

Environmental Compliance – Land and Environmental Management / Cadastro Ambiental Rural (CAR)

The Challenge

As a result of the deforestation control policy, clear-cutting rates declined significantly from 2004 to 2018. Yet, the great challenge of keeping the forest standing still remains, especially given the upward trend in recent years. According to Prodes/INPE, only between August 2022 and July 2023, deforestation affected 9,064 sq km in the Amazon and 11,011 sq km in the Cerrado. Despite the downward trend in these figures, in relation to the most recent years, the numbers remain alarming and demand urgent actions to combat deforestation.

The “New Forest Code” (Federal Law No. 12,651/2012) establishes requirements for the maintenance and restoration of native vegetation, and makes registration in the Rural Environmental Registry (CAR) mandatory for all rural properties in the country. The “Permanent Preservation Areas (APP)” – banks of water bodies, slopes and hilltops, “Legal Reserve” (RL) areas to be preserved according to percentages by biome; and Consolidated Areas – and areas used for agricultural activities before July 2008 are to be reported through the CAR. More than 7.2 million rural properties were registered on the SICAR on-line platform (www.car.gov.br) by October 2023. The area registered exceeds 671 million hectares, which is equivalent to more than fifteen times the size of Germany.

The Rural Environmental Registration System (SICAR) is managed by the Brazilian Forest Service (SFB/MMA), which is the project’s main partner. Despite the significant progress in registration figures, major challenges remain for the effective implementation of environmental compliance, in particular as regards the review and validation of registry entries and the implementation of State Environmental Compliance Programs (PRA), which are targeted at rural producers so that they restore their illegally deforested areas. Producers need to prepare and implement Projects for the Restoration of Degraded and Altered Areas (PRADA) in order to make sure their properties comply with forest regulations

The Goal

The goal of the project is to help implement environmental compliance and rural environmental management of rural properties so that they contribute to the reduction of deforestation and associated emissions, and to the conservation of biodiversity. In the long term, the project helps to restore degraded areas and preserve forests by protecting and rehabilitating natural carbon dioxide capture systems.

The specific goals are as follows:

1. To strengthen the institutional and operational capacities of the Brazilian Forest Service (SFB), the National Institute for Agrarian Reform (INCRA) and State Environmental Agencies (OEMAs) with respect to environmental compliance and rural environmental management;
2. To enhance implementation and use of environmental compliance instruments in the Project’s pilot states – Acre, Amazonas, Pará and Rondônia.
3. To develop skills for implementing environmental compliance at the federal, state and local levels



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Principal	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Country	Brazil
Partner	Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MMA), Brazilian Forest Service (SFB)
Funding	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
Political partners	Phase 1: 2 million euro Phase 2: 4.3 million euro Phase 3: 6 million euro
Project Term	Phase 1: August 2014 to March 2017 Phase 2: March 2017 to March 2020 Phase 3: March 2020 to December 2025

Approach

The project develops the following actions in collaboration with partners from SFB/MMA, State Environmental Agencies, research institutions and rural producer organizations: outreach and training campaigns, exchange of experiences for the implementation of the various steps of environmental compliance. These include (1) registration in the Rural Environmental Registry through the SICAR on-line platform; (2) review and validation of registry entries; (3) adherence to the environmental compliance program for the restoration of degraded areas (PRA); (4) development of individual restoration projects under the PRA (PRADA) based on economically viable implementation models; and (5) future participation in the market for Environmental Reserve Quotas (CRA). In addition, the project has a special focus on the adaptation of this process to traditional populations, such as *Quilombola* communities.

Establishing new partnerships

GIZ’s main partner in this project is the Brazilian Forest Service (SFB/MMA). At the federal level, INCRA/MDA and SDI/MAPA (where the Brazilian Agricultural Observatory is located) are also primary partners. At the state level, the primary partners are CAR management agencies – SEMA/AC, SEMA/AM, IPAAM/AM, SEMAS/PA and SEDAM/RO – and state agencies for technical assistance and rural extension. The project also relies on the collaboration of other stakeholders, such as Embrapa, and other research institutions, rural producer organizations, such as the National Confederation of Agriculture (CNA), and technical assistance organizations, such as the National Rural Education Service (SENAR), and organizations representing traditional peoples, such as CONAQ. The project also seeks participation from various stakeholders such as local governments, local NGOs and universities.

This figure shows the environmental information for the rural property to be registered in the CAR system (SICAR):

1. Consolidated (productive) areas;
2. The Legal Reserve;
3. Permanent Preservation Areas (APP);
4. Degraded areas to be restored or offset in the Legal Reserve and APPs.



Photos from the Integrated Land and Environmental Regularization Task Force in Rondônia (advising landowners and georeferencing tools)

Facilitating integration with other land policies

In order to be successful, environmental compliance seeks integration with other land policies. These include policies to support family farming and technical assistance and rural extension (ATER), agricultural credit, and land compliance. For rural producers to preserve native vegetation and restore degraded areas, they must have marketing capabilities that are commensurate with forest maintenance requirements, as well as a guarantee over his land (land security), which in turn helps them obtain financing.

Impacts

Review of the CAR and Construction of the Environmental Compliance Program – PRA

Review of registered properties has proven to be one of the greatest challenges for environmental compliance. The project provides direct support for the assisted implementation of review in the Amazon states, and monitors the development of module customizations in SICAR. The Project has also supported the PRAs in the states of Acre, Rondônia, Pará and Amazonas by outlining technical parameters for the settlement of forest restoration liabilities and building the SICAR PRA Module in close collaboration with the Brazilian Forest Service. Together with EMBRAPA, the project supports the qualification of lists of adapted species and restoration methodologies for the individual regions. In collaboration with other local partners, the project is developing economically viable models for the implementation of PRAs through the Webambiente platform. As such, the project has also been coordinating with the CNA the simplified implementation of the PRA by discussing with rural producers through a program called “PRAVALER” in order to find solutions.

New methodologies for traditional peoples and communities

Traditional peoples and communities (TPCs) use the territory collectively based on a unique relationship with nature. The project supports the development and implementation of a specific module for the environmental compliance of this constituency. In order to strengthen TPCs, the project uses a methodology and a specific training strategy for the empowerment, access and inclusion of these communities in social policies for agricultural development while observing the principles of autonomy, knowledge, practices, ethnicity, consultation processes, and free decision.

An integrated task force

The Integrated Task Force approach reconciles environmental and land compliance policies in the Amazon. Under this approach, several stages of both policies are carried out jointly on the ground by engaging relevant government and civil society actors. The task force reduces costs for both public officials and rural producers while reducing the risks of inconsistencies in geospatial data and, in particular, strengthening the State's presence in remote regions in the Amazon.

At the current stage of implementation of the Environmental Compliance Policy in the states, approximately 110 integrated task forces were in operation in municipalities in the states of Amazonas and Pará. These task forces help with registry entry corrections, analysis and preparation of PRADAS. This methodology was developed with the support of GIZ, and it has helped increase the number of corrected and reviewed entries.

Expansion to the Cerrado Biome: the Rural Landscapes Project

As of March 2019, the project will be part of the portfolio of the World Bank's Forest Investment Program (FIP) in Brazil. Based on co-financing of \$21 million from the World Bank, the project now falls under the activities of FIP Rural Landscapes, coordinated by SFB/MMA and SDI/MAPA, which is in charge of the Low Carbon Agriculture Plan (ABC). The project term has been extended to 2025, and this new project phase is intended to boost implementation of conservation practices and settlement of environmental liabilities and agricultural techniques with low carbon emissions in selected river basins in the Brazilian Cerrado biome. Other major partners include SENAR, EMBRAPA and INPE, in addition to the OEMAs in the seven States covered. The project supports the simultaneous implementation of environmental compliance and the ABC Plan in river basins with a heavy presence of extensive livestock farming and environmental liabilities. Key activities include monitoring of anthropized areas in the Cerrado; Technical and Management Assistance (ATEG) to rural producers provided by SENAR; and implementation of Integrated Landscape Management.

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