



**PERMANENT DELEGATION OF BRAZIL TO THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS  
LOCATED IN MONTREAL**

N. 25

The Permanent Delegation of Brazil to the International Organizations located in Montreal presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and, with reference with Notification 2011-121, dated June 16<sup>th</sup> 2011, and Decision X/37, adopted at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 10), sends in annex the considerations of the Brazilian Government to the inquiry on experiences and results of the impact evaluation of the production and use of biofuels on biodiversity.

The Permanent Delegation of Brazil avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity the assurances of its highest consideration.

Montreal, September 29th 2011.

In order to comply with the COP 10 Decision X/37 on "Biofuels and Biodiversity", the Executive Secretary, through Notification nr. 2011-121, invited Parties to submit experiences and results from assessments of the impacts of biofuel production and use on biodiversity and impacts on biodiversity that affect related socioeconomic conditions, as well as activities identified in paragraphs 7, 8, and 9, and to support the actions requested to the Executive Secretary in paragraph 13 of Decision X/37.

The following response is based on the contributions of the main stakeholders.

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**Subject title: Notification – Biofuels and Biodiversity**

*Brazil understands that the production and use of biofuels constitute an important instrument of sustainable development, contributing to GHG emissions reduction, providing opportunities for income generation and infrastructure improvement in rural areas and promoting agricultural progress in developing countries. In the context of climate change mitigation, biofuels represent an opportunity for developing countries to engage in a process towards a low carbon economy. To this effect, the positive environmental externalities of biofuels production and use must be stressed, which certainly contributes to the safeguarding of biodiversity.*

*It is essential to emphasize that the Brazilian Government is committed to the goal of promoting sustainable bioenergy. This means that Brazil does not blindly favor any pattern of biofuel production or use. To the contrary, Brazil aims at supporting and developing only the sustainable production and use of biofuels, keeping in mind the threefold dimension of sustainability (economic, social and environmental). The relationship between biofuels production and biodiversity can be mutually beneficial as the Brazilian experience has demonstrated. With the appropriate public policies it is possible to produce bioenergy and protect the biodiversity at the same time.*

*In this context, Brazil would like to share its experience in formulating supportive measures to promote the positive and minimize or avoid the negative impacts of the production and use of biofuels on biodiversity, as requested by the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity in the Notification 121/2011, which aims at implementing the provisions of the Decision X/37. To this end, the main Brazilian policies and instruments are listed bellow.*

**I- National Plan on Agroenergy**

*In this National Plan, launched in 2005, guidelines were established for research in four main areas (biodiesel, ethanol, forests with energy content, agriculture and livestock residues). Through the strengthening of research in these four priority fields, Brazil has gained expertise*

*and developed technologies to allow a sustainable use and production of bioenergy, which contributes to avoiding negative impacts on biodiversity.*

## **II- Sugarcane Agroecological Zoning**

*The Sugarcane Agroecological Zoning (ZAE) was launched by the Brazilian Government in 2009. It aims at providing technical information in order to help formulating national policies for the development of a sustainable sugar and ethanol production. This entails a thorough analysis of the climate and soil of the Brazilian territory, taking into account environmental, economic and social aspects in order to guide the expansion of sugarcane crops and investments in the sector. The main guidelines established by the ZAE are the following:*

- a) Exclusion of areas with native vegetation for crops expansion;*
- b) Exclusion of areas within the Amazon, the Pantanal and the Upper Paraguay River Basin, in order to safeguard the high biodiversity present in those areas and to promote a sustainable use of national natural resources;*
- c) Indication of areas with agricultural suitability for sugarcane cultivation without full irrigation, helping select areas where sugarcane cultivation would demand the lower levels of water consumption;*
- d) Indication of areas with land surface slope of less than 12%, allowing for mechanical harvest and environmental sound production;*
- e) To give priority to degraded land or grassland made available, since more than 34 million hectares of land are being underused or occupied by degraded grasslands;*
- f) To guide crops expansion so that it remains compatible with the cultivation of areas for food production.*

## **III- Sustainable Palm Oil Production Program and Palm Oil Agroecological Zoning**

*The Sustainable Palm Oil Production Program was launched in 2010, aiming at contributing to the diversification of feedstock used for biodiesel production (since, in Brazil, around 80% of the feedstock currently being used derives from soybean). The goal is to consolidate a legal framework for the indication of suitable crop land for palm oil cultivation, limiting its expansion to areas that were already subject to human action and promoting the recovery of degraded land. Areas with native vegetation were also excluded.*

*Following the successful example of the Sugarcane Agroecological Zoning, the Palm Oil Agroecological Zoning was also developed, under the scope of the Sustainable Palm Oil Production Program. In order to avoid any future damage to biodiversity, the Agroecological Zoning identifies the most suitable areas for sustainable palm oil cultivation.*

## **IV- National Biodiesel Production and Use Program**

*Established in 2003, the National Biodiesel Production and Use Program (PNPB) aims at implementing, in a sustainable way, the production and use of biodiesel, with a particular focus on social inclusion and regional development, through job and income generation. The PNPB is essentially a non-restrictive program. It contemplates the specific characteristics of each region insofar as oilseed types are concerned and does not exclude any alternatives. In addition to the agribusiness aspects, the Program also prioritizes participation of family agriculture, encouraging cooperatives and consortia by small farmers.*

*In order to promote social inclusion throughout the fuel's production and value chain, a "Social Fuel Seal" was designed. The Seal is awarded by the Brazilian Government and establishes the conditions for industrial producers of biodiesel to obtain tax benefits and credit. In order to receive the seal, a producer must purchase feedstock from family farmers and enter into a legally binding agreement with them to establish specific income levels and guarantee technical assistance and training.*

*This takes place simultaneously with other governmental programs (such as "Pronaf Mais Alimentos", the National Program for Food Acquisition) which encourages family farmers to develop a joint production of both food and oil. These mechanisms contribute to rural development, providing support for sustainable agriculture practices, significantly reducing the threat to biodiversity loss through unsound agriculture activities.*

#### **V- Climate Risk Zoning for Short Cycle Oilseeds**

*The Brazilian Government is also supporting the cultivation of oilseeds of short cycle for biodiesel production. The main objective is to promote their cultivation during those periods when land would be idle. This would mean an increase in oil supply without land use change, which contributes to safeguarding biodiversity and natural resources.*

#### **VI- Support for Research in Biological Nitrogen Fixation**

*The Brazilian Government is currently supporting research on soybean and sugarcane varieties capable of biologically fixing nitrogen in the soil, thereby reducing the need for nitrogenous fertilizers. This contributes to reducing GHG emissions and, hence, to helping protecting biodiversity.*

#### **VII- Low Carbon Agricultural Plan**

*The Low Carbon Agricultural Plan was established in 2010, comprising a set of actions designed to promote best practices in agriculture, including feedstock for biofuels production, allowing for a rational use of the Brazilian territory. The main focus is to contribute to emissions reduction and mitigation of climate change, which has impacts on biodiversity.*

#### **VIII- Strengthening Research and Development and Compliance with Government Guidelines**

*Research plays a key role in enabling increased crop production and development of new technological pathways and more efficient processing of feedstock for biofuels production. In this context, a particular challenge concerns the development of lignocellulosic biofuels, which would allow taking the most advantage of the sugarcane energy content. It is important, however, to make clear that Brazil recognizes the positive economic, social and environmental externalities generated by all kinds of biofuels, provided that they are produced in a sustainable manner.*

*As an illustration of Brazil's commitment to the abovementioned policies, access to financial aid from governmental Banks, for biofuel production purposes, are subject to strict technical requirements. In addition to compliance with the relevant agroecological zoning guidelines and the applicable environmental licensing procedures, production units must operate at a high level of energy efficiency. Increased energy efficiency (including cogeneration of electricity) contributes to GHG emissions reduction and, thus, has positive effects for the environment and biodiversity.*

#### **IX- International cooperation**

*The Brazilian Government gives priority to the promotion of renewable energy resources, particularly biofuels, keeping in mind their contribution to sustainable development. In this context, the development of an international biofuels market constitutes an important goal. This objective, however, will only be made possible if other countries assess their potentials as producers and consumers of bioenergy in a sustainable manner. To this end, the Brazilian Government has been willing to share its experience and has provided support through bilateral and trilateral cooperation initiatives to the development of national biofuels policies. This entails exchange of information (technical missions, seminars, training) as well as support to the execution of feasibility studies for biofuels production.*

*Through the feasibility studies, a country's potential is evaluated, which involves implementing some agroecological guidelines (after a thorough assessment of the country's natural endowments as well as economic and social conditions), whereupon the most suitable areas are identified and initial projects are suggested. Environmental conservation areas that should be excluded from any agricultural use are also pointed out. The core goal, therefore, is to reduce environmental impacts and risks. The list of countries that have benefited from this studies include El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, the Dominican Republic and Senegal (through trilateral cooperation with the United States). Brazil is currently cooperating with the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) for the elaboration of a feasibility study in the region.*

*Another significant example of Brazil's commitment to supporting other developing countries in this area would be the "Structured Program to Support Other Developing Countries in the Field of Renewable Energy (PRO-RENOVA)", which creates a broad framework for cooperation. The*



*main activities under the scope of the Program are: (i) sending Brazilian experts to perform training courses and seminars (since 2009, 16 countries have benefited from this initiative); (ii) inviting foreign experts or policy makers to assist training courses on specific aspects of biofuels production and use; (iii) promoting the participation of Brazilian experts in international events and discussions on renewable energy.*

*In international fora, the Brazilian Government is also engaged in supporting the sustainable production and use of biofuels. In this context, the work of the Global Bioenergy Partnership (GBEP), in which Brazil has the status of co-chair (with Italy), deserves mentioning. The GBEP is a forum that promotes multilateral dialogue on bioenergy, on a voluntary and non-binding basis. Its primary aim is to develop and help implement sustainability indicators for bioenergy, which were developed under the three pillars of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental). On the subject of biodiversity, the indicators on GHG emissions, non-GHG air pollutants emissions, soil quality, harvest levels, water use and quality, land use change and, mostly, biological diversity contribute more directly to helping countries develop national policies that safeguard biodiversity and promotes, altogether, a sustainable biofuels production and use.*

*All of the abovementioned initiatives provide significant illustration of the Brazilian engagement in promoting the sustainable use and production of biofuels, both domestically and internationally, which contribute to minimizing or avoiding negative impacts on biodiversity. Acknowledging the potential of biofuels to make a positive contribution to climate change mitigation, to social and economic progress and to both food and energy security, Brazil is willing to collaborate to the promotion of bioenergy.*

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