

Redd+ Results-based Payments Pilot Program: benefiting those who preserve the forest?

By Alessandra Cardoso





Inesc

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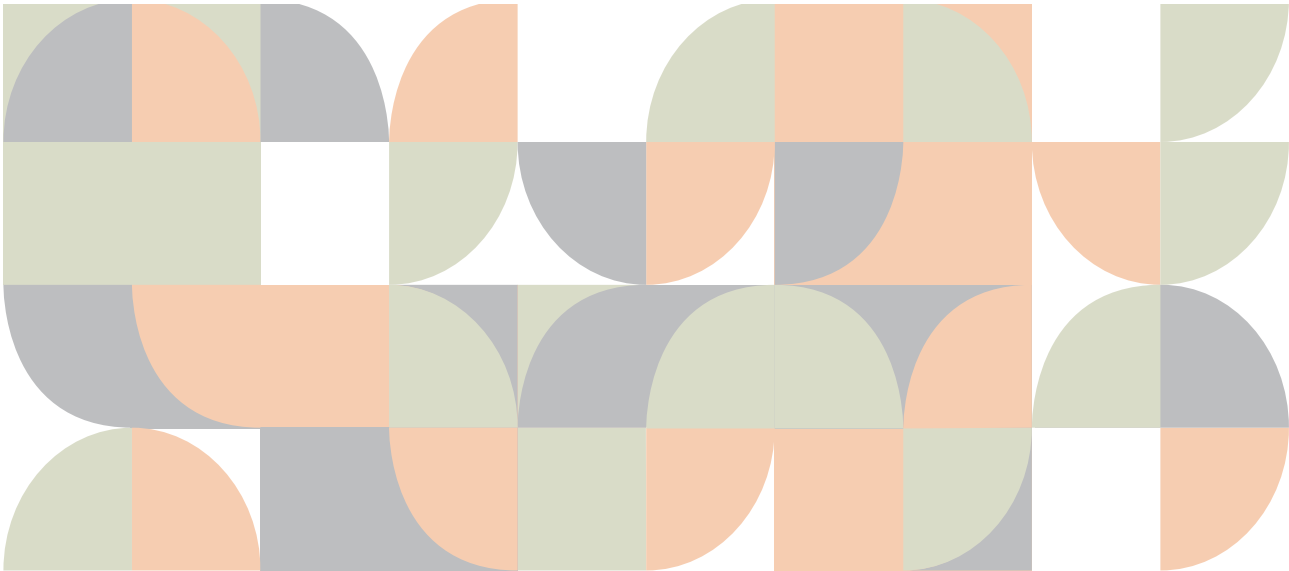
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Executive Summary

➡ This article is part of the effort to monitor socioenvironmental and climate policy in Brazil carried out by the Institute for Socioeconomic Studies (Inesc) over the years 2019 and 2020. Herein, we address the “REDD+ Results-based Pilot Program” which is financed by the Green Climate Fund and is being implemented as part of a broader program called “National Program of Payments for Environmental Services: Forest+” (*Floresta + Carbono Program*).

➡ Brazil is the first country to have a Pilot Project approved in order to raise funds for international cooperation in the scope of payment programs for results regarding the reduction of emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, the so-called REDD +, an instrument recognized by the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC).

➡ The Pilot Project sent to the Fund by Brazil is based on the “National REDD+ Strategy” or ENREDD +, a policy built between 2015 and 2016. The objective of this Strategy is to contribute to the fight against deforestation in Brazilian biomes. In order to reach this objective, it brings together a set of policies and plans that were already being implemented even before its establishment, such as PPCDAm and PPCerrado for instance, both internationally recognized for their positive results.

➡ The *Floresta + Carbono Program* differs from the proposal approved by the Green Climate Fund. Instead of reinforcing policies and programs that have already worked, the given Program bets on application of financial and market instruments for environmental protection. As demonstrated, the (i) purposes, the (ii) scope and the (iii) beneficiaries initially provided for in the Pilot Program are at serious risk of getting twisted, as the focus of this new version is the creation of a national carbon market.

➡ In the sense of nature privatization and financialization, this study concludes that the current Brazilian government promotes a turn of the national policy towards a market environmentalism and seeks to negotiate carbon credits, invalid for international multilateral organs, within the country itself.

➡ Therefore, the Institute of Socioeconomic Studies (Inesc, in Portuguese) understands that it is important to monitor the implementation of the Pilot Project approved by the Fund with special attention to the framework of the environmental and socio-environmental policies dismantling in Brazil and their effects in terms of compromising the fight against deforestation and burning in the Brazilian Amazon.

Introduction

This article provides information on the implementation by the Brazilian government of the “Redd+ Results-based Payment Pilot Program”. The Program has received U\$96 million funding from the Green Climate Fund and has been officially running since January 2020.

Based on a contextualization of the scenario wherein the Program was proposed and setting it in the current broader context of social and environmental policy dismantling in the country, concerns about its implementation are present.

The document seeks to demonstrate how the program was incorporated as part of a larger initiative launched by the federal government called “*Floresta + Carbono*” (Forest + Carbon). It is advocated that there is a turning of the national policy towards market environmentalism, with high risks of damage to the beneficiaries which were originally covered by the project: family farmers, indigenous peoples and traditional peoples and communities.

Methodologically, the article is based on the analysis of the documents related to the project which was approved by the Green Climate Fund, on the details regarding the commitments made by the country to this Fund, as well as on documents and information about the “*Floresta + Carbono Program*”, wherein the Pilot Program mentioned herein is incorporated as the main component.

The document presents initial findings as an attempt to answer the question: Is the *Floresta + Carbono Program*, as it is structured, compatible with the Pilot Program presented and approved by the GCF?

The set of analysis gathered along this course represents the core of this article, which is divided into four sections: in the first, we approach the context of approval of the Pilot Project prepared by Brazil with the Green Climate Fund, also punctuating the simultaneity between the arrival of these resources and socio-environmental and climate policy dismantling in the country; in the second, we assume that the program announced in 2020 differs significantly from that one presented to the GCF in 2018, the year of the proposal submission; in the third, we make a synthetic description of the original project, with emphasis on determining its target audience; and finally, in the fourth, we do the exercise of anticipating the results of *Floresta +*, reinforcing the contradictions between the defined actions present in the 2020 program and the ones in the 2018 one.

The Green Climate Fund (GCF)

Brazil is the first country to approve a Pilot Project to raise funds for international cooperation within the scope of results-based payment programs for the reduction of emissions caused by deforestation and forest degradation, the so-called REDD +¹, instrument recognized by the United Nations Framework Convention For Climate Change (UNFCCC). The Project, worth of **US\$ 96.4 million**, was submitted to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) in August 2018, being approved in February 2019 and having its implementation started only in 14 January 2020. Its approval by the GCF represented recognition over the country's past efforts to tackle the problem of deforestation in the Brazilian Legal Amazon.

It is important to understand that the financing for the Brazilian climate policy offered by the GCF rewards the results already achieved, that is, past or accumulated, of combating climate change in the countries, aiming to contribute to the maintenance of the environmental and socio-environmental governance capacities created and positively evaluated.

Thus, the Project² is based on the credibility acquired in the past to guarantee the maintenance of a set of good practices for the future. From a formal

point of view, it is this document that indicates to the UNFCCC's signatory countries how the federal government intends to use these resources as part of its climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts. In this case, we focus on coordinated actions for **(i)** preventing and controlling deforestation and forest degradation; **(ii)** promoting forest recovery; and **(iii)** promoting sustainable development.

In Brazil's case, the Pilot Project³ was based on the so-called "National REDD + Strategy" (ENREDD +, in Portuguese) built between 2015 and 2016⁴. The objective of this strategy is to contribute to the fight against deforestation in Brazilian biomes. In summary, ENREDD + is formed by the compilation of policies and plans that were already being implemented before its establishment. Many of these policies are recognized internationally for their positive results. This is the case **(i)** of PPCDAm⁵, which had entered its fourth phase during the formalization

1 REDD +: Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, Conserving Forest Carbon Stocks, Sustainable Forest Management, and Increasing Forest Carbon Stocks.

2 For more information, check: <http://redd.mma.gov.br/en/financing/green-fund-for-the-climate-gcf>

3 For more information, check: <http://redd.mma.gov.br/en/financing/green-fund-for-the-climate-gcf>

4 For more information, check: http://redd.mma.gov.br/images/publicacoes/enredd_document_web.pdf

5 The Experts' reviews converge, as they claim that the Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Deforestation in the Legal Amazon (PPCDAm) was fundamental to reduce deforestation in the Amazon, mainly through the expansion of protected areas (Conservation Units and Indigenous Lands) and the implementation of the satellite monitoring system (Deter System), together with inspection actions, supported by the so-called command and control measures.

of ENREDD +, as well as **(ii)** PPCerrado⁶, which was constituted in 2010.

Other measures that are also part of the ENREDD + framework are: **(iii)** the Forest Code, with emphasis on the Rural Environmental Registry (CAR, in Portuguese) and measures for the recovery and/or compensation of deforested legal reserve areas; **(iv)** policies for forest and indigenous peoples' lifestyle preservation, in particular, the National Policy for Territorial and Environmental Management of Indigenous Lands (PNGATI); and **(v)** the Low Carbon Agriculture Plan (Plano ABC, in Portuguese).

The indigenous component of ENREDD + was defined in the Project document as “a relevant contribution which has practical consequences in the environment for the implementation of PNGATI and has achieved the emission reduction targets contained in the National Policy on Climate Change (PNMC)”.

The Pilot Project, therefore, is about recognizing and valuing the paths and policies that had already been outlined by previous governments. However, **the GCF funding reaches Brazil in a context marked by the increase in deforestation and the accelerated dismantling of public environmental and socio-environmental policies. In fact, even those policies that were documented in the Project and served as a justification for its approval have become targets for dismantling.** Inesc has been constantly monitoring and reporting the mischaracterization of these policies.

6 PPCerrado stands for Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Deforestation in the Brazilian Cerrado.

As examples, PPCDAm and PPCerrado have been abandoned. According to an explicit statement made by the Minister of the Environment at a hearing at the Supreme Federal Court⁷, the PPCDAm, which would have its fourth phase concluded in 2020, was extinguished by the government in a non-transparent and undocumented manner at a meeting of the so-called Executive Committee for Controlling Illegal Deforestation and Native Vegetation Recovery (CONAVEG), according to Decree n° 10.142, November 2019⁸. Instead, another policy emerged, namely, the National Plan for Illegal Deforestation Control and Native Vegetation Recovery, which extends from 2020 to 2023, without presenting objective results or goals to be achieved, though⁹.

In turn, PNGATI was completely dismantled, and the dismantling took place in parallel with the extinction of the National Council for Indigenous Policy (CNPI, in Portuguese). CNPI played an important role in guiding the PNGATI. In general, policies for traditional peoples and communities, as well as for small agriculture, have been basically extinguished. In addition, the command and control policies under Ibama's responsibility currently suffer severe budget restrictions, and it has been generating a series of administrative difficulties for the fulfillment of the inspection actions regarding environmental crimes, which correspond to the legal mandate established for this entity.

7 For more information, access: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oxcg3QhvuU0> (speaks at 1:03:50)

8 As seen below, CONAREDD was recreated in the same month.

9 For more information, check: https://www.gov.br/planoalto/pt-br/conheca-a-vice-presidencia/nota-a-imprensa/anexo-ao-resumo-informativo-no-3_de-29-5-2020.pdf

Floresta + Carbono Program

On October 1, 2020, through the Floresta + Carbono Program, the federal government created an instrument whose purpose is to recognize the voluntary carbon market and environmental services in Brazil (Resolution No. 03, of July 22, 2020). The Program foresees the generation of carbon credits through conservation, as well as the recovery of native vegetation, strengthening, in addition, the compensation mechanisms for polluters. It should be implemented using the Green Climate Fund resources and it will replace public policies, favoring the application of financial and market instruments for environmental protection.

Faced with this scenario, the question is: **Is the Pilot Project which was presented and approved by the GCF compatible with the Floresta + Carbono Program?**

The Institute for Socioeconomic Studies (Inesc) understands that it is important to monitor the execution of the Pilot Project approved by the Fund with special attention to the dismantling of the environmental and socio-environmental policies in Brazil and its effects in terms of commitment to the fight against deforestation and fires in the Brazilian Amazon.

Understanding more: Results-based Payment

In Brazil, the debate about the lack of resources for environmental protection and preservation of the Amazon rainforest has been discussed for a long time. As part of this diagnosis, the Amazon Fund was built, for example, with international funding cooperation, mainly coming from the German and Norwegian governments. As for today, financial resources ranging around R\$ 2.9 billion are frozen due to the Brazilian government's insistence on dismantling the Fund's governance structure. This happened even though external evaluations considered it to be effective in tackling the deforestation problem, with a high degree of transparency, good management from BNDES side and excellent guidance by the Guidance Committee for the Amazon Fund - COFA.

At the same time, from the 1970s onwards, the environmental issue gained space on the international agenda, which recognized its indivisible character, defined multilateral strategies to face the so-called climate change. More recently, actions to mitigate these climate changes have become inextricably linked to the challenge of preserving the Amazon rainforest, with this preservation being assumed as part of a common but differentiated responsibility.

As part of this complex international historical construction the Article 5 of the Paris Agreement is reached at the COP, whereby it states: *“Parties are encouraged to take action to implement and support, including through **results-based payments**, the existing framework as set out in related guidance and decisions already agreed under the Convention for: policy approaches and positive incentives for activities relating to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries; and alternative policy approaches, such as joint mitigation and adaptation approaches for the integral and sustainable management of forests, while reaffirming the importance of incentivizing, as appropriate, non-carbon benefits associated with such approaches.”*

In this construction, the financial support for the so-called “results-based payments” for Reducing Emissions due to Deforestation and Degradation (REDD +) comes through the Green Climate Fund (GCF), created at COP 16 (Cancun), 2010.



Summary of the REDD+ Results-based Payments Pilot Program

The U\$ 96.4 million Pilot Project approved with the GCF has had its official start on January 14, 2020 and will be implemented over six years.

Two main results are foreseen in its design:

1. development of a Pilot Program to Encourage Environmental Services for the Conservation and Recovery of Native Vegetation (Floresta + Pilot Program), where most of the donation, U\$ 79.7 million out of the U\$ 96.4 million, should be spent on;

2. strengthening of the ENREDD + implementation through improvements in its governance, structure, and systems, wherein U\$ 7 million will be spent on.

The remaining U\$ 9.7 million will be used to manage the project, part of that being used by UNDP to provide project supervision services.

The Floresta + Pilot Program was proposed as a payment for environmental services, considering the **target group**:

1. small property or family rural land tenure, up to four fiscal modules, as an important part of the policy to encourage environmental compliance;

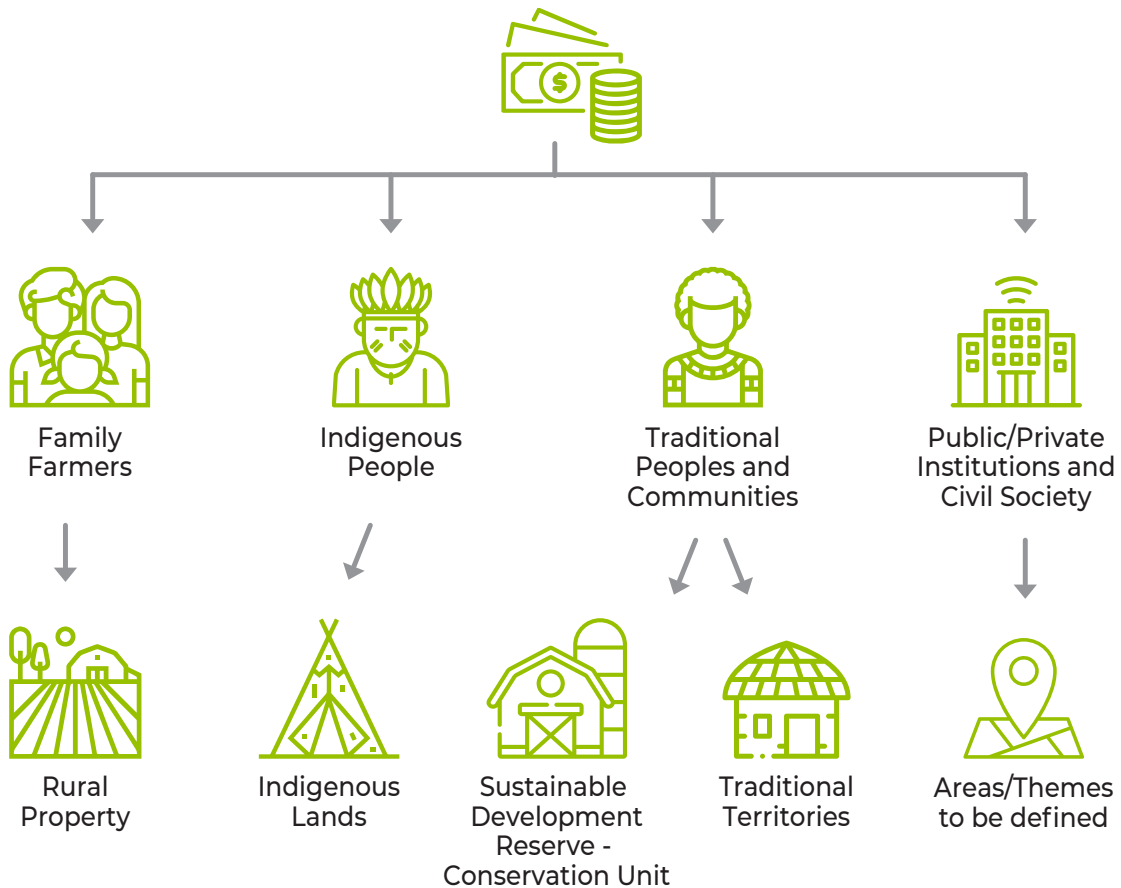
2. indigenous peoples, as an important part for strengthening PNGATI;

3. traditional peoples and communities: culturally differentiated groups that recognize themselves as such, that have their own forms of social organization, that occupy and use territories and natural resources as a condition for their cultural, social, religious, ancestral and economic reproduction, using knowledge, innovations and practices generated and transmitted by tradition;

4. public institutions or entities (including states and municipalities), civil associations, cooperatives and private law foundations that work on issues related to conservation and vegetation recovery.

The figure below, taken from a presentation by the Ministry of the Environment, graphically represents the beneficiaries of the Pilot Program.

Beneficiaries and Covered Areas



Source: Ministry of Environment (MMA)
Available at: <https://bit.ly/2ILTFIY>

A **wider detailing about the target group** for receiving payment regarding environmental services was defined through implementation modalities, with definition on specific values to be applied in each one:

Modality 1 (Floresta + Conservation): incentives for small property (family farming, up to 4 fiscal modules) or family rural tenure, with the objective of conserving the remaining Legal Reserve (U\$ 48.4 million);

Modality 2 (Floresta + Recovery): incentives for small family owned rural property, with the objective of recovering Permanent Preservation Areas (U\$ 12.37 million);

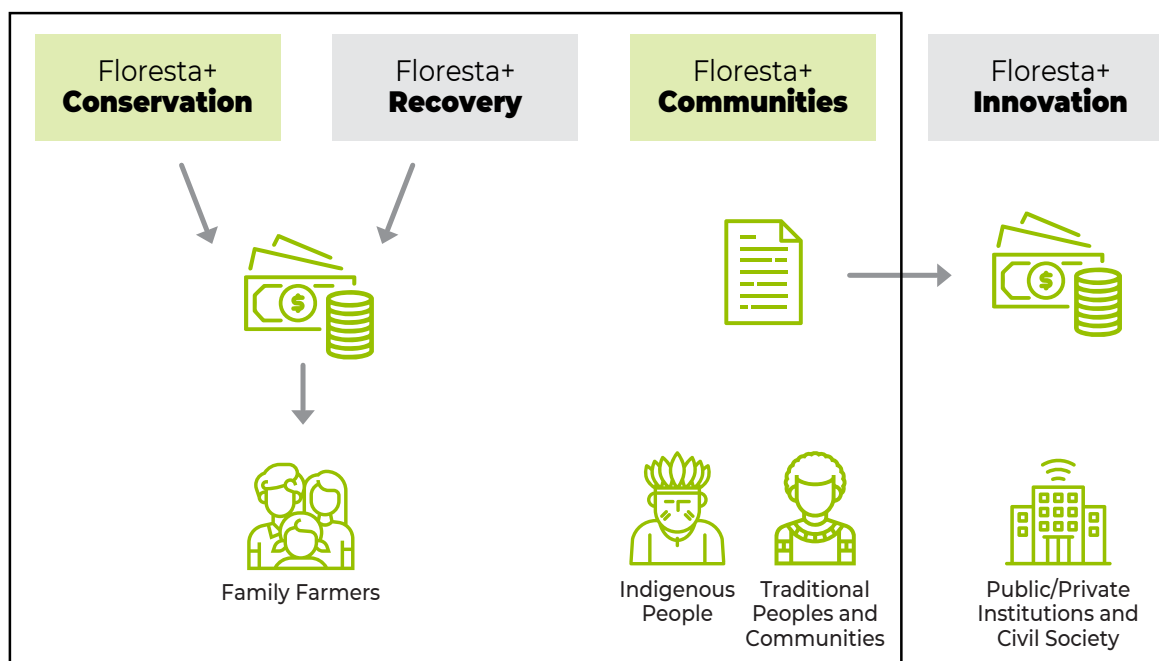
Modality 3 (Floresta + Communities): support for associations and entities representing indigenous peoples and traditional peoples and communities (U\$ 7.5 million);

Modality 4 (Floresta + Innovation): support for innovative actions and arrangements to develop, implement and leverage public policies for the conservation and recovery of native vegetation (U\$ 5 million).

The figure below, taken from a presentation carried out by the Ministry of Environment, graphically represents the modalities of the Pilot Program.

Implementation Modalities

80% of the approved funding should be used on these modalities



Source: Ministry of Environment (MMA)
Available at: <https://bit.ly/2ILTFIY>

Criteria for **spatial prioritization** of the Project were also established, considering:

1. regions with high deforestation pressure, forest degradation and forest fires;
2. priority areas for biodiversity conservation and native vegetation recovery, based on standards defined by the MMA;
3. buffer zones around protected areas;
4. regions with a higher density of small producers;
5. regions with a higher concentration of traditional peoples and communities;

6. integration with other public policies related to the native vegetation conservation and recovery.

Finally, the Green Fund establishes a series of obligations linked to measures for building and complying with safeguards, as well as the commitment to monitor the Project and its assessment. Key clauses were also included in the agreement to ensure transparency, in addition to parameters for accountability in the execution of Project¹⁰:

“(a) The accredited entity shall, in an annex to the first annual performance

¹⁰ Document available at: <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/gcf-b22-24.pdf>

report to be provided to GCF Secretariat in accordance with the terms of the FAA, include a copy of the operations manual for the Floresta+ program and the related monitoring and evaluation plan. The plan shall include the criteria and process for determining the eligibility of the beneficiaries, the prioritization of areas where the Floresta+ pilot program will be implemented, the estimated distribution of the GCF proceeds amongst the different beneficiary stakeholder groups, and the expected outcomes at the end of year 6 of the Floresta+ pilot program of the four modalities;

(b) The accredited entity shall, at least 30 calendar days prior to the delivery of Floresta+ pilot program incentives to the beneficiaries:

(i) disclose the documentation regarding environmental and social safeguards,

(ii) make the project available on its website and in locations convenient to affected peoples, and

(iii) provide the project disclosure package to the GCF Secretariat for further distribution to the Board and Active Observers and for posting on the GCF website;

(c) Ensure and confirm in each APR that the REDD+ RBP proceeds are used and the Activities set out in the Funding Proposal are implemented in a manner consistent with the Funding Proposal and the underlying national policy framework¹¹ within which these Activities are to be implemented.”

PNUD was identified by the Brazilian government as an accredited entity to support the construction of the project and to carry out the straight execution of the resources and the monitoring process.

¹¹ Read ENREDD +.

Pilot Program: benefiting those who preserve the forest?

The announcements of the *Floresta + Carbono Program* made by the Brazilian government, under the coordination of the Secretariat of Forests and Sustainable Development of the Ministry of the Environment, as well as the legal and formal documents that support it, already leave a series of doubts and concerns to be registered.

What can be seen is that the Brazilian government has chosen to use the U\$ 96 million from the Green Climate Fund to leverage a Program that is broader and different from the one originally presented to the GCF.

The *Floresta + Carbono Program* has two main purposes: (i) to benefit rural landowners, regardless of their size and (ii) to use the resources of the Pilot Project to leverage other private donations for the purpose of creating a voluntary carbon market in Brazil.

This is the logical analysis of the announcements already published about the *Floresta + Carbono Program*, as well as Ordinance No. 288, published on July 2, 2020, establishing the *Floresta + Program* and its base document¹².

In this document, the purpose of “accelerating the different fronts of market initiatives for environmental services” is made explicit, including: (i) the REDD + instrument, recognized by the United

Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and based on donations of results-based payments; (ii) the voluntary market for carbon credits from native forests, non-related to the UNFCCC, through private fundraising; (iii) the creation of green debentures within the financial sector; and (iv) the encouragement of private enterprises, especially infrastructure, to use payment for environmental services as a way to mitigate their environmental impacts in the territory.

Through the Floresta+ Program, the current government launched something distinctly different and potentially contradictory in relation to the Pilot Project approved by the GCF.

The Project presented by the Brazilian government to the GCF was based on the National REDD Strategy (ENREDD+), which brought together a set of policies to tackle the problem of deforestation through results. The project contracted by the GCF was a project regarding payment for environmental services to the beneficiaries **(small family property or rural property, indigenous peoples and traditional peoples and communities)** that have always preserved forests and that would contribute to rooting (not dismantling or the eliminating) the socio-environmental policies.

The existence of an “indigenous and traditional peoples and community’s” component, clearly linked to safeguard

¹² For more information, see: [https://www.mma.gov.br/images/publicacoes/Floresta + / Program% 20Forest + .pdf](https://www.mma.gov.br/images/publicacoes/Floresta%20Forest%20Program%20Forest%20Program.pdf)

measures and in compliance with ILO Convention 169¹³, in turn, elucidates how the intentions expressed in the original project would carry on and reinforce existing policies.

However, the Floresta + Carbono Program, which in practice is incorporating the Pilot Program approved by the GCF, is notably diverse and largely contradictory to the objective of targeting beneficiaries who protect the forest.

The target groups of the Floresta + Carbono Program are all private landowners, landowners in the Amazon, with little mention of indigenous peoples, traditional communities, and family farmers.

The government's declaration expresses the intention of using the Project to leverage a voluntary carbon market in Brazil.

Therefore, with its version of Floresta +, the Brazilian government tries to negotiate invalid carbon credits for international multilateral organs within the country itself. It is worth remembering that the Paris Agreement recognizes the role of forests as an essential part of climate mitigation actions, but emissions avoided in the forest sector and by land use cannot be used to offset emissions from other sectors in other countries.

Thus, in contradiction to the common ground established in the Agreement, the Brazilian government intends to create a national business environment for forest carbon, and, through

this Pilot, to attract other resources from sectors interested in offsetting its emissions, that is, buying carbon credits that will be offered through this Floresta+ Program.

It should also be noted that policies for small landowners or family rural tenure, indigenous peoples, traditional peoples, and communities have been nearly destroyed in the past two years in Brazil. In addition to the successive and drastic budget cuts, infralegal and administrative measures were taken, which dismantled the institutional capacities of the entities responsible for public policies related to the target groups of the Pilot Project.

Another element that calls attention in this initial period of implementation of the project is the performance of the **National Commission for REDD + (CONAREDD)**. This commission, created by Decree No. 8,576 of 2015, had an essential role in the construction of the Pilot Project submitted to the GCF, with a series of attributions, among them, the construction of social and environmental safeguard measures.

However, CONAREDD in its original formation, which had foreseen two full representatives and two alternate representatives from civil society, was discontinued in April 2019 by Decree No. 9,759 / 2019, which eliminated a series of public administration councils.

Later, in November 2019, CONAREDD was created again through Decree nº 10.144, however, with a composition that contemplates only one "representative from the organized Brazilian

¹³ ILO Convention 169 establishes the right of indigenous and tribal peoples to be consulted, in a free and informed manner, before decisions are taken that may affect their property or rights.

civil society”, in the figure of the Executive Secretary of the Brazilian Forum for Climate Change¹⁴.

It is with the current composition and current mandate of CONAREDD that the Resolutions that will base the implementation of the Pilot Floresta + Project have been approved. On July 22, 2020, Resolution No. 01 was approved, creating the **Technical Working Group for Safeguards**, with only one representative of indigenous peoples and one representative of traditional peoples and communities and family farmers. Clearly, this lack of representativeness gets the risk of becoming an under-representation and ineffectiveness incidence of those who are the target group of the Pilot Project.

Regarding the Technical Working Group for Safeguards, it is worth mentioning the speech of the “representative of civil society”, according to the

¹⁴ Oswaldo dos Santos Lucon, advisor to the Department of the Environment in the state of São Paulo.

records of the meeting of 16 July 2020:

“Oswaldo Lucon (FMBC) reported that the Safeguards GTT is more open to criticism, anticipating public pressure due to the safeguards chapter. He added that this issue can be mitigated through the circulation of documents, insofar as they can be made public, while critical or sensitive issues will be discussed internally within the GTT”¹⁵.

Also, on July 16, CONAREDD Resolutions 2 and 3 were approved. Resolution No. 2 created the Technical Working Group for Measurement, Reporting and Checking the REDD+ Results, without any representation from civil society. Resolution No. 3, in turn, recognizes the voluntary forest carbon market to support the Floresta + Program in its new version. On October 26, 2020, CONAREDD’s new internal regulations were approved, through Ordinance No. 544.

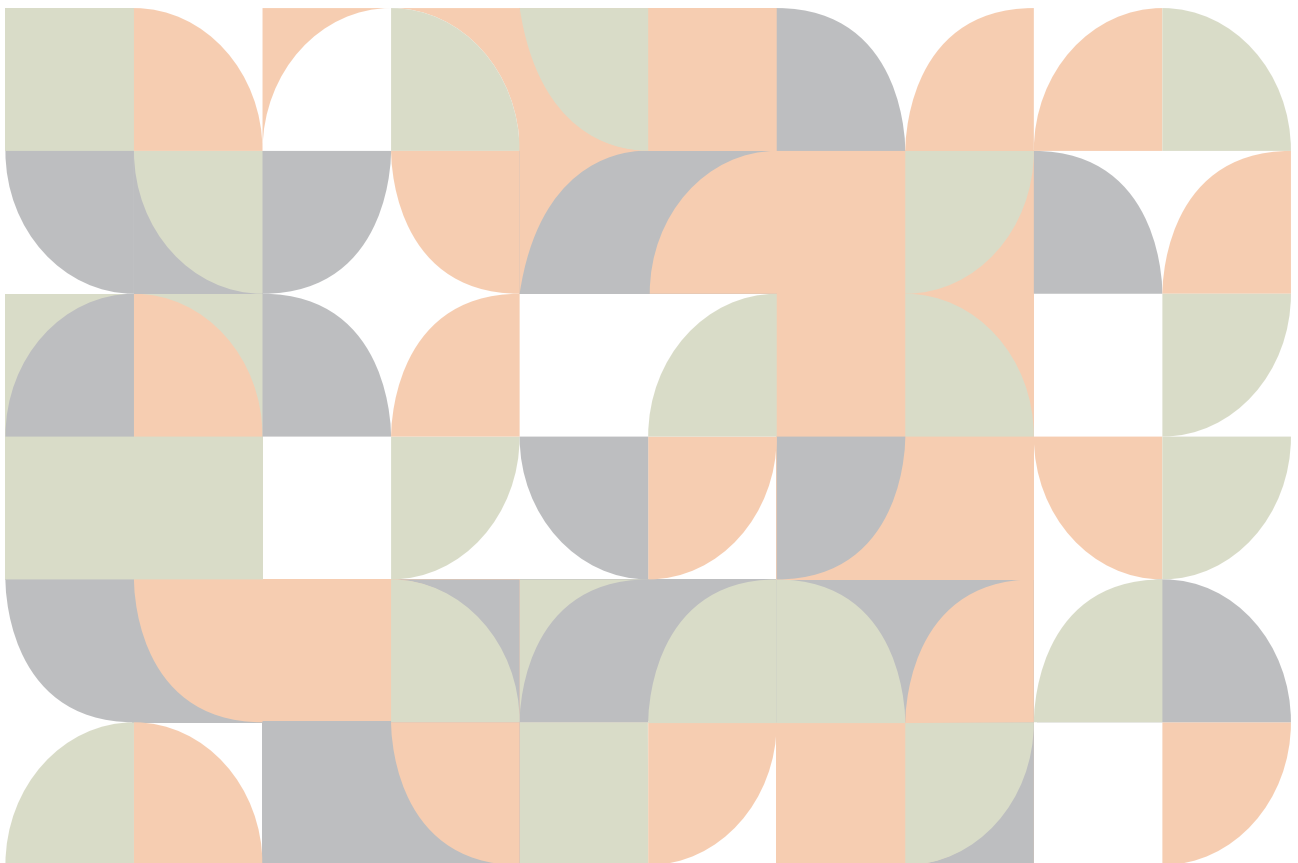
¹⁵ For more information, check: <http://redd.mma.gov.br/pt/reunioes>

Conclusion

In view of the above, the essential task of monitoring is under the responsibility of the UNDP in Brazil - as the assigned authority - and the GCF, which has the challenge of constituting a **commission of active observers** to monitor Project execution.

Having a Pilot Payment Program for environmental services, with U\$ 96 million to be used on a non-refundable basis, aimed at supporting social

groups that historically were responsible for forest preservation (indigenous peoples, traditional peoples and communities, and also small farmers), respecting safeguards, is urgent and relevant. However, the design of the *Floresta + Carbono Program*, which in practice will use the resources of the Pilot Project, is moving in another direction, as we demonstrated in this initial study.



Recommendations

Programs for payments for REDD+ results should not be understood as an end in themselves. They need to be complementary (not substitutive) to public policies aimed at reducing emissions from deforestation, besides being part of a broad socio-environmental policy strategy.

Thus, considering that the Forest + Carbon Program mixes and obfuscates the parameters established in the proposal sent by the Brazilian government to the Green Climate Fund in its (i) purposes, (ii) scope and (iii) beneficiaries; and

- Considering that the mechanisms for social participation and accountability on the performance of the Pilot Program for Payment for REDD+ Results have been dismantled by the Brazilian government elected for the 2019-2022 mandate, it is suggested that:

- The Green Climate Fund Board responsible for monitoring and evaluating the Pilot Program conduct a thorough assessment of the risks of deviation from the purpose, scope, beneficiaries, safeguards and social participation under the Program in Brazil.

- The Board of the Green Climate Fund recognize the independent monitoring by civil society organizations, social groups and beneficiaries of the Program as support for its monitoring.

- The Brazilian Government to reconstitute the social participation within CONARRED, in particular, to include indigenous peoples, family farmers, traditional peoples and communities, who should benefit from 80% of the Program's resources, as members of CONARRED.

- The UNDP, financial executor of the Program, make available on its website the database of all payments made under the Program.

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