The Land-Use Dialogues: Santa Catarina, Brazil

A multicountry engagement platform for gathering knowledge and leading processes for enabling responsible business, improved governance and inclusive development in landscapes at risk.

The Challenge
Biodiversity loss is a major environmental issue and a critical problem in Brazil, home to approximately 20% of all existing species. One of the main causes for this global problem is identified as the loss of habitat. The Brazilian Atlantic Rainforest (also known as “Mata Atlântica”) plays a key role in this scenario, as it is one of the richest ecologic regions regarding biodiversity in the planet. It is, however, in an extremely degraded state, as approximately 90% of its original forest has been cleared, with only fragmented pieces remaining.

The Context
The Brazilian Atlantic Rainforest is one of the biologically richest and most diverse forests in the world, home to about 8,000 endemic plant species and 1,6 million animal species. In 1992, UNESCO created the Mata Atlântica Biosphere Reserve, with the aim to conserve and restore ecological corridors, biological diversity and help develop sustainable uses and social practices in the area.

It is present in seventeen Brazilian states, providing the ideal conditions for the survival of species and living organisms, as well as supporting natural resources and ecosystem services. Currently, 72% of the Brazilian population lives in regions originally covered by the Atlantic Rainforest.

Yet, after a long history of intense deforestation due primarily to agricultural production, pasture and timber activities, currently only 8% of the Atlantic Rainforest remains in the country (considering well-conserved fragments of over 100 hectares). What remains is highly fragmented, causing not only the extinction of several species, but also threatening the livelihood of traditional rural communities that depend on the preservation of natural resources for its survival.

The state of Santa Catarina, in Brazil, is fully located in the Atlantic Rainforest biome, and is considered the state with the largest remaining area of forest compared to original values. Conversely, it is ranked in 5th place among the states with the highest deforestation rates. It is, in fact, one of the few states that increased deforestation levels when comparing the years of 2012-2013 and 2013-2014. In the name of “economic development”, intense land-
use resulted in around 80% of the Atlantic Rainforest in the region deforested, causing flooding episodes and extreme climate events to occur more frequently than ever before.

In an effort to preserve and restore the Atlantic Rainforest, there are important federal policies and legislation in place, such as the Atlantic Rainforest Law (Law 11,428/2006) and The Brazilian Forest Code (Law 12,651/2012), which created the Environmental Rural Registry, and promotes the creation and expansion of Legal Reserves and Permanent Protected Areas. In addition, the Brazilian Constitution of 1988 considers the Atlantic Rainforest biome a national heritage. Nevertheless, we are still facing this alarming scenario.

In this regard, the Brazilian Forest Dialogue has worked, since 2008, to promote conservation of the Atlantic Rainforest in the state of Santa Catarina. Its work focuses specifically in the region of the Itajaí Valley, which covers 15,000km² of the state’s area, and where 52 cities are located, with approximately 20% of the state’s population.

The Brazilian Forest Dialogue’s role is to establish and facilitate landscape initiatives with multiple stakeholders, such as community-based and international organizations, associations, governments, businesses, and more.

Although there is no standardized definition for the landscape approach, it can be understood as a multi-stakeholder process set out in areas where productive land uses, such as agriculture and livestock farming, compete with environmental protection and conservation. Its ultimate goal is to achieve economic, social and environmental objectives that synergize different interests and actions from multiple actors.

It promotes collaboration among different stakeholders to align their objectives, identify and address common risks and opportunities, and build partnerships based on trust, supporting shared decision-making and collective action.

This is the reason why the Land-Use Dialogue (LUD) initiative is timely in such context.

**The Need**

Increased land-use demand over the years by activities such as timber extraction, agricultural production, farming, ranching, illegal logging, urban sprawl and pollution, has caused the Atlantic Rainforest to be at risk. It is clear that the ongoing efforts to reach a solution using traditional approaches, in which different actors work in a segregated and independent way, are not working. The Atlantic Rainforest is a common and shared resource, thus requiring an integrated and holistic approach to reconcile agricultural production, economic development and biodiversity conservation.

The Brazilian Forest Dialogue, in collaboration with The Forests Dialogue (TFD), believe that by providing a platform where different actors can engage openly in a conversation and negotiation process based on trust can lead to a long-term and much needed solution to address the critical situation the Atlantic Rainforest is currently in. This is the Brazil LUD’s ultimate goal. Such project, called “Planning and implementing sustainable landscape in the Brazilian Atlantic Rainforest (PLANRAN)”, will be coordinated by Apremavi.
**The Process**

The Brazil LUD initiative includes:

- 1 Scoping Dialogue in Santa Catarina, with regional and local partners and 2 or 3 international actors, to determine key focal themes and activities.
- 1 Field Dialogue to assess challenges and develop collaborative solutions among partners, also including international actors, in conjunction with a workshop to discuss the 2030/50 scenarios.
- 1 Document/Publication describing resulting actions and recommendations.
- Other meetings within the Brazilian Forest Dialogue in order to expand the LUD initiative to different Brazilian regions.

**Proposed timeline of key activities:**

- November 2015 – finalize implementation plan
- February 2016 – start implementing PlanRan
- April 2016 – Scoping Dialogue
- November 2016 – Workshop to discuss 2030/50 scenarios
- November 2016 – Material consolidation and production of proposal to build desired scenarios
- December 2016 – Definition of working group and agenda to enable desired scenarios
- December 2016 – Definition of exchange proposals with other regions
- TBD – other meetings on plan for moving forward

**Expected Outcomes**

The outcomes of the Brazil LUD initiative will be designed to feed into:

- Direct actions within the specific regional PLANRAN clusters.
- Knowledge/communication actions, such as policy briefs and other knowledge products.
- Learning processes, such as case studies and exchange events that will benefit the global community and facilitate LUD actions in other landscapes at risk.

These LUD expected outcomes will strengthen many of PLANRAN’s existing objectives including:

- Convening and strengthening landscape-level inclusive multi-stakeholder platforms to market, mobilize resources for and exchange ideas and expertise around nature-based enterprises and climate-resilient value chains.
- Strengthening governance for landscape management and restoration of degraded hotspots, by convening multiple stakeholders to design and establish natural resource management governance structures incorporating cross-sector forums and smallholders community-based monitoring mechanisms.
- Fostering relationships and dialogue with Governmental and Non-Governmental Arrangements to achieve legislation of new forest act.
- Promoting the development of landscape areas in mosaic with integrated governmental/private nature conservation regions.
- Engaging agro-businesses in dialogue focused on understanding linkages between business operations and ecosystem functions.
- Facilitation of dialogue between NGOs, producer organizations and private forest companies restoration opportunities, risk mitigation for communities and businesses, and increasing natural capital.
Partners

The Forests Dialogue
http://theforestsdialogue.org
The Forests Dialogue (TFD) is a neutral, international, multi-stakeholder platform established in 2000 to help address conflicts and challenges about important forest-related issues. TFD is governed by an international Steering Committee reflecting the breadth of interests in forests, and its secretariat is hosted by Yale University. TFD has developed and facilitated 15 dialogue initiatives, comprising more than 60 country-level and international dialogues involving over 3,000 individuals during its 15 years of work. Half of the dialogue initiatives have focused on what would now be called 'landscape' topics.

Apremavi
http://apremavi.org.br
The Associação de Preservação do Meio Ambiente e da Vida - Apremavi - was founded on 9th of July 1987 in the region of Alto Vale do Itajaí, in the state of Santa Catarina, south of Brazil. Its mission is the defense, the preservation and restoration of the environment as well as cultural values, aiming to improve the quality of human life in the Atlantic Rainforest biome. The Apremavi was established by citizens concerned about the future consequences of the thoughtless and enormous destruction of the environment, especially the Atlantic Rainforest, caused primarily by the lumber industry.

The Brazilian Forest Dialogue
http://www.dialogoflorestal.org.br
The Forests Dialogue is a unique and independent initiative that promotes interaction between business representatives of the forest sector, environmental organizations and social movements, in order to build up capacity and favour a common ground of interaction between the different stakeholders. It aims to implement actions related to forest production and to expand the scale of conservation efforts and environmental restoration, thus generating benefits for the participants of the Dialogue and to society in general.

International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
http://www.iucn.org
IUCN helps the world find pragmatic solutions to our most pressing environment and development challenges. IUCN’s work focuses on valuing and conserving nature, ensuring effective and equitable governance of its use, and deploying nature-based solutions to global challenges in climate, food and development. IUCN supports scientific research, manages field projects all over the world, and brings governments, NGOs, the UN and companies together to develop policy, laws and best practice.

PLANRAN partners include:

- Private Sector Companies: Kablin, Fibria, Ingredion, Syngenta, Perdigão, Pamplona.
- NGOs: Pacto para Restauração da Mata Atlântica.
- Development Partners, Foundations, Research Organizations and CSOs: IUCN, Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC), Universidade do Alto Vale do Itajaí (Unidavi), Banco do Brasil.
References


http://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/southamerica/brazil/placesweprotect/atlantic-forest.xml


http://www.pnas.org/content/110/21/8349.full.pdf

http://www.mma.gov.br/biomas/mata-atlantica

SOS Mata Atlântica/INPE, 2011

SOS Mata Atlântica/INPE, 2012