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The Soy Moratorium will be renewed for another year

The GTS (Soy Working Group) announces an incentive program for Rural Environmental Registration (CAR)

The Soy Moratorium, signed on July 24, 2006, will be renewed for another year, until January 31, 2013. The announcement was made by the GTS (Soy Working Group), made up of ABIOVE's and ANEC's member companies, the Ministry of the Environment, the Bank of Brazil and civil society organizations (International Conservation, Greenpeace, IPAM, TNC and WWF-Brasil). The GTS also announced the launch of an incentive program for Rural Environmental Registration (CAR) in the Amazon Biome, according to their resolution in their meeting in São Paulo at the end of August. The incentive program will orient rural producers, making them aware of the need and advantages of adapting to current legislation.

By announcing an extension to the Moratorium, the GTS, based on the results of the 2011 monitoring program, recognizes that Brazilian soybean production is a controlled deforestation vector in the Amazon Biome. The 2010/2011 crop monitoring identified the presence of this oilseed on 11,698 hectares (45 sq.miles) that were deforested after July 2006. This corresponds to 0.39% of the total area cleared in the states of Mato Grosso, Pará and Rondônia since that date.





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CAR Incentive Program

The new voluntary registration program includes actions designed to provide rural producers with explanations. Among the programmed activities are: production and distribution of technical material such as booklets, posters and folders; organization of courses, training and field days to teach the producer how to structure the CAR process; offers a listing of companies specialized in geoprocessing and regularization of rural properties; annual publication of the advances made; search for financial incentives for producers who need to recover Legal Reserve areas; and payments for environmental services. The task force is now working to define the indices for this program.

Although a good number of the properties with agricultural production are already registered, some obstacles still make it difficult for the producer to obtain a rural environmental registration. Examples include the lack of definition of the new Forest Code and the lack of infrastructure in the state secretariats of the environment, making the process very slow. For these reasons, this initiative by the soybean traders is even more relevant.

New agenda for priorities

The soy productive chain intends to advance the initiative's objectives. In addition to monitoring deforestation, and purchasing and financing restrictions, the member companies of ABIOVE (Brazilian Vegetable Oil Industries Association) and ANEC (National Grain Exporters Association) will work together with civil society, and the federal and state governments, to improve the region's governance, including that of public lands. This covers the CAR incentive program; land regularization; Sojasat Program in partnership with INPE (National Space Research Institute); mapping of the Amazon Biome on an adequate scale by IBGE (Brazilian Geographic & Statistical Institute); improving IBAMA's (Brazilian Environmental & Renewable Natural Resources Institute) embargo listing; and payment for environmental services.



Further information on the Soy Moratorium

ABIOVE and ANEC, together with their member companies, signed a commitment in 2006 to implement a governance program with the objective of not trading or financing soybeans from crops grown in deforested areas of the Amazon Biome. This commitment met international consumer demands for soy that was not responsible for deforestation. Civil society organizations have participated in this initiative from its inception. The original commitment was for two years but, due to the good results obtained and the sector's diligence in contributing to the fall in deforestation, the federal government, in the form of the Ministry of the Environment, joined the Moratorium in 2008, continuing through to today.

The commitments made under the Soy Moratorium were complied with and recognized by civil society and the European customers of Brazilian soybeans: Ahold, ASDA, Carrefour, Co-operative, Kraft, Marks & Spencer, McDonald's, Nutreco, Ritter-Sport, Sainsbury's, Waitrose and Wal-Mart. These companies supported the positive evolution of the work developed under the Moratorium. After INPE's work identifying deforested areas through satellite images, overflights were made to identify land use and occupation. On farms where soybean plantations were found, meetings were held with the rural producers. This methodology, improved over the five years of the Moratorium, generated relevant information for evaluating the processes that lead to deforestation.

In addition to the monitoring program, a set of tools are available to the companies to guarantee governance of the productive processes. "Looking back, records from before the Moratorium show a situation of conflict between the market and the Brazilian soy producer in the Amazon Biome. In just a short time, this situation of conflict has become one of comfort. We have been able to work in a constructive manner because the questioning related to deforestation has ceased. The process's great merit is its efficacy and simplicity. Over the last five years, we have refined criteria and assumed more specific controls, and today we have an impeccable vigilance of the process", said Carlo Lovatelli, ABIOVE president.

According to Paulo Adario of Greenpeace, coordinator of the GTS civil society group, the Soy Moratorium has thus far set a very positive example of corporate responsibility. "Over the five years of the Moratorium, deforestation of the Amazon has fallen and soybean exports have increased. It is now necessary to strengthen the commitment and create permanent governance bases to provide the market with a guarantee that its demand for zero deforestation in the chain is met."

According to Minister Izabella Teixeira, of the Ministry of the Environment, "The soybean productive chain represents a Brazilian agricultural sector that is promoting adequate dialogue with society, and setting an example of how to progress economically while protecting our biomes. It is also adapting to the new requirements of the international markets that are demanding more certified products. The results are promising, but the challenges to be faced in advancing an environmental agenda are still great".



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