



**WORLD
LAND
TRUST**



Supporting a
**WORLD-CLASS ARR
PROJECT TO RESTORE
NORTHERN COLOMBIA'S
TROPICAL FOREST**



Colombian Red Howler Monkey

Country

Colombia

Partner

Fundación Proyecto Tití

Biome

Tropical Dry Forest

Ecoregion

Eastern Cordillera Real
Montane Forests

Habitats

The project is located within the tropical dry forests of Colombia's Caribbean region – one of the country's most threatened and fragmented ecosystems. Located within the deeply folded landscape of the Montes de María, the most intact forest remains in protected areas, along river corridors, and on steep or inaccessible slopes. Across much of the surrounding landscape, however, native forest has been cleared and converted to pasture.

These pasturelands are dominated by aggressive introduced grass species, which outcompete native plants and prevent natural forest regeneration, even after cattle are removed. Through large-scale restoration and natural regeneration, this project aims to transform these degraded slopes back into resilient and diverse tropical forest.

Project summary

Delivered by our partner Fundación Proyecto Tití (FPT), this high-integrity Afforestation, Reforestation and Revegetation (ARR) carbon project will transform degraded pasture into resilient Tropical Dry Forest habitat within the Los Tities de San Juan Reserve in northern Colombia. Developed under the Equitable Earth standard, and drawing on decades of FPT's restoration experience, it aims to recreate a structurally and ecologically resilient forest with enhanced biodiversity benefits.

At its heart is the Critically Endangered and endemic Cotton-top Tamarin (*Saguinus oedipus*) – one of the world's smallest, most charismatic primates and a flagship species for Colombia's tropical dry forests. By restoring and reconnecting habitat for the Cotton-top Tamarin, the project will also strengthen protection for a remarkable diversity of native wildlife across the wider landscape.

Certified in 2026, the project will deliver carbon removals credits over a 40-year period (2021–2061), with reforestation now planned across the reserve's largest property, contributing to a total of 639 hectares (1,579 acres) under restoration.

Between 2025 and 2028, over 180,000 saplings from 80 native species will be planted using a range of ecological restoration strategies designed to maximise biodiversity benefits and long-term ecosystem resilience. Natural regeneration is also being encouraged across the reserve to support ecological succession and long-term forest recovery.

Main threats to the area

Tropical dry forests in Colombia face intense and ongoing pressure. Less than 7% of the original forest remains and is particularly depleted in the Caribbean region.

Key threats include deforestation for cattle ranching and agriculture, the spread of invasive grasses, and fire. Encroachment by livestock from neighbouring lands also poses a significant challenge, making effective boundary management essential.

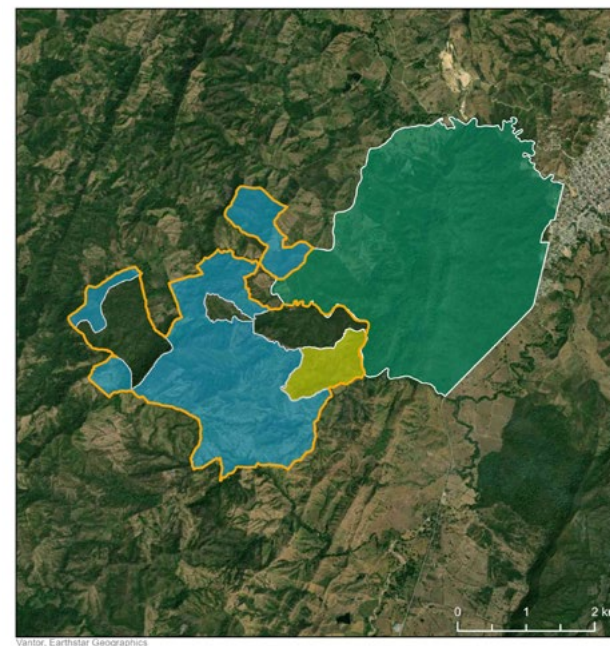
Additional pressures include illegal logging, hunting of Cotton-top Tamarins for the pet trade, and conflict with returning predators such as the Puma.

Without active protection, restoration, and management, these lands would likely remain degraded or be further converted for agricultural use. In this region, land perceived as “unused” is often informally claimed, making long-term conservation dependent on sustained presence, management, and community engagement.

Global prioritisation

The project lies within the Tumbes–Chocó–Magdalena biodiversity hotspot, one of the most biologically rich yet threatened regions in the world.

The neighbouring Santuario Los Colorados National Park is recognised as both a Key Biodiversity Area and an Important Bird Area, highlighting the global significance of this landscape for conservation.



- Full Los Tities de San Juan Reserve
- Restoration areas
- Reference site
- Los Colorados Fauna and Flora Sanctuary



Biodiversity

Surveys within the San Juan Forest Reserve have recorded at least 44 mammal species, 212 bird species, 20 amphibians, and 47 reptiles. These include globally threatened and endemic species such as the Critically Endangered Dahl's Toad-headed Turtle (*Mesoclemmys dahl*) and the Vulnerable Colombian Black Spider Monkey (*Ateles fusciceps rufiventris*).

The diversity of plants is equally rich, with over 200 plant species recorded, including Endangered and overexploited tree species like “Amargoroso” (*Aspidosperma polyneuron*).

Encouragingly, Puma have recently returned to the reserve – a powerful indicator of improving habitat quality and ecological connectivity, and a testament to the growing success of FPT's long-term restoration and protection efforts.

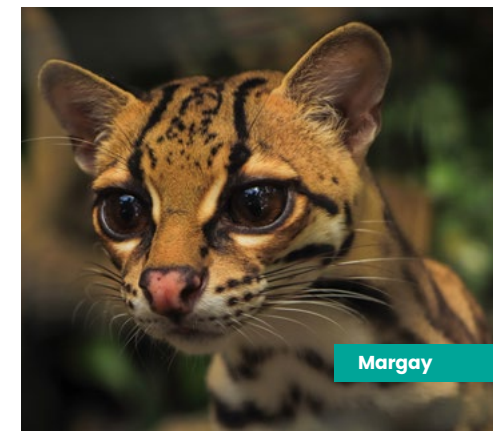
Key species'

Cotton-Top Tamarin (*Saguinus oedipus*, CR), Colombian Black Spider Monkey (*Ateles fusciceps rufiventris*, VU), Margay (*Leopardus wiedii*, NT), Colombian Red Howler Monkey (*Alouatta seniculus*, LC), Puma (*Puma concolor*, LC), Northern Naked-tailed Armadillo (*Cabassous centralis*, DD), Dahl's Toad Headed Turtle (*Mesoclemmys dahl*, CR), Red-footed Tortoise (*Chelonoidis carbonarius*, VU), *Aspidosperma polyneuron* (evergreen tree species, EN), Red Ceiba tree (*Pachira fendleri*/ *Pachira quinata*, LC but EN within Colombia due to overexploitation for wood).

'The Red List of Threatened Species, maintained by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), includes categories of Critically Endangered (CR), Endangered (EN), Vulnerable (VU), Near Threatened (NT) and Least Concern (LC).



Colombian Black Spider Monkey



Margay



FPT rangers



Red-footed Tortoise



FPT tree nursery

Local Communities

While the reserve itself is privately owned by FPT, local communities play an important role in supporting its conservation. Many staff members are from surrounding communities, and the organisation delivers a range of outreach and development initiatives.

Through environmental education and awareness programmes, FPT promotes understanding of the value of forests and wildlife, helping reduce unsustainable resource use. These efforts aim to generate long-term benefits for communities while strengthening local support for conservation.

Partner/Organisation

Founded in 2004, Fundación Proyecto Tití (FPT) is dedicated to securing a future for the Critically Endangered Cotton-top Tamarin. Their work combines scientific

research, forest protection, habitat restoration, and community engagement to reduce threats to biodiversity and support sustainable livelihoods.

WLT has worked with FPT since 2022 to support the protection and restoration of this globally important ecosystem.

UN Sustainable Development Goals directly advanced by this project:



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