

## **EMBARGOED UNTIL NOV 13 2017 – 1:30 PM (BONN TIME)**

### **Study launched at COP23 indicates pathways for Brazil to eliminate deforestation in the Amazon**

The Working Group (WG) for Zero Deforestation - composed by NGOs Amazon Environmental Research Institute (IPAM), Greenpeace, *Instituto Centro de Vida*, Imaflora, Imazon, *Instituto Socioambiental*, TNC, and WWF launched the report "A Pathway to Zero Deforestation in the Amazon" this Monday (13) at COP23 in Bonn. In the study, organizations indicate ways to eliminate deforestation in the Amazon in the short term, with environmental, economic and social benefits for all.

In 2016, deforestation in the Amazon alone accounted for 26% of domestic emissions of greenhouse gases. Zero deforestation is therefore the fastest and easiest way to reduce emissions and comply with the Paris agreement.

The WG argues that there is no longer any justifiable reason for the destruction of native vegetation in Brazil. Continuing deforestation results in an imbalance of the climate, destroys biodiversity and water resources, damages human health and, contrary to what many believe, compromises the competitiveness of agricultural production.

The good news is that Brazil already knows the path to zero deforestation and knows how to get there. "The measures implemented in recent years (2005-2012) have cut deforestation rates in the Amazon by about 70% and indicate that the elements needed to achieve zero deforestation are present," the publication points out.

The pathway for zero deforestation, according to the organizations, involves several sectors and implicates four lines of action:

- implementation of effective and perennial environmental public policies;
- support for sustainable forest uses and best farming practices;
- drastic restriction of the market for products associated with new deforestation;
- engagement of voters, consumers and investors in efforts to eliminate deforestation.

For the Zero Deforestation WG, changes in the agricultural production system, the fight against encroachment of public lands, market action and incentives for a forest economy are among the most urgent actions to eliminate deforestation, indicated in the study:

- Agriculture can continue to contribute to the economy by producing in the areas already deforested. In the Amazon alone, there are 10 million hectares of abandoned or poorly used pastures, which could be used to expand the production of beef and grains.
- In 2016, at least 24% of deforestation was concentrated in public areas that have not yet been allocated for use. Today there are 70 million hectares not allocated in the Amazon, which need to be converted into indigenous lands and conservation areas to curb speculative deforestation.
- Stimulating the forest economy through government programs also needs to be expanded. Extraction of forest products yielded around an average of R\$ 3 billion between 2015 and 2016, of which R\$ 1.8 billion comes from logging and 537 million from *açaí* extraction.
- Promote positive incentives for those who conserve forests beyond the legal requirement.

- In addition to expanding command and control actions, which continue to be fundamental, it is essential to increase the effectiveness in punishing environmental crimes.
- The private sector must increase efforts in the complete monitoring of supply chains and blocking of producers who deforest. In this way, the total transparency of socio-environmental data by governments is fundamental.

The report also reinforces the importance of the society mobilization against recent attempts to weaken forest protection, such as easing environmental licensing, reducing the protection of Conservation Areas, halting the demarcation of Indigenous Lands and conceding amnesty to the illegal grabbing of public lands - generating a profit of R\$19 billion for encroachers.

"Brazil already knows the path to reach zero deforestation, but has gone in the opposite direction. Temer and the Congress have been discussing and approving measures that encourage further deforestation, land grabbing and violence in the rural areas. If actions are not taken urgently, the scenario is that high rates of deforestation in the Amazon will persist," comments Cristiane Mazzetti, Amazon specialist at Greenpeace Brazil. "The road exists, but it is necessary that governments and companies seriously commit themselves to transforming the actions proposed in the document into reality, eliminating any form of deforestation in the short term," she adds.

"The end of deforestation in the Amazon and forest conservation today represents the best investment that agriculture can make in favor of its future productivity. Forests are great crop irrigation systems. We not only talking about producing without deforesting, but producing more and better, conserving the forests of the region", Paulo Moutinho, IPAM researcher.

"Thousands of people die or fall ill every year because of the smoke from the forest fires associated with deforestation. We already know what to do to eliminate deforestation and save these lives and avoid diseases. Now it takes courage to act, "Paulo Barreto, a senior researcher at Imazon.

For the full report: { HYPERLINK "<http://ipam.org.br/bibliotecas/a-pathway-to-zero-deforestation-in-the-brazilian-amazon-full-report/>" }

For the Executive Summary: { HYPERLINK "<http://ipam.org.br/bibliotecas/a-pathway-to-zero-deforestation-in-the-brazilian-amazon-executive-summary/>" }

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