

Argentina to exterminate 100,000 ravenous beavers

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During a beaver cull in Argentina, experts will catch the beavers in traps and then bash them on the head to kill them quickly

Argentina will cull 100,000 beavers which are devastating southern woodlands by gnawing down huge trees, officials said Monday.

The plague of big-toothed rodents has struck in the Tierra del Fuego province, a far southern region known as "the End of the World."

"They can cut down a small tree in a few hours and a big one in days. We are talking about trees that are 100 or 150 years old and they do not grow back," said the region's conservation chief Erio Curto.

"They cut down trees on the riverbank so the water overflows and floods everything," he told reporters.

He said Argentine authorities had signed an agreement to exterminate the [beavers](#) with neighboring Chile. The surrounding Patagonia region spans the border of the two countries.

Experts in the [provincial government](#) said it could take as long as 10 to 15 years to cull all the beavers.

The cull is backed by the United Nations and environmental groups.

Experts will catch the beavers in traps and then bash them on the head to kill them quickly, officials said.

A few dozen beavers were brought from Canada and introduced to the region in 1946 to breed for their fur. But their breeding has got out of control.

Authorities estimate the beavers have destroyed an area twice the size of Buenos Aires.

"When I saw it I was reminded of Poland after the Second World War, where all the [trees](#) had been blown away," said the prominent naturalist Claudio Bertonatti, speaking in a recent documentary.

"What had happened? Beavers, that's what had happened," he said, interviewed in the documentary, "Beavers: the Invasion at the End of the World."

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