



## **Forests on Tenerife – An emerald island in the Atlantic**

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**In partnership with José Garcia Casanova**

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## Report 2

An important step in protecting the pine forest on Tenerife was the designation as the El Teide National Park in 1954. However, the park is very popular and among the most visited parks of the world which puts a lot of pressure on nature. The problem is when people don't follow the rules of the park like leaving trash behind, not following the paths or cutting and taking plants with them. People can also actively ignite fires causing devastating forest fires.

Furthermore, not all pine forests lie within the park boundaries, hence, those areas are not properly protected from economic activities like constructions. Another issue are herbivores like rabbits or sheep that put high grazing pressure on plants. At certain locations within the park, enclosures have been set up that keep out herbivores. This is working well as the plants can grow without herbivore grazing. In the area without fences, however, the plants are not protected.

The Laurel forest is designated as a Rural Park which is a different protection category from the National Park. Rural Parks have different zones where human activities are allowed to various degrees while in other zones no human activities are allowed. This has helped the forest to recover and many species are doing better. However, the park is facing similar issues as the Teide National Park with visitors putting pressure on nature and disregarding rules. More forest rangers are required to patrol the forests to control that people behave according to the rules

Finally, fires are a particularly big threat as the status as a protection status does not protect the forests from fires. There should be more surveillance in the forest to prevent people from causing fires. There should also be more monitoring to spot fires and act more quickly to get them under control. The old pine plantations are particularly problematic because they contain high amounts of biomass that burns more quickly.



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