



The (in)commensurable values of alerce. Mercantile, communal, and patrimonial dynamics throughout the socioenvironmental history of Cochamó, Chile [

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Analítica

The alerce, named lahuán or lahual en mapuche language and Fitzroya cupressoides as a scientific name, is a tree species of considerable height and exceptional longevity, which is endemic to Chilean and Argentinean south. Its wood has been highly valued for its low weight, resistance to humidity and malleability. This paper is based on an ethnography of Cochamó's territory, in Chilean Patagonia, and it analyzes the forms of relation between human and alerces from a diachronic perspective, focusing on the processes of creation of value by understanding them in the context of local and global nets of power, commerce and meaning. In this sense, we highlight three systems of values: the commodity value of the colonial era; the communal value related to the domestic use of alerce wood of a society of marginal settlers; the patrimonial value that fosters contemporary processes of turistification and conservation

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