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# Chapter 6

## Geographic Imaginaries in Dispute in Northern Patagonia: Tourism, Environmental Conservation, and Indigenous Territorial Rights in Quinquén, Chile



**Bastien Sepúlveda and Nelson Martínez-Berríos**

**Abstract** In this chapter, we pose that tourism participates in a process of reterritorialization, in dialogue with past and present dynamics of deterritorialization, and arises from the actions of diverse powers that constrain Indigenous agency. We discuss tourism both as a window that reveals the tensions between environmental conservation and Indigenous territorial rights and as a socio-political process that could resolve them. Methodologically, this work reflects extensive bibliographical review, document analysis, and fieldwork that has been conducted through numerous periodic stays in Quinquén and other Pewenche communities. First, we explore a theoretical perspective of the production of geographical imaginaries and its applications in Northern Patagonia. Next, we analyze the dual processes of exploitation/protection of the Araucaria, contextualizing them within the framework of the territorial dispossession that affected the Pewenche in the upper basin of the Bío-Bío River, an area of Chile located in the mountainous communes of Lonquimay, in the Araucanía Region, and Alto Bío-Bío, in the Bío-Bío Region, where 54% and 83% of the population identify themselves as Pewenche, respectively. This chapter continues with consideration of the Quinquén territory of northern Chilean Patagonia, where the Pewenche struggle for the Araucaria tree has resulted in a tourism development project.

**Keywords** Patagonia · Indigenous agency · Geographic imaginaries · Tourism · Reterritorialization

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## 6.1 Introduction

More Indigenous communities throughout Latin America are incorporating tourism into their economies and ways of life. In the 1990s, an incipient development of Indigenous tourism was evident in southern Belize (Steinberg 1994), in the Ecuadorian Amazon (Wesche 1993), and in south-central Chile (Volle 1999). Not only has Indigenous tourism increased and expanded geographically over recent years, but it has also diversified to include activities that link aspects of rural tourism, agro-tourism, ecotourism, and ethno-tourism. This range of activities has been labeled *Indigenous tourism* (Pereiro 2015), a variant of community-based tourism that places the community (rural/peasant/Indigenous) as the articulating axis of a business venture that focuses on local livelihoods and claims to be economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable (Skewes et al. 2012).

In Chile, Indigenous tourism has undergone significant development, even becoming a specific focus of attention in national tourism policy, where it is defined as “that which is offered by Indigenous individuals, families, or organizations, and [whose] offer incorporates part of the Indigenous culture” (De la Maza and Huisca 2020, p. 105). Part of this development has been concentrated in the territory referred to as the Alto Bío-Bío (ABB), or upper basin of the Bío-Bío River. The ABB includes the mountainous communes of Lonquimay (La Araucanía Region) and Alto Bío-Bío (Bío-Bío Region), where, respectively, 54% and 83% of the population identify themselves as Pewenche, according to the 2017 Census (Chilean National Statistics Institute 2017). The Pewenche constitute a branch of the Mapuche people, whose way of life is closely linked to the Araucaria forests (*pinalerías*) found in their territory. In fact, the symbiotic relationship that the Pewenche maintain with these forests has led them to mobilize against the logging of Araucaria that was practiced without restraint by forestry companies in the mid-twentieth century.

As a result of these mobilizations, the Araucaria tree was declared a Natural Monument, thus strictly prohibiting its exploitation and preserving it within several Chilean protected areas (PAs). It is interesting to note that beyond the Pewenche mobilizations, these declarations responded to disputes that originated during colonial times over the establishment of divergent conceptions of space and geographical imaginaries in the region. For example, the Pacification of the Araucanía (1861–1883), which led to the annexation of Mapuche territory by the Chilean government, spatially inscribed its authority through the demarcation and creation of land designations, including *land concessions*, *forest reserves*, *land auctions*, *colonization territories*, and *Indigenous reductions*, among others. The main outcome of Pacification of the Araucanía was the deterritorialization of the Pewenche, who lost control of, and access to, their lands, forests, and waters. In some cases, Pewenche communities were even forcibly removed and relocated.

In this chapter, we are interested in exploring the capacity of Indigenous tourism to help communities reverse historic processes of deterritorialization by facilitating a symbolic and effective re-appropriation of certain environmental resources through processes of formal protection. We present the emblematic case of Quinquén’s Pewenche community, which resisted the appropriation of their lands

by the logging conglomerate, the Galletué Society. The Galletué Society sought to evict Pewenche families from their lands and had planned the exploitation of their Araucaria groves. Indigenous tourism development was proposed as a potential mechanism resource for protecting the Araucaria (Reyes 2006). We examine how the longstanding Pewenche struggle for the Araucaria tree became the catalyst for tourist development activity, that was centered around a broader rural identity (e.g., rural tourism, agro-tourism, ecotourism, and ethno-tourism), but fundamentally related to the Pewenche connection with the *ñuke mapu*, which refers to Mother Earth, or the Earth, in a deeper sense of the term.

In continuity with other works that discuss Indigenous tourism in the ABB (Palomino-Schalscha 2015; Krell 2020) and other sectors of Chilean (Pilquimán 2016, 2017) and Argentine Norpatagonia (Impemba and Maragliano 2019), we propose that in an Indigenous context, tourism development is not solely limited to the economic dimension. Rather, we posit that Indigenous tourism contributes to a process of reterritorialization that interacts with past and present dynamics of deterritorialization by diverse powers that seek to constrain Indigenous agency. We discuss the spatially intertwined and temporally simultaneous processes of Indigenous de/re/territorialization by interpreting tourism both as a process that reveals the tensions between environmental conservation and Indigenous territorial rights, and as a socio-political process that could resolve them (Haesbaert 2011).

In the first section, we delve into the understanding of the production of geographical imaginaries from a theoretical perspective (Zusman 2013), along with exploring its applications in northern Patagonia. We then analyze the dual process of exploitation/protection of the Araucaria, contextualizing it within the framework of the territorial dispossession that affected the Pewenche in the ABB. In the third section, we focus on the case of Quinquén, where the Pewenche struggle for the Araucaria tree resulted in a tourism development project. Finally, we outline some conclusions on the articulations between tourism, environmental conservation, and Indigenous territorial rights in the northern Patagonia region of Chile.

This chapter synthesizes data obtained by both authors over the last 15 years. Extensive fieldwork was conducted through numerous stays in Quinquén and other Pewenche communities, where both formal (community assemblies, meetings, and encounters with local authorities, etc.) and informal (conversations in family environments, participation in cultural activities, etc.) exchanges with various local actors took place. Furthermore, we complement these data with bibliographical revision of the archives of administrative-judicial-legal documentation from different institutions.

## 6.2 The Production of Norpatagonia as a Geographic Imaginary

The military conquest and incorporation of the Mapuche territory into the jurisdictions of Chile and Argentina at the end of the nineteenth century subjected the northern reaches of Patagonia to a competitive process of territorial appropriation

and expansion between two nation-states that were still under formation. The most remote and isolated regions of northern Patagonia saw the creation of the first PAs, especially in the mountainous sectors of the Andes where the international border between the two countries had been established in 1882. Along with reserving spaces for timber production, Chile and Argentina sought to strengthen state sovereignty in these lands and restrict the lifestyles of Indigenous communities whose cultural practices and livelihood activities were soon limited through restrictions on use and access (Sepúlveda and Guyot 2016).

A global process of rural transformation has been underway since the final decades of the twentieth century. Directly associated with growing environmental awareness, rural transformation has imposed a new landscape paradigm on the rural world. Once considered as productive spaces for a range of extractive activities (e.g., ranching, mining, forestry), rural peripheries and the protected areas they shelter are now being valued as recreational spaces by and for conservation, under the wing of the sustainable development paradigm and global environmental governance (Blair et al. 2019; Olea 2020). This shift in global thinking allows regions that were historically constructed as remote and peripheral to become the new focus of rural development policies that promote ecotourism and other variants of community-based tourism. Thus, the mountainous areas of the former Mapuche territory, which was historically referred to as the border territories, are being reconceptualized as part of an interconnected Norpatagonia ecological unit. The environmental conservation paradigm has defined Norpatagonia as an interconnected ecological unit with diffuse and porous limits. Thus, environmental conservation acts as a transboundary process that manifests through the creation of PAs along and across different political borders (Sepúlveda and Guyot 2016).

This restructuring of space occurs in conjunction with transformations that occur in geographic imaginaries. A geographic imaginary is a set of beliefs or ideas held about a place that, when materialized in social practices, shape the way in which those places are perceived (Scott 1999; Zusman 2013). Geographic imaginaries result largely from the environmental, cultural, economic, and geopolitical narratives circulated by powerful actors and manifest through territorialities that are superimposed on one another over time, revealing competing ideological and discursive formations (Peet and Watts 1996).

The concept of Norpatagonia illustrates the sedimentary character of these imagined spaces, which have been constantly reimagined, according to the state's changing needs. During the nineteenth century, Norpatagonia was conceptualized as *desert*, which justified the eviction and genocide carried out against the Indigenous communities in the so-called Desert Campaign in Argentina (Navarro-Floria 1999). Afterward, on both sides of the Andes, sectors of Norpatagonia were (re)imagined as territories for colonization, enabling the concession of small landholdings to national and foreign settlers, and the dedication of large tracts of land for environmental conservation as forest reserves, which would later become national parks, geoparks, biosphere reserves, and more recently, Indigenous conservation territories.

With the 2019 designation of Lonquimay as a Zone of Tourist Interest (*Zona de Interés Turístico* [ZOIT]), tourism development has added another layer to perpetuate this geographic imaginary. Chilean ZOIT designations are accompanied by standards for how associated lands ought to be managed. For example, the Lonquimay ZOIT declaration decree specified how Indigenous communities would be inserted within this new geographic order, by designating their lands as *biodiversity conservation territories*. It described notable characteristics of the Lonquimay ZOIT associated with Indigenous lands:

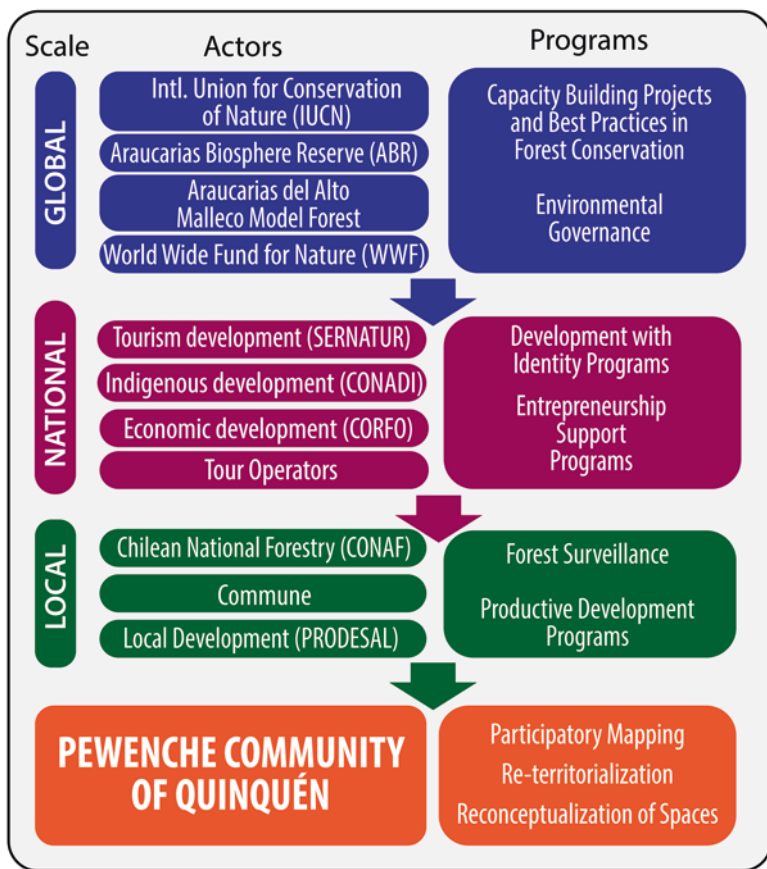
Quinquén's Pehuenche Park, which is the first biodiversity conservation territory managed by Indigenous communities, and the Los Arenales snow park, which is also managed by an Indigenous community, stand out. In addition, the commune of Lonquimay belongs to the UNESCO Araucarias Biosphere Reserve and the Kütralcura Geopark. (Chilean Ministry of Economy, Development and Tourism and Undersecretariat of Tourism 2019, p. 2).

Environmental and conservation-centered framing of Norpatagonia's geographical imaginary perpetuates narratives that simultaneously enable and justify powers of control over these territories and their inhabitants through a process of *environmentalization* (Agrawal 2005). For example, overlapping territorial claims and designations that are implemented in the name of conservation and conservation-based development (e.g., national protected areas, ZOITs, UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, Geoparks) are facilitated through state and international policy, law, treaty, or decree. Under these designations, agencies impose rules and norms regarding how lands can (and cannot) be used within Norpatagonia. These *environmental governmentalities* have serious consequences for Indigenous communities that depend on these lands for their survival and way of life (Agnew and Oslander 2010; Li 2007), requiring them to either adapt, negotiate, or resist. But, implementing these strategies normally requires the specialized capacities (e.g., technical, financial, and legal) to navigate and interact with an environmental bureaucracy of institutions that span multiple scales, from communities to supranational entities. Moreover, this bureaucracy is made up of institutions and actors who also compete for access, ownership, and rights to these environmental resources, among themselves. Predictably, disparate skill levels and social capital among local groups result in repeated cycles of domination by larger entities and resistance from local communities, with little advance (Peet and Watts 1996; Peluso 1992; Robbins 2019).

We understand Indigenous agency as the capacity of Indigenous individuals, communities, and organizations (whether or not they are formally recognized as such) to exercise control within the space they operate and counteract powers at various scales that limit this capacity. Moreover, Indigenous agency includes the capacity to contest, resist and/or negotiate the terms for defining their own development priorities, using a wide repertoire of actions and resources such as the invocation of ancestors, the alliance with nature, and performance, thereby preserving their way of life.

Over the last three decades, tourism has emerged as a powerful tool for northern Patagonia Indigenous communities. Through Indigenous tourism, communities have retained control and power over the re-territorialization process and resisted

the geographical imaginaries that seek to constrain their livelihoods. Quinquén, and other communities, have intensified their participation in community-based tourism initiatives that are supported by environmental approaches to global governance, like the Indigenous Conservation Territory designation promoted by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Nevertheless, as discussed previously, these land designations still limit Indigenous agency. While theoretically these initiatives originate from within the communities themselves, in practice they respond to highly authoritative, schematic, and prescriptive visions of the territories as defined by international environmental agencies operating at larger scales (Fig. 6.1). Even when all, or part, of these Indigenous communities, participate in the implementation of these models, they often do so to challenge and/or counter-territorialize the space, motivated by ancestral (Martínez 2015), ontological (Palomino-Schalscha 2015), heritage (Andrade and Pilquimán 2020), and cultural survival (Pilquimán 2016).



**Fig. 6.1** Model for the development of an Indigenous Conservation Territory, adaptation of a model developed by the World Wide Fund for Nature Chile. (Molina and Pávez 2012, p. 15)

### 6.3 Land, Forests, and Conflicts in the Alto Bio-Bio Region

The Pewenche define themselves as people (*che*) of the Araucaria (*pewen*), primarily because of the intimate relationship they have with this tree. The Araucaria's fruit, called *piñón* or *nguilliu*, is harvested at the end of the summer season between March and April, at which time their livestock are taken to graze on the high plains of the mountain range. The tree's pine nuts also form the basis of their diet and occupy a central place in the Pewenche economic system, as they are sold to traders who supply the regional markets. Furthermore, the Pewenche use the Araucaria as an after (*rewe*) in the traditional celebration (*nguillatun*), a ceremony that brings together members of various communities to thank God (*Ngenechen*) for the harvests and goodness granted and pray for the coming year. These examples highlight the importance of the Araucaria tree for the Pewenche identity. This insight is fundamental to understanding the conflict that has arisen around the tree's use and appropriation in the ABB. The following section dissects this conflict by exploring the dynamics of territorial dispossession that continue to affect Pewenche communities.

#### 6.3.1 Pewenche Territorial Dispossession

When the Mapuche territory was annexed to the State of Chile at the end of the nineteenth century, the mechanism that would establish Indigenous property rights had already been defined. The 1866 Titles of Merced (TM) Law would establish Indigenous property rights for reduced areas within the territories they had traditionally occupied; the remaining lands would be available for auctions, cessions, concessions, and settlement of Chilean and European settlers. Article 6 of this law specified that, "[...] all lands for which effective and continuous possession of at least one year has not been proven shall be considered uncultivated lands and, consequently, government property" (Chilean National Congress Library 1866, para. 12). This statute meant that the Pewenche's summer pasture lands in the AAB, where their prized *pinalerías* were located, were often excluded from the reductions. The Pewenche only occupied these areas for part of the year during which time they constructed mobile *outposts*; therefore, they could not prove *effective and continuous possession* (Azócar et al. 2005).

In addition, the resettlement of Indigenous people was sometimes carried out after some of the auctions and cessions had been made to settlers. For example, in Lonquimay, prior to the arrival of the Indian Registration Committee (*Comisión Radicadora de Indígenas* [CRI]) in 1896, the installation of a large number of settlers limited the possibilities of establishing Pewenche settlements. In other cases, including some sectors of the current commune of ABB, local landowners managed to prevent the arrival of the CRI, so the resettlement never took place (Molina and Correa 1996). As a result of these irregularities, many Pewenche were left without land and/or without documentation to prove their land claim, while others



experienced legalized theft via land grants that did not encompass all the land they actually occupied. By 1930, when resettlement practices were terminated with the repeal of the Law of December 4, 1866, 12 land reductions had occurred in the ABB, representing a total of 370 km<sup>2</sup> (Fig. 6.2 and Table 6.1).

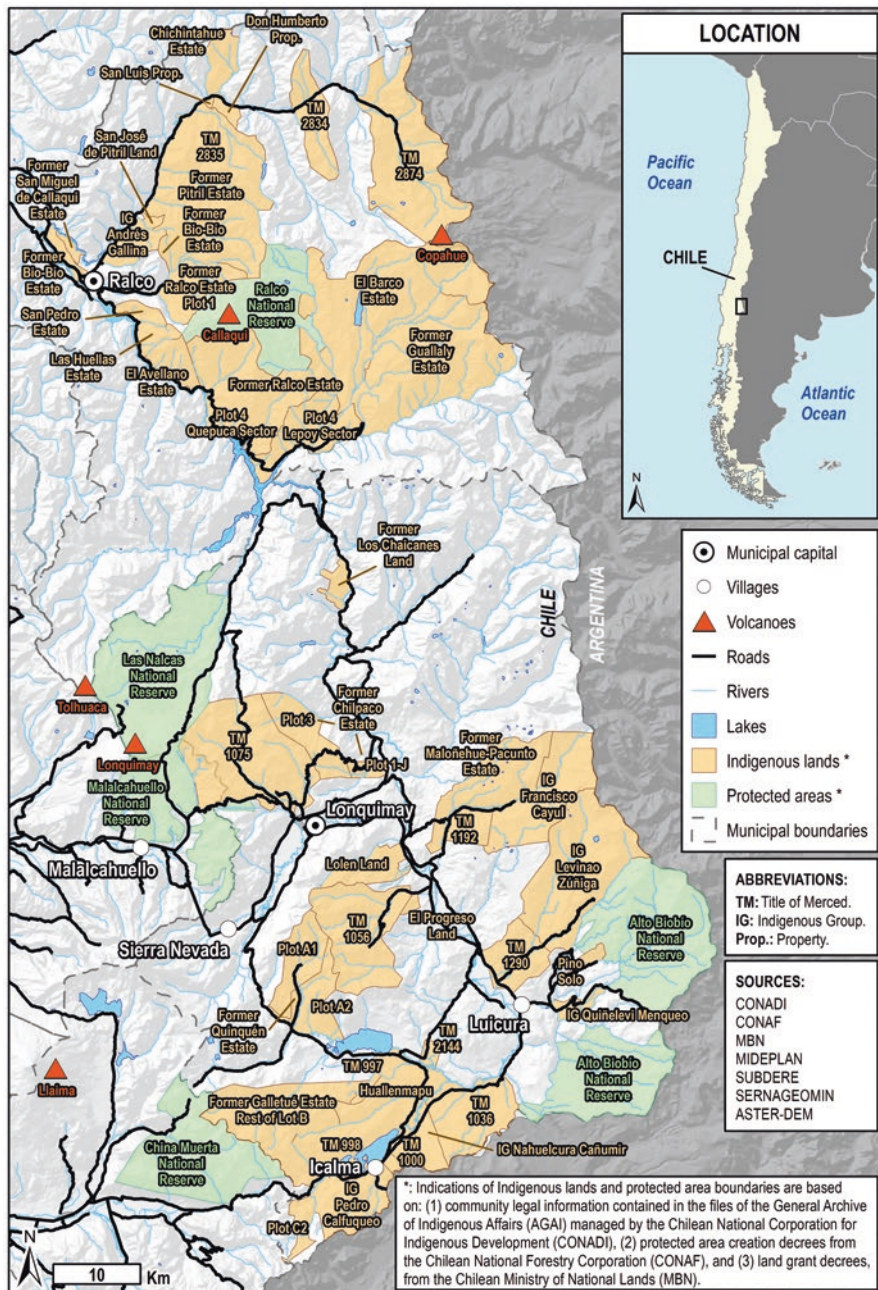


Fig. 6.2 Pewenche landholdings and protected areas in the Alto Bio-Bio region

**Table 6.1** Reductions formed in the Alto Bio-Bío region, Chilean General Archive of Indigenous Affairs, Chilean National Indigenous development corporation (CONADI)

TM	Holder	Sector	Km <sup>2</sup>	Date
997	Huenucal Ivante	Icalma	7.5	1905
998	Pedro Calfuqueo	Icalma	10	
1000	Benancio Cumillán	Cruzaco	9	
1036	Manuel & Samuel Queupu	Mariepumenuco	42	
1056	Paulino Huaiquillan	Pedregoso	28	1906
1075	Bernardo Ñanco	Naranjo	65	
1192	Francisco Cayul	Collipulli	22	1907
1290	P. Curilem, L. Zúñiga, and G. Ñehuen	Pehuenco	21	1908
2144	José Quintriqueo	Cerro Redondo	5	1911
2834	Antonio Marihuan	Malla Malla	34.44	1919
2835	José Anselmo Pavián	Cahuenucu	41.34	
2874	Antonio Canío	Trapa Trapa	84.3	1920

Half a century later, the military regime (1973–1990) resurveyed the properties in order to adapt their boundaries to the true occupation of their inhabitants, increasing the size of the Pewenche landholdings in the areas that had previously been reduced. In addition, Decree Law No. 2568, enacted in 1979, systemized the process of land division and sale within Indigenous communities, and also established the possibility for Indigenous families to petition the ceding of fiscal lands that for various reasons had not been settled. Thus, the Institute for Agricultural Development (INDAP) received 14 plots of land in the ABB to assign to Pewenche families who had been occupying them without land titles. Many Pewenche were thus able to recover their *veranadas*. When added to the lands remapped from the reductions, these transfers increased the area held by the Pewenche by a little more than 1580 km<sup>2</sup> (Table 6.2 and Fig. 6.2).

In 1993, Chile passed Law No. 19,253 (referred to as “the Indigenous Law”) which established the Fund for Indigenous Lands and Waters. This fund helps subsidize or finance the re-purchase of land for Indigenous individuals and communities. In the ABB, slightly more than 160 km<sup>2</sup> were retransferred to Pewenche families thanks to this statute. Lands were also reacquired in other ways. For example, the El Barco estate was purchased at the end of 1994 by the *Empresa Nacional de Electricidad Sociedad Anónima* (ENDESA) to relocate families whose lands were going to be (and were) flooded by the filling of the Ralco reservoir in 2004 (Hakenholz 2004). Despite these legal reacquisitions, only 50 properties (just over 2000 km<sup>2</sup>) have been recognized as the property of the Pewenche since the establishment of the first TMs in 1905. This total represents just 36% of the traditional Pewenche territory in the ABB (Table 6.3).

**Table 6.2** Pewenche lands (re)measured by the Institute for Agricultural Development (INDAP) in the Alto Bio-Bío region, Chilean General Archive of Indigenous Affairs, Chilean National Indigenous development corporation (CONADI)

Pewenche lands in the Alto Bio-Bío region	(Re)-Surveying		
	Date	Km <sup>2</sup>	
San Miguel de Callaqui Estate	1985	3.97	
Ralco Estate: Lot 1		37.1	
Ralco Estate: Lot 3–4		176.003	
Guallaly Estate		183.83	
Bío-Bío Estate: Lot A		99.69	
Bío-Bío Estate: Property 48		1986	5.49
Pitril Estate	106.62		
Gallina Indigenous Group	24.79		
Title of Merced 2834	38.40		
Title of Merced 2835	92.95		
Title of Merced 2874	137.59		
<b><i>Sub-total Alto Bio-Bío</i></b>	<b>816.49</b>		
Title of Merced 997	1983		13.78
Title of Merced 1036			67.64
Huenucal Ivante Indigenous Group			2.94
Nahuelcura Cañumir Indigenous Group	1984	16.86	
Pedro Calfuqueo Indigenous Group		56.47	
Francisco Cayul Indigenous Group		83.498	
Levinao Zúñiga Indigenous Group		134.63	
Quiñelevi Meliqueo Indigenous Group		10.211	
Title of Merced 1000		13.81	
Title of Merced 1056		99.14	
Title of Merced 1075		146.94	
Title of Merced 1192		25.20	
Title of Merced 1290		37.15	
Title of Merced 2144	5		
Title of Merced 998	1987	51.12	
<b><i>Sub-total Lonquimay</i></b>	<b>764.42</b>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>1580.91</b>		

**Table 6.3** Pewenche landholdings in the Alto Bio-Bio, Chilean General Archive of Indigenous Affairs, National Indigenous development corporation (CONADI)

Acquisition method	Property	Km <sup>2</sup>
Commission for the Settlement of Indians (1905–1920)	12	728.78
Institute for Agricultural Development (1987–1991)	14	852.14
Fund for Indigenous Lands and Waters (since 1993)	12	160.95
Other modalities	12	445.63
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>2187.51</b>

### 6.3.2 *Araucaria Harvesting and Protection*

The delayed and partial recognition of the Pewenche lands directly affected the conflicts that arose when forestry companies entered the ABB with the specific intention of exploiting the *pinalerías*. Luis Otero (2006) recalled that the construction of the Las Raíces tunnel, in 1938, “opened to exploitation the entire araucaria zone of the Alto Bío-Bío” (p. 119). This tunnel, which extended 4.5 km, facilitated rail connectivity between the area and the coast; much later, in 2005, this route was converted to facilitate automobile traffic. He recounted that nearly 300 km<sup>2</sup> of Araucaria forests were harvested for lumber within a period of 60 years. As a result of this pressure, Araucaria logging was regulated for the first time in 1969, based on the argument made in the Supreme Decree N°94 of the Ministry of Agriculture, “[...] that there is a risk of extinction of the Araucaria Araucana species due to the exploitation to which it has been subjected.”

By this time, logging companies had already intruded on Pewenche lands. For communities that possessed formal recognition of their territorial rights, these conflicts could be resolved through just compensation to the Pewenche, generated by revenue from the timber that had previously been harvested on their lands. In Pedregoso, for example, two lumber companies that exploited the neighboring lands, subsequently encroached within the boundaries of TM 1056; as the Pewenche had a clearly established TM, they had recourse and ended up signing several purchase and sale contracts with the lumber company between 1964 and 1974.

Cases where communities did not yet have land titles were much more complicated to resolve. In Ralco, for example, the Pewenche were still considered illegal occupants of their lands when Araucaria exploitation began. The Ralco estate had been registered in the land registry in 1881 by Rafael Anguita, then ex-mayor of Los Angeles, and through successive transfers, in 1949, it transferred to Dionisio González, who contributed it to the working capital of the Ralco Lumber Holding Company (*Maderas Ralco Sociedad Anónima*) in 1962. The cutting of Araucaria trees began 4 years later. The Pewenche quickly petitioned the government to stop this logging, and in 1972, Chile declared “the Araucaria forests of the Ralco Estate, in the commune of Santa Bárbara” a national park (Chilean Ministry of Lands and Colonization 1972). While the decree of 1969 had only established harvesting regulations, this new regulation conferred absolute protection to the Araucaria within the limits of the Ralco estate (Molina and Correa 1996).

The Chilean government’s response to the logging of Araucarias in Ralco has not been favorable for the Pewenche to date, as the new PA deprived the Pewenche of possession and access to their summer pastures (Aagesen 1998). Nevertheless, under Chile’s National Reserve PA mandate, the possibility of integrating the needs of local communities into the management of the PA exists so, over time, this situation may continue to evolve (Sepúlveda and Guyot 2016). It is interesting to note that, far from being unique to the Ralco case, the creation of Chilean PAs for conservation purposes on lands claimed by Indigenous communities is widespread and

has perpetuated the process of territorial alienation initiated during the conquest of Mapuche territory (Sepúlveda and Guyot 2016). The same logic was at work in Quinquén where, in addition to opposing the logging of their forests, the Pewenche families had to deal with the Galletué Society's attempts to evict them from their lands. This conflict gained notoriety at the national level (Bengoa 1992), but interestingly, in this case, the desire to create a National Reserve on the lands recovered from the Galletué Society was opposed by an alternative project that proposed the development of tourism as a primary mechanism for the protection of the Araucaria forests (Reyes 2006).

## 6.4 Tourism as an Alternative Protection Resource: The Case of Quinquén

The Quinquén community is made up of approximately 250 people, distributed among 52 families who live at the headwaters of the Biobío River in the commune of Lonquimay. They depend heavily on natural resources for both food security and cultural subsistence. Quinquén is also a community recognized internationally for its historical struggle against landowners and logging companies in the late 1980s. This prolonged struggle resulted in the declaration of the Araucaria as a Chilean Natural Monument in 1990, and much later—in 2007—the granting of formal land ownership to the Quinquén community (Molina 2015). This section describes the slow but progressive process of touristification (i.e., a complex process of territorial transformation through tourism) of Pewenche community spaces and the environmental and regulatory conditions that drove the families of Quinquén to participate in community-based tourism initiatives.

### 6.4.1 *From the Creation of a Regulatory Landscape...*

The Pewenche of Quinquén have coexisted in a close symbiotic relationship with the Araucaria forests. They have protected Araucaria habitat from anthropogenic threats, denouncing illegal logging and even confronting the logging companies that endangered it through overexploitation (e.g., in *Forestal Casagrande*, *Forestal Malleco*, and *Sociedad Galletué*; Bengoa 1992). As a result of these mobilizations and the support of national and international environmental organizations, Supreme Decree N°43 was promulgated in 1990, which established the protection of the Araucaria from any form of exploitation (see Table 6.4). This decree was of crucial importance for the inhabitants of Quinquén and all the Pewenche communities, since it recognized that the Araucaria “is intimately linked to values and principles that make up the historical, social, and cultural heritage of the Mapuche people and the nation as a whole.”

**Table 6.4** Chilean regulatory frameworks with impact on Quinquén

Legislation	Content	Validity
D.S. N°94/1969	Approves regulations for the exploitation of Araucaria Araucana timber.	Repealed (05/12/1970)
S.D. N°157/1969	Amends D.S. N°94/1969.	Repealed (05/12/1970)
D.S. N°439/1970	Approves new regulations for the exploitation of Araucaria Araucana timber and repeals the supreme decrees mentioned therein.	Repealed (04/26/1976)
Agreement N°2065/1971	Expropriation of Fundo Quinquén by the Corporation for Agrarian Reform (CORA).	Revoked (19/07/1974)
D.S. N°29/1976	Declares the Araucaria Araucana a Natural Monument.	Repealed (26/12/1987)
D.S. N°259 /1980	Regulation of D.L. No. 701/ 1974 on Forestry Development.	Amended (12/06/1998)
D.S. N°141/1987	Declares the Araucaria Araucana a Natural Monument in the places indicated and regulates its use in sectors located outside such places.	Repealed (03/04/1990)
D.S. N°43/1990	Declares the Araucaria Araucana a Natural Monument.	Current
D.S. N°56/1991	Creates the Lago Galletué National Reserve in the commune of Lonquimay.	
Law No. 19253/1993	Establishes norms for the protection, promotion, and development of Indigenous people, and creates the National Corporation for Indigenous Development.	Current
D.S. N°27/1997	It removes Lago Galletué National Reserve from its status as such.	
D.E. 525/2003	Authorizes the cutting of forest specimens indicated.	Repealed (12/23/2004)
Law No. 20283/2008	Law on native forest recovery and forestry promotion.	Current
D.E. 654/2009	Complements D.S. N°490/1976, N°43/1990 and N°13/1995, exempted, which declared natural monuments to different forest species.	Repealed (12/08/2011)
Decree N°146/2019	Declares Lonquimay a Zone of Tourist Interest.	Current

<sup>a</sup>DE Exempt Decree, DL Decree Law, DS Supreme Decree

This legal recognition was pivotal for the subsequent heritage protection of the Araucaria species. And, to give even greater protection to the ecosystems where the Araucaria grows, Supreme Decree No. 56 was issued in 1991, creating the Lago Galletué National Reserve (Fig. 6.3). This regulation established, among other considerations, that the habitat of the Araucaria:

[...] is very fragile, and its alterations are irreversible, which is why this species – despite having been declared a Natural Monument – is vulnerable to extinction, making it necessary to act with the utmost urgency in order to stop the process of deterioration that affects it. (D.S. N°56/1991)

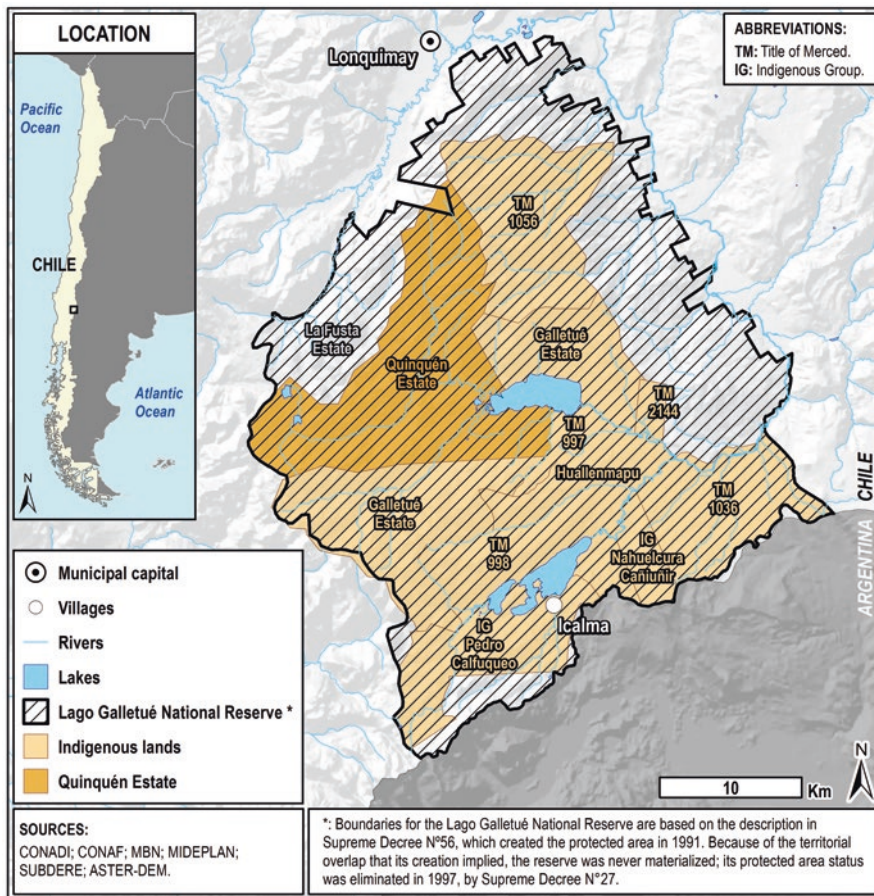


Fig. 6.3 Lago Galletué National Reserve, Lonquimay, according to D.S. N°56/1991

Through this act, the government placed several Indigenous communities, including Quinquén, within the limits of a 290.3 km<sup>2</sup> PA; thus, its implementation had important consequences in terms of both territorial configuration and access to the available natural resources. Actually, the Lago Galletué National Reserve never became a reality. In order to at least partially solve the problems caused by the territorial overlap that its creation implied, Supreme Decree N°27 was promulgated in 1997. This decree removed the protected area status to facilitate the transfer of land ownership to the National Indigenous Development Corporation (CONADI), which would subsequently grant land titles to the members of the Indigenous communities claiming territorial rights in the Reserve’s area.

In 1995, the community of Quinquén was formally declared an Indigenous Community, under the protection of the Indigenous Law, which recognizes the importance of the land for the cultural existence of the Indigenous Peoples, ensuring

its “adequate use, ecological conservation, and development.” By virtue of this law, multiple mechanisms of subordination were activated, both of the Indigenous people through neo-developmental ventures, and of the geographic space through the environmentalization of the territory. This law also incorporated the creation of Indigenous Development Areas (*Áreas de Desarrollo Indígena* [ADI]), which are territorial planning instruments designed to facilitate and focus the transfer of resources to sectors considered a priority in terms of development. When the Indigenous Law was enacted, the Galletué-Icalma sector was identified as a key area in which the creation of an ADI could be integrated with the Lago Galletué National Reserve, a project that was opposed by the inhabitants of Quinquén who did not want to see an external development model imposed on them (Dodge and Reyes 1995).

Quinquén community agency has had to adapt to this succession of contradictory laws (e.g., environmental, forestry, Indigenous), which together make up the region’s “regulatory landscape.” This concept refers to how legal provisions manifest in geographical space, including through the creation of PAs, forest reserves, or Indigenous territories. The effects of these provisions have manifested in their capacity to produce different types of subjectivity; that is, the way in which people are defined collectively and individually in relation to the space they occupy (e.g., the inhabitants of Indigenous communities are *comuneros*). Indeed, it is through this exercise of government sovereignty that spaces are conceptualized, defined, and shaped based on the government’s interests and vision for the land, its resources, and its inhabitants. Locations deemed appropriate for tourism development are constructed in this manner.

#### 6.4.2 ...To the Touristification of Quinquén

In Quinquén, the coexistence of millenary *pinalerías* and Pewenche families constitutes an exemplary case to explain the geographic dynamics resulting from the wide repertoire of practices deployed by: (a) the regulatory action of the State, such as land designations, forestry laws, territorial ordinances, formal recognition of ancestral rights, development of entrepreneurship programs, and zoning; (b) the action of governmental and non-governmental, national, and international agencies, by way of forest monitoring, programs to support conservation, climate change mitigation, and ecosystem protection; and (c) Indigenous agency action to negotiate both intra- and extra-community agreements to gain access to natural resources in their territories, including a slow but steady process of counter-territorialization.

This interaction between government regulation, conservation interests and initiatives, and Indigenous rights advocacy in the region brought about the gradual touristification of Quinquén. The regulatory frameworks that were imposed to safeguard the region’s resources from exploitation also restricted access to these resources to Indigenous communities, thereby impacting Indigenous livelihoods and leaving tourism as the only viable economic alternative. Tourism in Quinquén



was seen as being a local management strategy for conservation, management, and environmental protection; also it represented the result (although not necessarily intentional) of strong essentialist pressures, since they installed subjectivation practices that placed the inhabitants of a territory as naturally gifted for the development of a single economic activity. In this sense, the aforementioned regulatory conditions have been decisive for the touristification of the territory where these families live or, in other words, for the emergence of what is known as the “tourist vocation” of the territory.

Tourism development in Quinquén can be summarized in three key phases: (a) Informal tourism development, (b) Initiatives of the Quimque Wentrú Indigenous Association, and (c) Creation of the Quinquén Pewenche Park.

**Informal Tourism Development** Ever since the legal settlement in Quinquén, some of its inhabitants began to receive travelers on their way to other destinations that were attracted both by the scenic beauty of the surroundings and by the tourist promotion of the *Araucanía Andina* destination. Some of these travelers stayed for the entire summer season on the shores of the Galletué Lake. Along with these visitors came some undesired consequences. They did not bring resources to the community, or when they did, it was limited to minor forms of compensation such as exchanges for food. They damaged the bush flora to make firewood and left garbage and solid waste for the community to manage. Free transit to the lake area deteriorated the road and caused problems for community members who had their houses near the road or the lake area. These economic and environmental impacts motivated the community to seek external support in order to confront and organize against the emerging tourism activity.

**Initiatives of the Quimque Wentrú Indigenous Association** In 1996, community leaders, supported by external institutions, created the Quimque Wentrú Indigenous Association, a legal entity protected under the Indigenous Law that would allow them to advance their own development agenda (Arce et al. 2016). This association included members of the Huenucal Ivante, Kmkeñ (vernacular name of Quinquén), Marimenuco, Pedregoso, and Pedro Calfuqueo communities and aimed to recover land for families that had not benefited from the previous laws of Indigenous settlement and territorial recognition. As a result of the association’s efforts, international aid funds were obtained for the development of a series of initiatives that sought to ensure the economic sustainability of the lands they had received through its productive use. For example, a building was purchased in the town of Lonquimay. Initially, this building allowed association members from distant areas to stay overnight in the town to carry out their business. Later it was converted into the Follil Pewenche Inn (Fig. 6.4).

To add property value and complement the services that would be offered at the Inn, the association created four trails (mainly for horseback riding) and a camping area at the Galletué Lake (Fig. 6.5). These trails were constructed in traditional use areas and, in summer, were offered to occasional visitors for hiking or flora and fauna observation. Along the same lines, in 2001 the community implemented the



**Fig. 6.4** Follil Pewenche Inn in Lonquimay



**Fig. 6.5** Campground in Quinquén

project known as *Ecotourism for the conservation of the Araucaria: a challenge for the Pewenche Quimque Wentrú association of the Lonquimay commune*, in order to give greater impetus to tourism development. The objectives of this project were to promote both the conservation of the area's existing Araucaria forests and the dissemination of the Pewenche culture (Reyes 2006). To support the transition to tourism, the association procured resources to hire a full-time consultant to provide programming support, such as gastronomy, guide training, and administration. In developing these initiatives, the community established alliances with governmental and non-governmental forestry agencies such as the Chilean Committee for the Defense of Flora and Fauna (CODEFF), the Chilean National Forestry Corporation (CONAF), and the Model Forest program.

**Creation of the Quinquén Pewenche Park** Between 2009 and 2011, the community participated in the project: *Model of Areas Conserved by Indigenous Communities for the Development of Ecotourism and Biodiversity: proposal based on a pilot experience of a Pehuenche community park in the community of Quinquén, in the Andean Araucanía*. This project's primary goal was to transform the community open space into the first Indigenous Conservation Territory in Chile by creating Quinquén Pewenche Park. The initiative was implemented by the World Wildlife Fund, one of the largest international conservation organizations, with support from the Regional Government of La Araucanía, the Municipality of Lonquimay, and the Chilean National Tourism Service (SERNATUR). The community maintains a close collaborative relationship with WWF to this day (Aylwin and Cuadra 2011).

The project sought to make conservation-based tourism the main focus of the community. The Quinquén Pewenche Cooperative was created to promote intra-community connections and linkages by coordinating activities such as horseback riding, gastronomy, hiking service providers, as well as producers of leather, wood, and textile handicrafts. A welcome center (*Kukañwe Ruka*) was set up to provide information to tourists, along with a network of trails and signage reflecting the varying degrees of difficulty, with the Araucaria forests as the main attraction (Fig. 6.6). A participatory land-use planning process was also carried out to demarcate the areas that would be used for tourism and to protect the areas considered sacred and/or of high cultural value by the community.

Quinquén's location in the midst of millenary Araucaria forests has framed an imaginary of harmonious coexistence between its inhabitants and nature, which has been essential for the implementation of conservationist agendas and associated tourism development. This imaginary has not arisen exclusively as a result of the action of powers outside the community. The inhabitants of Quinquén have been instrumental to the protection of the Araucaria ecosystem and saw the touristification of their territory as a means to achieve this end. In the face of significant external pressures from both conservation and development interests, the Quinquén community saw tourism as a viable means of preserving its agency/sovereignty over its territories and taking control of the reterritorialization process.



Fig. 6.6 Welcome signs to the Quinquén Indigenous conservation territory

However, the promises of conservation tourism have not yielded the expected results. This is partly because of the strict safety standards and health codes that must be met in order to obtain permits and financing, and also because the income generated is neither consistent nor adequate to reverse the ongoing marginalization of the Quinquén community. In sum, although tourism development is not the definitive solution, it has provided the inhabitants of Quinquén with alternative opportunities for empowerment and control over unfolding reterritorialization processes that are also compatible with the emerging global conservation agenda.

## 6.5 Conclusion

As this chapter has demonstrated, the territories of the northern Patagonian Andes have been the object of an evolving geographical imaginary, which has aspired to control the region's development since the mid-nineteenth century. This imaginary was constructed to ensure the incorporation of these territories within the Chilean and Argentine nations and has inspired a series of concrete political strategies to strengthen private property rights, facilitate the introduction of agriculture, and promote the dispossession and resettlement of Indigenous lands. In the twentieth

century, this same imaginary evolved, creating national areas for conservation and other areas that were deemed appropriate for timber harvesting. A lack of controls opened these areas to indiscriminate logging. The development of the railroad and later inclusion within bioceanic corridors, converted these logging areas into integration territories, facilitating tourism and their conception as biodiversity conservation areas of binational scope. As these strategies have evolved, the territory has been further integrated through environmental governmentalities that have been layered through their inclusion within the global network of UNESCO biosphere reserves, their rediscovery as sites of geological interest, or their designation as Indigenous conservation territories, and ZOITs. This constant transformation of *territorial orders* has resulted in the production of successive geographical imaginaries.

The participation of the Pewenche in community-based tourism initiatives resulted from a combination of external structuring forces and endogenous decisions. It allowed the Pewenche to take control of different elements of tourism in order to advance their own reterritorialization agenda, helping them retain sovereignty over their lands and erase the marks of colonialism. For example, for the Pewenche, the term *lof* refers to the community as a politically organized social group that is based on kinship. The reappropriation of this term *lof* in Quinquén, in connection with its community-based and centered development as a tourist destination, contrasts sharply with the term *Indigenous reduction* that has traditionally been employed by the state to describe Indigenous living spaces. This reappropriation illustrates how tourism can be an opportunity for identity revitalization.

In spite of the implementation and repercussions we have outlined, tourism has facilitated a shift in Indigenous agency. Strategically employed as a tool, tourism has allowed Indigenous communities to influence the transformation of geographical imaginaries, empowering communities to exercise control and counteract powers that have successively denied their existence and/or relegated them to the margins of the capitalist resource exploitation process, thus delegitimizing their territorial demands. Nevertheless, as in the case of the Pewenche communities and the Araucaria forests, associating Indigenous identity with environmental conservation through tourism development required they assume a central role in the production of a new imaginary based on the recognition of their ontologies and ways of life, and consequently of their territorial rights. In turn, this imaginary assumes a kind of strategic essentialism, calibrated by current movements (e.g., bioculturalism, multiculturalism, development with identity) that seek to make Indigenous subjectivities compatible with the demands of the neoliberal paradigm (Krell 2020). What is certain is that the struggle for the production and recomposition of geographical imaginaries in Norpatagonia is—and will continue to be—characterized by the growing participation and mobilization of Indigenous communities in the environmentalization of their territories.

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