

CORCOVADO
NATIONAL PARK



*The mistake we made was in thinking
that the earth belonged to us
when the fact of the matter is
we're the ones who belong to the earth*
—Nicanor Parra

CORCOVADO
NATIONAL PARK

Chile's Wilderness Jewel



Essays by

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DEDICATION

To the generations yet to come—the wild creatures and their progeny that will call this landscape home, and the human visitors who come to experience its timeless beauty. For the creative spirit of cooperation between private conservationists, public officials, and the Chilean military that made Corcovado National Park a reality, we are grateful.



Thou shall love beauty, which is the shadow of God over the universe.

—Gabriela Mistral



Wilderness is the arena of evolution.

—Dave Foreman



Panoramic beauty bears a close relationship to the fertility of the earth.

—Rafael Elizalde Mac-Clure



*National lands are a rare space of utter democracy:
the poorest citizen gets resplendent views that even a billionaire is not allowed to buy.*

—Nicholas Kristof



FOREWORD

Ricardo Lagos

It is a beautiful sunny day in Palena, southern Chile. As the sun is still high over the horizon, our two-seater plane takes off, heading toward the Corcovado volcano. The Chaitén volcano comes into view—the same volcano that caused so much destruction in 2008 and is still spouting from its open crater. Nearby, an ash-colored forest made up of burnt trees lay like silent witnesses to what happened there. A bit farther off, you can see the Carretera Austral (Southern Road) and catch an aerial glimpse of the city of Chaitén, so badly damaged by the flood of ash and mud that came rushing down the river following the eruption. And at last, across from Chaitén Bay, the Corcovado volcano finally emerges.

Snow covers most of the summit, but it tends to disappear farther down where that sharp peak graciously turns into a soft plain. As the plane hums along, we see an exceptional landscape as we approach Corcovado from the east, instead of from the sea. There, before our eyes, is an incredible scene: at the foot of the volcano,

we see one, two, three, five, six lakes of all shapes, sizes, and shades of blue. For a moment, I think that we are in paradise. A lakeshore sits at the foot of a rocky cliff that, seen from above, seems to rise two hundred, three hundred, maybe four hundred meters. Below lies a forest so dense in some areas that it looks impenetrable. Continuing south, we look east toward the lakes to gaze once more at the crystal blue water. The land appears untouched and beckons us to explore.

The pilot observes, “Look, there they are.” At that I see where part of the forest is a lighter green and even more beautiful. Again the pilot says, “Look there, the Guaitecas cypress.” And there they stand, these centuries-old, immaculate trees, south of the volcano. A memory of my deceased mother-in-law, the sculptress Luisa de la Fuente, comes to mind; she would bring some cypress wood home from Palena to “work on,” as she would say. These memories fill me as the Tic Toc Bay comes into view. Now in the heart of summer, it harbors a couple of docked yachts that appear to have been placed intentionally, as though by some landscape architect, as a reminder that someone, somewhere, has already discovered this paradise.

As we follow the Tic Toc River upstream and see more lakes shimmering in the wilderness, we are viewing the wild heart of Corcovado National Park in all its depth and splendor. At times one feels that this is what the Earth must have looked like at the creation. No trace of human action is apparent and, if in fact this place has been discovered previously, no tracks can be spotted. I feel overwhelmed at the sight of this virgin land and I ask myself, how can we keep it pristine so that future generations will experience this same emotion?

Before I can answer, I sense a new wave of emotion coming on, this time caused by the view of a beautiful blue fjord in the distance. Ancient forest completely

surrounds it, unbroken to the water’s edge. The pilot continues highlighting the vistas, including the extraordinary Trébol (Clover) Lake, his explanations revealing great familiarity with the surroundings. He tells me of the efforts to build a big, private lodge on state-owned land and how the project was rejected in time, and the tract became part of the national park.

As we head north toward a new range of mountains, not as high as the Corcovado volcano but with its own set of snow-covered peaks, we catch a distant glimpse of the Southern Road. The sun begins to set on the horizon, shedding a wash of colored light on that never-melting snow. The landscape is harsh, rough, and complex. Before we reach Yelcho Lake we gaze at a few steep, dropping cliffs. I feel practically “intoxicated” from so much beauty and realize how quickly these past two hours in the plane have gone by, sensing also that this bird’s-eye view has allowed me to see a protected area that is unique in Chile and ranks with the great national parks anywhere on Earth.

I had visited the area before, including Tic Toc Bay and Villa Santa Lucía, in January of 2005 while I was president of Chile. I had come to sign a decree creating Corcovado National Park. That day marked the successful completion of a process that began when Douglas Tompkins approached me regarding the possibility of donating to the State more than 85,000 hectares that his charitable foundation had acquired in partnership with American conservationist Peter Buckley. Their gift together with a similarly sized public domain tract and another 80,000 hectares of land ceded by the Chilean Army were joined to form Corcovado National Park. In total, the new park would cover approximately 294,000 hectares.

The day I signed the decree, I noted in my speech that by creating the park, “our intention is to preserve and enjoy the wealth of its pristine and unspoiled

nature, which we know is home to more than 133 different species of flora, 18 species of mammals, and 64 of birds. Hence, we are undertaking the commitment to care for this flora and fauna that we have received—intact—from our ancestors and to preserve it for future generations. How can we do this? By uniting forces, both to create this national park and to care for its unique biodiversity and ecosystems.”

I then added, “I have often said that these rainy, cold forests are equivalent to those that once existed in Europe and disappeared during the Roman Empire. Here we can still see two- or three-thousand-year-old alerce trees.” One cannot help but be struck by the idea that the primeval forests of Corcovado National Park, typical of the Palena coastal region, have been here for thousands of years. Through the centuries they bear the winds and storms that sweep off the Pacific. These natural forests are unique to Chile. They belong to us and we must find ways to enjoy and preserve them so that future generations may continue to share them with the world.

This is truly a great challenge, to enjoy these fjords, bays, valleys, lakes, forests, volcanoes, and mountains—to make them available for research, education, recreation, and tourism—in a way that leaves them intact and healthy forever. Experts have informed me that in similar large national parks around the world, only a small percentage of the landscape, perhaps 2 or 3 percent, is developed for visitor facilities and roads and trails that foster travel by vehicle, horse, or canoe, or on foot. Therefore, our task is to devise a Corcovado management plan that might allow mankind to further experience the immense beauty of this glacier-crafted park without disturbing nature.

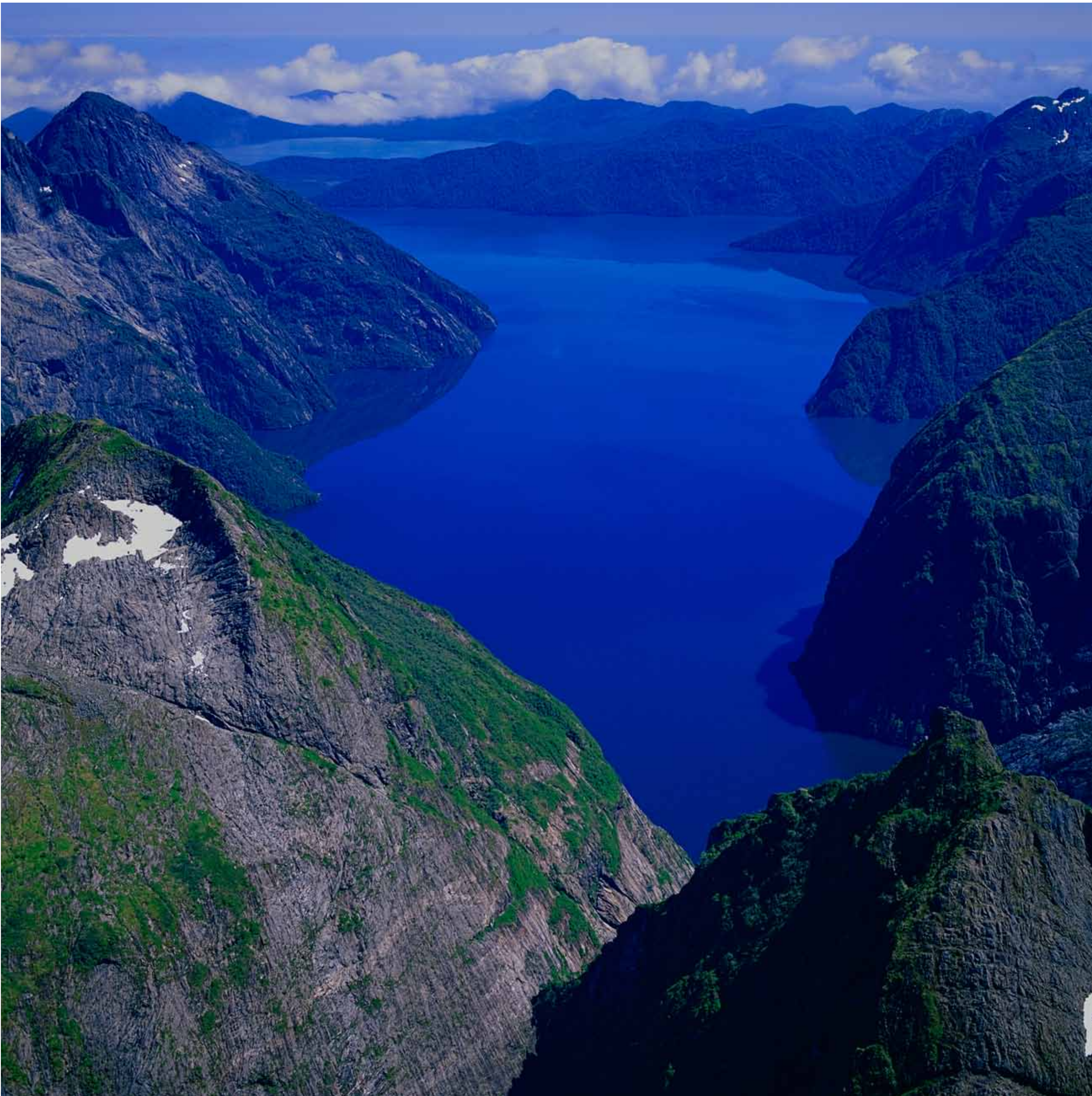
The creation of Corcovado National Park was consistent with a wider biodiversity conservation policy that sought to protect not only land features but

also the coastal areas of Francisco Coloane in the Magallanes Region, Punta Morro-Copiapó River in the Atacama Region, and Lafken Mapu Lahual in the Lakes Region, which are living proof of the importance of our maritime heritage. Additionally, Corcovado National Park was created as part of the State’s modern, inclusive, and responsible protected-areas strategy that joins hand in hand with private initiative. In fact, more than five hundred private contributions representing approximately 1,700,000 hectares of privately owned land have been made toward protected wildlife areas in Chile. Such land has been protected under different types of legal regimes.

Our administration highlighted Chile’s rich, diverse, and beautiful wildlife and I remain convinced that more and better institutions, management models, public-private partnerships, and innovative conservation tools are required to preserve our natural heritage and guarantee that it will be enjoyed by generations to come. Everyone must have access to this heritage. That’s why we have promoted projects such as Sendero de Chile (Trails of Chile), an initiative currently underway that covers the length and width of Chile from Visviri to Cape Horn, where hikers can connect with nature and observe the different ecosystems, communities, and cultures that there abound. Paths are meant to be walked. They should allow us to discover, admire, enjoy, and—most of all—value what nature has bestowed upon us.

The care and management of protected areas also gives our communities and regional and local economies an important opportunity for development. Ecotourism is on the rise worldwide and the institutions in charge of developing preservation policies must meet the challenge and learn from the harmonious co-existence established between parks and neighboring communities.

The virgin territory of Corcovado National Park represents the best of southern Chile’s lakes, flora, fauna, and great and unique beauty. The park already has won a place in our history for being the first Chilean national park created in the twenty-first century, and we wish for it to be recognized as well for being the result of valuable cooperation between the public and private sectors and for being a project that promotes fairness, social integration, sustainability, and ecological vitality.



INTRODUCTION

Douglas Tompkins

During frequent mountaineering and kayaking expeditions to Patagonia since the 1960s my love for the region grew, and in 1992 I moved to South America and began living in the province of Palena in southern Chile. Since the region is mostly roadless, I had been flying my light aircraft from Puerto Montt to reach our small farm on the Renihue Fjord. As I was getting familiar with the local area and sometimes exploring farther south, usually along the coast but with some reconnaissance into the interior, I often flew past an extraordinarily beautiful mountainous landscape south of the village of Chaitén. The Matterhorn-shaped Corcovado volcano could be seen easily from the air when approaching our own farm twenty-five miles to the north for it was the singular landmark of the area. The mountain could also be seen from the southern part of Chiloé Island to the west.

On every successive flight over this amazing landscape I kept finding new valleys, interesting features, and scenic vistas to admire. Only one small farm dotted the coast near the mouth of the Corcovado River. That farm was accessible only

by sea and fronted the fearful Gulf of Corcovado, which the small fishing boats of the area and even large ships take very seriously in rough weather. It becomes a virtual wind tunnel when the big storms with anticyclonic winds come roaring down the gulf. The exceedingly thin and poor soils, in addition to the climate, explain why the area is nearly uninhabited.

In 1996 I bought another isolated small farm in Raúl Marín Balmaceda in the Pitipalena just south of the province of Palena in the northernmost tip of the Aysén Region. Thereafter I shuttled back and forth quite often from our home in Renihue to Raúl Marín and became more and more familiar with the area between them, which I nicknamed the “Corcovado wilderness area.” I always flew a slightly different route, getting to know this very special place. About that time, my old friend and former business partner Peter Buckley from California came for a visit and we went down to Raúl Marín one day to see how the restoration of the farm there was progressing, and to see the country from the air. On the way home we flew over the Corcovado wilderness.

By then I had made some investigations into the status of the land there because it appeared to be ideal for a conservation project. Given its prime condition, its old-growth forests, and its spectacular natural features, it would have been a shame to see it developed. I had discovered that roughly 80,000 hectares (in two tracts) near the Corcovado volcano were owned by an Italian who was living in Santiago. An associate was looking into the land’s ownership history for me, but at that point I had little solid information. Nonetheless, my conservationist’s instincts were aroused.

As Peter and I flew up the coast that day, I pointed out the Corcovado landscape to him, and—once he had sufficient time to absorb its beauty—I casually dropped the idea about our buying the area together. (Of course I had no idea

whether the owner was interested in selling, or what the price might be.) I said to Peter, “Why don’t we buy this place?” and to my surprise Peter even more casually replied, “Why not?”

Peter returned to the United States and I set about to contact the owner, and to find out if there might be some chance to acquire the land and assure its future as untouched wilderness before it fell to subsistence farms, mines, foresters’ axes, or even prisons. (There is a penitentiary in a back fjord in an area of Melimoyu farther south!) This Corcovado wilderness region was a precious piece of Chile’s national patrimony, with a relatively untouched stretch of coastline and surrounded and protected by a range of mountains that separated it from the main north-south Southern Road to the east. I began to get excited by the prospect of its permanent protection.

At that time I was also working on a large-format book about Chilean forests, doing background research and taking aerial photographs. I learned that the last great stands of virgin Guaitecas cypress trees were located exactly on the land in question. Some coastal areas of the property had been exploited earlier in the century, but for the most part the logged areas were recovering. I realized then the reason for areas of smaller trees near the coast, and also in the hills just north of the interior part of Tic Tòc Bay. When I looked closely I could even detect un-extracted piles of logs in a few places. I was satisfied, however, that natural regeneration was going well and that in a few more decades the forests would be fully recovered.

During this period my wife, Kris, and I began to sail a small, converted fishing boat up and down the coast. We took the opportunity to stop in at the small farm at the entrance to the Corcovado River and also to Tic Tòc where we met the rough-and-tough caretaker there who worked for the Italian owner. We also

met the two brothers who owned the single small farm on that expansive coastline; they periodically visited Chaitén to pick up supplies for their isolated living down in Corcovado. When sailing past we could often see the tracks of their cows on the beach, and sometimes the cows themselves.

Eventually I had contact with the land’s owner and went to visit him in Santiago. He was open to receiving an offer. I called Peter to see if he was still on board with the idea, and as he was, I proceeded to work on the purchase. In fairly short order a deal was struck and the property was acquired by Peter Buckley and the Conservation Land Trust, one of the charitable foundations Kris and I established to create parklands in Chile and Argentina. From the beginning, we had the sense of having bought something truly great that would be very important for Chilean conservation.

After researching the other properties that bordered our acquisition, we discovered that they belonged to the Chilean government. Some sections were under the jurisdiction of the army, one smaller tract was under the jurisdiction of the navy, and the rest under the jurisdiction of the Chilean Ministry of National Property.

I also had been working on the purchase of several hectares of land that the military was selling in the middle of Puerto Montt, with the idea of building a nice public park there and then donating it to the city, which lacked any park at all. (As an aside, the military preferred to sell the land to a developer and now it is covered with a ghastly shopping mall. But that is another tale.) Consequently I became familiar with some of the access points to the military officials in charge of disposing unneeded assets, which led me to a meeting in Santiago with a top officer who had authority to discuss a possible sale of the Corcovado-area properties.

I got an appointment and went to see General Hernán Abad, who was an affable and intelligent man. We had a short, cordial meeting in which I explained

that we now owned the area on the coast near the Corcovado volcano. Together we looked over maps showing the ownership of other properties adjacent to us, and we noted that the Chilean Army owned a large piece in the mountains next to the valleys we owned. As the region was wild, beautiful, and remote, it was ideal for new parklands. Would there be any chance of buying the military tracts to add them to the conservation project?

The good general explained to me that this might be possible—the army was, in fact, selling off some nonstrategic lands in an attempt to consolidate their properties and to put the proceeds into infrastructure such as barracks and equipment. However, he pointed out that the army was in need of a shooting range for missiles or heavy artillery. It might be easier to convince others in the high command to sell the land, he suggested, if an arrangement could be worked out that would allow the army to shoot some artillery up there once in a while when they needed practice. That might facilitate the deal.

In those days we had been receiving some political opposition to our conservation work establishing the privately owned Pumalin Park north of Chaitén, so I had asked a fellow conservationist, Teddy Goldsmith, if he would join us and be the lead buyer of the Corcovado-area military lands. The Goldsmith Foundation would therefore be the public face and partner on this project to create, at least for the short term, a private wilderness park there; the national park idea we would work on later. Teddy had responded positively regarding the purchase of this military land.

Thus I indicated to the general that I was representing the interests of the Goldsmith Foundation as much as my own. When General Abad made his suggestion of the firing range, I gently explained to him that it would be very difficult for me to convince our partner, a nonprofit environmental foundation based in London, to use its assets for acquiring property in remote coastal Chile that would be, in effect, an

artillery range, albeit a beautiful one. A short but pregnant silence ensued as the general absorbed this concept. His knitted brow then relaxed as he realized that indeed this would be a difficult idea to sell; he smiled and nodded his head in acknowledgment. We both lifted our eyebrows in agreement and no more was said on the topic.

Time went by and I did not hear from the general so I got back in touch with him and we communicated a few times. Finally the word came that the military was not going to sell the property, at least not to us. There was a lot of ultra-nationalist sentiment opposing our ownership of the Pumalin area at the time and it became clear that the military would have nothing to do with us given the prejudices inside the armed forces. So the matter died there.

Then came a long period of nearly ten years in which the Corcovado property we had acquired was watched over by our caretakers, with only a few minor incidents with wood poachers along the coast. The old buildings of Tic Tòc were fixed up, an airstrip built there, and a nice guesthouse remodeled from the existing caretaker’s house. A new caretaker’s house, woodshed, vegetable garden, and greenhouse were built along with a boathouse and pier on the beach. Life was a dream there and we hired a great family with two young homeschooled boys to safeguard the area. The family was a terrific presence, winning friends with fishermen, seaweed collectors, and yacht people who stopped in from time to time in summer, and with the occasional scientist doing research in the area. Kris and I often sailed our launch down to stay a night, to visit the Corcovado River estuary, and to make an occasional patrol of the beach areas in between. When Peter Buckley came on a subsequent visit to Chile, we climbed the Yanteles volcano in front of Tic Tòc Bay and together surveyed this glorious country.

In 2000, when Ricardo Lagos became president of Chile, it seemed the perfect time to offer our holdings to the Chilean park system. The vision, however, was

that a new national park should include both our private conservation lands and all of the State-owned land in the immediate region—that would be the way to fully protect the ecological values of the undesignated Corcovado wilderness area.

President Lagos had been the minister of public works prior to winning the presidency and we had formed a good working relationship. He recognized the importance of our conservation efforts and had no doubts about our intentions. We appreciated his voice of reason in the press when many fanciful accusations swirled about regarding our motives for buying large tracts of land. The president appeared to us to be a statesmanlike, serious, affirmative politician whose views we largely shared. When we had met him and presented our plan to create the first scenic highway in Chile while he was public works minister, he immediately grasped the concept and gave us a green light to make a pilot project.

So it seemed that the political climate was right to make an offer to donate our Corcovado-area conservation lands, which by then had grown to roughly 85,000 hectares (we had added nearly 4,500 hectares at the mouth of the Corcovado River, purchased from a French citizen). A spectacular new national park with some 86 kilometers of coastline, the last important big stand of Guaitecas cypress, and a landscape as dramatic as anywhere in Chile could be created here. And best of all, there were no land title disputes or untitled people living inside the borders of either our property or the government's, something comparatively rare elsewhere in the country.

We drafted a letter to President Lagos proposing to give our assembled conservation holdings to the State if the adjacent military lands would be included in the future national park. The process was underway. At that time, my right hand and partner in all conservation matters and land issues was Carlos Cuevas. Carlos stepped into the main role to see the project through to completion and work

on the rather complex steps required to make a donation to the State. Carlos has written a more detailed account, including some interesting anecdotes about that process, in his essay for this book. That account suggests what it takes to push this sort of project through a difficult bureaucracy with all the infighting within ministries, the political jockeying, and the professional and often petty jealousies that can trip up even the best intentions. All of those obstacles were overcome, in large part because a strong president made his wishes clear as to what had to be done.

In looking back over this project, I believe the central lesson we learned was that if you have a vision to make something that is lasting, monumental, and above all beautiful, you will win the hearts and minds necessary to make a success. Beauty—especially wild beauty—grasps the imagination of even the most jaded and urbanized person. It is breathtaking and awesome and we are struck by it. It is a response, I believe, in the subconscious, especially in those of us who are children of an overdeveloped techno-industrial consumer culture, to our desire to be whole and healthy. *Wholeness* and *health* both descend from a common root word. Kris and I as individuals put beauty and aesthetic questions at the head of the list of values that inform our work. Our nonprofit foundations operate similarly. As a rule, if it is not beautiful, most likely it is not right.

Great leaders in various nations throughout history have created great legacies. Establishing national parks—living legacies of wholeness and health—will continue to be a key priority for visionary political leaders around the globe. Ricardo Lagos was quick to see the integrity and beauty in the Corcovado wilderness and to understand the need to conserve for the future an especially lovely part of his country. And thus, a park was born. Kris and I, our colleague Peter Buckley, all Chileans, and nature lovers elsewhere in the world are grateful for his clarity and decisiveness.





SOVEREIGNTY AND PRESERVATION OF NATURE

Juan Emilio Cheyre

In January 2005, while serving as commander in chief of the Chilean Army, I took part in the decisions that led to the creation of Corcovado National Park. Following a long process of studies and negotiations, President Lagos directed the Executive Branch to add an area of approximately 726,000 acres south of Chaitén to our country’s system of protected lands. This extensive zone would be subject to legal regulations and management procedures to conserve its exceptional flora and fauna. Without a doubt, that part of Chile’s national territory deserved special treatment; the pristine habitat there is globally rare. The new park was intended to improve social conditions for local communities, mitigate climate change, and contribute to nature protection for the well-being of our country and the world.

It may seem strange that an institution such as the army participated in a park creation project, especially when doing so meant it would need to transfer nearly 300,000 acres that had been under the army’s administration for many years to the Ministry of National Property. To a poorly informed observer it might appear that the army lost, asset-wise, an area that was its responsibility for strategic reasons linked to sovereignty.

Indeed, for decades the property that the army agreed to cede was under the military’s control. Through the 1980s and well into the 1990s the Palena Province and the adjoining Aysén Region were, for all practical purposes, uninhabited territory, without a complete road network (still an unresolved issue). Here was an empty space where the State did not exercise control of the territory in its broadest sense. Hence, the Chilean Army constituted, in practice, the only institution capable of maintaining a physical presence and safeguarding the wealth of our country—including native wildlife and wonderful scenery replete with fjords, canals, glaciers, and rivers. The military presence was also necessary because of the territory’s proximity to Argentina; border disputes with that country were ongoing and almost led to armed conflict in 1978. The army’s mission of providing security to Chile and helping to maintain sovereignty throughout its territory demanded that the institution take responsibility for administering this tract.

It is important to stress that a country’s Armed Forces, and in particular its army, exist for the purposes described above and that their mission is stipulated in the constitution. Their tasks include activities of a direct military nature, such as equipping and training troops at a level that discourages hostile intent from a foreign power that might challenge sovereignty. The military also fulfills its

mission through indirect or subsidiary means—actions that contribute to national development, promote social cohesion, provide a presence in unpopulated areas, and support isolated, rural populations unable to reap the benefits received by other citizens whose place of residence gives them access to education, health care, and employment. In short, providing security and safeguarding sovereignty certainly has a military dimension for the army, but at the same time, it acquires other dimensions linked to its mission, highly influenced by each territory’s special conditions and inhabitants, and by the State’s characteristics and degree of development.

That was why the Chilean Army kept the Corcovado area, among other assets assigned by the State. That area constituted an unpopulated zone with untapped natural wealth and resources, located in an area vital to our border control, and which remained detached from the rest of the national territory with no easy way of communication. Lastly, it was suitable for military drills given its special topographical, climatic, and other characteristics.

By 2005, in the early part of the twenty-first century and nearing Chile’s bicentennial as an independent republic, the goal that led the State to hand over these areas to the army had been fully accomplished. When the army offered its landholdings to help create Corcovado National Park, Chile’s security had been preserved in full, the sovereignty in that area had never been breached and, most importantly, the army was the most important player in linking the region significantly, though unfortunately not yet fully, to the national territory.

Some people may mistakenly believe that only the army can exercise sovereignty and reaffirm territorial command that provides security by physically inhabiting the homeland, and that a military presence, with its attendant feature of an armed

force capable of facing a potential enemy, is the best way to secure our territory and safeguard our rights. Without a doubt, every society has required, and will continue to require, armed forces entrusted to such a task. However, there are direct and indirect ways to this end, both of which interact in complete harmony.

In the early years of this century Chile experienced a trend of increased globalization, where relationships of cooperation, integration, and partnership between nations prevail. Our boundary issues with Argentina were almost completely resolved and a new type of relationship had emerged, not only with that neighboring country but also with the region and the world. Far from what some think, the phenomena of integration and globalization do not erase national identity; on the contrary, I believe that human beings and cultures contribute more to an interconnected and interdependent peaceful world when they have a strong, distinct identity as a society.

The country, a State’s territory, shapes the character of a nation, that collective body of citizens with roots in a common past and who share, most of all, the dream of a future when they realize their aspirations. Harmonious relations are a priority in this social enterprise. The State’s programs and policies are shaped by the people’s elected representatives. They are joined in their task by institutions such as the Judiciary, which administers justice, and the Armed Forces, which handles security. The promotion of social cohesion and a unified identity, an important component of the nation’s development, is achieved through multiple actions, which, as commander in chief of the Chilean Army, I had in mind when supporting the project to create Corcovado National Park. The idea was to continue advancing, yet now in a different way, the task of territorial administration that the military had undertaken for decades.

Indeed, a national park inspires our fellow citizens to identify with their territory in a profound way. The concept of sovereignty, so tightly bound to military ends, will consolidate and grow when Chileans from Arica, Copiapo, Santiago, Tirua, Contulmo, Futrono, or Ensenada wander through beautiful parklands admiring vegetation so different from that growing in their places of origin or identifying species unfamiliar to them. With these experiences they will realize that this, too, is Chile—and that water resources, lakes and glaciers, are as important as the mines, farmland, sea, or desert that characterize the area they call home.

National parks such as Corcovado educate visitors, who learn to preserve a healthy, pollution-free world. Protected areas help to conserve biodiversity and counter the negative trends affecting the global environment. And they sensitize people to the pressing need for careful management of natural resources, especially water and energy. People discover that appreciating nature is beneficial to our country and to a planet that now, more than ever, needs humans who are brought up with respect for the land, its flora and fauna, which we must preserve as a treasure for the sake of humanity.

In addition, when conservation projects are properly structured, their effects transcend just the number of people visiting a park. The effect is multiplied because visitors share their experience and the park becomes a magnet for increasing numbers of Chilean and foreign tourists who will venture, with a respect for nature, into a barely explored and little-known land, promoting a kind of tourism that contributes to culture and healthy living and should generate a love for the landscape. The presence of significant numbers of foreign visitors will bring opportunities to project Chile’s national image as a leader in thoughtful

development and parklands protection. Additionally, park-related tourism that draws visitors from around the globe will enable Chileans to understand the beneficial effects of cooperating with other peoples with whom we are called upon to build cultural and developmental processes that cross national boundaries; ultimately, we share one world and together must overcome the threat of climate change and other environmental impacts. In short, the park effort, in helping strengthen the bonds between citizens and their national territory, and between Chileans and foreign visitors who come to experience our natural heritage, complements the traditional work of the army.

The decision to help bring Corcovado National Park to life was based on, among other factors, these ideas. Bolstering social cohesion and contributing to development are two areas of action that were defined by the army and that I sought to promote during my command. They constitute indirect forms of action, but they have a concrete role in establishing sovereignty, promoting peace, providing security, building national awareness for the love of country, and contributing to a constructive and harmonious relationship with other nations. They are instrumental in helping our society to have a healthy relationship with nature, the land and wildlife, appreciating and caring for Chile’s diversity as one of its most valuable assets.

There was also another reason: Traditionally, in the army, love of country is a deeply rooted concept. Disseminating this concept requires contributing—in the same way that educators, artists, philosophers, and writers do—to the creation of a common culture. Love of country is built and strengthened with the knowledge of our history, but it is also fostered in the present, if young people develop a profound appreciation for Chile’s flora and fauna, landscapes, diverse

climate, and the work that men and women do throughout the country to sustain and protect that natural heritage.

I am privileged to have spent forty-four years in the Chilean Army. The finest schooling in love for my country came from knowing the authentic, profound Chile, from the far north to the Antarctic territory. For me, this was an education in civic conscience: traveling under torrential rains, through forests, riding for days in areas where few Chileans had ventured, or living for more than a month in a wind-whipped tent in the desert, admiring the stars after many days of hard work. From these experiences, I never doubted that military activity should include a fundamental concern for helping my countrymen transcend the boundaries of their birthplace and gain knowledge of this wonderful, greater Chile that stretches from Easter Island to continental Chile to the Antarctic regions.

The successful collaboration to establish Corcovado National Park is not the Chilean Army's only experience in this field. Among other examples, the army was a key participant in Chile's first scientific expedition to the South Pole; created the Army Environmental Department and held international seminars on environmental protection; worked with the Defensores del Bosque Chileno (Defenders of the Chilean Forest) to protect Santiago's piedmonts and mountains; transferred Cautín Island to the Temuco community and incorporated the Chena Hills into the network of parks in the Santiago Metropolitan Region; mapped Easter Island; surveyed—along with German and Chinese scientists—King George and Ardley islands on the Antarctic Peninsula; and constructed roads south of Tierra del Fuego.

All those actions aimed to foster the love for country embodied in the homeland concept, exercise our sovereignty, and continue developing our nation by

promoting peace and integration with neighboring countries, being well aware that humankind exists embedded in nature. We Chileans must value and protect the asset—our wealth of natural resources—most essential to the development of our country and of the human beings who inhabit this world.

I conclude these reflections with the hope that the goals that guided our actions, together with other public- and private-sector institutions, in giving life to Corcovado National Park, have contributed to the predicted objectives. In the future, thousands, and perhaps someday millions, of Chileans will better cherish their country and strengthen their patriotism by visiting and enjoying this park, which will help them better understand Chile. Toward that end, our national parks must achieve an institutional capacity to properly care for the millions of acres they comprise. I believe that, to date, we lack an institutional environment and a management model that ensures excellent stewardship of the national parks. Although strides have been taken in this respect, the extent of the task demands studies, public policies, consensus, and a true commitment to address this issue, which is of the utmost importance.





STRUGGLE AND SUCCESS: CREATING CORCOVADO NATIONAL PARK

Carlos Cuevas

*Another great volcano, with a saddle-shaped summit,
also emitted from its immense crater little jets of steam.
Subsequently we saw the lofty-peaked Corcovado—well deserving
the name of “el famoso Corcovado.”*

This passage from the entry for 29 November 1834 describes the distant view of the Corcovado volcano as noted by Charles Darwin in *The Voyage of the Beagle*. He was looking from the hills of Chiloé Island across the Gulf of Corcovado. Even from sixty miles away, the mountain looked impressive. Rising from the coast to more than 1,800 meters above sea level, it was a major landmark in the Andes Range for the inhabitants of Chiloé and for travelers on the so-called Inland Sea of Chiloé.

From colonial times, Corcovado was a dominant feature, although a distant and apparently unreachable one. For colonial-era people, as well as for the entrepreneurs of the past two centuries, there was nothing of interest in the mountain and its surroundings. This was an advantage for nature conservation, allowing the course of evolution—a process that Darwin began to understand during his travels in South America—to continue there without interruption.

Although the inhabitants of Chiloé did not settle the coast of what is today Palena Province, they occasionally visited throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to collect shellfish and wood. Jesuit missionaries explored the rivers that provided the only route inland, searching for a mountain pass to the pampas across the Andes. In 1888 the Chilean government launched the first official settlement in all of Palena and Aysén, on Isla Los Leones near Corcovado. The attempt was a complete failure because the soils and climate were inadequate for agriculture or raising livestock.

In spite of this failure, new schemes were tried after the turn of the twentieth century. This time huge tracts of land were offered to lure settlers, but nobody was enticed to try to make a living in this marginal area, the deadlines expired, and the government repossessed the land. After the Austral Ownership Law was passed in the 1930s, some large parcels of land were acquired free or at low cost from the government. The owners usually sold the properties, many of which ended up in the hands of foreign corporations or individuals. Since the stated purpose was to “clean” the land and carry out logging, grazing, or agricultural operations, nobody opposed this transfer of the public domain to private ownership, assuming that “development” and “progress” would result.

As part of this process, two significant tracts flanking the Corcovado volcano became privately owned. The Linahua parcel of 76,786 hectares (roughly 190,000 acres) and the 7,941-hectare (nearly 20,000-acre) Tic Toc property together comprised all the valley bottoms of the watersheds of the Corcovado and Tic Toc

rivers. Decades later, conservationist Douglas Tompkins and his former business partner Peter Buckley acquired the lands to assure their preservation and repatriate them to the public domain.

When they gave the land to the Chilean people in 2005 for a new national park, it was the largest land donation in Chile’s history. The only condition of the gift was that the Chilean government should include the public domain lands comprising the mountain ranges of these watersheds in the new park. The process was not always easy, and old attitudes about nature preservation and bureaucratic obstacles needed to be overcome. Eventually, however, success was achieved, and upon its dedication Corcovado became both Chile’s first national park of the twenty-first century and one of the grandest, protected wilderness areas on Earth.

Corcovado National Park was born because several people, with widely differing backgrounds and experience, shared a common vision. They were Douglas Tompkins and Peter Buckley; former president Ricardo Lagos, who accepted the donation and firmly steered the process despite resistance from the political and business establishment; and General Juan Emilio Cheyre, then head of the Chilean Army, who understood that, in the modern world, the role and thinking of the Armed Forces must evolve. Besides securing the national boundaries, the military may also help defend the natural heritage that exists within those boundaries. The Corcovado initiative was also lucky to have Paulina Saball, a skillful administrator, as Undersecretary of National Property, and Carlos Weber, a career park planner, in charge of Corporación Nacional Forestal (CONAF), the governmental agency responsible for parks administration and forest protection.

A NATURAL WONDER

Corcovado National Park is a place of outstanding value to Chile’s natural heritage because of its beauty, ecosystem diversity, and wildness—it is an expansive

landscape with almost no sign of human interference. The park’s establishment achieves several conservation goals: Most notably, a whole watershed is preserved, from the Andes divide down to the Pacific Ocean; protected areas in Chile usually comprise either the upper or lower parts of a watershed but seldom a complete one. Extensive areas of the endemic conifer Guaitecas cypress are secured, as well as other types of temperate rain forest. The park and surrounding areas support a vast array of coastal and marine natural communities, home to many species under threat including the Humboldt penguin, river otter, blue whale, Guíña cat, Chilean ferret, torcaza dove, and others.

The almost complete absence of human interference with natural processes is Corcovado National Park’s distinctive characteristic, a trait highly unusual even for protected areas in temperate regions around the Earth. The following succinct history explains how this came to be. Even today, most of the people that visit the park have a scientific background or a keen interest in nature, their numbers are limited, and the visitors show restraint in their behavior.

Corcovado is located in the southern part of the country, known as Zona Austral in Chile and more often called Western Patagonia elsewhere, covering the province of Palena and the regions of Aysén and Magallanes; the latter includes the Chilean side of Tierra del Fuego. These two regions (the political equivalent to states in the United States) and one province (roughly equivalent to a county) cover a combined area of 255,828 square kilometers (roughly 100,000 square miles). The outer coastline extends for some 1,300 linear kilometers (800 miles), but in reality the coast is a maze of fjords, archipelagos, and peninsulas; if each feature were measured separately, the total coastline would stretch out for over 80,000 kilometers (50,000 miles). Similar ecosystems are found only in a few areas globally.

After more than a century of official settlement efforts supported by the national government, experience has demonstrated that, in Patagonia, people end

up living in particular places not according to government dictum (and people do not migrate because of some wicked plot on the part of environmentalists) but rather according to the laws of nature that dictate where on the planet, and under what circumstances, people may or may not make a living. The place of origin for most of Patagonia’s inhabitants is the island of Chiloé; forty thousand people lived there at the time of Darwin’s visit, some 4 percent of Chile’s population at that time, while the rest of Patagonia had a very sparse indigenous population. Today Chiloé has 120,000 residents, less than 1 percent of Chile’s population of 17 million. The reason for this relative decrease has been a persistent emigration of “Chilotes,” as the inhabitants of Chiloé are known.

Why, if there was unoccupied land on the mainland just in front of the island, with government support and encouragement to homestead there, did people choose to travel more than a thousand kilometers to try their luck elsewhere? The answer is simple: prospective settlers knew well that their families could never make a living there, not even at the modest level of expectations prevalent a century ago. Few areas in the Patagonian fjords were settled successfully in the years following Darwin’s visit, but the colonists’ life has been romanticized and it is very difficult to counter this imagery with the facts.

In central Chile, more than 90 percent of the people live in the lowlands at the base of the mountains, but in Western Patagonia, the Andes range emerges directly from the sea. The lowlands are submerged at the bottom of fjords and bays. Moreover, the territory above sea level is precipitous, with lofty peaks, ice fields, steeply forested slopes, and extreme weather. Snow, sleet, and rain combined sometimes exceed 6,000 millimeters (240 inches) per year; ecosystems are fragile under such conditions. The viability of commercial agriculture or forestry activities in the coastal areas is unlikely in the short term and impossible in the long term. Protected areas such as national parks are the best long-term, sustainable land use option. Besides the limiting factors already mentioned, in Patagonia

the low summer temperatures (combined with low winter temperatures) do not allow most crops to complete their growing cycle, and forests and pasture grasses mature slowly. Comparisons with central Chile or Western Europe, based on the assumption that the same population densities could exist, are deeply flawed; the relevant comparisons should be made with Alaska, Iceland, or Lapland.

On the eastern slopes of the Andes, precipitation decreases dramatically and conditions are marginally better, allowing for some cattle ranching and sheep grazing, but the ecological cost of such enterprises has been staggering—more than three million hectares of forests were burned, and now former forest land as well as natural grasslands are either overgrazed or destroyed by erosion. Lands either were given free after some years of leasing for small landowners or were sold at a modest price for large corporations, if the leaseholder “improved” the property. Ironically, the law encouraged forest burning as the least costly way to demonstrate that the leaseholder had improved the land and therefore deserved to be its owner.

Opponents of nature conservation and park creation often argue that ecosystem protection is a threat to traditional Patagonian culture, which is understood as livestock grazing and forest clearing to open the land for grazing. Sheep grazing is seen as the only way to show presence and national control over a sparsely populated territory (*bacer patria* is the term used in Spanish but, being a mixture of showing the flag and nation building, it’s difficult to translate into English). National parks are perceived as obstacles that hinder or render impossible such shows of sovereignty. It is interesting to note that neighboring Argentina has adopted quite the opposite approach. Starting in the 1930s, national parks were created along the boundaries with Chile, Bolivia, Paraguay, and Brazil as a means to stress the presence and sovereign rights of the Argentinian nation. Judging from the results, the nature conservation-oriented approach looks much more successful.

SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

The creation of national parks and other protected areas is not a scientific or technical problem with only one possible solution. To the contrary, it has always been a complex social issue affected by the worldview of key decision makers and the political influence of park advocates. Whether a protected area is established by a government or by a private individual (or through public-private collaboration), the practical result is that a specific piece of land or water body is consciously taken out of trade and normal short-term and direct profit making. Thus it is recognized, at least implicitly, that for some places there are objectives more important than resource exploitation.

This type of action is not exceptional throughout mankind's history (and pre-history). For millennia human societies have conducted religious, military, or political rituals that divert potential resources from trade, profit, or individual gain for the good of the group, or at least to assure cohesion around the dominant members of the group. What is different today is that this new "economic lunacy" is geared to the survival of biological diversity or the cultural heritage linked to natural environments, something that certain influential members of Chilean society feel are not worthwhile values but obstacles to progress.

The political ruling class in Chile is among the most environmentally hostile in the world; for some of its members, the proposal to establish a new national park from lands donated by foreign businessmen was particularly difficult to accept. Here were members of the international business community working to "lock up resources" in a new park, directly challenging the idea that all lands should be open to exploitation, and willing to affirm their conservation philosophy by investing their own money.

Most Chilean politicians, both in power and in the opposition, share a vision about environmental protection and economic development that the rest of the

world is leaving behind. Establishing national parks and, more broadly, spending public money to protect the human environment are perceived as a waste of resources that should be devoted to advancing progress and development.

Within this geographical and social framework, the land donation for Corcovado opened a debate over two different visions: One considers desirable and feasible a Chilean Patagonia with many industries and roads, inhabited by at least one million people, up from the current population of 279,000; the contrasting vision for the future is to make Patagonia a Reserve for Life (Reserva de Vida) where people's livelihoods are based on activities compatible with the conservation of fragile ecosystems, and economic development benefits from the area's worldwide recognition as a great natural treasure.

In Chile the procedure for establishing a national park involves two different ministries. CONAF (the acronym in Spanish for the forests and protected-areas agency) falls under the Ministry of Agriculture and is tasked with managing national parks, but the Ministry of National Property (Ministerio de Bienes Nacionales) has the authority to assign public domain lands for declaration as national parks or other types of government-protected areas. The latter is also the ministry involved in accepting land donations on behalf of the Chilean government.

The priority for the Ministry of National Property (formerly called Ministry of Lands and Homesteading), since its establishment in 1930, has been to transfer government lands to whoever promised to "improve" and settle the property. Since the mid-1970s, it has managed a land development program, promoting sales in fee simple or land concessions intended to make a profit. The ministry never focused on conservation as a primary objective, and it also never had any program similar to CONAF's that actively manages land for protection while allowing local communities to develop business activities outside park boundaries serving the visitors attracted by the parks. The Treasury instituted a policy of setting annual quotas of income generation through land sales; funding for the



Ministry of National Property was in part tied to the fulfillment of the quotas. During the 1990s the problem was aggravated because the Treasury also tied part of the salary of every worker in the ministry to the achievement of certain goals that in open or implied ways included land sales. In practice, everybody knew that each piece of land assigned for conservation purposes made it a bit more difficult to achieve the ministry's goals and sooner or later their pockets could be hurt.

Under these circumstances, the process of land assignment for a new national park is not easy. If you are not interested in nature conservation, either because you are honestly committed to the idea that progress requires the replacement of natural features or because your salary will be higher if this happens, it is logical to believe that park administrators are "inefficient" or "poor managers." They control vast assets but do not maximize the financial gains from them, as a land developer would. During the Corcovado negotiations, the fate of Trébol Lake was a case in point. It was agreed that the lands surrounding the lake were essential for the new park, but when the official document was about to be signed at the presidential palace we noticed that the lake was missing from the maps and text. Some middle-echelon bureaucrats preferred to sell the lakefront land and perhaps thought that nobody would notice the change with the excitement of the ceremony. Of course we had to reschedule the signing until the documents were amended. That was only one of the occasions when direct intervention by President Lagos was needed to overcome bureaucratic inertia and keep the process on track.

Because Chilean history offers few examples of land donations to the State for environmental purposes, and none with a size of 85,000 hectares, the procedures and precedents were missing and had to be created as obstacles were encountered. For instance, anyone wishing to make a land donation has to pay a tax rate equivalent to the inheritance tax. The measure is not as absurd as it looks. Some wealthy people saw a loophole in the tax code; by donating their assets to the chosen heirs they avoided paying the tax, and so the government solved the problem by making

both taxes equal. Since donations were so uncommon, this caused little concern until the Linahua and Tic Toc tracts were offered in order to expand the national park system. The process came to a standstill for months until a way was found around the problem, and fortunately the donors did not have to pay a hefty tax as a punishment for their generosity.

Another problem we had to solve was measuring the land to be donated. The Survey Division of the ministry conducts measurements for thousands of land transactions every year, typically for houses, schools, police precincts, or health stations. A detailed topographic study is standard to avoid conflicts with neighbors, but generally only a few hours of field work are needed because the parcels are small, ranging from a couple hundred to a few thousand square meters. Attempting to apply the usual way of doing business to 850 *million* square meters of forest, wetlands, mountains, and ice fields is a very different matter. Of course, determining precise boundaries of land donated to the public domain is unimportant, when the neighbor is the public domain!—and the different tracts will ultimately be managed as one park. But the decision to use a procedure that was the exception and not the rule was delayed for months.

The traditional production-oriented vision of public decision makers was not the only hurdle to overcome. We also drew criticism from some environmentalists for whom any experiment with public-private cooperation was anathema. They believed that only nongovernmental organizations, not the government, deserved to receive donations from private philanthropists.

The business community also watched the process skeptically, wondering if the deal was serious and would be completed. Some of its members had spearheaded the campaign against Douglas Tompkins using charges that his conservation purchases represented "land grabbing by a foreigner." All his acquisitions were made at market price from private individuals or corporations and according to Chilean law, but anticonservationists still raised suspicions about the real motives behind

the land purchases. The announcement by Tompkins that a very important tract of land was being offered free to the Chilean people struck a double blow to those critics: First, with the proposed gift, Tompkins showed that he was not involved in land speculation or trying to hold on to huge amounts of property (he also made clear his intention to someday donate to the State other privately acquired conservation lands—including estancias Yendegaia and Cabo León in Magallanes, Valle Chacabuco in the Aysén steppe, and his flagship project, Pumalin Park. The only condition would be that permanent conservation of each ecosystem be assured). Second, the Corcovado donation was a show of confidence in the future performance of public institutions, a statement about the active role governments should play in conservation, and an endorsement of national parks as a conservation tool.

Another source of problems arose in the sparsely populated municipality of Chaitén where Corcovado is located. Douglas Tompkins's arrival in 1990 and his land acquisitions over the next ten years, totaling some 300,000 hectares for Pumalin Park and 85,000 for Corcovado, put this isolated corner of the Los Lagos Region in the forefront of national news. A controversial former mayor of Chaitén skillfully inspired mistrust as a way to get public visibility and boost his political career, based on forceful opposition to conservation projects. These types of attacks, reflecting short-term views and vested interests, made the effort to create a national park more complicated.

For a community used to thinking of development in terms of carving pastoral estates out of the forest, it is difficult to imagine how a protected area may become a far larger source of income than marginal lands in traditional use. Usually, decades must pass between the moment a park is created and the time when its ecological and economic benefits become so large and evident that antienvironment interests cannot deny them. A good case in point is renowned Torres del Paine National Park, also located in Chilean Patagonia, which was established in 1959 and gradually expanded over the next fifteen years to improve ecosystem

protection. It took thirty years until the benefits for the local community became fully apparent. Now, fifty years later, it is important not only for the locals but for the whole Magallanes Region, which has become a service economy with tourism as one of the main sources of income, whereas it was formerly dependent on sheep grazing and a small, and now dwindling, oil extraction operation.

Almost twenty years after Torres del Paine was created, the local Chamber of Commerce was still appealing to the government to reverse the park decision, arguing that the park was a threat to the economic well-being of the province, since grazing in some marginal summer pastures was banned. Less than a decade after Corcovado's creation, we should not expect the park to be fully appreciated yet or to have a large impact upon the local economy. The same expectation of gradual process is true for all the best-known parks in Chile, such as Conguillío or Laguna San Rafael, among other examples.

Although President Lagos welcomed the donation of conservation land on behalf of the government, many people in the middle ranks were unhappy and did not want to publicly acknowledge that the idea came from Tompkins. At the inauguration of the national park, with the president, a number of ministers, and the heads of the army and the navy in attendance, it was announced that the park was being created out of government land and that, later on, a couple of tracts donated by Mr. Tompkins would be added. They did not succeed in playing down Tompkins's role, because the last speech was by the president himself and he unequivocally stated that the park's creation had been made possible by the donation of the core lands and publicly thanked Douglas Tompkins.

All the problems mentioned above hampered the process for establishing Corcovado National Park. The account of all the adventures we lived through on this eventful journey would take very long. More than once we traveled from Palena to Santiago to sign certain documents, only to find out that the meeting had been called off at the last minute due to unspecified circumstances.

We discovered that there are myriad ways for disgruntled bureaucrats to slow down the implementation of a decision made at the upper levels, and the president was forced to follow the process closely to ensure success.

INTO THE FUTURE

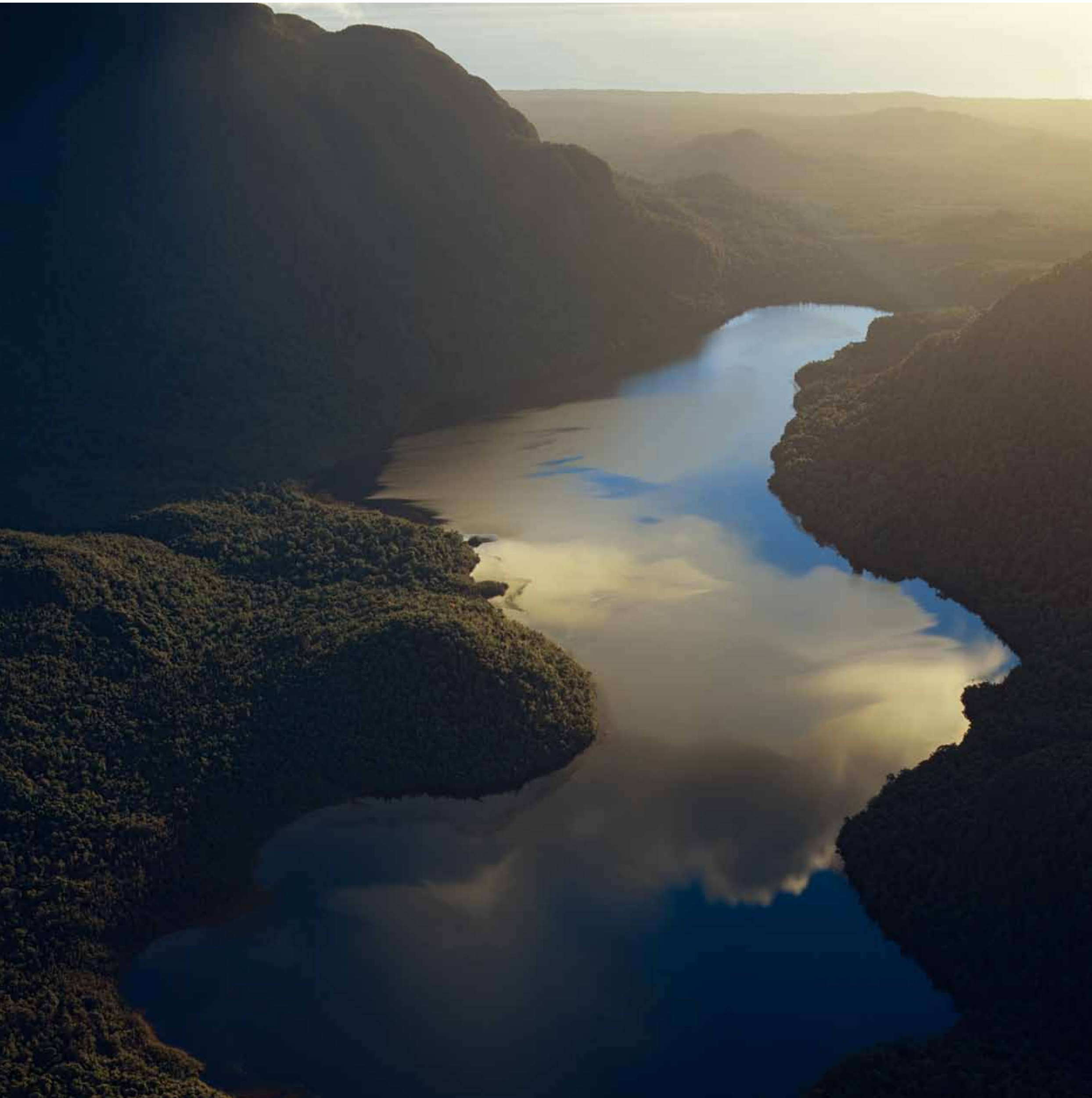
For various reasons it is seldom possible, from the beginning, to include within the boundaries of a new national park all the territory needed for its proper protection and management. Corcovado is no exception to this rule. At both sides of the entrance to Tic Toc Bay there are tracts of public domain land presently assigned to the navy. Unlike the army, the navy did not relinquish control of its holdings there for inclusion in the new park, but at the dedication ceremony the commander of the Chilean Navy, Admiral Miguel Ángel Vergara, using a colloquial expression, told me: “*Hay que darle tiempo al tiempo*,” which roughly translated means, “It takes time for the times to come.”

The government also excluded a comparatively small area near the village of Santa Lucía, with easy access to the Carretera Austral, the only road connecting Palena and Aysén, a route traveled by growing numbers of tourists as well as the local inhabitants of western Patagonia. The stated purpose was that the government was interested both in conservation and in promoting development through land concessions. In the following years the concessionaires have had mixed results and few locals or tourists passing by visit the place. Whatever the reason for this land being excluded, the effect has been a missed opportunity to create tourist access to parkland. The lack of public access does not affect Corcovado’s role as an ecological preserve, since the area excluded is comparatively small and the ecosystem is well represented within the present boundaries of the park, but the park’s potential to play social, educational, and economic roles is impaired. A national park (but not a public domain concession) is

a strong brand that attracts people to visit, allowing the locals to provide services and generate income for themselves.

The Ministry of National Property has recently acknowledged the heritage value of about 100,000 hectares of land adjoining Corcovado’s southern boundary by declaring it a Protected National Property. The area has good access through the village of Raúl Marín Balmaceda linked by road to the Carretera Austral. By expanding Corcovado National Park to include this and the aforementioned adjacent tracts, the ecological and social values of the park would be significantly enhanced. In all three cases, as the “time for the times” arrives, the addition of these lands to the park should be considered and acted upon.

The planet is now immersed in an unprecedented environmental crisis. For the first time since life appeared on Earth, one species, humankind, has the power to destroy the very ecological web that supports its own life and all other forms of life that share the planet. Action is needed, in many places and at many levels. The creation of Corcovado National Park is one such effort, a statement of hope for the future and a refuge for life until conditions improve.



*Let's teach in Chile that countries also grow upwards, upwards;
as humans grow, so do trees, and just as we care for human life,
let's care for the tree's life, which is like the life of the Chilean land.
Uphold the beauty of the tree, the beauty of Chile, the water of Chile,
the resources of Chile.*

—President Eduardo Frei Montalva

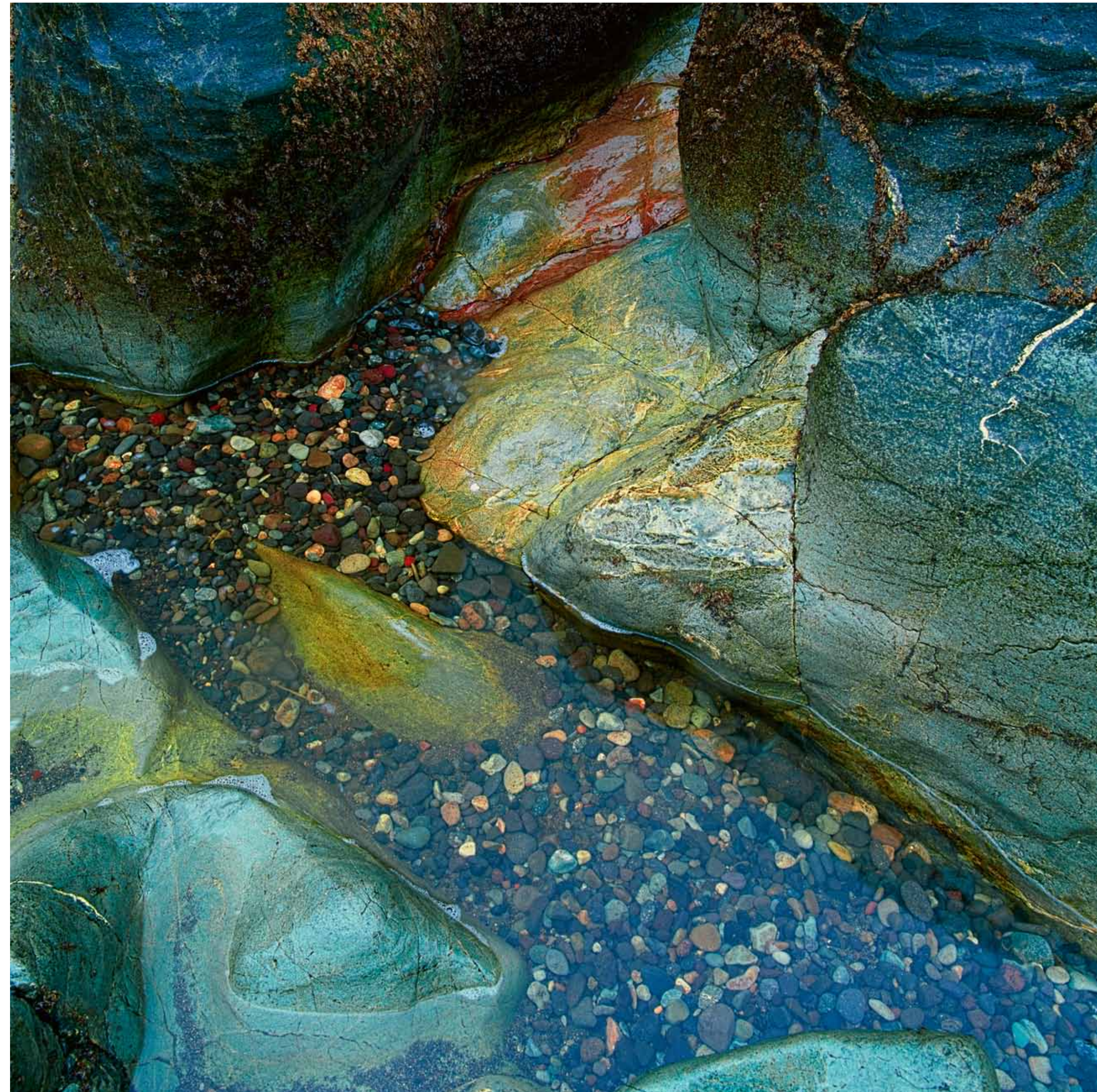


BEACHES AND COASTLINE

It Is Born

*Here I came to the very edge
where nothing at all needs saying,
everything is learned through time and the sea,
and the moon was coming back,
its rays all silvered,
and time and again the shadows would be broken
by the crash of a wave,
and every day on the balcony of the sea,
wings are spread, fire is born,
and everything is blue again like tomorrow.*

—Pablo Neruda





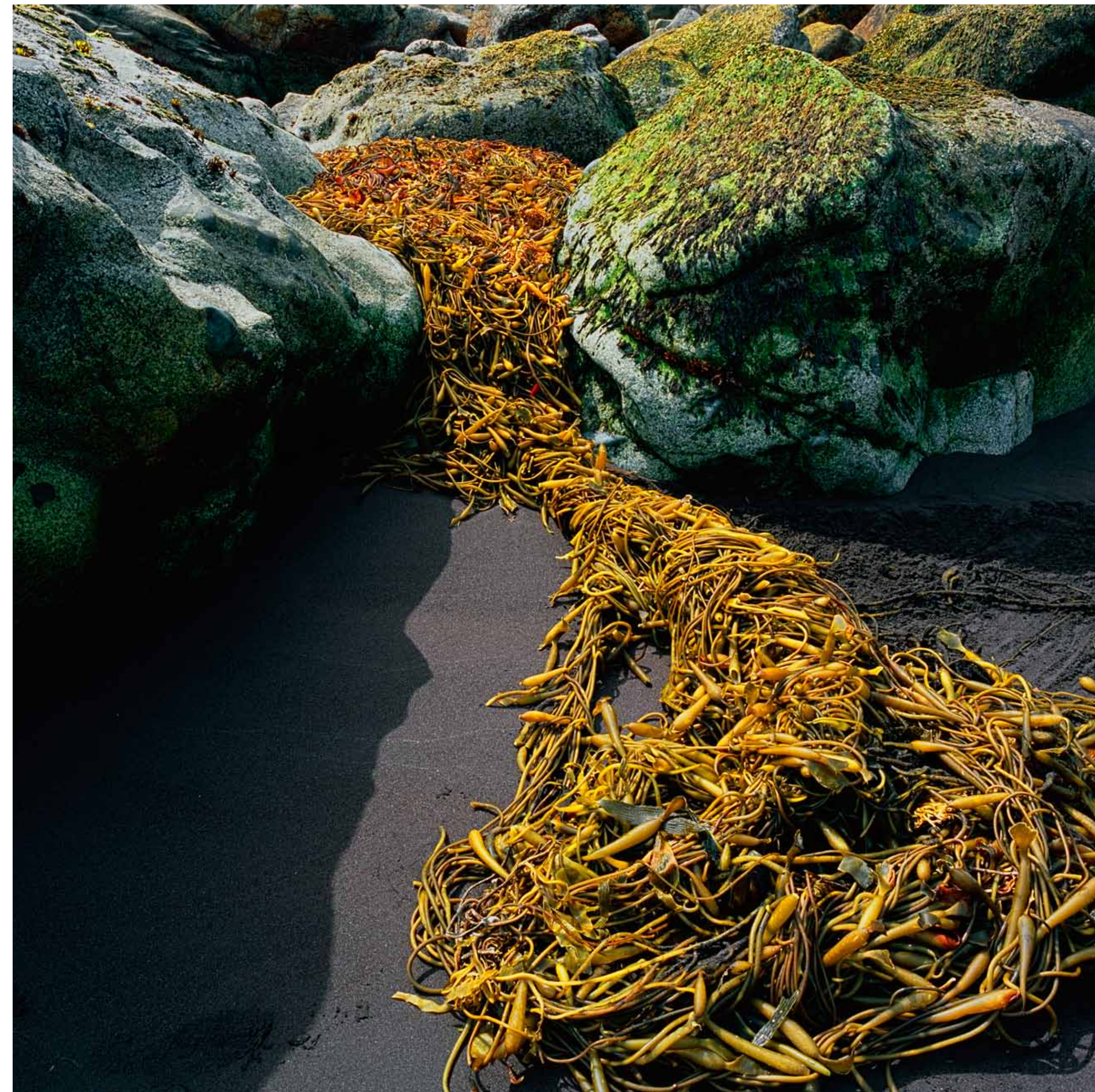








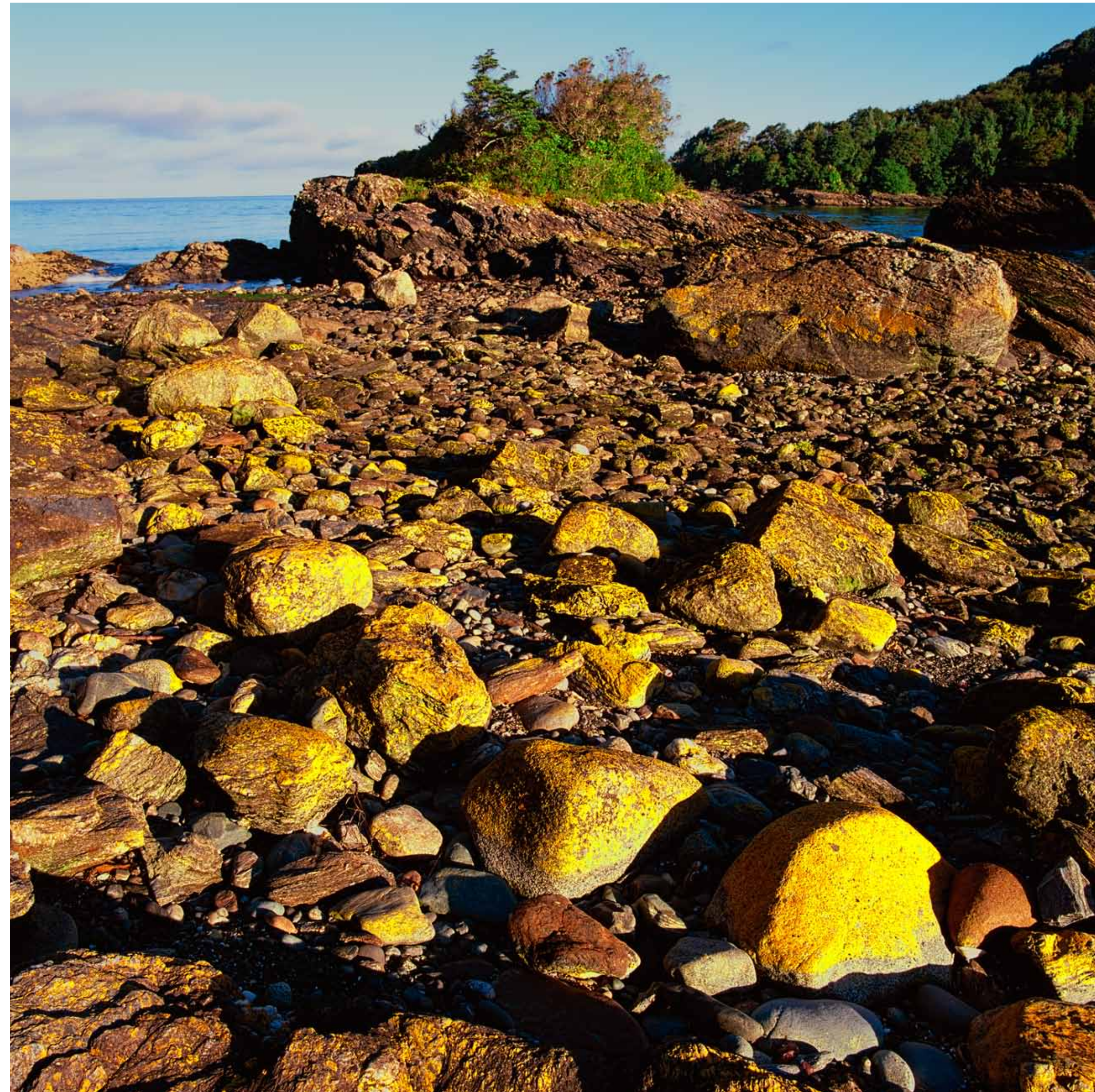
*Let us look more closely about us and see how good are the common things,
how marvelous are all things made at the beginning.
The meaning of life is in its beauty. And ten thousand years from now
children will call across the centuries that the world is young,
that the sunshine is good, that love and faith,
and mystery and the buoyancy of life are the only realities.*
—Liberty Hyde Bailey





*On all these shores there are echoes of past and future: of the flow of time,
obliterating yet containing all that has gone before;
of the sea's eternal rhythms—the tides, the beat of surf,
the pressing rivers of the currents—shaping, changing, dominating;
of the stream of life, flowing as inexorably as any ocean current,
from past to unknown future.*

—Rachel Carson







*Passing clouds,
take me to the sea,
to listen to the song
of the high tide,
to sing amid
the garland of waves.*
—Gabriela Mistral



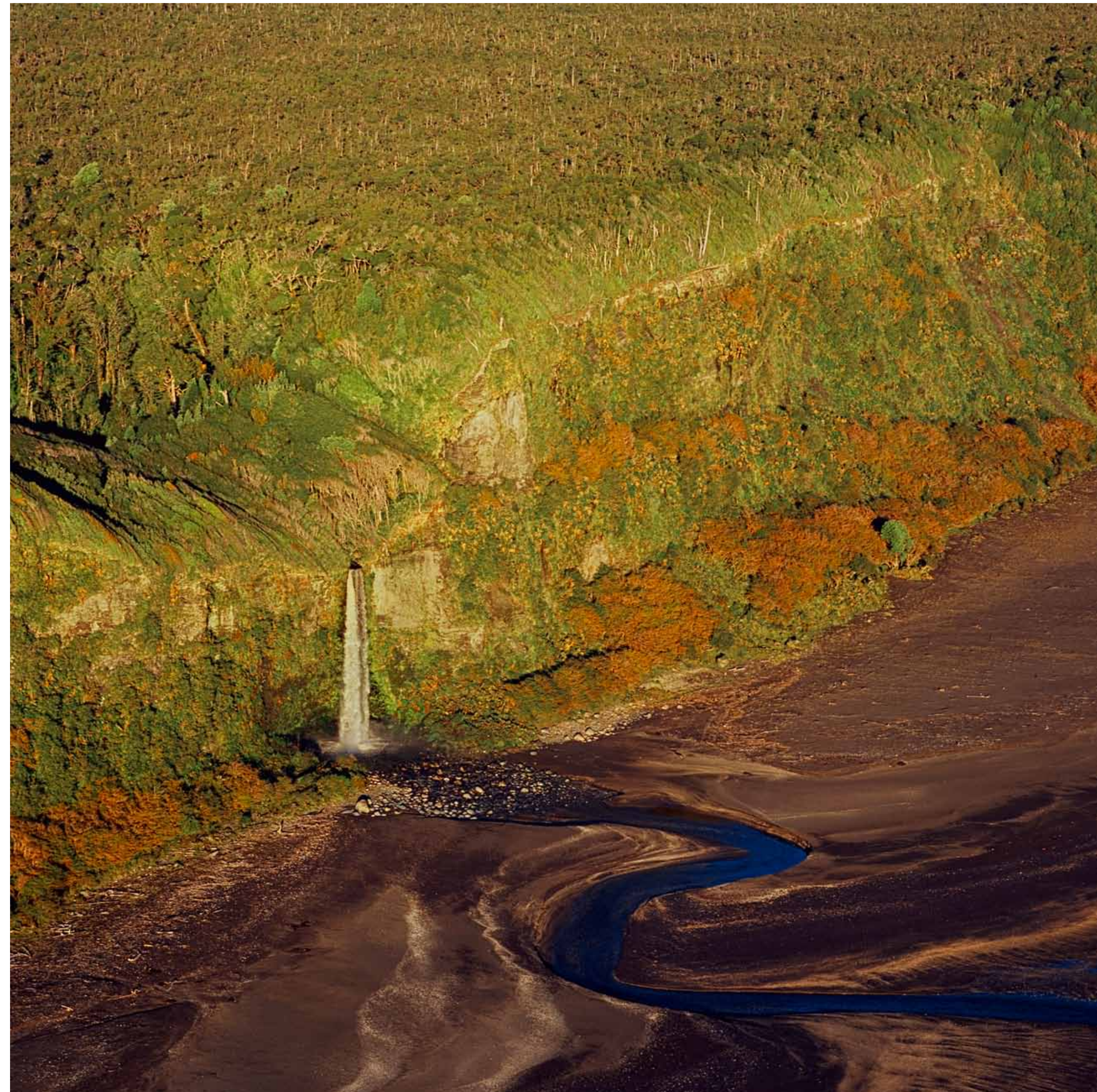








*It is a new theory in the world, of management of the public land
for a superior kind of pleasure and profit; for the perpetuation
of the country's natural and historical heritage,
untarnished by invasion and depletion other than that of invincible time.*
—Freeman Tilden





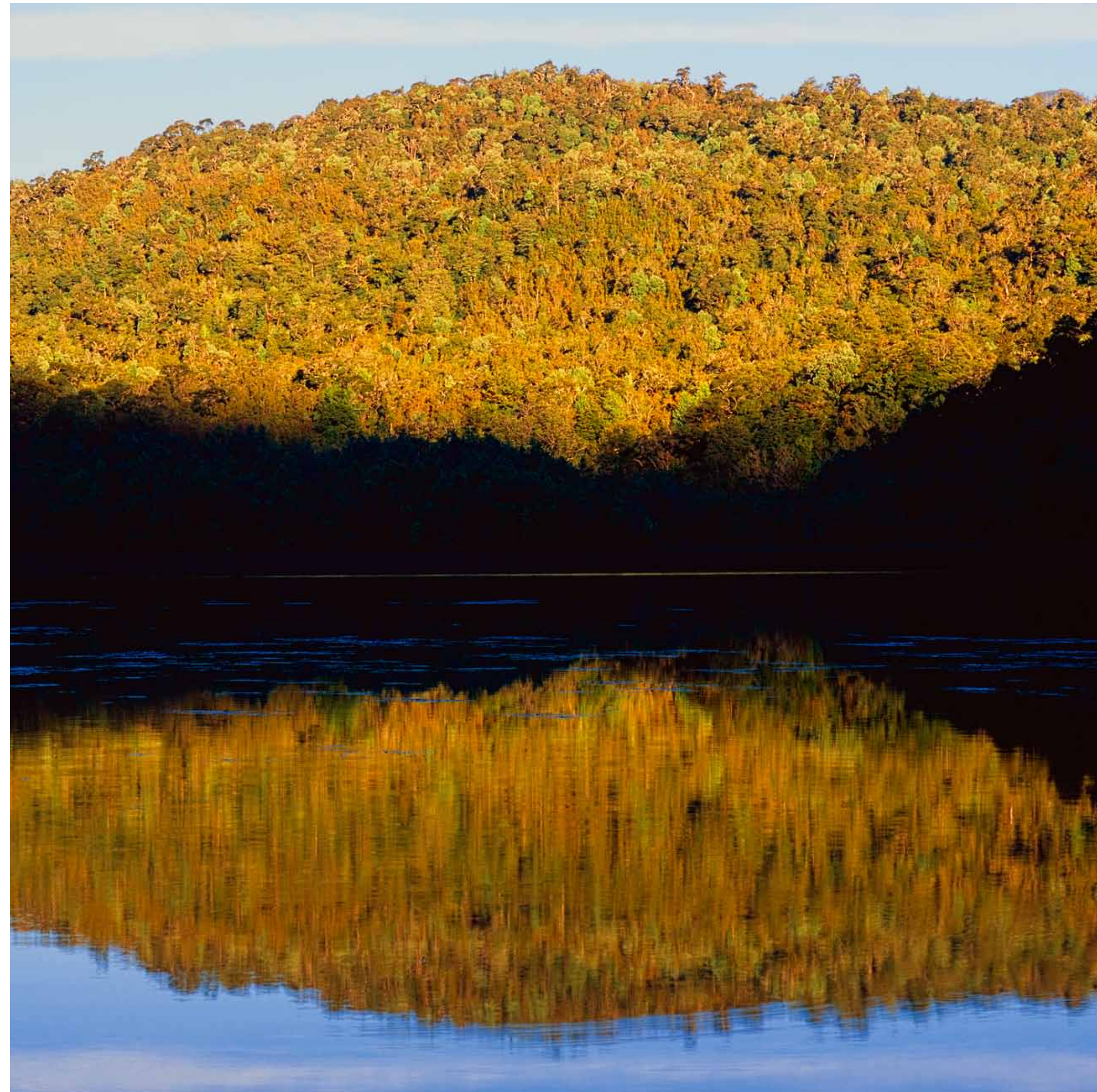
ANCIENT FOREST

*Near the last solitary place
the tree weaves its sturdiest armor
its songs and its dreams.*

.....

*The wind changed the direction of its sap,
turning each branch into a hieroglyph
and at dawn played
the torrential flutes
from the damp corners of the planet.*

—Marino Muñoz Lagos





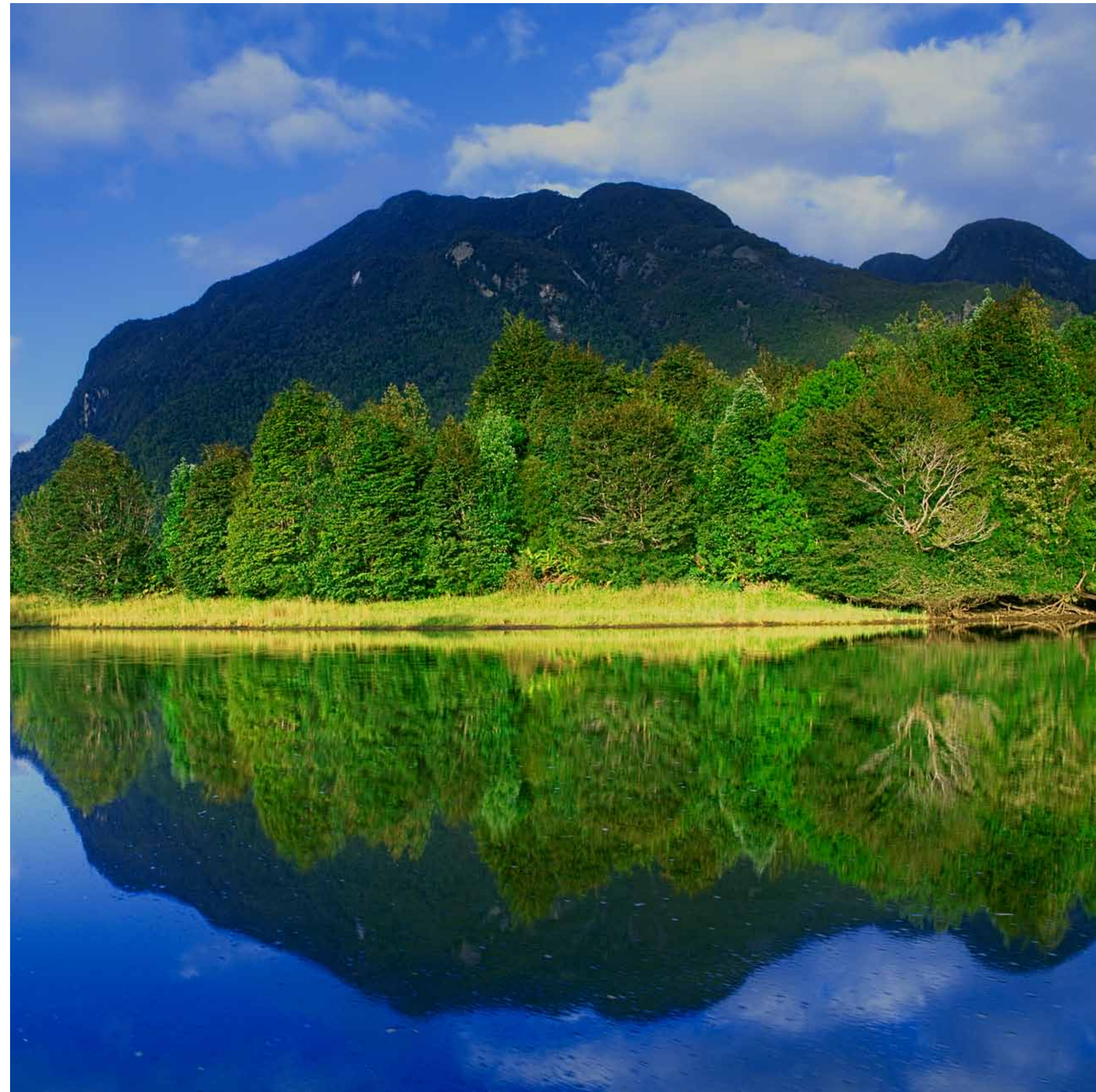








*For Chileans a national park conjures an iconic image
of snow-capped volcanoes, forests, and lakes.
The first protected areas designated nearly a century ago
embodied that image but the latest,
Corcovado, is the most outstanding of them all.
The shaping of the nation's system of protected areas is a work in progress,
one step at a time and against strong opponents,
but gradually the dream is coming true.*
—Carlos Weber



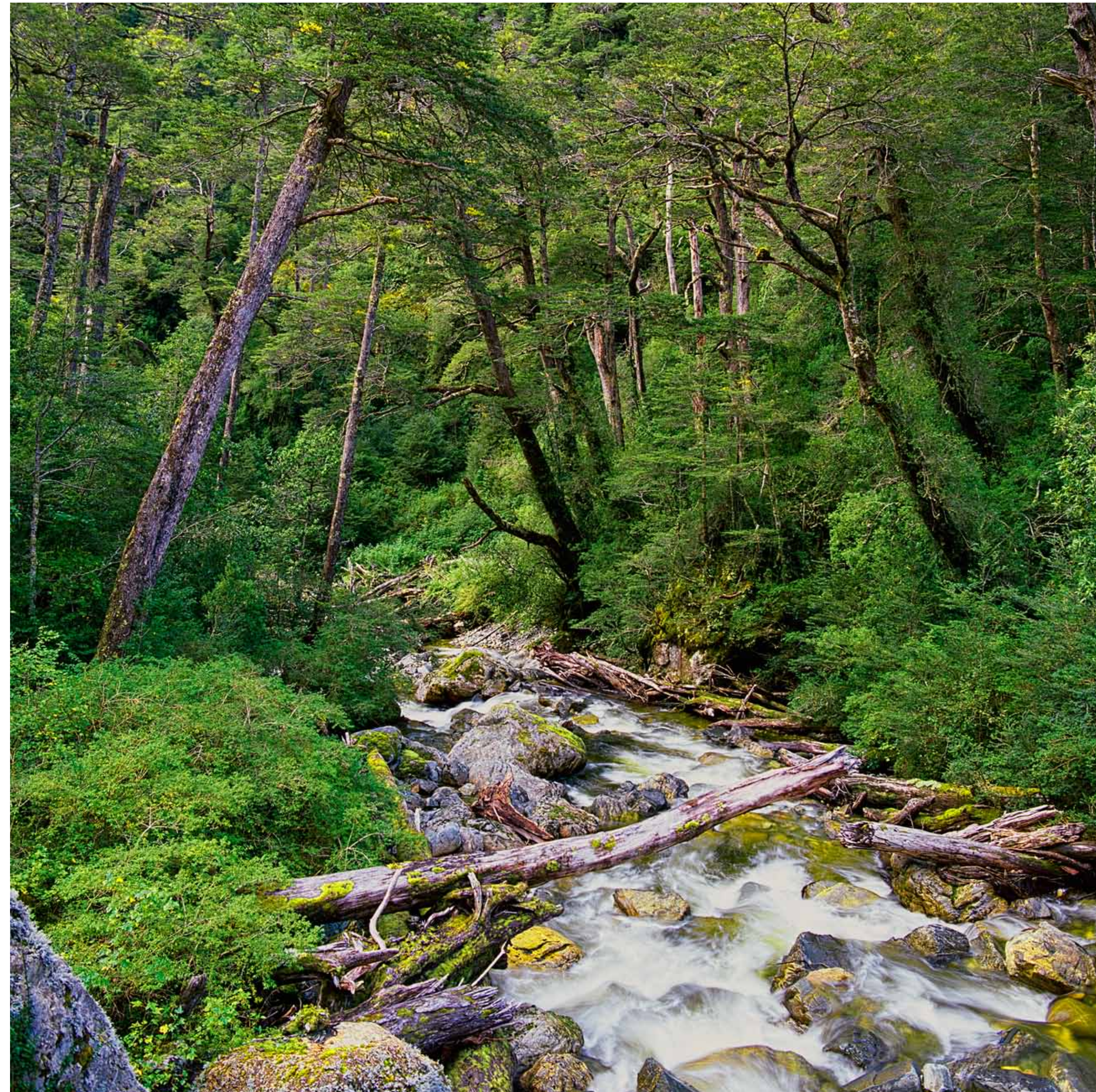


FOREST INTERIOR

The clearest way into the Universe is through a forest wilderness.
—John Muir



*But the very heart of the thicket is the realm of the chucao,
who would rather die than let himself be seen, and the realm of the coot,
incorrectly called swamp raven,
who laughs incessantly with the trill of an old, off-key contralto.
And there where the juío with the faint, muted, shadowy, unfinished voice abides,
the thrush repeatedly sings his two-note joy
which instills a touch of anguish, for summer is ending.*
—Luis Oyarzún



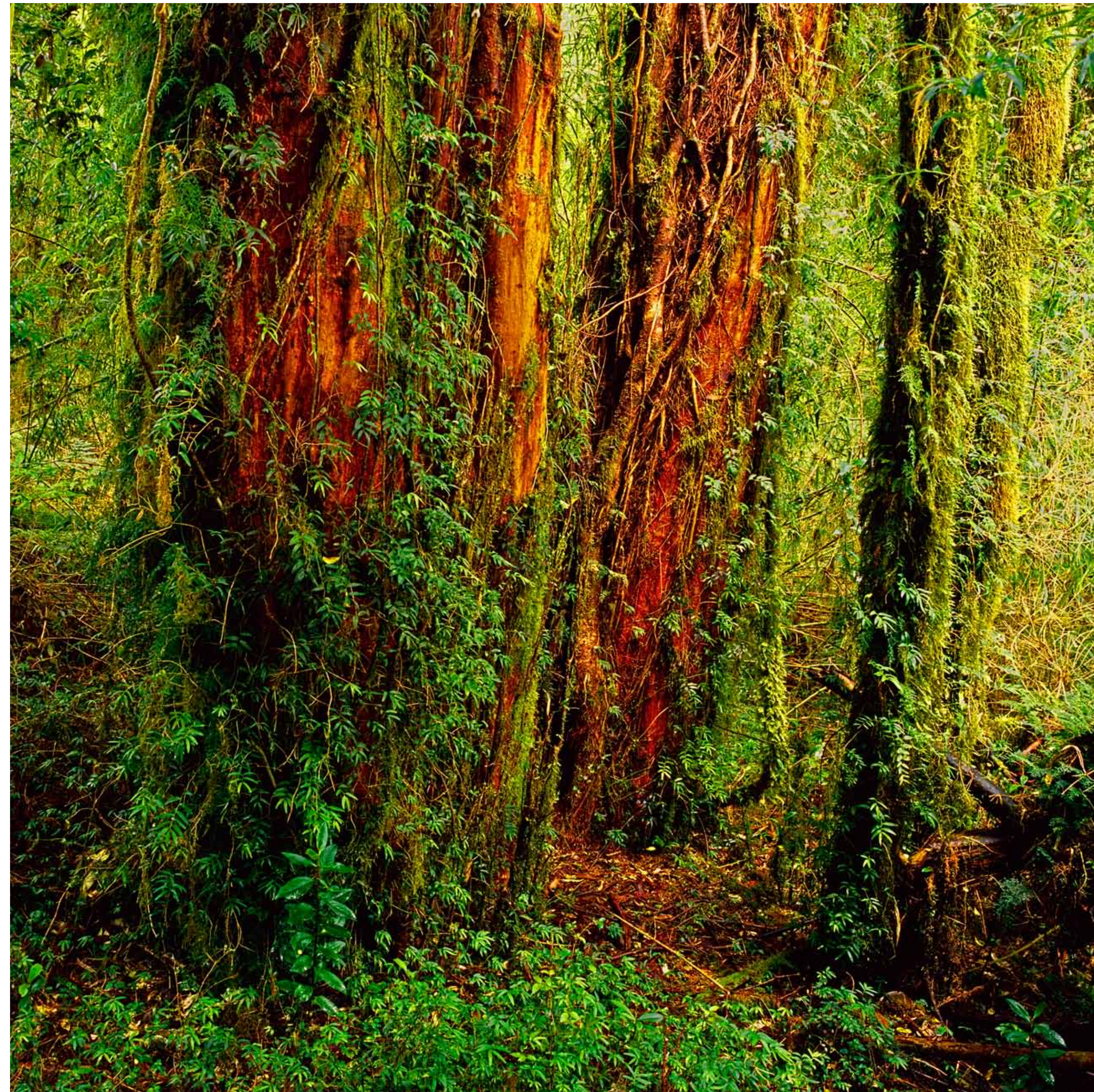






*I will not allow them to fell my centuries old tree . . .
at its side lay down
the wrathful ax. Adorned by the dew,
celebrated by the birds. Let the fingers of the wind
awaken its glorious keyboard every day.*

—Juvencio Valle

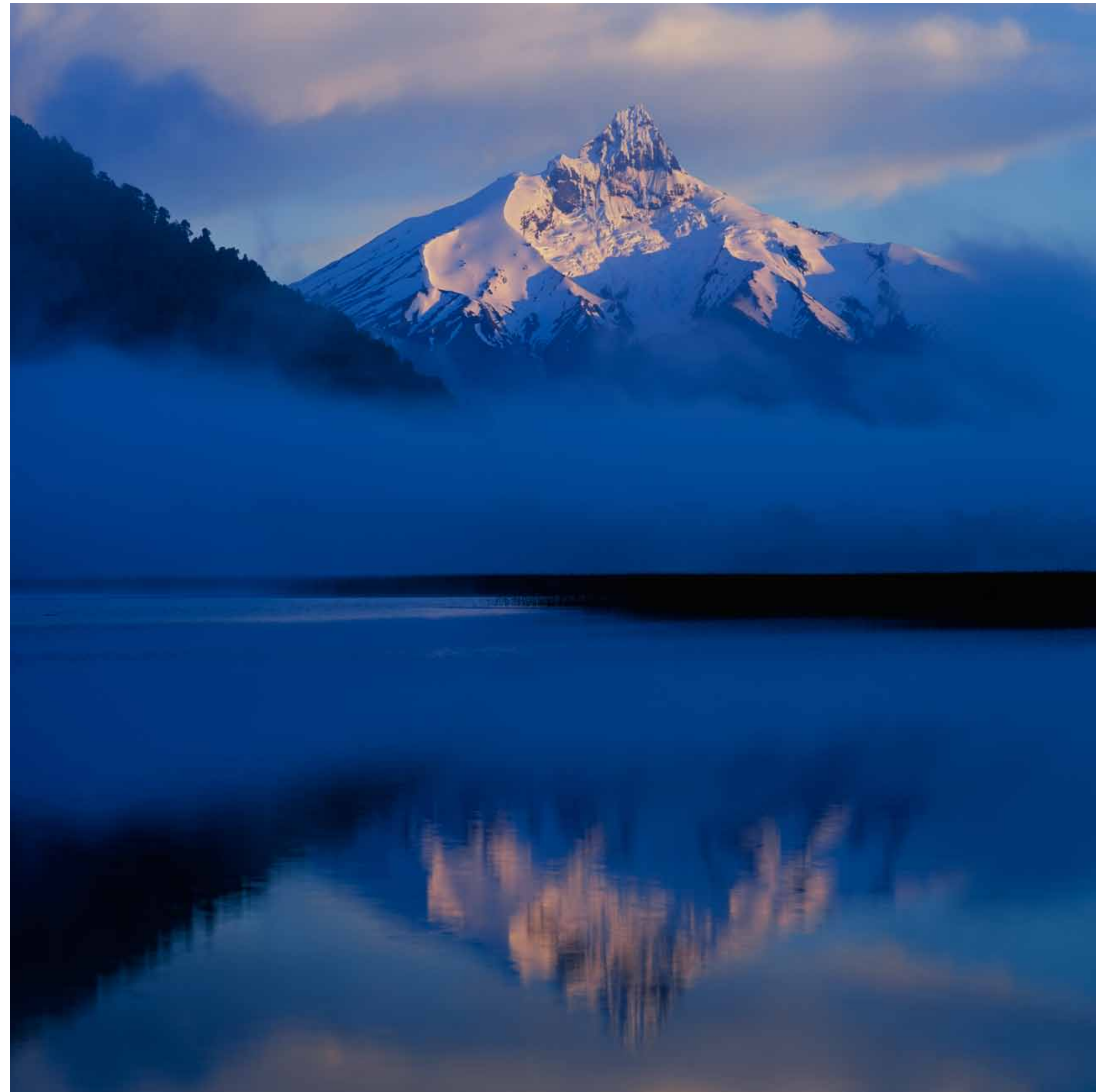




THE CORCOVADO VOLCANO

*The day rose splendidly clear.
The volcano of Osorno was spouting out volumes of smoke.
This most beautiful mountain, formed like a perfect cone, and white with snow,
stands out in front of the Cordillera.
Another great volcano, with a saddle-shaped summit,
also emitted from its immense crater little jets of steam.
Subsequently we saw the lofty-peaked Corcovado—
well deserving the name of “el famoso Corcovado.”
Thus we beheld, from one point of view, three great active volcanoes,
each about seven thousand feet high.*

—Charles Darwin













*National parks preserve not only the organic relationships of nature,
they also preserve the extremes of natural spectacle and natural beauty.
Both the extremity and the fact that it is preserved inviolate must be stressed . . .
If the simple experience of uncontaminated nature is inestimably good,
so is such an equally simple experience as glimpsing the processes of creation . . .
how a glacier has gutted a peak, how a mountain range has slipped
and folded along a fault line, how in the eons of time the fundamental earth
has been erected and then redistributed grain by grain.*

—Bernard De Voto





MOSSES AND FLOWERS

The task of conserving biodiversity distills down to two basic challenges, protecting it and preserving it. Protecting biodiversity entails creating parks in accordance with a systematic plan to include within their borders most or all of the species found in a region and, ultimately, in the world as a whole.

—John Terborgh

















*The wild things of this earth are not ours to do with as we please.
They have been given to us in trust, and we must account for them to the generations
which will come after us and audit our accounts.*
—William T. Hornaday



*Wilderness is a place where the wild potential is fully expressed,
a diversity of living and nonliving beings flourishing
according to their own sorts of order . . .
When an ecosystem is fully functioning, all the members are present at the assembly.
To speak of wilderness is to speak of wholeness.*
—Gary Snyder





RIVERS AND LAKES

*In parks . . . we recontact both certainty and uncertainty,
the permanent and the changing, the stable and the spontaneous,
the predictable and the novel. More philosophically put:
We confront order and chaos. We go wild; we go where the Earth is still wild.*
—Holmes Rolston III





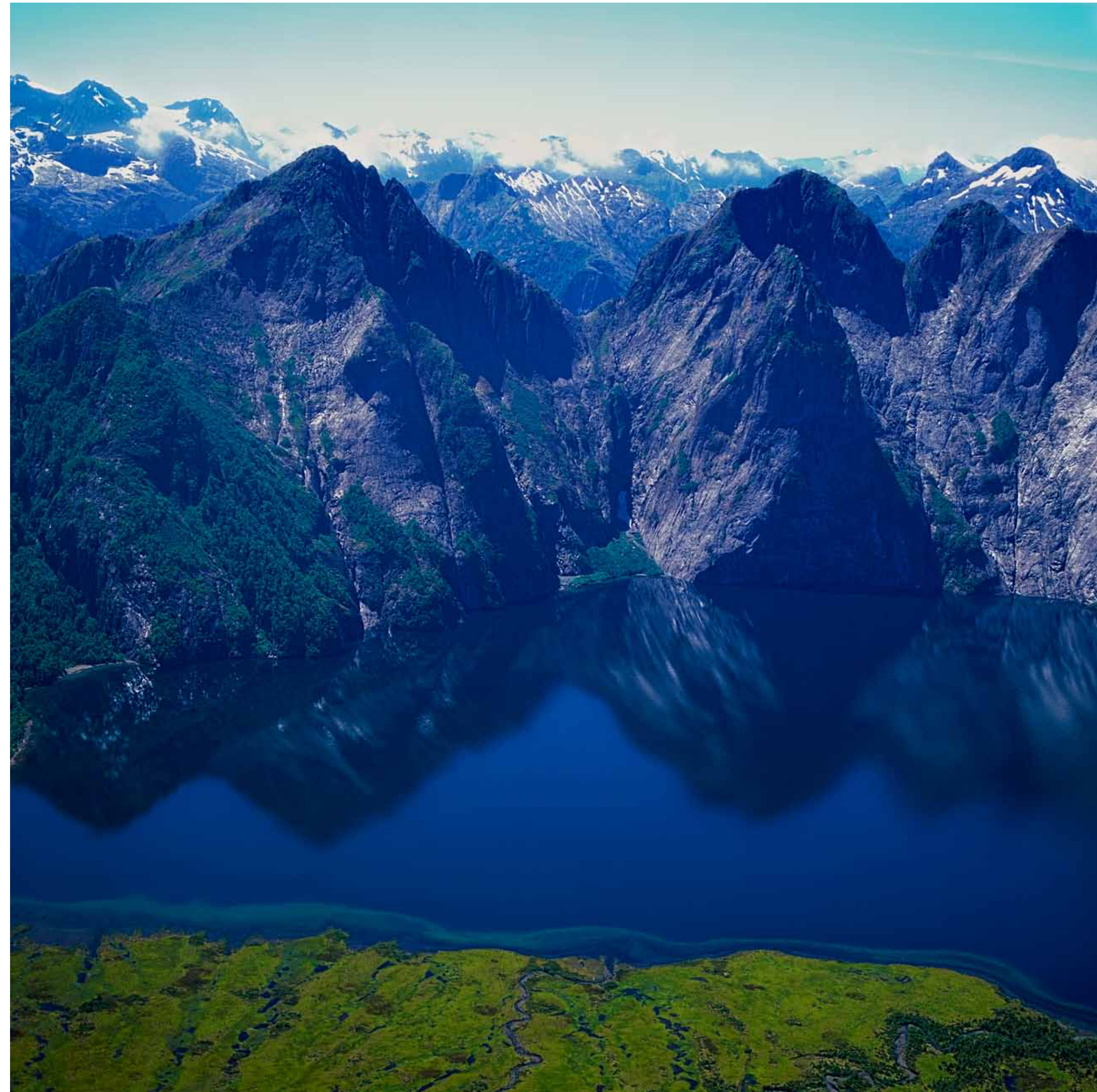




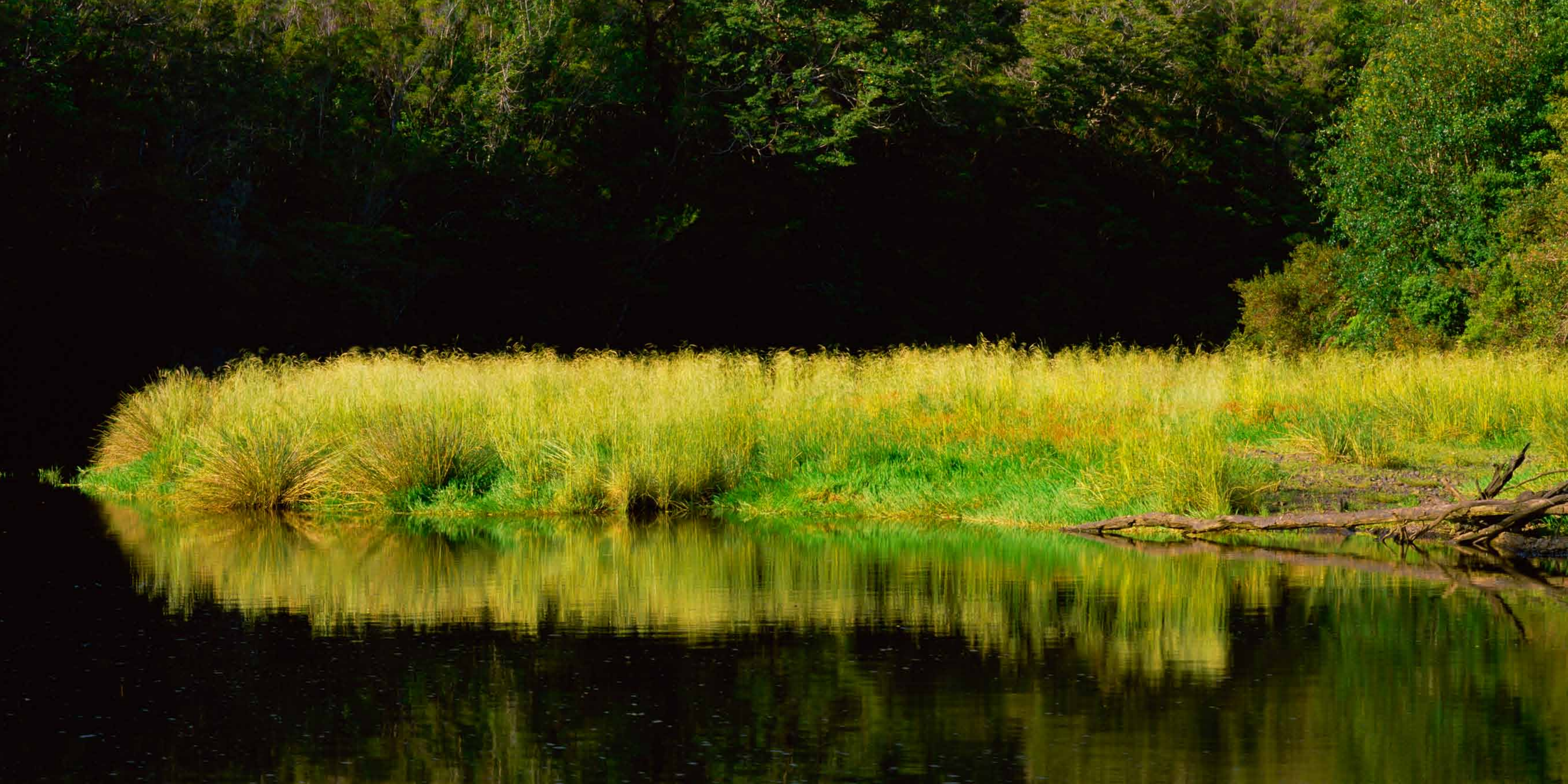


*The true meaning of patriotism is allegiance to the earth on which a nation stands.
Conservation is the most elemental form of patriotism.*

—Richard Nelson

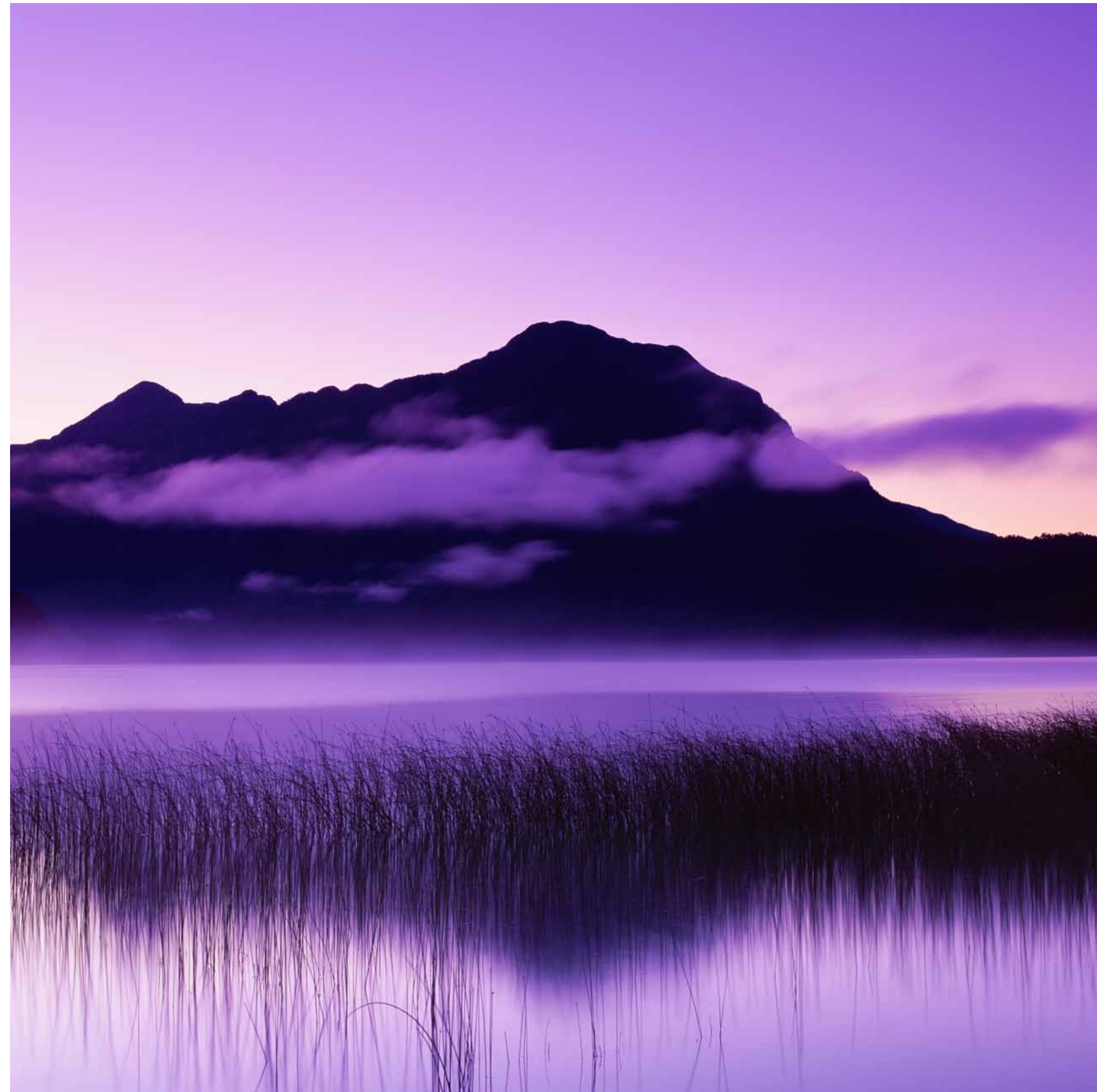






*Until beauty becomes part of the foreground of our cultural life,
we will not see a successful shift to an ecological paradigm.*

—Sandra Lubarsky

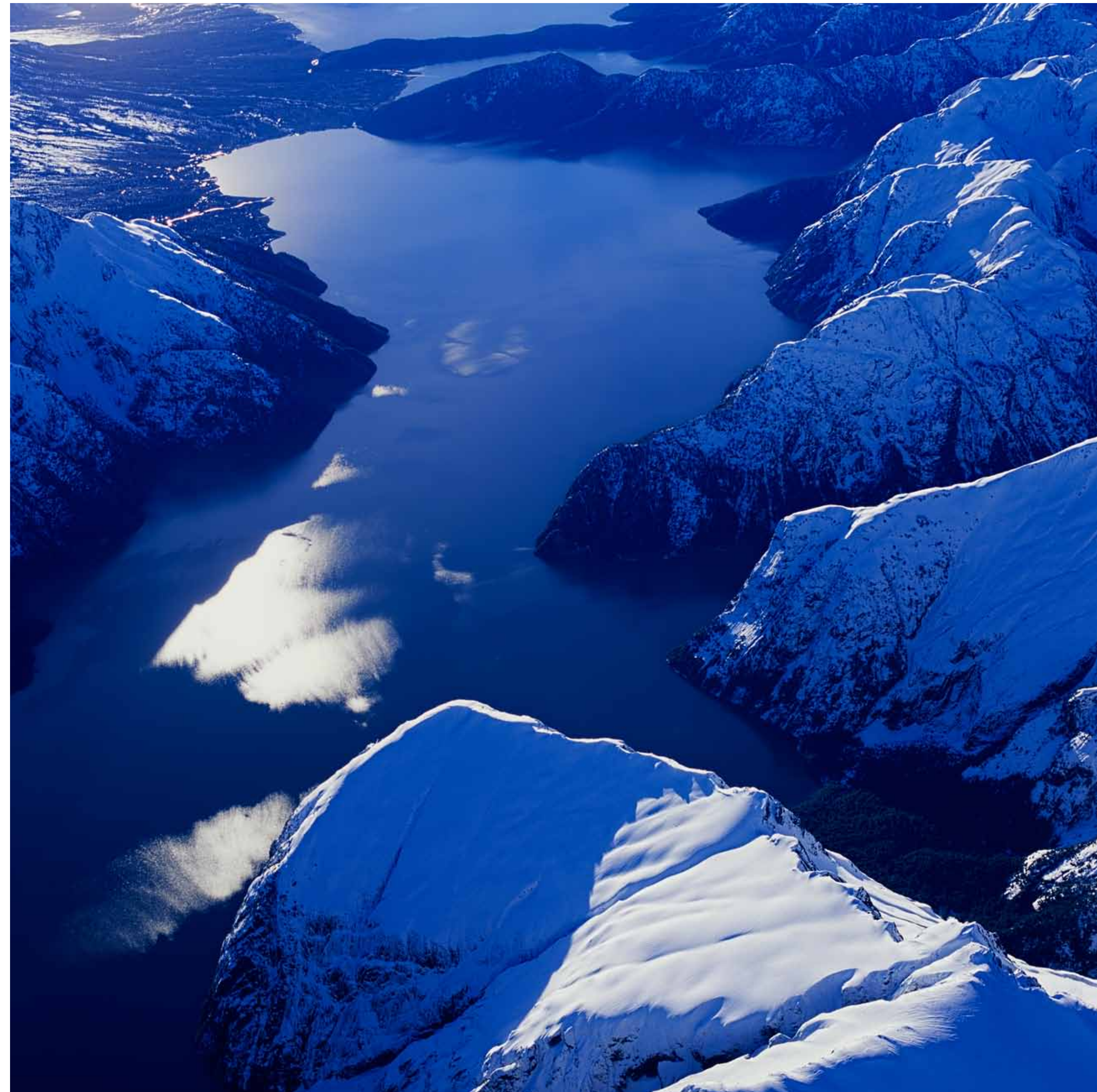






*Preservation of unspoiled and healthy nature benefits people,
therefore those who defend nature are also defenders of humankind;
on the other hand, those who attack nature, supporting the shortsighted interests
of some people, ultimately attack humanity, threatening its future along
with the future of nature as a whole.*

—Godofredo Stutzin

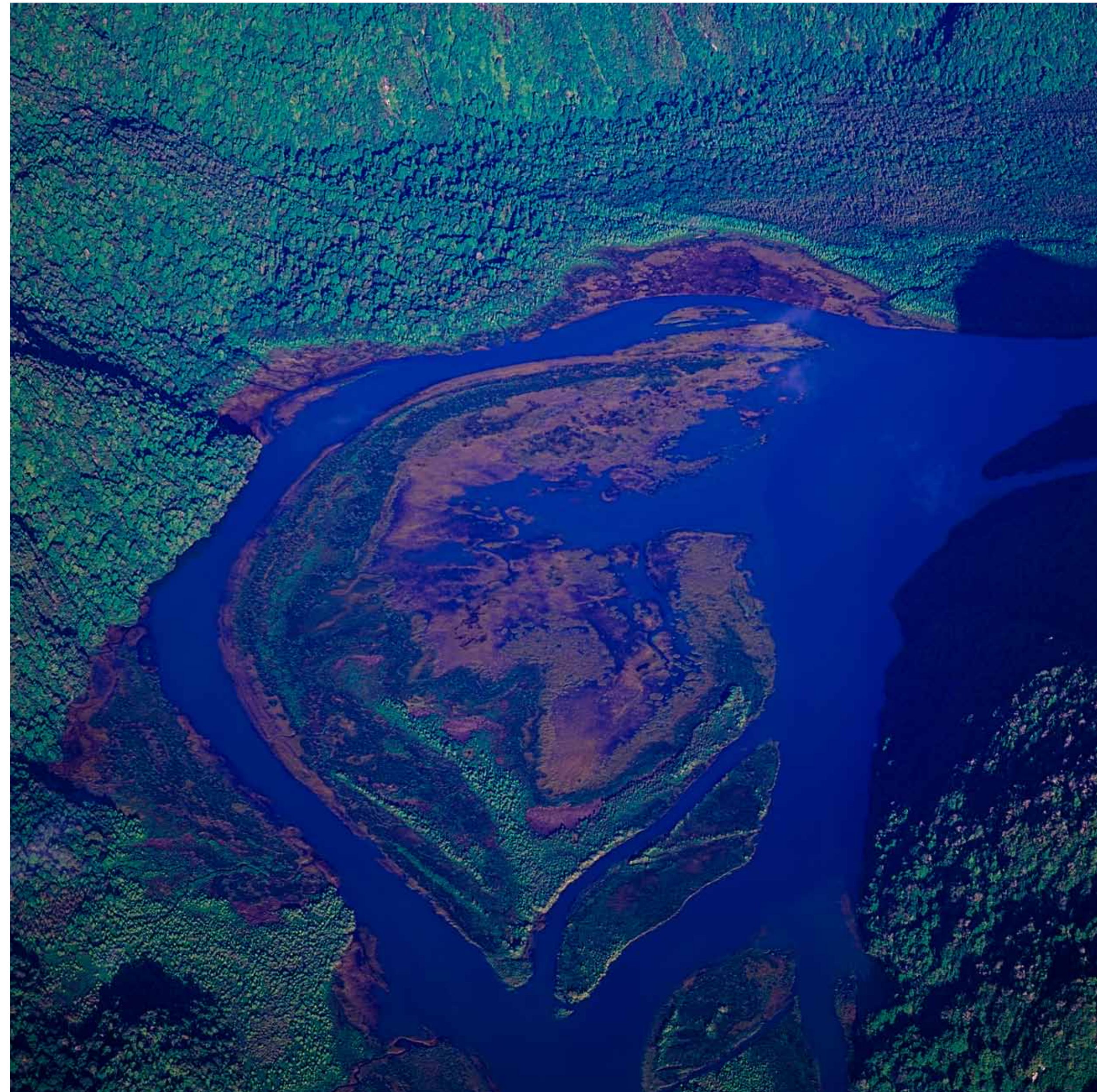




MARSHES AND WETLANDS

*Whether protected by government, trusts, or individuals,
natural lands offer the last resort for other species
as well as for those of our own species who crave contact with wildness.*

—Scott Russell Sanders











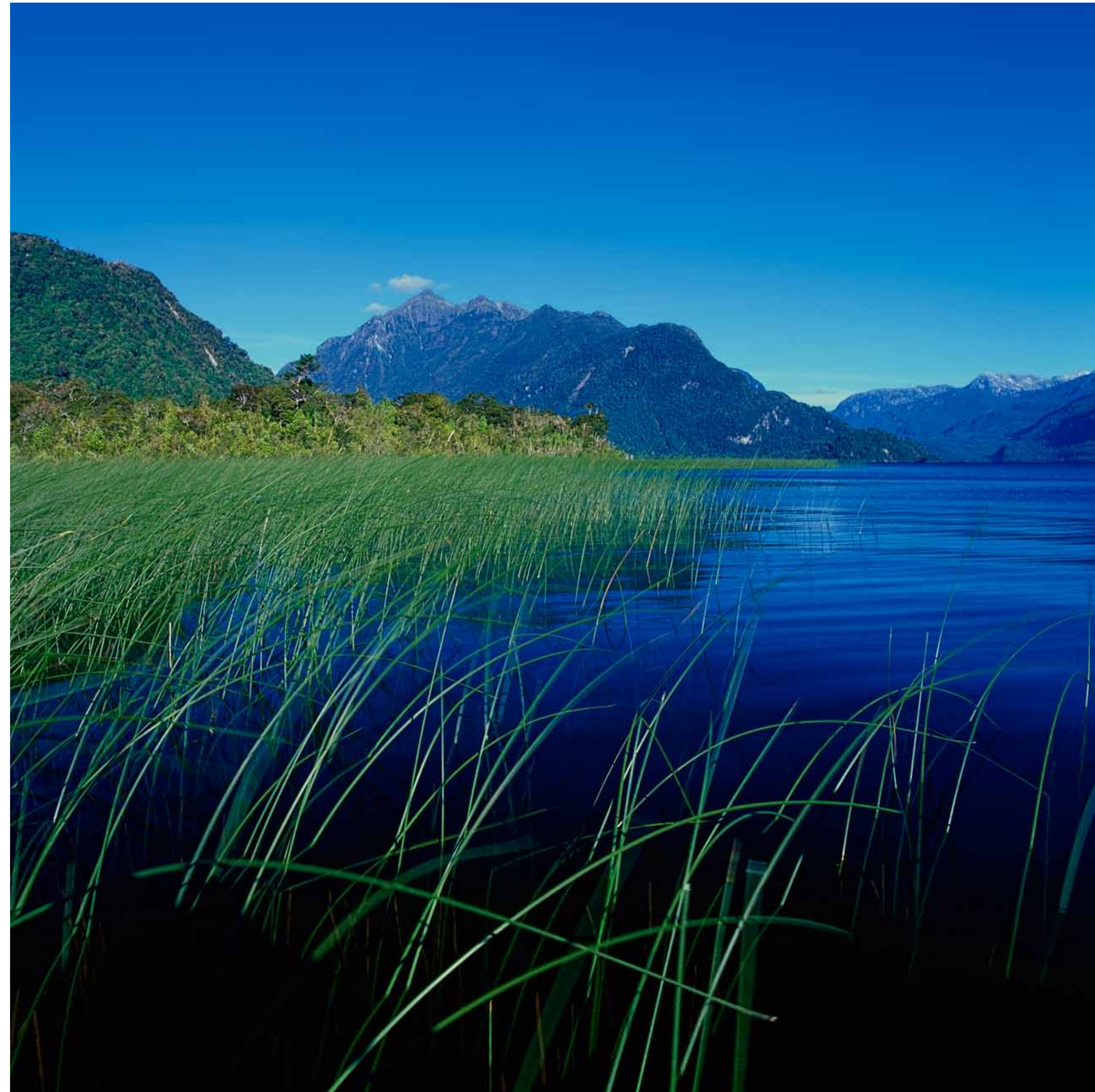






*The land ethic simply enlarges the boundaries of the community
to include soils, waters, plants, and animals, or collectively: the land . . . In short,
a land ethic changes the role of Homo sapiens from conqueror of
the land-community to plain member and citizen of it.*

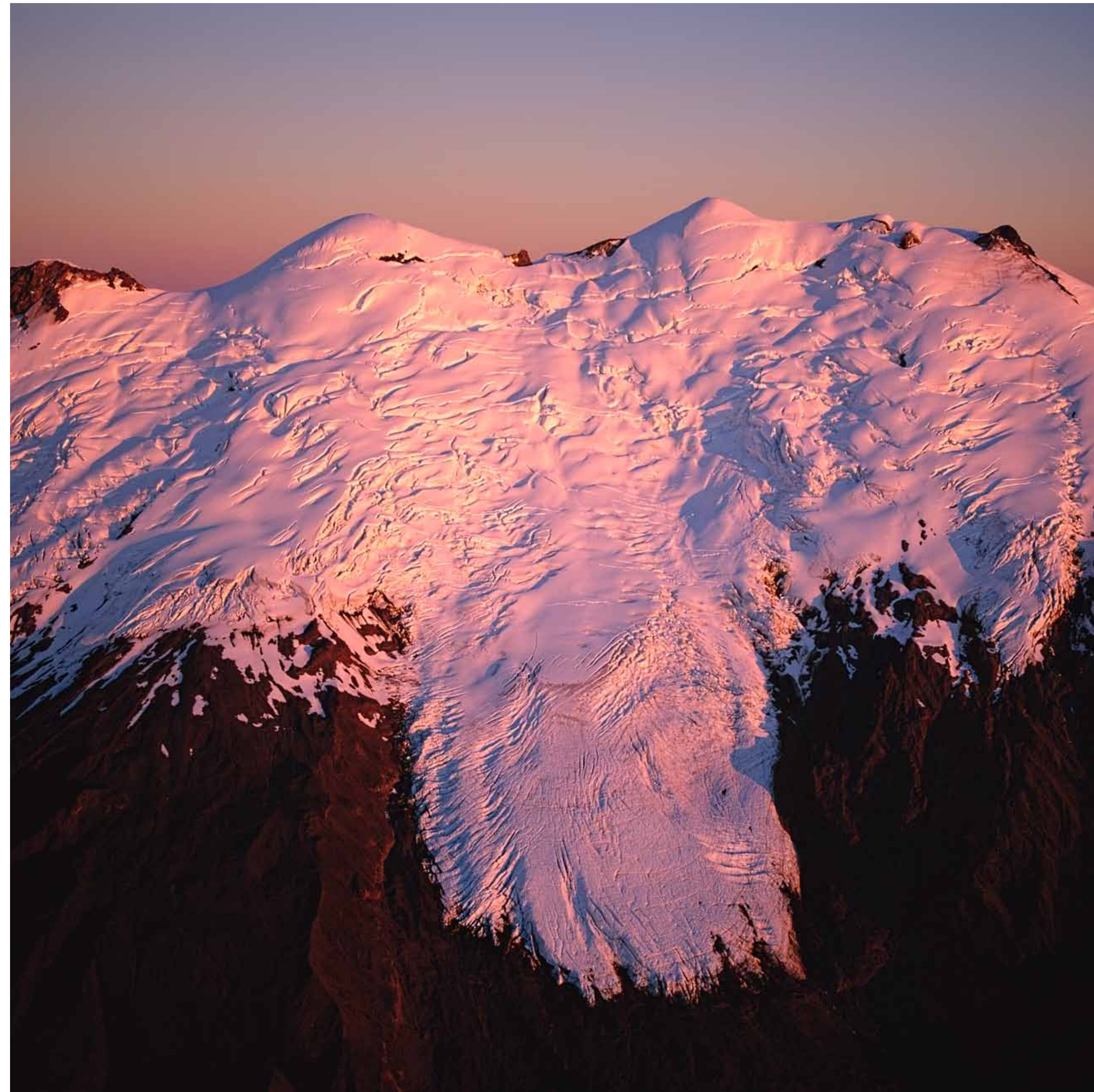
—Aldo Leopold





MOUNTAINS AND GLACIERS

*Nature seems to know nothing or even care of man.
There is no hut, no ax traces in the tree, or a pile that hints of a former wharf.
Civilized man, in front of this nature, seems a foreigner, an outsider.
Nature, in her immensity, occupies all, silences all.*
—Benjamín Subercaseaux











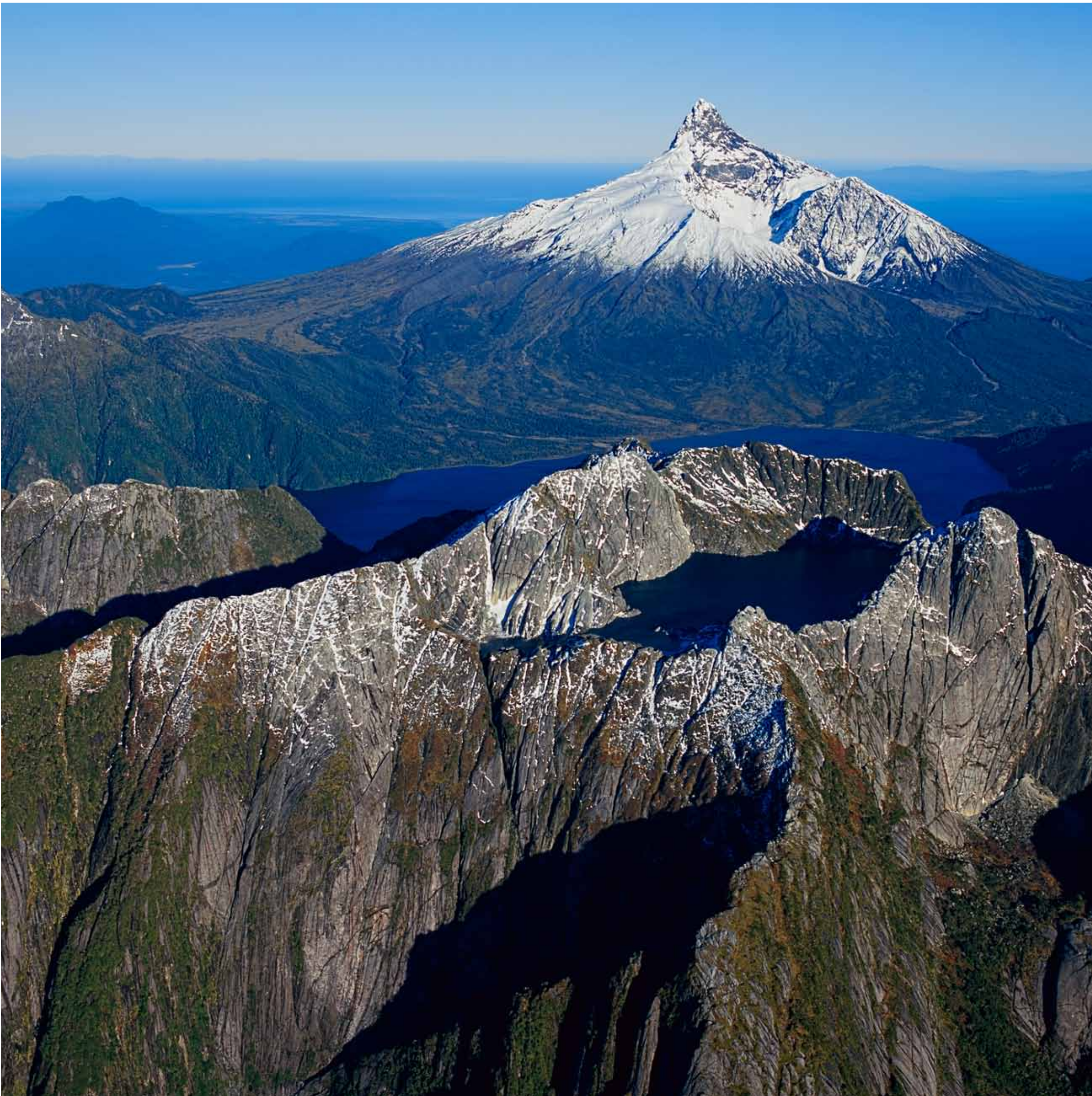












AFTERWORD

Corcovado and the Evolving National Park Idea

Tom Butler

Two hundred years from today, a local fisherman piloting his vessel along the coast south of Chaitén may look up at the Corcovado volcano and see its striking profile rising above a wild, intact ribbon of forest. It is the same view a visitor to Corcovado National Park may witness today, or would have seen on the day Chile achieved independence two centuries ago. As the pace of societal change grows increasingly frenetic, one of the most notable attributes of a national park is its timelessness.

With permanent protection as a national park, the landscape's continuity of life is assured. The seasons will come and go. Storms sweeping off the Pacific will hit the mountains and drop their moisture on the park's undeveloped lakes and free-flowing rivers. The creatures who call the area home will never need to fear the screaming chainsaws and bulldozers that too often are the heralds of modernity. Change will come on nature's schedule, not be yoked to human whims and

desires. Every Chilean can take pride in this outcome, for the land is now part of the permanent heritage—the patrimony—of the nation, and its wild beauty may shine forever as a beacon of hope in a troubled world.

That statement may seem like hyperbole, or, at the least, a very heavy burden to place on a little-known protected area in a lightly settled part of Chile. But I think it's fair to recognize Corcovado National Park's value as both a *place*—the actual habitat it secures—and as a *symbol* of how creative public-private partnerships, abetted by citizen-directed philanthropy, can help create new systems of conservation land around the world. These systems—wildlands networks—of public and private land conserved for untrammelled nature and environmentally compatible resource production, are the best hope of achieving ecological and social goals. Foremost of these goals must be sustaining a planet welcoming to life in all its buzzing, blossoming diversity.

As the core areas of wildlands networks, national parks are fundamental. Conservationists now know that it is not sufficient to set aside a few isolated parks and wilderness areas amidst a sea of development, and then to assume that the needs of nature are satisfied. Over the past three decades, the science of conservation biology has clearly shown how isolation is a recipe for extinction—that fragmented and disjunct habitats cannot retain all of their native species over time, or fully sustain the natural processes that create and shape biodiversity. The antidote to this sickness is reconnection, making sure that large blocks of secure habitat are linked by wildlife movement corridors and buffered by well-managed farms and timberlands.

National parks, which are among the oldest of land conservation tools, are perfectly suited to assume this new task as the biological heart of wildlands networks. With a nearly 150-year track record, national parks are the most durable and popular mechanism to preserve natural areas for wildlife and people. The national park idea, which began with Yellowstone in the

American West in 1872, has now spread to nearly one hundred countries. Responding to the advocacy (and often private philanthropy) of conservationists, national governments have established more than six thousand protected areas of that designation.

Why have national parks proliferated around the globe? The primary answer to that question begins with the many values that parks provide: wildlife habitat, recreation and spiritual renewal for human visitors, economic development, areas for scientific research, cultural and historical interpretation, and, of course, natural beauty. These values have been variously emphasized through the decades and in different settings, but all of them remain valuable parts of the national park experience today. However, as protected areas evolve to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century, a new understanding is emerging about how parks and reserves provide ecosystem services, including climate regulation. National parks and other protected areas are increasingly acknowledged as a crucial element in the fight against human-caused climate change because wild forests and grasslands store large amounts of carbon in their biomass and soils.

A secondary answer to the question of why national parks are so popular is that the national park idea is big enough to reflect each country’s distinctive attributes. Visitors flock to parks like Serengeti in Tanzania or Okavango Delta in Botswana to see some of the greatest wildlife spectacles on Earth. The park systems in Costa Rica and Belize showcase astounding biological diversity. Parks in the United Kingdom and other European countries often feature cultural and historic artifacts. Chile’s Torres del Paine National Park, Grand Teton in the United States, and Banff in Canada are icons because of their classic mountain scenery. Everywhere one visits national parks one can see the best of a country and her people.

This is certainly true of Chile. Judged on beauty, ecosystem variety represented in conservation lands, percentage of national territory covered, or the wildness of its protected areas, Chile’s system of national parks and reserves must be ranked as among the best in the world. But it would be fair to note that this relative leadership stems more from geography, demographics, and historical development patterns than from conscious planning and consistent governmental support for parks. Yes, there have been and are visionary Chilean conservationists, and every full-term president has increased the number of parks since Chile’s first national park was established in 1926. A small cadre of park professionals including a dedicated ranger corps has worked—often with very limited resources but considerable creativity—to expand and safeguard the protected-areas system. During the past eight decades, however, Chile has not implemented a coordinated, philosophically sound approach to park creation, infrastructure development, and stewardship with broad-based political support and adequate funding from the government.

Unfortunately, the same could be said of practically every other country. A few nations, particularly in Africa, have built their tourism marketing programs around park-related adventure travel. Costa Rica has set aside more than a quarter of its territory in protected areas and has implemented innovative policies linking parklands and ecosystem services payments. But no country has yet fully exploited the potential for parklands to be the centerpiece of a national land conservation and economic development program.

In this regard, Chile has tremendous potential. During the past decade, visits to Chile’s national parks have more than doubled, now reaching more than two million each year. The National Tourism Board has helped support this trend by highlighting the country’s natural wonders, using the motto, “Chile, Nature That

Moves You.” But the parks’ potential extends beyond just increasing revenue from foreign tourists who enjoy visiting natural areas while on holiday.

Chile is uniquely positioned to build a model parks system for the twenty-first century for other nations to emulate. The first step toward that end would be to expand support for parks across all sectors of society, building a committed constituency for protected areas. Presidential administrations come and go, but love for one’s country transcends partisanship, and when a parks-advocacy movement is perceived as both powerful and broadly representative across the political spectrum, governmental officials cannot easily discount it.

A growing, politically influential parks movement in Chile would build on the nation’s existing system of parks and reserves to create a comprehensive protected-areas network across the country. That system of public lands would offer numerous tangible benefits to Chilean society and be designed to conserve the country’s natural heritage, foster economic development, and counter the climate crisis. Local conservationists will certainly craft their campaigns for new and expanded parklands using language that resonates with Chilean values and traditions, but they might base their advocacy on the following themes:

PARKS FOR PEOPLE

Just as Ecuador led the world in codifying the rights of nature in its constitution, Chile could lead the world by making sure every citizen has access to nearby parklands, whether administered by national, regional, local, or private agencies. As Chile’s population grows more urban, it becomes increasingly important for families to have opportunities to spend time in wild places. A growing body of evidence suggests that children need natural areas in which to play for the healthy

development of their minds and bodies. Other urbanized countries, including the United States, are fighting the epidemic of “nature deficit disorder” in young people by expanding park-related programs.

PARKS FOR PROSPERITY

A world-renowned national park such as Torres del Paine will attract visitors (and their money) despite its remoteness, but less iconic parks closer to population centers can also be engines for regional economic activity, provided they are properly marketed and offer inviting public-access infrastructure. If constructed with care, infrastructure need not significantly compromise the park’s core mission of conservation, and it can help build a conservation ethic throughout society as people visit, enjoy, and learn about the landscapes and wildlife of their country. Well-managed farmlands outside the park can serve as ecological buffers while providing employment, agricultural products, and related tourism. Regional marketing associations can capitalize on this combination of ecological and cultural amenities; visitors might go bird watching and hiking in a national park one day and enjoy wine and cheese tastings at nearby farms the next.

PARKS FOR NATURE

Chile is already a global leader in creating big, wild, remote parks and reserves but its wilderness areas can still be expanded in several regions. One particularly exciting idea articulated by Chilean conservationists would be to expand Alacalufes National Reserve and upgrade it to national park status, thereby creating one of the largest protected areas in South America. Additionally, some

ecologically valuable natural communities and some entire regions of Chile are underrepresented in protected areas. Strategic additions to the park system, particularly where there are rare or endangered species that require additional habitat or habitat linkages between protected areas, could fix this problem and help bolster wildlife populations.

PARKS FOR THE PLANET

Natural areas of every size provide ecological services, but the string of large wilderness parks and reserves from the Lakes District to Tierra del Fuego play a globally important role in climate protection. These wild landscapes store tremendous amounts of carbon and are a tangible demonstration of Chile’s national commitment to addressing climate change. These intact habitats are vital to slowing the extinction crisis as well, by helping perpetuate all of Chile’s native creatures. The benefits of intact wildlife habitat and carbon sequestration accrue to every citizen of Chile, but also to the entire community of life—all the species with which humans share the Earth.

Designated in 2005, Corcovado National Park is a landmark addition to Chile’s patrimony. A park for nature, people, and the planet, it is and will remain a wilderness area visited by relatively small numbers of people who seek to experience its beauty and wildness.

The fact that Corcovado National Park resulted from a philanthropic act—the gift to the State of private land acquired by Peter Buckley and the Doug and Kris Tompkins-founded Conservation Land Trust—is also notable. Public-private partnerships can contribute to many kinds of civic progress, including land

and wildlife conservation. The tradition of park-related philanthropy is a venerable one, with numerous examples around the globe. The first national parks in Argentina and Ireland were born from gifts of private land to the State. In the United States, many national parks were created or expanded through private philanthropy. In the 1970s, the current boundaries and extent of Chile’s own Torres del Paine National Park were established when Italian nobleman and mountaineer Guido Monzino gave his 13,000-hectare estancia to enlarge the park. Monzino’s gift is little known today, but every citizen has benefited from it and other donated parklands in Chile’s history.

Similarly, the philanthropy of Doug Tompkins and Peter Buckley, the commitment of General Emilio Cheyre, and the vision of President Ricardo Lagos to create Corcovado National Park may be unremembered two centuries from now. But if people then still look up at the mountain’s sinuous form and are moved by its grandeur, if they study the park’s natural communities to better understand nature’s genius, if the wildlife there thrives unmolested, then the conservation legacy of these individuals—and of the many others who worked to establish the park—lives on. A gift to the future, Corcovado will remain a place of beauty, wholeness, and integrity held in trust by the Chilean people for all time.





*The greatest beauty is organic wholeness, the wholeness of life and things,
the divine beauty of the universe. Love that, not man apart from that.*

—Robinson Jeffers



IN SEARCH OF NATURE'S BEAUTY

Antonio Vizcaíno

Before I explain what a privilege it has been to photograph Corcovado National Park, I feel I ought to share first the story of how photography has allowed me to dedicate my life to the pursuit of natural beauty. My appreciation of wild beauty and proximity to it have deeply transformed me. Nature photography requires the kind of observation and patience that allow me to perceive the endless movement and transformation that take place in the great outdoors, awakening in my spirit the sensation of constantly finding myself at the dawn of creation.

Very early on, I developed a love for the natural world through camping experiences shared with my family. I spent many nights as a child listening to waves crash onto solitary beaches, or in mountains marveling at heavens that were crowded with stars, infinite luminous dots whose light expressed all the possibilities life held.

Ten years ago, I decided to approach my relation to nature with greater determination by traveling across the American continent in order to photograph the most scenic and well-preserved areas, thus creating images of outstanding natural beauty that would be used to promote conservation. To this end, together with

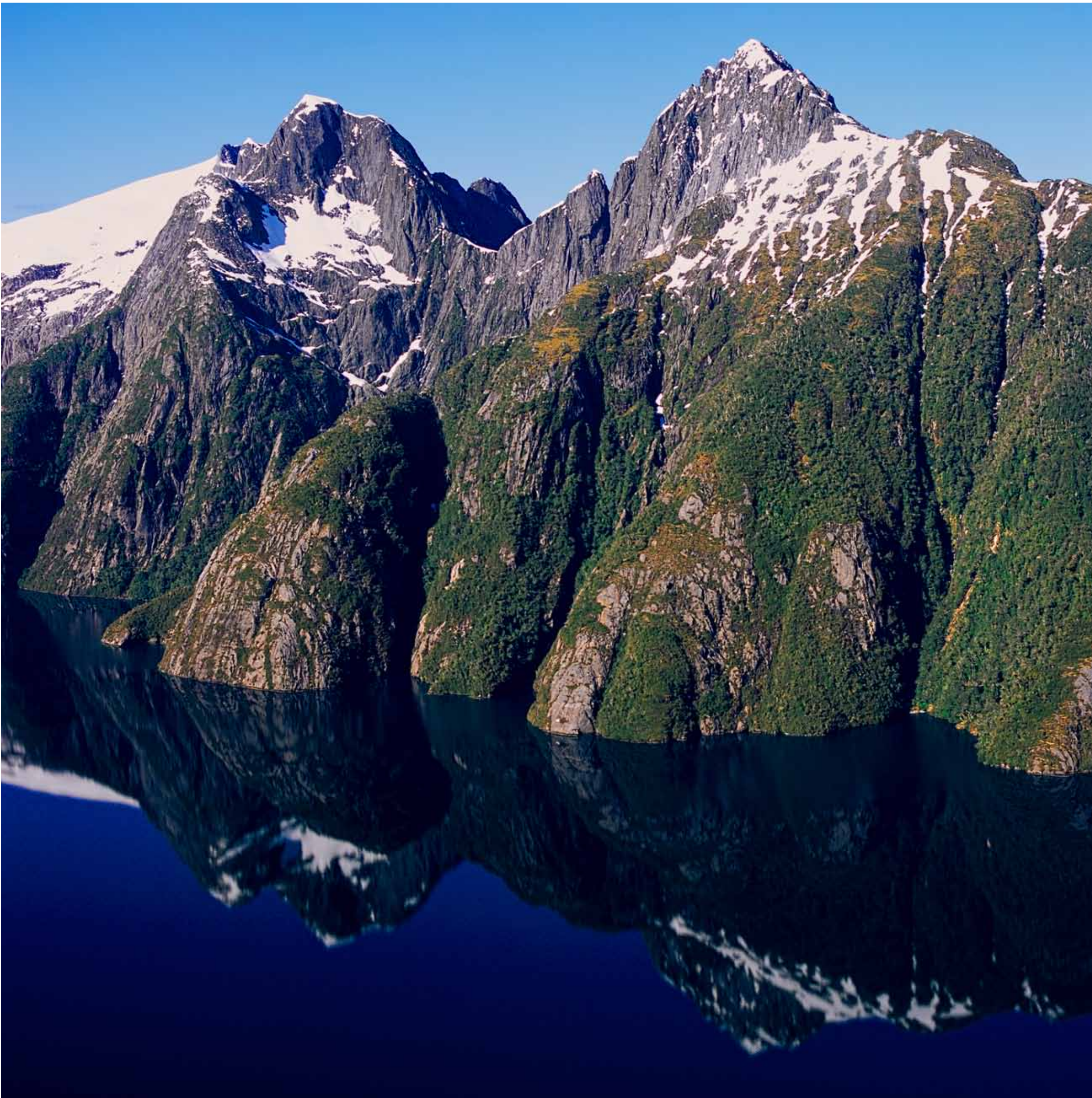
Ximena De la Macorra and Jorge Sandoval, I founded the organization América Natural and initiated the Tierra de Fuego–Alaska expedition, an ongoing project without limits or limitations.

Over the first few weeks of this expedition, while blazing trails through Patagonia, I encountered a pair of fellow travelers and nature lovers dedicated to protecting broad expanses of wildland: Doug and Kris Tompkins. Doug immediately displayed his renowned generosity by inviting me to visit them at Pumalin Park, where we embarked on a lasting relationship of mutual respect, admiration, and affection. It was this chance encounter in Patagonia that later allowed me to collaborate as a photographer with the Tompkinses on extraordinary conservation projects, and to explore and photograph Corcovado National Park as well.

There are few places on this planet where we can truly escape from the influence of civilization; this park is one of them. Its beauty is unparalleled. The photographs that appear in this book were created over the course of six years during many trips to experience Corcovado's wonders—its volcanoes, glaciers, and endless beaches; ancient rain forests covered with lichen and colored mosses; and green and blue pristine rivers flowing down from the glacial summits of hundreds of mountains.

The experience that inspired me most was the opportunity to photograph from the air at daybreak and sunset on numerous occasions while accompanied by two daredevil pilots: Doug Tompkins, who was never afraid to position the airplane at the best angle, and Rodrigo Noriega, who enjoyed scouting for puma tracks as we flew over mountaintops. It was also my privilege to spend time in this wonderful protected area with many other colleagues, and I am deeply grateful to all of them.

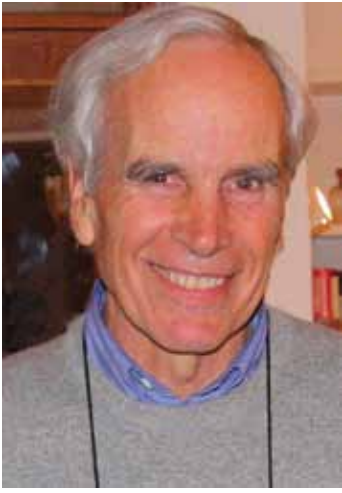
The efforts of Doug and Kris Tompkins and all those who contributed to the creation of Corcovado National Park represent not only a great gift to the Chilean people and nation, but a tribute to life, a glimmer of hope for all of humanity, and a model of how, through our actions, we can create a better world. What has been preserved here is no less than a sacred space where natural processes can continue their cycles and landscapes can endure as territories of both life and spirit.



CONTRIBUTORS



Ricardo Lagos was president of Chile from 2000 to 2006. A lawyer and an economist with a PhD in economics, he founded the Party for Democracy in 1987 and has been one of Chile's leading political figures for decades. Prior to his election as president, Lagos was the Minister of Public Works and the Minister of Education in previous administrations. Since leaving office he has taught at various universities, started the Foundation for Democracy and Development (where he is president), and served as the United Nations special envoy for climate change from 2007 to 2010.



Douglas Tompkins is a longtime wilderness advocate, mountaineer, organic farmer, and activist. He founded The North Face outdoor gear retailer and cofounded Esprit clothing. Since retiring from business and moving to Chile in the early 1990s, he has worked to create large-scale protected areas in Chile and Argentina. He and his wife, Kristine Tompkins, have also restored several degraded farms. Through a family foundation, Doug Tompkins has been a supporter of activist groups in North and South America and has helped produce numerous campaign-related books on topics such as industrial forestry, motorized recreation, corporate agriculture, and coal mining.



Juan Emilio Cheyre is the founding director of the Center for International Studies at the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile, where he promotes peace, security, progress, and solidarity among nations through research and teaching on international issues. He was commander in chief of the Chilean Army from 2002 to 2006 during the presidential term of Ricardo Lagos. A progressive figure, Cheyre was acclaimed for modernizing the Chilean armed forces and helping make the military a full supporter of democratic institutions. He is the author of numerous books and holds a PhD in political science and sociology from the Complutense University in Madrid.



Carlos Cuevas is an ecologist with a degree in forestry from the University of Chile and is one of the founders of the Chilean environmental movement. For the past thirty years he has worked to establish public and private protected areas. As a key collaborator with Douglas Tompkins for more than a decade, Cuevas has been a driving force behind the creation of Pumalín Park, Corcovado National Park, and other conservation lands. A resident of Puerto Varas, in the south of Chile, Cuevas is currently the president of the Melimoyu Foundation, where he is leading the effort to create a new coastal national park in the Melimoyu area in the Aysén Region of Patagonia.



Tom Butler is the editorial projects director of the Foundation for Deep Ecology and president of the U.S.-based Northeast Wilderness Trust, a regional land conservation organization. An activist and writer, he was formerly the longtime editor of *Wild Earth* journal. Butler's books include *Wild Earth: Wild Ideas for a World Out of Balance*, *Plundering Appalachia*, and *Wildlands Philanthropy*, the latter a celebration of parks and nature preserves established over the span of a century through private initiative and funding.



Antonio Vizcaíno is a nature photographer, editor, and conservationist. He studied photography at the International Center of Photography in New York. His work is devoted to disseminating natural beauty in order to foster a new, more respectful culture toward nature. Over the past two decades he has published twenty-four books of his photography, including *Water*, *Forest*, *Wildlands Philanthropy*, and *Mexico: Landscape and Spirit*. In 2001 he launched the photographic expedition *América Natural: Tierra del Fuego–Alaska*, aimed at photographing the best-protected natural areas of the Americas, and contributing, by means of images and environmental education campaigns, to the conservation of the continent's biological diversity.

CORCOVADO NATIONAL PARK

in Brief

An area characterized by its lack of human intervention, the wild country in and around Corcovado National Park is, in geological time, a very young place. Ice covered the region until a few thousand years ago, giving little time for soils to form and natural diversity to flourish. Thus the current scene is all the more miraculous—coastal estuaries teem with life, marine mammals thrive in Tic Toc Bay, and temperate rain forest extends up the river valleys and onto the flanks of glacier-carved mountains. It is a landscape of exceptional beauty, shaped by the forces of volcanism, glaciation, and climate. The sea in front of Corcovado equals the grandeur of the scene on land. Marine life is abundant and diverse, including year-round breeding and feeding grounds for the largest population of blue whales in the southern hemisphere.

Year Designated
2005

Key Partners in Park Creation
Douglas Tompkins, Peter Buckley, The Conservation Land Trust, Chilean Army, Corporación Nacional Forestal (CONAF), administration of President Ricardo Lagos

Size
294,000 hectares (726,000 acres)

Location
Palena Province, southern Chile
43° 7' 24" S latitude and 73° 6' 21" W longitude

Landscape Features
Mountains, valleys, glaciers, Yanteles and Corcovado volcanoes, more than eighty lakes, wetlands, expansive coastline, estuaries, numerous watercourses including the Corcovado, Tic Toc, and Miragualay rivers

Elevational Gradient
From sea level to roughly 2,000 meters (6,500 feet) in less than ten kilometers

Highest Mountains
Yanteles (2,000 meters/6,500 feet); Corcovado (1,850 meters/6,000 feet)

Biomes
Pacific coastline, Valdivian temperate rain forest, boreal forest in uplands, alpine zone of rock and ice

Soils
Generally thin and fragile soils, volcanic and glacial in origin

Notable Species
Alerce, Guaitecas cypress, Southern dolphin, orca, two species of sea lion, blue whale, puma, Culpeo fox, Chilla fox, Geoffroy's cat, pudu deer, Andean condor, flying steamer duck

Values
Scenic beauty, wildlife habitat, wilderness recreation, setting for scientific research, intrinsic value

Climate
Cool, wet, maritime climate with very high rainfall, between 3,000 and 5,000 mm annually (118–197 inches); annual monthly average temperature is 10.1° C (50° F); higher peaks retain snow year-round

CHILE



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



Peter Buckley



Pedro Pablo Gutierrez

Name a national park anywhere in the world, and behind its creation will be a group of people who cared about a particular landscape and worked to see it protected. Corcovado National Park is no exception. Four essayists in this book, Ricardo Lagos, Juan Emilio Cheyre, Douglas Tompkins, and Carlos Cuevas were central to the Corcovado creation story, but equally indispensable was conservationist Peter Buckley. When Buckley first flew over the Corcovado landscape with his friend Doug Tompkins, and Tompkins broached the idea of purchasing private land there, Buckley did not hesitate for an instant before agreeing. Years later, he was again enthusiastic when the opportunity arose to donate that land to the Chilean national park system. Without the generosity of Peter Buckley, who typifies the quiet, frequently anonymous philanthropy that makes many conservation projects happen, there likely would be no Corcovado National Park today.

Similarly, the behind-the-scenes efforts of Pedro Pablo Gutierrez were also crucial. A tenacious and tireless advocate, Gutierrez served as the Conservation Land Trust's lead attorney on the park project. He skillfully shepherd-ed the land donation through many institutional barriers, helping to push forward a complex conservation project that had no precedent in Chilean park history. Surely he will be rewarded in heaven for his earthly labors to birth Corcovado National Park.

The individuals who assisted the park effort and who were helpful in the production of this book that celebrates it are too numerous to mention comprehensively. Special thanks, however, go to Ricardo Lagos, Juan Emilio Cheyre, Douglas Tompkins, Carlos Cuevas, Antonio Vizcaíno, Tom Butler, Kristine Tompkins, Carlos Weber, Rodrigo Noriega, Carolina Morgado, Hernán Mladinic, Carmen Gloria Joost, Juan Joost, Ottmar and Ignacio Tampier, Juan Enrique Abadie, Hernán Abad, Juan Pablo Orrego, Sara Larraín, Manfred Max-Neef, Debbie Ryker, Esther Li, Monseñor Juan Luis Ysern, Paulina Saball, Francisco Huenchumilla, Vitalia Puga, Patricio Rodrigo, Hernán Sandoval, Rodrigo Egaña, Carlos Villalobos, Natalia Acevedo, Adriana López Sanfeliu, Trinidad Zaldívar, Jorge Barajas, Julia Coronado, Ingrid Espinoza, Macarena Soler, Francois Saliot, Manuel Nonque, Wolfram Heise, Nicolo Gligo, Rachel Wilkins, Danielle Thys, Claudia Yarur, Jennifer Esser, Carlos Decap, and Mary Elder Jacobsen.

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The Conservation Land Trust, a nonprofit private operating foundation incorporated in California, works to create and expand national parks 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 has conserved more than 1.6 million acres to date and has partnered with government agencies and other nongovernmental organizations to establish multiple new protected areas, including Chile’s Corcovado National Park.

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