
[Argentina: environmental justice in action](#)

The Court of Rio Negro province in Argentina accepted a petition signed by citizen Jorge Ronco against EDERSA (Empresa de Energia Rio Negro S.A.) and DPA (Provincial Department of Waters) for the environmental damages caused by the hydroelectric project undertaken by both companies in El Bolson area, in the Patagonia region.

The project, in which U\$S 10 millions were to be invested, started in 1993 and was presented as a development opportunity for the region. Nevertheless, it ignored the requirements of Law nr. 2342/89 and no environmental impact assessment was carried out. It was then when Mr Ronco, inhabitant of the area, decided to sue the companies. A group of academics, headed by Prof. Luis Sancholuz of the Bariloche University Regional Centre of the Comahue National University evaluated the damages caused by the works.

The Court established that an ecological crime has been committed and that the environmental damage has to be reverted. The rivers' and creeks' margins will now have to be reforested with native species to restore the ecosystem.

It is the first time that offenders of the Environmental Law are taken to court in Rio Negro, and this is certainly a good sign for the future.

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