

Strategies to Reduce Deforestation in Brazil - Outline

This publication, which was released at the Rio+20 Conference, summarizes the strategy used by the Brazilian Government since 2005 to combat and reduce deforestation, illegal logging and fires in the forests and savannas of the Brazilian Amazon and since 2009 in the Cerrado biome. The Cerrado is the vast savanna region of central Brazil, covering a quarter of the country. The programs described here covered three fourths of the country and brought down the deforestation rate in the Amazon by 80%. The publication describes several policy instruments that were and continue to be utilized, among them:

1. Legal requirement for all rural lands/establishments to maintain native ecosystems in vulnerable areas (along rivers, mountain slopes and catchment areas) - denominated Areas for Permanent Preservation (APPs), established by the Brazilian Forest Code (since 1934, revised in 1965, again in 2001 and finally in 2012);
2. Legal requirement to maintain additionally at least 20% (in the Amazon 80%) of all rural areas/establishments with native ecosystems where no clear cutting is allowed but where sustainable selective logging and exploitation of non-timber forest products are permitted - denominated Legal Reserves (RLs), established by the Brazilian Forest Code (since 1934, revised in 1965, again in 1988 and 2001 and finally in 2012);
3. Wall to wall annual remote sensing, since 1988 in the Brazilian Amazon (Deforestation Monitoring Project - PRODES done by INPE); webpage available at <http://www.obt.inpe.br/prodes/index.php> [since early 2000s the NGO IMAZON has also been conducting independent monitoring of deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon. Website in English available at <http://www.imazon.org.br/pagina-inicial-en>];
4. Wall to wall annual remote sensing since 2008 [baseline 2002] in the Cerrado and all other biomes (PMDBBS done by IBAMA); website available at <http://siscom.ibama.gov.br/monitorabiomas/> [since 1990 the NGO SOS Atlantic Forest and INPE have been producing independent remote sensing of deforestation of the Atlantic Forest biome of forest fragments larger than 100 hectares in 1985] website available at <http://www.sosma.org.br/5697/sos-mata-atlantica-e-inpe-divulgam-dados-do-atlas-dos-remanescentes-florestais-da-mata-atlantica-no-periodo-de-2010-a-2011/>];
5. Wall to wall daily remote sensing of fires in all of Brazil since 1988 (Monitoring of Vegetation Fires by Satellite in Near Real-time Project done by INPE); webpage in English available at <http://www.inpe.br/queimadas/>];
6. Monthly wall to wall remote sensing since May 2004 in the Brazilian Amazon (DETER done by INPE); webpage available at <http://www.obt.inpe.br/deter/> [Since 2003 monthly wall to wall remote sensing of deforestation in the Cerrado have been conducted by the Federal University of Goias in partnership with the NGOs Conservation International/Brazil and TNC/Brazil (Systematic Monitoring of Deforestation in the Cerrado Biome - SIAD-Cerrado done by UFG); webpage available at http://www.lapig.iesa.ufg.br/lapig/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=38&Itemid=52];
7. Annual remote sensing of forest degradation (illegal selective logging, etc) since 2007 in the Amazon (DEGRAD done by INPE); webpage available at <http://www.obt.inpe.br/degrad/>];

8. Law enforcement campaigns since 1989 by the Brazilian Environment Institute (IBAMA) supported by the Federal Police and the Army, with use of remote sensing data and other intelligence data and helicopters;
9. Restriction of access to credit from the Federal Government to Municipalities which are included in a Black List of worst deforestation rates (resolutions by the Brazilian Central Bank and the Brazilian MoE);
10. Low interest credit lines made available for low carbon emission agricultural practices by public banks (technical orientation by the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation - Embrapa, resolutions by the Brazilian Central Bank, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Climate Fund, operated by the National Bank for Economic and Social Development on behalf of the Brazilian MoE);
11. Low interest rate loans and grants for ecosystem restoration and sustainable use available from the Regional Constitutional Development Funds for the Amazon (operated by the Bank of the Amazon), for the Dry Northeastern Brazil (operated by the Bank of Northeastern Brazil) and for the Cerrado and Pantanal of Central Brazil (operated by the Bank of Brazil);
12. Grants available for ecosystem conservation, restoration and sustainable use available on a competitive basis from the Amazon Fund (operated by the National Bank for Economic and Social Development on behalf of the Brazilian MoE) and the National Environmental Fund operated by the Brazilian MoE;
13. Requirement for all rural lands/establishments to register with the Environmental Rural Registry (CAR) and inform if they comply with the environmental requirements of the Brazilian Forest Code - till recently this was a voluntary requirement, but the revised Forest Code of 2012 made it now obligatory to all.
14. In cases of detected non-compliance to the environmental requirements of the Forest Code, land owners and users are now obliged by the revised Forest Code of 2012 to agree, to implement, on a case by case basis, with the State Environment or Forest Agency with an ecosystem restoration project (PRA);
15. Wall to wall annual remote sensing of the whole country with high resolution RapidEye images (5m resolution) now made available by the Brazilian MoE for all agencies in Brazil (specifically to be used in the implementation of the the CAR and the PRAs);
16. Payment for Ecosystem Services paid to local communities living inside sustainable use federal protected areas in the Amazon (Bolsa Verde Program implemented by the Chico Mendes Institute for Biodiversity Conservation of the Brazilian MoE in partnership with the Ministry of Social Development) and in sustainable use protected areas administered by the State of Amazonas, in partnership with the large private bank BRADESCO (Bolsa Florest Program);
17. Voluntary commitment since 2006 of private grain companies in Brazil (pushed by Greenpeace Brazil) not to buy soya from farms producing in recently deforested areas (with independent remote sensing paid by grain companies to certify compliance) (Soya Moratorium by the Brazilian Industries Association of Vegetable Oils - ABIOVE and the Brazilian Association of Grains Exporters - ANEC) website available at <http://www.abiove.org.br/site/?page=moratoria-da-soja&area=NS0zLTE=>

18. Voluntary sustainable forest management certification of timber extraction operations by FSC accredited organizations and by CERFLOR/PEFC accredited organizations; websites available at <http://www.florestal.gov.br/snif/producao-florestal/certificacao-florestal> , <http://br.fsc.org/newsroom.261.3.htm> , <http://www.inmetro.gov.br/qualidade/cerflor.asp>

19. There are many civil society initiatives to promote sustainable consumption of timber in Brazil, with formal commitments from many State and Municipal governments, industries, retailers, etc., such as the Madeira Legal (Legal Timber) initiative. webpage available at <http://www.madeiralegal.org.br/madeira.htm> [Chapter three of the Brazilian 4th National Report list several such voluntary initiatives]

20. Voluntary commitment of large meat companies not to buy cattle from recently deforested areas in the Amazon, the Carne Legal (Legal Meat) Campaign promoted by the National Bank for Economic and Social Development (a big lender to the sector), big retailers/supermarkets chains and by the Federal Public Attorneys Offices; webpage available at <http://www.carnelegal.mpf.gov.br/>

21. Expansion of the National Protected Areas System (SNUC), under the coordination of the Brazilian MoE (total area doubled since 2002, mostly in the Amazon where PAs currently represent more than 27% (greatly supported by the ARPA project funded by GEF and other sources);

22. Recognition and demarcation of Indigenous Lands (currently more than 13% of the Brazilian territory and just over 20% of the Brazilian Amazon are under Indigenous Lands).

There are several other important initiatives that contribute to combat deforestation, but the above are certainly the most important ones (most of them at the federal level). There are many more initiatives at the State and Municipal levels as well as many civil society initiatives.