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# The Forests Dialogue

ENGAGE! EXPLORE! CHANGE!

## Field-Dialogue on Tree Plantations in the Landscape (TPL) in Brazil

12–16 March 2018 | Espírito Santo and Bahia, Brazil

### Concept Note

#### ABOUT THE TPL INITIATIVE

Tree plantations currently provide a third of the world's industrial wood, a proportion expected to increase significantly in coming decades. They also have great potential to deliver environmental services and social benefits, such as combating climate change and implementing conservation efforts. However, many aspects of tree plantations have been and remain controversial, with concerns that associated environmental and social costs often outweigh economic and other benefits.



The TPL initiative explores the evolving state of issues related to tree plantations and planted forests within the larger landscape context through engaging key stakeholder groups at the international, national and local levels. The Forests Dialogue (TFD) launched the Tree Plantations in the Landscape (TPL) Initiative in September 2015 at the XIV World Forestry Congress in South Africa with the first field dialogue in Chile in 2016. The TPL Initiative in Brazil will build on TFD's previous Intensively Managed Planted Forests (IMPF) initiative, with a field dialogue in Brazil in 2008. The dialogue will be the first effort in partnership with New Generation Plantations (NGP).

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In order to complement and support existing processes in the sector, the TPL initiative has been developed to:

- ➔ **Enhance discussions through field dialogues that address the TPL Initiative's five key topic areas** (listed below)
- 1. Revisit issues raised in the IMPF dialogue in 2008, noting any resulting outcomes including changes by companies and new or remaining concerns.
- 2. Identify the dialogue's role in order to complement other international processes;
- 3. Gather and share learnings and best practices from related processes;
- 4. Catalyze and support regional and national level processes;
- 5. Develop alliances, broaden reach and be implemented in collaboration with partners to avoid duplication.

## THE TPL BRAZIL CONTEXT

Brazil is one of the major forestry nations of Latin America and is the world's largest producer of Eucalyptus-derived pulp. Global demand has ensured steady growth and profits in the Brazilian planted tree industry, which in 2015 represented 6.0% of the country's Industrial GDP. This growth is reflected in an expansion of area under planted forest—Brazil had about 7.8 million hectares of planted trees in 2016, up from 5.6 million hectares in 2005.

In 2008 TFD held an IMPF dialogue which identified priority environmental and social measures. Environmental measures included developing environmental zoning, promoting native species, restoring degraded areas, promoting conservation incentives, managing of the impacts of the IMPFs and strengthening of local environmental agencies. In the social front, participants identified the need for the following: a social footprint, distribution of benefits, a more just tax reform, mitigation of negative social outcomes and identification economic alternatives for communities.<sup>1</sup> The 2018 TPL dialogue will follow-up on these goals, observing successes, identifying what must be improved and setting new objectives in light of the new context.

Following up from the dialogue, through a survey in 2015, stakeholders reflected that while the dialogue had positive effects and there had been improvement in most areas, some key issues remain unaltered.<sup>2</sup>

1 2008 Brazil IMPF Co-Chair's Summary: [http://theforestdialogue.org/sites/default/files/tfd\\_impf\\_brazil\\_dialogue\\_co-chairs\\_summary\\_-\\_english.pdf](http://theforestdialogue.org/sites/default/files/tfd_impf_brazil_dialogue_co-chairs_summary_-_english.pdf)

2 Kanowski, Peter. Background Paper. 2015. [http://theforestdialogue.org/sites/default/files/tfd\\_impf2\\_background\\_paper\\_24aug15.pdf](http://theforestdialogue.org/sites/default/files/tfd_impf2_background_paper_24aug15.pdf)



A major topic of the 2008 dialogue, the potential for social conflict between multiple groups in the area, requires revisiting. These include companies, indigenous communities, *quilombolas* (settlements with special status in Brazil comprised of former slaves and other marginalized groups), MST (landless social movement), charcoal makers and *grileiros* (land-grabbers). In the IMPF Dialogue, all except for the land-grabbers showed an intention to unite for the sustainable development of the country. We will return to see if that is still their vision, and what were the impacts of further intensification to these communities.

Furthermore, changes in the socio-political context have changed the landscape for IMPFs resulting in new challenges and points of tension.



The following are key changes since 2008 that will be touched upon in the TPL dialogue.

- ➔ **The national economy:** The stable and growing economy that attracted local and foreign investment in IMPFs, at the time, is no longer present. Despite these changes, new uses for tree products, beyond the traditional supply of pulp and paper, plus the ability to utilize byproducts of production processes, signal that this market will continue to grow into the foreseeable future.
- ➔ **Debate over sustainable intensification, especially the role of GM trees:** There is still a disagreement amongst Brazil's population about the environmental and social impacts of plantations, and whether or not sustainable intensification is possible. The use of genetically modified trees, in particular, is highly debated. When Brazil's National Technical Commission on Biosafety (CTNBio) allowed plantations to utilize GM Eucalyptus trees in April 2015, there were strong reaction and protests from the civil society, leading to the destruction of several GM trees.<sup>3</sup> Some argue that GM trees will further intensification and commercialization of land use, reinforcing their concerns about the social impacts of IMPFs on vulnerable local communities.
- ➔ **Adaptation and mitigation to Climate Change:** In the Paris Agreement, Brazil pledged to cut greenhouse emissions to 37% below 2005 levels by 2025 and 43% by 2030.<sup>4</sup> Brazil has been

3 Kanowski, Peter. Background Paper. 2015. [http://theforestdialogue.org/sites/default/files/tfd\\_impf2\\_background\\_paper\\_24aug15.pdf](http://theforestdialogue.org/sites/default/files/tfd_impf2_background_paper_24aug15.pdf)

4 UNFCCC, Brazil's Intended Contributions: <http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/INDC/Published%20Documents/>



successful in that area, emissions in 2013 were 33% lower than the emissions in 2005. Emissions from land-use change and deforestation, the main emissions source in Brazil, were 73% lower in 2013 than in 2004. However, emissions from agriculture and energy are rising, now 30% of Brazil's emissions.<sup>5</sup> Alarming, deforestation rates began increasing again this past year. Key topics for dialogue include deforestation and land-use emissions, the production of biomass from IMPFs for energy, adaptation to pests and fire resulting from climate change, and strategies for planted forests to adapt to climate change including diversification of species.

- **Brazilian legal conservation requirements:** The law regarding conservation requirements, a focus of the IMPF dialogue in 2008, has since changed. In 2012 a new Forest Code was put in place that altered the measurement of the area preserved within permanent preservation areas APPs and included a new stipulation on legal reserves (RLs), allowing for compensation in other areas of the same biome, even with exotic species. These changes sparked a legal debate and the constitutionality of the law is now being analyzed in the Supreme Court, and the decision could impact IMPFs directly.



The dialogue will mobilize around the work of the NGP platform, and the Mata Atlântica Restoration Pact. Ten years ago, WWF launched the New Generation Plantations platform, with the participation of a number of companies and government forest departments that manage plantations. The idea was to identify and promote better practices for plantation design and management, learning and sharing experiences from around the world. Although they approach the issue from different perspectives and contexts, participants share a belief that as tree plantations grow over the coming decades they can – and must – bring real benefits to people and nature. The Mata Atlantic Restoration Pact with more than 260 members, including NGOs, businesses, government agencies and research institutions and ties in with Brazil's Paris pledge. The Mata Atlântica Restoration Pact, of which Fibria, Suzano and Veracel are active members, was launched in 2009, with the mission to restore 15 million hectares of Atlantic forest by 2050, and a target of 1 million hectares by 2020. We will be visiting these locations to see the results of such efforts in action.




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Brazil/1/BRAZIL%20iNDC%20english%20FINAL.pdf. The Decree 9703 of 2017 internalized the Paris Agreement. [http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil\\_03/\\_ato2015-2018/2017/decreto/D9073.htm](http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/_ato2015-2018/2017/decreto/D9073.htm)

5 Aamodt 2015, SEEG 2014.

## THE DIALOGUE

This multi-stakeholder field dialogue will convene approximately 30 Brazilian and 20 international experts and stakeholders in **March 2018** in the **States of Bahia and Espírito Santo, Brazil**.

Participants will arrive in Porto Seguro, Bahia, on Monday, March 12th and commence the dialogue with a half-day, introductory session, followed by field visits. Moving south along the Atlantic coast between the 13th-15th, participants will engage in two full-day site visits and one day consisting of both facilitated group discussion and a site visit. Visits will include local farms, landless movement lands (MST), indigenous communities, *quilombos* and IMPFs. Friday, March 16th will be dedicated to a full day dialogue, using both plenary and small working-group formats, in the coastal city of Vitória, Espírito Santo.

## TPL BRAZIL PRIORITIES

The TPL Brazil dialogue will provide a venue to address, within a specific Brazilian context, the five key priority topic areas identified during the TPL Initiative Scoping Dialogue. These five key priority topic areas are:

1. Plantation forests in the context of the global sustainable development agenda.
2. The design and implantation of plantation forests in the context of a landscape approach.
3. Approaches to enable good governance and inclusive development.
4. Identifying key externalities (from the perspective of different stakeholders) associated with the development and management of plantation forests.
5. The diversification of the forms and species composition of plantation forests, the sustainability of plantation forestry systems, efforts to combat climate change and to amplify conservation, and access to and use of new technologies.

## OUTPUTS

1. A background paper will be commissioned prior to the field dialogue to provide participants with a baseline understanding of the concept and context of tree plantations in Brazil, and to present ideas to stimulate discussion. It will give an overview of tree plantations in Brazilian landscapes, as well as pertinent government policies, and will discuss the main successes and changes since 2008 and current challenges confronting effective conflict management in the sector. The paper will be finalized and made publicly available after the dialogue.
2. The dialogue co-chairs will prepare an official report summarizing participants' experiences during the site visits and the discussions during the dialogue. It will also analyze the evolution of



the interaction between stakeholders, especially if there has been an improvement in corporate responsibility, governance and social and sustainable plantation practices from the last IMPF dialogue. The summary report will be distributed widely, and key findings will be presented to priority stakeholders in Brazil.

3. Communication materials include one or more generally targeted pieces with accessible language will be produced for TFD and partners' websites and social media. There will also be engaging short 30 second videos for social media and 5 and 10-minute-long edited videos to be posted on TFD's and partners' websites.
4. Press outputs include press conferences before and after the dialogue coordinated with local media outlets, targeted outreach via social media to opinion-shapers, one or more news articles to be published online immediately following the dialogue in regional and international outlets that will report out on key messages.



## LOOKING AHEAD

At the national level, the field dialogue will help strengthen a stakeholder network that can support policy initiatives around tree plantations in the landscape, comprising key leaders from government, the agriculture and forest sectors, and civil society. We will analyze how plantations can play a role in combating climate change and deforestation, while maintaining ecosystems and contributing to restoration. Local communities, in particular, will be empowered to play an active, leading role.

Internationally, findings from the Brazil field dialogue will provide case information that can inform the design and implementation of best practices for tree plantations elsewhere. Findings from the dialogue will help frame field dialogues being planned in other countries. A wrap-up meeting will synthesize learnings, create consensus recommendations, and develop a concrete action plan with partners.

## COLLABORATORS

TFD, New Generation Plantations, Diálogo Florestal (The Brazilian Forests Dialogue), WWF, Fibria, Veracel, Suzano, Two State Platforms.

### New Generation Plantations' Strengths



The New Generation Plantations (NGP) platform works toward a vision of forest plantations that contribute positively to the welfare of local communities and do not replace natural forests or other important ecosystems. WWF manages the NGP platform with participation from companies and governments around the world. The platform is a place to share ideas and learn about better practices through real-world examples. NGP brings together people of various backgrounds with different values, perspectives, knowledge and experiences, stimulating their critical reflection on the understanding of common challenges and questions.

### The Forests Dialogue's Strengths



TFD provides a neutral platform for dialogue. As no single organization dominates the dialogue process, diverse stakeholders feel welcome and empowered, leading to outcomes that are made durable by the sense of ownership shared by all participants. A dialogue is only as valuable as the breadth and depth of those actors who engage, and TFD's process ensures broad participation that enables strong uptake of dialogue outcomes. TFD will seek, in particular, to include local and national stakeholders that are interested or affected by tree plantations but which have not yet directly engaged with them, such as companies, NGOs and civil society organizations.

### Diálogo Florestal (Forests Dialogue Brazil) Strengths



As TFD, TFD Brazil provides a neutral and independent platform for interaction between forest management companies and socio-environmental organizations. It has the objective to build a cohesive vision and path forward between these sectors. Through that, TFD Brazil intends to strengthen conservation and restoration efforts, generating benefits to Dialogue members and all of society.