

## Daniela Gomel

### Fundación Vida Silvestre Argentina



**Daniela Gomel** is a public policy and governance specialist at Fundación Vida Silvestre, a World Wildlife Fund (WWF) partner organization in Argentina. She manages the policy and governance dimensions of several projects related to forests, protected areas, plastics and climate change. Daniela also coordinates a Targeting Natural Resource Corruption (TNRC) pilot project that focuses on promoting transparency and sharing learning to address corruption that undermines effective governance in the fisheries sector, particularly at the capture stage.

## Her Story

### What does your role entail?

I coordinate a pilot project that has developed an electronic system (known as an e-logbook) for reporting fishing information at the capture stage. This involves working with ship captains and owners who are willing to test and provide feedback on the system. To scale up the e-logbook, I'm also working to advance policy on traceability and to prioritize the issue on the public agenda in Argentina. As part of our outreach

efforts, I've worked with my team to create advocacy materials, request meetings with key decision makers, participate in Congressional debates, release media contents, and organize and/or participate in events to advocate for the adoption of a traceability regulation.

## What drivers or facilitators of corruption are you working to address?

I'm working to address illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing—specifically discards and bycatch of endangered species. In some cases, fishing vessel captains and inspectors collude to hide their actions to avoid penalties. The lack of information about these practices hinders efforts to establish policies that prevent such activity. At Vida Silvestre, we are working to tackle the lack of regulations and insufficient implementation of existing regulations by promoting supply chain transparency to reduce discards and bycatch. While the e-logbook is one solution at the capture stage, implementing traceability regulations is also important to improve the rest of the supply chain.

“Targeting corruption opens new windows of opportunity to address environmental challenges.”

– Daniela Gomel, Fundación Vida Silvestre Argentina

## Is there a critical moment that set you on the course you're on now?

As a political scientist, I have been involved in the design and implementation of various environmental policies. When I joined the Vida Silvestre team, I started to focus specifically on fishery issues and institutional needs to improve marine conservation outcomes. I realized that we had vast experience working at the field-level but were doing less work on policy reforms that are important for scaling good practices. Moreover, we needed to strengthen our consideration of international context, as new

requirements from importing countries are being launched or drafted. We've found that some other countries in the region have relevant experience in fishery traceability that could be adapted in Argentina. Our TNRC pilot project has enabled us to bring new stakeholders together to try a new approach to working on fishery sector challenges stemming from corruption and lack of transparency.

## What's something unexpected that you've learned through your work?

I've learned that captains and ship owners are willing to talk about corruption in protected environments, but there is limited current incentive to address this issue, since the costs of doing so are high. I was originally concerned that gender barriers may hamper our efforts (most of our pilot design team are women, whereas we're chiefly working with men on implementation). But in general, the process has been a great experience.

## What would you say to other practitioners seeking to address corruption through their conservation programming?

I would offer two pieces of advice: First, find ways to adapt your narrative to context. Some partners can be uncomfortable with the word “corruption”. Using other accepted language is ok –the impact of the work is what matters. Second, there's a lot of information out there to support different approaches for measuring impact. Do not be afraid of new indicators and evaluation methods. These can help you more effectively tackle conservation problems in new ways.

## What gives you hope for the future?

When working directly with people, it's possible to find common ground and bring out their own desires to change practices. There's also strong potential to build consensus in the policy arena to develop better regulations that benefit both people and our environment.

### About Targeting Natural Resource Corruption

The Targeting Natural Resource Corruption (TNRC) project is working to improve biodiversity outcomes by helping practitioners to address the threats posed by corruption to wildlife, fisheries and forests. TNRC harnesses existing knowledge, generates new evidence, and supports innovative policy and practice for more effective anti-corruption programming. Learn more at [tnrcproject.org](http://tnrcproject.org).

### Disclaimer

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