Douglas and Kristine Tompkins. For the first time, a multiday expedition to explore the place. All were impressed with the excellence of the project and the possibility of purchasing the Yendegaia tract. In April 1998, they invited Kristine and Douglas Tompkins and other wildlife advocates to a meeting with the governor and regional authorities to propose the idea of Yendegaia's donation to the State in pursuit of creating a new national park and the possibility of a future transborder park between Chile and Argentina. The idea reached congressmen and a few ministers, spreading quickly and receiving wide coverage. However, it was not until March of 2011 that it was taken up again when Kristine and Douglas Tompkins presented then Chilean president Sebastián Piñera with a comprehensive proposal for creating several new national parks, expanding others, and redistricting specific reserves to national parks status. The idea was presented to the board, and continued to oversee the Yendegaia tract's stewardship.

In 2013, after a period of deliberation which in itself is above all and essentially a political act as it embodies the decision and vision of the head of state—his or her long-term outlook and dreams for the future, and pleasure of all citizens. It increases and strengthens the natural heritage of the Chilean state, which is the ultimate guarantor of these assets for all future generations of Chileans, in a world pressured by overdevelopment and one in which large, intact wildlife habitats are increasingly rare and threatened. Yendegaia National Park, the final result of this public-private collaboration, undoubtedly leaves the country with an expanded conservation legacy and an increased recognition of the world-renowned protected areas.

The creation of parks is also a patriotic act, which, when made in conjunction with donations from private parties, constitutes a kind of repatriation of land from the private to the public realms, a way of extending public property for the benefit and pleasure of all citizens. It increases and strengthens the natural heritage of the world-renowned protected areas.

The creation of parks is also a patriotic act, which, when made in conjunction with donations from private parties, constitutes a kind of repatriation of land from the private to the public realms, a way of extending public property for the benefit and pleasure of all citizens. It increases and strengthens the natural heritage of the present and future generations. Indeed, not only does it encompass a technical, ecological, legal, administrative, and logistical aspect, but, most of all, it embodies the decision and vision of the head of state—his or her long-term outlook and dreams for the future, that go beyond the day-to-day limitations of government to leave a legacy that is transcendent, a true gift for all citizens of future generations. The creation of parks serves as a reminder that the environment is a common good that must be protected and preserved for future generations, ensuring that the natural heritage of the world is safeguarded for future generations.
The creation of a new national park is not something that happens every day. An event of this kind is excellent news for all those involved: the individuals and nongovernmental organizations that promoted the idea, local communities which benefit from the initiative, regional and national authorities charged with protecting imperiled ecosystems, and certainly the people of the country who gain a new recreational area in the midst of scenic splendor, to be safeguarded for future generations.

The creation of Yendegaia National Park is a story we can all be proud of, not only because it resulted from the cooperation between the Chilean government and Fundación Yendegaia to preserve a unique area in our country's far south, but also because it reflects the growing trend of the active participation of civil society in promoting and perfecting public conservation policies. Moreover, the creation of this new park is notable due to the commitment and drive shown by then-President Sebastián Piñera Echenique. Prior to his term in office, Piñera, an avid conservationist, created Tantauco Park, an expansive and ecologically rich, private nature reserve on Chiloé Island. Demonstrating his ongoing interest in conservation, he did not hesitate to embrace this Tierra del Fuego initiative while serving as president.

In order to understand the process by which Yendegaia became a new national park, it is useful first to understand the role played by the State in biodiversity conservation and ecosystem protection. In fact, the government of Chile is constitutionally entrusted to “enforce nature conservation in the country.” This translates into three key objectives embodied in the prevailing legislation, namely, to sustain biological diversity, conserve environmental heritage, and ensure the sustainable use of resources over time. In pursuit of these goals, the State created the National System of State-Protected Wildlife Areas (its Spanish acronym is SNASPE), comprised of natural monuments, national reserves, and national parks across Chile. Likewise, as part of this initiative and with a view to defining a long-term road map consistent over time, the State also established a National Biodiversity Strategy, which includes the goal of representing in protected areas at least 10 percent of all of the country’s native ecosystems.

More than a hundred units of the protected areas system have been designated to date, from Arica to Punta Arenas, all of them administrated by the National Forest Service (CONAF) and covering an estimated 36 million acres (14.4 million hectares), equivalent to 19.3 percent of the surface of continental Chile. This percentage of protection, well above the average 11 percent standard of OECD countries, reveals the value assigned by Chile to protecting its biodiversity. This commitment is especially important because of the many unique and endemic species and ecosystems in Chile. It is no wonder, then, that Chile is renowned for its ecological diversity and scenic beauty, which deserves special and dedicated protection.

One of these highly distinctive but also fragile ecosystems is the eastern section of the Darwin Range, between Almirantazgo Sound and the Beagle Channel.

Although a good part of this area had already received protection in 1965 when Alberto De Agostini National Park was established (and later expanded in the
Y endegaia, through the person of Douglas Tompkins, approached the Chilean government of conservation organizations, finally waned in August of 2013 when many people. According to local belief, there had to be a “catch.” money to conserve lands perceived as distant and unproductive was unthinkable to society.

Exercised for decades in other developed economies, is not well known in Chilean regional as well as national authorities. The idea of environmental philanthropy, of vast tracts of land in the southern reaches of the world. This outside investment, private nonprofit institutions, financed from abroad, invested in the conservation forest activists.

This skepticism, along with a series of odd conjectures about the motivations for outside individuals and organizations to spend considerable effort and resources, was widely held. This is where private initiative entered the scene, without which the new effort for the Magallanes Region and especially for the island of Tierra del Fuego, as private nonprofit institutions, financed from abroad, invested in the conservation of vast tracts of land in the southern reaches of the world. This outside investment, which for many of our citizens may be difficult to comprehend, led to suspicion among some local people. Conspiracy theories abounded and were supported by regional as well as national authorities. The idea of environmental philanthropy, exercised for decades in other developed economies, is not well known in Chilean society. For outside individuals and organizations to spend considerable effort and money to conserve lands perceived as distant and unproductive was unthinkable to many people. According to local belief, there had to be a “catch.”

This skepticism, along with a series of odd conjectures about the motivations of conservation organizations, finally waned in August of 2013 when Fundación Y endegaia, through the person of Douglas Tompkins, approached the Chilean government with a proposal to join forces to create a new national park. The proposition was that the Fundación would donate its approximately 94,000 acres (38,500 hectares) while the government contributed the adjacent 276,000 acres (111,000 hectares) of state-owned land. This idea was certainly very appealing, as well as proof of an increasingly empowered citizen movement committed to environmental protection; these factors immediately motivated and involved President Piñera and his cabinet.

In order to make an in-depth analysis of the park proposal, I was entrusted creating an interdisciplinary task force of professionals from different government ministries and agencies, which worked hard over the following months compiling the necessary background information. The team focused on analyzing the proposition from a global point of view, specifically studying its technical and political viability and formulating possible alternatives for any necessary improvements. The analysis was based on six general criteria, dividing each one into individual characteristics of the proposed new national park. More than 25 topics were analyzed in depth, which included the territorial context of the proposal; its ecological importance at local and national levels; tourism potential; economic-development potential under different scenarios; administration costs as part of Chile’s protected area system; and implications of the eventual declaration of a national park on the neighboring local community.

Each one of these criteria was considered in detail by specialized teams from CONAF, the underscary for tourism, and the Ministries for Economy, Public Works, Environment, National Assets, and Social Development. This endeavor also required the help and commitment of some 25 professionals including biologists, architects, civil engineers, business administrators, forest engineers, geographers, journalists, and lawyers. This collaborative work, a completely new experience for a State used to working in units that are operationally independent, thus addressing the concerns raised by different ministries involved in the study. This work in turn built trust between the parties and created new allies in drafting an adapted proposal for the park.

This last point is not a minor detail as it became obvious that successful implementation of an initiative of this scope was linked to the capacity for deeply understanding the needs of each party involved, seeking flexibility in both public and private interests to build consensus on key issues without losing focus of the main objective. This work arrangement proved to be highly efficient as the Ministers’ Committee on Sustainability, a formal entity responsible for recommending the creation of the new national park to the president, presented a strong proposal capable of answering the questions of even the most demanding counterparts within the government and local communities.

Finally, fifteen years after a group of idealists began this almost-heroic conservation effort, it became a reality during the January of 2014 visit by President Piñera who signed the decree creating Y endegaia National Park. Thus, public and private interests aligned to preserve an additional 370,000 acres (150,000 hectares), protecting one of the most spectacular and wild places on the South American continent. Y endegaia became unit number 101 of the National System of State-Protected Wildlife Areas, or national park number 37, which our children and grandchildren can proudly visit today, and the generations to come will experience long into the future.
Yendegaia Bay is located on the northern shore of the Beagle Channel in the far east of the Darwin Mountain Range, only three kilometers away from the international border with Argentina. It is a wide bay entering the island of Tierra del Fuego in a northwesterly direction. Administratively, this area and the entire Yendegaia tract belong to the province of the Chilean Antarctic, within the Magallanes and Chilean Antarctic Region.

The northern section of Yendegaia is an Andean subrange watershed where the Marcou and Deseado peaks rise to 3,000–3,300 feet (900–1,000 meters) above sea level. To the west it extends parallel to the northern shore of Almirantazgo Sound, separating the headwaters of the Rasmussen and Las Turbas Rivers.

To the south of this first mountain range lie the deep, rift valley lakes known as Deseado and Despreciado (Arata) and the Paciencia Valley. This trough is followed by another transversal mountain range that separates the headwaters of Las Turbas River from those of Fagnano Lake and its source, the Arauco River, which meets the sea at Caleta Maria, a small settlement. This is the area where President Sebastián Piñera and Douglas Tompkins, representing Fundación Yendegaia, signed the act that created the new Yendegaia National Park on January 5, 2014.

A half century before, in 1956, the famous Salesian explorer Alberto De Agostini crossed the area from Almirantazgo Sound to La Patania Valley. He wrote a compelling description of the untouched Fuegan cold jungle:

The forest we passed through is one of the most entangled and darkest I had ever seen, and truth be told it invoked an undefined sense of fear in one's soul . . . the near absence of light that penetrated in solitary places gave such a dismal and sinister feeling to the landscape that we were under the illusion of having penetrated mysterious forests of which legends are made, populated with elves and witches.

Today, these forests are no longer as dense because of human intervention via cattle farming and forestry. Fires and indiscriminate logging have inflicted wounds on the earth and the southern light rebounds, in some places, off naked soil. The original raison d’être of Fundación Yendegaia was to conserve natural habitats and restore the degraded landscapes on the former Estancia Yendegaia property. With this and adjacent government land now joined to create Yendegaia National Park, the tremendous ecological and scientific value of the area will be secured. Moreover, Yendegaia will receive the necessary funds to continue with its conservation and recovery trajectory, and it will become an important center for recreation and environmental education for the entire society.

BIODIVERSITY IN THE NEW PARK

VEGETATION

The soils and climate are the main abiotic factors that directly influence the types of vegetation on Tierra del Fuego. Thus, in response to the different combinations of these factors, we can define several main types of vegetation.
Some forests in Tierra del Fuego have been badly damaged by beavers. A non-native rodent from Canada that was introduced by the fur industry in the 1940s, the beaver has caused major devastation. Beaver dams and their consequent water impoundments lead to overaccumulation of the soils, causing the demise of many of the original tree species, especially the lenga. Beavers currently are a plague because they do not have natural predators. Government authorities continuously carry out campaigns to eradicate them. Similarly, the introduction of exotic trees to the region was extremely detrimental for native fish that were preyed upon by these introduced species.

**MAGELLANIC LENDAGA.** Starting at 1,600 feet (500 meters) above sea level, the shape of the trees changes and takes on a form resembling a shrub. These stunted moss are an adaptation to the strong winds that sweep across the mountains. The lenga, also found in this area, is a true species that is well adapted to the rigorous conditions imposed by the region’s cold climate; it has adopted a creeping form when found at its maximum elevation, while in lower areas it can reach 100 feet (30 meters) in height. Older trees have diameters of approximately 60 inches (150 centimeters). Since the lenga loses its leaves, it is a deciduous tree, but by the fall the foliage has turned to myriad shades of greens, yellows, and reds, and the forest displays its characteristic warmth. Every season of the year offers a different visual experience to visitors, who take pleasure in admiring the shifting colors, a sublime gift from nature.

The Magellanic colusse (Nothofagus antarrostris), on the other hand, does not lose its leaves in winter, remaining green year round. It also grows to a considerable height, up to 115 feet (35 meters), and replaces the coihue (Nothofagus dombeyi) in the subantarctic forest starting at approximately 49°S latitude. It grows in groups, forming small communities within lenga forests up to an altitude of 655 feet (200 meters) and stands out for being more robust than other surrounding trees. This species is more commonly found in the eastern portion of the park where it grows in communities with the coihue tree in the rainier sections of the uplands.

Both the lenga and colusse can be attacked by parasites, the Myzodendron parellense Banks (leafless sub-shrub) and the Cyttaria darwinii (Cyttaria sp.), known as kangaroo bush (jaguar del valle, in Spanish) because it was one of the staples that the natives included in their diet. This zone is known for its peat bogs and flooded areas where Sphagnum moss (Sphagnum magellanicum) grows almost exclusively. Peat is made of plant remains, mainly bryophytes or mosses. They have an enormous capacity to retain water and therefore are active creators of humus. The enormous water-retaining capacity of peat bogs is due to the absorbent properties of Sphagnum moss. Peat bogs cover 1 percent of the Earth’s surface and were created over a long period of time. For example, a 60-inch-deep (1.5-meter) deposit took not less than 6,000 years to form. White pine (from Sphagnum moss) is mainly used as fuel and as a soil additive. This moss has been commercially exploited for more than one hundred fifty years. The use of peat as fuel has increased in many countries due to the energy crisis. The peat industry depends on the natural production of Sphagnum moss. Its properties make it ideal for conditioning soils, as bedding for growing other plants, and for making non-toxic dyes and paints. Sphagnum moss has been commercially exploited for manufacturing medical dressings, paper, and other decorative products. Sphagnum moss has been commercially exploited for manufacturing medical dressings, paper, and other decorative products.

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**COASTAL VEGETATION.** The cañelo grows to its full potential along the coast of the Beagle Channel because the environment is humid and offers certain benefits. This tree is an evergreen frequently found together with the Magellanic colusse. The coast, on the other hand, grows to the slope at an altitude of 310 feet (100 meters), embellishing the landscape with its red flowers. The underground contains plenty of moss and ferns. Loma de las Abades (Magallánicas), grows here among other shrubs and heather plants. In springtime, delicate orchids (Gabinóe florescendo) bloom, their white flowers poising through the edges of the forest. The most vibrant colors are provided by the murtilla (Empetraria radula), violas (Viola sp.), and primulas (Primula farinacea). The Magellánica murtilla is a small stunted shrub with hanging branches, sharp leaves, and reddish flowers. The Selk'nam people used to eat its edible fruit, which has a sweet-sour taste.

The Magellánica murtilla is a small stunted shrub with hanging branches, sharp leaves, and reddish flowers. The Selk'nam people used to eat its edible fruit, which has a sweet-sour taste.
Despite their name, the visóns have yellow flowers and the primulas stand out for their white flowers. In summer, with the flowering of araucarias (Araucaria araucana), the seaside is awash in pink petals and fields are orange with months of white and yellow daisies (Chrysanthemum spp.). However, flowers bloom year-round in the park, changing the landscape with every season. In winter, for example, the sticky (Bidens pilosa) pushes through the snow, opening its amber-colored flowers. The leaves of this shrub are of a deep green color, similar to that of marijuana. It is green year-round, and its orange-yellow flowers bloom by the end of winter while its bluish-colored fruit ripens in fall.

The calamita (Boraginaceae), a thorny shrub with many arching branches, also thrives here. In summer it stands out among the forest trees for its yellow daisies (Tetraneuris comosa), however, flowers bloom year-round in the landscape on the island.

At higher altitudes, on crossing the mountains, a species of petrel (Pterodroma spp.) and yeast-type vegetation can be seen with certain abundance that are characteristic of a sheepy terrain formed by the petrifaction of vegetation in a humid environment. Other plants such as reeds, some species of cryptogams, mosses mainly, and a white-flowered aster (Centaurea calcarea) also flourish here.

The campitillo (Phacellaria flava) can also be found in this habitat type. Creamy or pale yellow and purple-veined, this delicately perfumed flower blooms between November and January. It measures 36–28 inches (9–70 centimeters) and grows in clusters of 2 to 7 flowers. It can be found in almost every landscape on the island.

VEGETATION

In sum, the terrestrial and aquatic habitats of the newly designated Yendegaia National Park offer a rich variety of ecological features and attributes. It is a land of harsh climate. The guanaco was central to the economy and culture of the indigenous Mapuche. It is the biggest land mammal living in the park (weighing up to 200 pounds), and it is considered an asset to help sustain several imperiled animal species. These include the previously mentioned North American beaver (Castor canadensis), which is deemed vulnerable, and the southern river otter (Lontra provocax), the pampas fox of Tierra del Fuego (Lycalopex culpaeus), both of which are in danger of extinction.

ANIMALS

In shortgrass pastures, marshlands, wet areas near roads, one can observe a notable variety of birds including the common penguin or black-bellied cormorant (Phalacrocorax atriceps), the manchita isla or black-faced ibis (Threskiornis melanocephalus), the terns or Southern lapwing (Vanellus chilensis), and araucana cormorants or the red-backed grebes (Chloephaga rhodopunctata).

In Isla point at higher altitudes, one can see jotes or viznizas (Geococcyx caerulescens) and the apalejos or viznizas or rufous-tailed hawks (Buteo jamaicensis). The Yendegaia coastline is representative of southern Chile’s channels and fjords ecosystem. Marine life here is abundant with the presence of birds such as the black-necked cormorant (Phalacrocorax nigropectoralis), the ostras aurales or Magellanic oystercatcher (Haematopus leucophaeus), Magellanic penguins (Spheniscus magellanicus), petrelis (Poullionifera), gaviota marina or king gulls (Larus dominicanus), gaviota aurora or dolphinfish gulls (Leucophaeus scoresbii), imperial cormorants (Leucocarbo atriceps), flightless steamer ducks (Tachyeres pteneres), and araucana or grebes (Chloephaga rhodopunctata).

MARINE ANIMALS

The Yendegaia coastal area is also abundant with marine mammals such as southern fur seals (Arctocephalus gazella); the elephant or the ruddy-headed goose (Chloephaga hybrida), flightless steamer ducks (Tachyeres pteneres), and araucana or grebes (Chloephaga rhodopunctata).

Of the nonnative species that have been introduced to the region, the most prominent are the South American gray fox or chilla (Lycalopex culpaeus), the common or European rabbit (Oryctolagus cuniculus), and the rabbit-like mouse (Castor fiber). In short, these species thrive in the park, allowing it to be rich in biodiversity and serve as an asset to help sustain several imperiled animal species.

In sum, the terrestrial and aquatic habitats of the newly designated Yendegaia National Park offer a rich variety of ecological features and attributes. It is a landscape of global importance, with fascinating creatures and striking scenery. Its size, remote character, and landscape position—between two other national parks and forming a broad habitat linkage—make it a great asset for conservation at the end of the world.
mother rock, father sky,
your weeping rests at the foot of the snowdrifts
and every star perches on your white summit
lighting the road to silence
—Rubén Patagonia
Why Patagonia? . . .

Palled for a moment with civilization and its surroundings,
I wanted to escape somewhere,
where I might be as far removed from them as possible.

—Lady Florence Dixie
We need to listen more to the biologists and naturalists, sociologist, philosophers, and artists. Let us pay more attention to poets and environmentalists and learn from our forests, which offer multiple values.

—Adriana Hoffmann
PEAT Bogs
No synonym for God is as perfect as Beauty.
—John Muir
A stupendous panorama, indescribable for the profound vastness of the horizon and the sublime grandeur of the hundreds of summits. . . .

This is the first time human eyes have gazed upon these frozen solitudes, at times with raptures of joy; at other times with astonished awe. . . .

I peer intently across that immense expanse of snow, ice, and mountain peaks, rendered even sharper by the crystalline transparency of the air and the glittering sunlight, and try to divine its secrets.

—Alberto María De Agostini
One light is left us:
the beauty of things, not men;
the immense beauty of the world, not the human world.

Look—and without imagination,
desire, nor dream—directly at the mountains and the sea.
Are they not beautiful?
—Robinson Jeffers
COASTLINE
It is called the “Land of Fire” as if in mocking irony by man in his always misguided obstinacy. Who would not be appalled at such turning of the truth on its head, calling “fire” what is in fact “cold”? It would be like shouting “Blasphemer!” at the Soul of Piety itself.

—Nicolás Granato
Trees have historically and mythologically represented many things—the Tree of Life, the axis of the earth, tribal ancestors, homes of spirits.

—Stephanie Kaza
Among the scenes which are deeply impressed on my mind, none exceed in sublimity the primeval forests . . . temples filled with the varied productions of the God of Nature.

No one can stand in these solitudes unmoved, and not feel that there is more in man than the mere breath of his body.

—Charles Darwin
Parks should be dominated by the spirit of beauty. . . .
Is not outstanding beauty one of the rarest and greatest possessions a land can possess?
It should be looked upon as a national asset and given an important place in every programme of conservation.
—J. B. Harkin
PATTERNS AND FORMS
Protean steppe of Tierra del Fuego, your paintbrushes every instant spread the rainbow of color offered by the setting sun. And the snows of your winters magnify your reflections scattering the longings of your trembling shadows.

—Nicolo Gligo
The natural world is the greatest source of excitement;  
the greatest source of visual beauty;  
the greatest source of intellectual interest. . . .
The greatest source of so much in life that makes life worth living.
—David Attenborough
Protected areas . . . counteract what has been called the extinction of experience in the wake of the downhill spiral of generational ecological amnesia: this effect refers to the narrowing range of potent experiences of the natural world, accompanied by a cumulative collective ignorance of how rich life on Earth is when left free of human chiseling and hammering.

—Eileen Crist
On mountains, latitude’s imperceptible changes can become altitude’s striking transformations. Ecology and climate change rapidly from balmy foothills to glacial heights. . . .

Up high, biology vanishes to reveal a world shaped by the starker forces of geology and meteorology, the bare bones of the earth wrapped in sky.

—Rebecca Solnit
Mosses and Lichens
Just at the limits of ordinary perception lies another level in the hierarchy of beauty, of leaves as tiny and perfectly ordered as a snowflake, of unseen lives complex and beautiful... Mosses... [are] a vehicle for intimacy with the landscape, like a secret knowledge of the forest.

—Robin Wall Kimmerer
The parks are an object lesson for a world of limited resources. In the national parks the visitor learns that satisfaction is not correlated to the rate at which he expends resources, but that just the opposite is true. The parks promote intensive experience, rather than intensive use. The more one knows, searches, and understands, the greater the interest and satisfaction of the park experience.

—Joseph L. Sax
Located in one of the most spectacular regions of the world, Yendegaia National Park requires travelers to the area to undergo meticulous preparation and overcome several hurdles before reaching its incomparable rewards. The only access is by boat, by sailing on the Strait of Magellan to reach Yendegaia Bay. Planning for this leg of the trip always involves leaving some leeway for the unexpected, with weather as the decisive factor.

Taking the photographs for this book entailed several extensive trips whose common denominator was always waiting for the right weather and light conditions to occur. Tierra del Fuego’s legendary weather is ever changing: One may experience rain, sun, snow, and wind on the same day. I witnessed this when walking, and occasionally riding on horseback, through the valleys on fascinating explorations of the terrain. Similarly, when I sailed by sea with Oceana Joss Gregoir and Aramara Vizcaíno, I was awestruck by every detail of the fjord coastline where the rocks and stone, sculpted and painted by glaciers, were displayed as natural abstract art. Shooting the aerial photographs during the four seasons of the year demanded careful planning and lots of patience and was successful thanks to pilot Rodrigo Noriega. When the wind conditions and cloud coverage allowed, Rodrigo’s experience and weather knowledge let us seize windows of opportunity to enter the area.

But, just as the climate is extreme, so is its stunning beauty. Exploring Yendegaia on a photographic search of its natural beauty is like entering a land of fantasia. The diversity of colors and textures in plants, rocks, or lichen never ceases to amaze me. Whether in the visual close-ups I obtained during extensive expeditions on land, the images gathered while crossing enormous valleys, or wide panoramas seen from a distance and afforded by hours of overflight, the colors and texture factors are, from a photographic point of view, what make this place extraordinary. For this reason I chose a visual language that would show, on the one hand, panoramic landscapes that impress us with their grandiosity and, on the other hand, intimate details of the smallest plants or facets of rivers and valleys that offer abstract images that not only record their beauty but also evoke their emotional impact.

The diversity of this landscape comes forth on a grand scale through its mountains, glaciers, coastlines and fjords, forests and tundra, rivers and lakes. Life in this park is revealed in its vastness, and photographing it has been a privilege that has allowed me to perceive the dimension of our planet. In addition to the insight gained through my personal experience crossing this magnificent territory and photographing it, the truly transcendent thing offered to me was the opportunity to participate and provide images for a project of this magnitude hand in hand with the conservation program led by Douglas and Kristine Tompkins.

The fact that the Yendegaia property was purchased for the purpose of eventually donating it to Chile’s national parks system demonstrates the clear vision of a conservation project with a firm strategy. Yendegaia borders with Argentina to the east, specifically with Tierra del Fuego National Park, and with Chile’s Alberto de Agostini National Park to the west. Donating the property and running it into a national park has enabled the completion of a protected corridor between these two natural areas. Thus the new Yendegaia National Park’s conservation impact is multiplied, as it has helped establish a broad, permanently secure habitat linkage and a binational protected area.

I was fortunate in that I was able to closely follow the process that led to the former Estancia Yendegaia property becoming a national park. Personally, I was deeply moved to see how a dream came true, and I am grateful to know that this is still possible and that we can hold onto areas where life preserves itself through its ancestral cycle.

ANTONIO VIZCAÍNO
Douglas Tompkins is a wilderness advocate, mountaineer, organic farmer, and conservationist. For more than two decades, he has worked alongside his wife, Kristine Tompkins, to restore degraded farms and to establish large-scale protected areas, including national parks in Argentina and Chile. Through a family foundation, Doug Tompkins supports environmental activism campaigns in North and South America and has helped produce numerous conservation-related books, including *Corcovado National Park: Chile’s Wilderness Jewel* and *Monte León National Park*.

Miguel Juan Sebastián Piñera Echenique, popularly known as Sebastián Piñera, former president of Chile (2010–2014), was born in Santiago, Chile. A businessman and politician, Piñera has been a professor at several Chilean universities, has served as senator (of East Santiago), and has been instrumental in creating projects with an ecological mission, including Fundación Futuro and the privately funded nature preserve, Tantauco Park. He holds a degree in Business Administration from the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile and MA and PhD degrees in Economics from Harvard University.

Bosilje Sapundžić is a relentless advocate, mountaineer, organic farmer, and conservationist. For more than two decades, he has worked alongside his wife, Kristine Tompkins, to restore degraded farms in Argentina and Chile. Through a family foundation, Doug Tompkins supports environmental activism campaigns in North and South America and has helped produce numerous conservation-related books, including *Corcovado National Park: Chile’s Wilderness Jewel* and *Monte León National Park*.

Nicolo Gligo V., born in the Magallanes and Chilean Antarctic Region, is a professor and director of the Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Chile. Gligo has held senior positions in the Chilean Ministry of Agriculture and the Research Institute of Natural Resources and international posts with the United Nations’ Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. Consultant to numerous agencies and guest professor at universities throughout Latin America, Gligo launched the comprehensive report, “The Status of the Environment in Chile.”

Nicolás Gilpi P., born in the Magallanes and Chilean Antarctic Region, is a professor and director of the Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Chile. Gilpi has held senior positions in the Chilean Ministry of Agriculture and the Research Institute of Natural Resources and international posts with the United Nations’ Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. Consultant to numerous agencies and guest professor at universities throughout Latin America, Gilpi launched the comprehensive report, “The Status of the Environment in Chile.”

Miguel Juan Sebastián Piñera Echenique is an entrepreneur with degrees in civil engineering and business management. His philanthropy for Chilean nature conservation inspires his work to create national and private parks in Chile. Valde’s entrepreneurial efforts include Tantauco Park in Chile, one of Chile’s largest private nature preserves. He later founded sustainable efforts under the auspices of Fundación Nacional Park, Tic-Tac Marine Park, Pumalín Park, and Juan Fernández Protected Coastal Marine Area, and created national environments, as well as the expansion of Sierra Chica Continental National Park.

Antonio Vizcaíno is a photographer, editor, and conservationist. In the last two decades, he has published 39 books of his nature photography, including *Water, Forest, Mountain, Wildland Philanthropy*, and *Mexico: Landscape and Spirit*. In 2001, he embarked on the photographic expedition “América Natural: Tierra del Fuego–Alaska,” with the goal of photographing the best-protected natural areas in America and contributing—through images and campaigns of environmental education—to the preservation of the continent’s biological diversity.

CONTRIBUTORS
YENDEGAIA NATIONAL PARK

In Brief

A land of striking beauty and diversity, Yenegaia National Park offers unique scientific, scenic, and cultural values. The park’s mountains, glaciers, lakes, rivers, streams, and forests are of outstanding ecological character. The park features pristine and lightly manipulated ecosystems, including extensive tracts of subantarctic forest—a globally rare natural community.

Notable species include the Dominican gull and giant swallow, and giant woodpecker; common rayadito; the Seychelles warbler; and fungi, especially species adapted to peatlands. Species of conservation concern include the San Félix petrel. Species of conservation concern include the southern rock shrike, sooty-breasted guan, and Tiera del Fuego caique. Soo innumerable species reach such as alpaca, seals, sea lions, Pep’s delphinid, and Chilian delphinid.

Yenegaia National Park also serves as a broad wildlife corridor and connects Yenegaia National Park to the west, Yendegaia National Park to the east, and bordering Chile’s Alberto De Agostini National Park and the bordering Argentina.

The creation of Yenegaia National Park is the result of innovative public-private cooperation. Many people were united in this collaborative effort to make a dream become a beautiful reality. There are too many individuals who helped birth the park (and this book), including all of those who, in their unique way, contributed to its success by creating the community organization “Amigos de Yendegaia.” Key contributors to the park’s creation include:

- Peter Buckley, Ernest Beyeler, I. Lenox Chase of the former Estancia Yendegaia, in partnership with the Conservation Land Trust (CLT)
- Santiago Valdés, interministerial coordinator of the Government of Chile
- Pedro Pablo Gutiérrez, head attorney on this and other CLT conservation projects, as well as attorney Mónica Solar, a member of the Templeton Conservation team for more than a decade
- Thanks also go to legal Espinosa, a forestry engineer in charge of the Land Program of the foundations that supervised the technical and cartographic aspects of the project. We invite you also, with thanks, to the board of Fundación Yenegaia—Board President Carolina Morgado, Victor Gallegos, Rodrigo Navarino, Carmen Gisela Jones, Juan Torro, and Carlos Canón Correa, as well as past directors Mario Lasio Sierra, Jaime Chaves, and Tin gala,
- Many local people in the Magallanes Region believed in this project from the beginning and contributed to make the community organization “Amigos de Yenegaia.” Key individuals in this group included José Ruiz Des Santos, Juan Manuel Dignacón, Fernando Hesse Alonso, Joko Saglio Silva, Alfredo Pérez Sipierre, Hugo Vera Carcara, Carlos Pérez Ogawa, and Beatriz Rebollo López
- We also express our gratitude to all those who collaborated in various capacities, government departments, and nongovernmental organizations, and their representatives who, with their dedicated efforts, made possible the creation of a new national park. These individuals include Mr. Sebastián Piñera, then president of Chile; Douglas Tompkins, president of the Conservation Land Trust; Nicolo Cicans, former director of Fundación Yenegaia and a member of the Tiera del Fuego; Horacio Míchel, director of Fundación Yenegaia; who oversee relations with government institutions that led to the park’s creation; Santiago Valdés, interministerial coordinator of the Government of Chile; Adrián Hoffmann, one of the project’s initiators who, along with Alan Watson Futures and Giancarlo Bresciani (1984-1991), had the original idea of conserving the land; and photograph Antonio Vizcaino. His marvelous images, captured during photo expeditions, make possible due to the skill of pilot Rodrigo Navega transport the reader to the furthest crooks and corners of the park. Many other individuals added Antonio Vizcaino with his travel logistics and photographic production work, such as Pilara Elisa de Solleva, Lorena García Méndez, Francisco Guevara, Vicente Hernandez, Oscar June, Marilú Martínez, Carmen Gloria Pacheco Soffía, Andrea Maza, Ángel Sandoval, Jorge Sandoval, Lorena Valdés, Fernando Viveros, Antoni Vizcaino, Martí Vizcaino.
- We give our constant support, vision, and legal counsel of Mr. Pablo Gutiérrez, head attorney on this and other CLT conservation projects, as well as attorney Mónica Solar, a member of the Templeton Conservation team for more than a decade. Thanks also go to legal Espinosa, a forestry engineer in charge of the Land Program of the foundations that supervised the technical and cartographic aspects of the project. We invite you also, with thanks, to the board of Fundación Yenegaia—Board President Carolina Morgado, Victor Gallegos, Rodrigo Navarino, Carmen Gisela Jones, Juan Torro, and Carlos Canón Correa, as well as past directors Mario Lasio Sierra, Jaime Chaves, and Tin gala,

We acknowledge with profound gratitude Peter Buckley and Ernest Beyeler (2013-2010), two outstanding philanthropists who made crucial contributions to the purchase of the former Estancia Yendegaia, in partnership with the Conservation Land Trust (CLT)


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Finally, we thank the members of the Núñez indigenous community of Bulaños, Miguel Balfor, Maria Luisa Munoz Cristina Calderon, Michele Donovan, Tereza Gonzalo Sode Caceros, Hugo Maldonado, GritAllows Jr., General Jose Miguel Lopez, and Colonel Edgardo Arum Cardenas.


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COLOPHON

The Conservation Land Trust (CLT), a nonprofit private operating foundation incorporated in California and registered national park in Chile and Argentina. Since its founding in 1992, CLT has developed innovative projects in South America that preserve wilderness, conserve biodiversity, protect endangered species, and restore degraded ecosystems. CLT is a member of the World Commission on Protected Areas and has partnered with government agencies and other non-governmental organizations to establish multiple new protected areas including Chile’s Cordillera National Park and Monte Leone National Park in Argentina.

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