

Lessons Learned

Building of legal and institutional structures: The importance of building up both legal and institutional structures to deliver large scale programmes with the dual objectives of reducing poverty and promoting ecosystem conservation and restoration needs to be emphasized. These structures not only eliminate restrictions but also make viable the operationalization and logistics of the programmes. Further, mechanisms must be in place to ensure adaptability to emerging conditions.

Inter-institutional networking: Inter-institutional networking refers to the communication and collaboration needed between the four sectors of government so that they are able to carry out the programmes discussed. Various other sectors and partners were also involved and are key components in the operation of the programmes.

Integration among the objectives of different sectorial plans: The undertaking of programmes with the dual objectives of reducing poverty and promoting ecosystem conservation and restoration has the potential to promote, or even deepen, integration among the objectives of different sectorial plans. For example, in the GGP the rural priority areas as defined by the federal government were broadened to include families from classic settlements projects due to increased integration of rural sectorial plans.

Financing: Combining socio-economic and development objectives with ecosystem conservation and restoration for public policies, such as the Price-Support Policy for Socio-Biodiversity Derived Products and the Green Grant Programme, constitutes a viable, and possible win-win, strategy for allocating financial resources as dual positive objectives are achieved. This is extremely important because development and execution of environmental programs alone normally faces intense restrictions and disputes in the allocation of tight budgets.

The full case study can be found at <http://www.cbd.int/restoration/>

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Leveraging public programmes with socio-economic and development objectives to support conservation and restoration of ecosystems: the Price-Support Policy for Socio-Biodiversity Derived Products and the Green Grant Programme of Brazil

The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 recognises that biodiversity underpins ecosystem functioning and the provision of ecosystem services that are essential for human well-being. The fourth Global Biodiversity Outlook underscores that biodiversity is still being lost and ecosystems degraded at alarming rates. Actions for restoring degraded ecosystems need to be strengthened and scaled up. Some countries have developed public programmes with socio-economic and development objectives that invest in large-scale conservation and restoration of ecosystems. These programmes use labour-intensive approaches for both development needs and environmental goals.

This pamphlet, which is one in a series, outlines the elements of success of the price-support policy for socio-biodiversity derived products and the Green Grant Program in Brazil successful. The aim is to provide information on the potential of public programmes with socio-economic and development objectives to contribute simultaneously to development and environmental goals. This information may be useful to other countries considering implementing similar programmes in their countries, thereby scaling up biodiversity conservation.

Introduction

Brazil has recognized and invested in a number of government programs that seek to reduce chronic poverty and improve infrastructure as well as conserve and restore ecosystems. Two promising government policies for supporting biodiversity conservation and restoration goals on a large-scale are: the Price-support Policy for Socio-Biodiversity Derived Products and the *Bolsa Verde* Programme (Green Grant Programme). Both programmes target the Brazilian population that largely depends upon the use of non-timber forest products (fruits, seeds, fibers and other plant parts) for their livelihoods. They provide positive impacts on ecosystems and improve the beneficiaries' quality of life.



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Structuring Policies for Extractive Products and the Extractivists

Non-timber forest product extraction is intertwined with the process of colonization and conquest of what is now the Brazilian territory and still persists today. This practice is in large part associated with a variety of communities in the remote corners of the country. These communities are strongly dependent on products extracted from nature and are among the economically poorest segment of the Brazilian population.

Although the extraction of non-timber forest products no longer represents a large share of the national economy, the products derived from it play a vital role in the subsistence of the producing groups (henceforth, extractivists). This activity frequently amounts to an important source of income and is considered by the federal government a key component of a strategy for the sustainable use of natural resources.

The 1980s marked the beginning of a relationship between extractivists, the environmentalist movement, and environmental public policy. This relationship began with the struggle of the rubber tappers of Xapuri against deforestation, culminated in the murder of their leader, Chico Mendes, and resulted in the establishment of a legal frame for extractive reserves (RESEX) by 1990. Important milestones solidified the association between environmental policy and the extractivists:

- The establishment of sustainable use protected areas, such as RESEX and similar areas, by the National System of Protected Areas, in 2000;
- The structuring of public policy in support of family farmers, including extractivists, with the setting up of the National Policy on Family Farming and Rural Family Enterprises in 2006;
- The institution of the National Policy for the Sustainable Development of Traditional Peoples and Communities in 2007.

Price-Support Policy for Socio-Biodiversity Derived Products

The Price-Support Policy for Socio-Biodiversity Derived Products (PSPBIO) aims to reduce income variations for extractivists and to support the valorisation of their products. In return, indigenous and local communities reduce the impacts of their exploitation techniques, which contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

The National Supply Company implements the policy. It sets a minimum price for selected products and operationalizes the payments, in the form of a subsidy. This process provides payment for the difference between the

minimum price set by the government and the sale value of the extractive products.

The policy was first implemented in 2009. In 2013, the greatest amount of subsidies was paid out, with expenditures of nearly USD 2.6 million. Over the years, the number of products supported by policy has increased, reaching 14 in 2013, and includes piassaba fiber, babassu almonds, rubber, Brazil and souari nuts, and açai fruit. From 2009 to 2013, the subsidy payment policy reached 84 counties in 11 states, mainly in the Atlantic Rainforest and Amazon biomes, and less so in the *Cerrado* and *Caatinga* biomes. The *Pampa* and *Pantanal* biomes are not yet reached by PSPBIO.

This uneven distribution of the subsidies may be associated with various factors. In the case of Brazil nut, for example, no payments were made in 2011 or 2012 because the sale price was greater than the minimum price defined by the government; this was also the case with açai.

In interviews, potential recipients stated that one major obstacle was to obtain the Family Farmers Program Eligibility Declaration, which certifies those who are eligible to access

government funded support programs such as PSPBIO. Other bottlenecks mentioned in the operationalization of payments included: the need to present a purchase or sale invoice, as well as the requirement that the extractivist possess personal documentation and a checking account. These requirements certainly are important obstacles for extractivists to access PSPBIO, given their social condition and the informal nature of the trading of such products.

The Environmental Conservation Support Programme (*Bolsa Verde* or *Green Grant Programme*)

The Green Grant Program (GGP) was launched in order to help extremely poor families develop environmental conservation activities, as part of the Brazil without Extreme Poverty Plan. The Plan has a priority target group of 16.2 million Brazilians, identified by the 2010 Census, as living in conditions of extreme poverty. The Plan's objectives include guaranteeing income, access to public service, and inclusion in production.

The GGP targets communities in situations of extreme poverty living in rural priority areas defined by the federal government. These areas include sustainable use protected areas and *environmentally differentiated* settlement projects such as Sustainable Development Projects, and Forestry Settlement Projects. The GGP transfers funds and will provide technical assistance to families who are engaged in natural resource conservation activities in rural areas.

At the onset, the GGP prioritized the northern region of Brazil (i.e. the Amazon biome), where there is a greater concentration of rural priority areas and a larger eligible population. The number of participant states and counties increased steadily, such that within two years, only three states were not involved, and 730 out of 5,570 counties have poor families being served by the programme. However, a strong incidence of GGP in the Amazon continues, whereas the Pampa and Pantanal biomes are yet to be reached by the programme.

To receive benefits in the GGP families must be registered with the *CadÚnico*, a government

database of underprivileged families. The database is used to ensure that families have access to federal social protection programs. GGP is integrated with the *Bolsa Família* or Family Grant Program, which directly transfers income to poor and extremely poor Brazilian families. The joint operation of these two programmes makes it possible to use the same payment system and to ensure recipients under one programme receive benefits from the other.

Implementation of the Green Grant Program involves various stages and institutions:

1. The identification and registration of families in the rural priority areas;
2. The forwarding of this information to the program coordination in Brasilia;
3. The verification of potential beneficiary families meeting social and environmental conditions to enter GGP;
4. The return of the Terms of Adhesion to the Program to the field for signatures by the families.

One of the challenges the programme faces is the difficulty in reaching the target population, who sometimes relocate temporarily, or even permanently, to extract non-timber and other forest products or to take up residence in another place offering better subsistence conditions. For example, in November 2012 there were approximately 15,000 Terms awaiting signature by the beneficiaries.

