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BNDES approves R\$ 23 million to monitor the Amazon Forest in other South American countries

This operation is the Fund's first international support and covers 99% of the Amazon Biome

The Board of directors of the Brazilian Development Bank (BNDES), within the scope of the Amazon Fund, has approved support amounting to R\$ 23 million for the Organization of Amazon Cooperation Treaty (OTCA), which comprises Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guiana, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela. The operation is the first lot of support from the Amazon Fund for projects in other countries with tropical forest, and the aim is to help develop improve monitoring deforestation, as well as changes in land and forest use in countries that are OTCA members, and whose territories comprise approximately 99% of the Amazon Biome (see map).

The OTCA, which is responsible for the Amazon Cooperation Treaty (TCA) implementation, signed in 1978, operates as a cooperation mechanism, helping carry out programs and projects that foster sustainable development and regional cooperation to improve standards of living for Amazon inhabitants.

The project has the support of Brazil's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MRE), while the Ministry of the Environment (MMA) is part of the implementation structure as the Coordinator National Institution through the Policy Department to the Deforestation Control. The National Institute for Spatial Research (INPE) will also participate in the project, providing technological training and support to monitor the forest coverage (read more about this on page 2).

Network monitoring - Within 60 months, the project entitled "Monitoring the Forest Coverage of the Regional Amazon" seeks to promote an exchange of knowledge, as well as network cooperation and interconnection between OTCA countries. Currently, Brazil has one of the most developed satellite environmental monitoring systems in the world. Outside this, however, there is no available official data on forest coverage and deforestation in the other OTCA countries.

The project which started in 2011, with resources from GIZ (the German Agency of International Technical Cooperation) and ITTO (International Organization of Tropical Timber) will receive support from the Amazon



French Guiana is the only country covered by the Amazon Biome outside the OTCA.

from the Amazon Fund in the following initiatives: installation and improvement of observation rooms ; operational infrastructure assembled in each of the member countries to monitor the Amazon forest coverage; structuring the research rooms; access to forest coverage monitoring technologies; design of national monitoring plans; improvement, harmonization and standardization of institutional capacities to obtain survey information on the changes in land use. Regional cooperation to combat illegal deforestation and the exchange of experiences related to public policy instruments aimed at reducing deforestation rates will also receive financial support from the Fund. With this operation, the Amazon Fund portfolio has a total of 37 supported projects, amounting to R\$ 462.8 million. All projects are in keeping with the general aim of the Amazon Fund, which is to reduce deforestation using sustainable development (for more information www.amazonfund.gov.br).

INPE Technology will be adjusted for the other OTCA countries

Brazilian Satellite System to monitor the environment, considered one of the most modern in the world, will help combat deforestation in the Regional Amazon

The methodologies and technologies developed by National Institute for Spatial Research (INPE) for satellite monitoring of the Amazon forest coverage will be adjusted for the other countries that are members of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (OTCA).

In total, INPE has four main systems: PRODES, DETER, DEGRAD and DETEX (see side box). Each one monitors several stages of deforestation in Brazil, which has large deforested areas for cattle-raising and agriculture.

In the other OTCA countries Bolivia, Colombia, Equator, Guiana, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela, deforestation mainly occurs in small areas, contributing to environmental degradation, which makes it difficult to detect and measure these areas.

Even within each country, the reason that leads to Amazon deforestation varies. Guiana and Suriname, for instance, are heavily influenced by mining; Peru and Colombia by agriculture and cattle-raising. These particularities reinforce the need to customize and adapt the monitoring systems, such as images with higher definition to identify small deforested areas.

As it happened...

On April 26 and 27, in the city of São Luís, in the state of Maranhão the VI Forum of the Environmental Secretariats of the Legal Amazon was held. It included representatives from the states of Acre, Amapá, Amazonas, Maranhão, Rondônia, Roraima and Tocantins. The Forum aims to establish a joint agenda between the nine states to prioritize environmental, social and economic issues, contributing to sustainable development for the Amazon population.

Cláudia Soares Costa, head of the Amazon Fund's Management Department, participated in this event, lecturing on the Fund's operations and the possibilities for support for projects from Amazon state governments.

The program included subjects such as the implementation of Rural Environmental Registration (CAR) and holding Regional and State Environment Conferences, besides discussions concerning the National Strategy to Reduce Emissions caused by Forest Deforestation and Degradation (REDD+).

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PRODES

□ The **Calculation Program for Amazon Deforestation**, by means of satellite images, measures the annual rates of clear-cuts, considering deforestation in an area larger than 6.25 hectares. Annually, the INPE verifies the deforestation rate in an area larger than 4 million square kilometers. The system is considered the largest program to monitor forests in the world.

DETER

□ The **Real-time Deforestation Detection System**, every two weeks, publishes an alert map for areas beyond 25 hectares, indicating not only totally deforested areas (clear cutting) but also those being deforested by progressive forest degradation. The advantage of this system is the speed at which it detects new deforestation, making it possible to produce data for supervision in a short period of time.

DEGRAD

□ The **Mapping System for Forest Deforestation in Brazil's Amazon** uses satellite images to annually map out areas being deforested, where forest coverage has not yet been totally removed and, thus, is not computed by the PRODES system.

DETEX

□ The main aim of the **Monitoring System for Selective Timber Exploration**, jointly developed with the Brazilian Forest Service (SFB), is to generate data to help provide effective surveillance of management plans for forest concessions and public forests in general.



Photo: SEMA Maranhão

Environmental Secretariats of the Amazon Legal States.

Another issue was the implementation of Complementary Law Nº 140, which addresses standards for cooperation between the federal government, states, the Federal District and municipalities in administrative efforts related to protecting documents, works and goods with historical, artistic and cultural value, as well as protecting the environment, combating pollution, and preserving the forest, fauna and flora.