

**INSTITUTE OF APPLIED RESEARCH IN SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT – IPADES**

FOREST AND AGRICULTURE IN BRAZIL IN THE 21st CENTURY

Francisco Benedito da Costa Barbosa

Founding Partner – IPADES

By its extension forestry, biodiversity and freshness in agribusiness, Brazil will have an increasingly prominent role in world agenda of the environment and food safety. Under this aspect and with this responsibility, the country will appear to the 24th United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 24/UNFCCC), to be held in the city of Katowice, Poland, from 2 to 16 December 2018, with the document. *"2030-2050 Vision: The Future of forests and agriculture in Brazil"*.

The document is the result of the articulation of more than 200 people from 150 institutions, which, by means of a Brazil Coalition met to discuss the future of the forests and agriculture in the country, in approximately 30 meetings during the year 2018. These people are representatives of agribusiness, entities in defense of the environment, the financial sector, universities and research institutes, which have identified common goals and designing the scenario dreamed by them for 2030 and 2050.

A good part of the future designed by the Brazil Coalition is based or in progress. According to this group, *"they have to act to accomplish what are still projects, causing these experiences become predominant practices, i.e., create a plan of action to make our dreams a reality"*. The action of this group is very timely because the agricultural production combined with environmental preservation is an important demand of the 21st century, and Brazil a great protagonist.

Brazil as one of the major players in the global agribusiness has a prominent role in the actions to combat climate change. Currently, agriculture is one of the main sources of emission of greenhouse gases (GHG) in the country. In 2016, the quantity issued reached 499 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalent, representing 22% of national emissions.

However, by means of more sustainable use of soil, the sector can become an important part of the solution, so as to contribute not only to reducing emissions. But also to capture carbon from the atmosphere by photosynthesis of crops, pastures, reforestation, and to store it in the soil through the root system of the plants.

This great natural ability of agriculture has in its favor approximately 178 million hectares of degraded pastures or degradation that must be recovered or integrated into sustainable production systems, enabling their intensification. With this will increase the productivity of the sector without the demand for new forest areas.

These concepts, technologies and production systems need to be brought to family agriculture, given its importance in 90% of municipalities with up to 20 thousand inhabitants. The main challenges for family agriculture is aligned with the funding of Low-Carbon Agriculture (Plan ABC) are: technical assistance and rural extension, logistics, social infrastructure. But, it is also important that the municipal administrations to prioritize the economy of the municipality, breaking with a tradition almost cultural, that the problem of these municipalities is restricted to education and health. For the great majority of managers, the economy is resolved with the financial transfers of social policies: retirement and Family Bag Program, which inject money in trade and services.

Two other important aspects, but they are relegated, and who count the Forest Code approved in 2012 are the environmental regularization and payment for environmental services. The Rural Environmental Cadastre (CAR) ran faster with more than 80% of rural properties already indexed, constituting one of the main databases on private properties in the world.

However, there has been progress in the following steps, which consists in the validation of registrations by United, and the elaboration of plans for regularization. The Payment for Environmental Services (PES) and the dimension of Environmental Reserve (CRA), also need to exit the role, because they have a lot to contribute as incentives for environmental preservation and a way to reward landowners for this service which is a public good.

Even without the practice of incentives to rural producers for environmental preservation in their properties, Brazil has huge environmental heritage, and the recent past of the country demonstrates that unite the environmental preservation and agriculture is possible. Between 2004 and 2012, the country has managed to

drastically reduce their deforestation rates at the same time in which increased its agricultural production.

The improvement of this environment of preservation and production converging needs to be an agenda of State consistent with public policies that move in the direction of convergence with integrated operations and aligned to the areas of climate change, forest and agriculture, as an example has been the integration Farming-Livestock-Forest, tillage and biological nitrogen fixation.

According to 2018 data from the Brazilian Forest Service (SFB), the national forestry sector is responsible for 3.5% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 7.3% of the country's exports, with the generation of 7 million jobs. When magnified this assessment for the sector of restoration and reforestation, there is the potential for consolidation of an industry of modern forestry production and recovery, with the creation of 215 thousand jobs and inflow of R\$ 6.5 billion in taxes, with annual investments of up to R\$ 3.7 billion until 2030 and the removal of up to 3.22 Gt CO₂ (billions of tonnes of CO₂ per year).

The deforestation in Brazil, in large part comes from illegal activities, but there is also, on the legality, the lack of environmental awareness, and more than that, which our country possessed an enormous area antropizada and degraded pasture which need to be incorporated into the productive process. On the other hand, it is necessary to create incentives to encourage producers to maintain forest areas on their properties. In this sense, economic mechanisms of compensation should be improved via comprehensive public policies, national and subnational.

Brazil is the 7th largest emitter of GHG emissions in the world. The country needs to demonstrate its ability to promote development without compromising the food security and climate of the planet. This is the commitment of Brazil with humanity in the 21st century.

For this reason, the rational use of soil must be at the center of the debates about national development, need to be clear about where and how you want to reach. Dreams become area in 2050, in a Brazil that is able to produce more and better, create ditch to natural and planted forests, put an end to deforestation, make public policies and build economic instruments aligned and integrated to achieve this dream.

There is a task only for producers, but the awareness of society that Brazil has a special place in the world in relation to environmental preservation and food security. Therefore, their natural vocation is to produce, store, and with this, generate economic

prosperity, environmental and social development for their population. All this can be seeking the preservation and production on rational foundations. The empirical knowledge and the economic or political voluntarism which prevailed until the second half of the last century should no longer be used.