



European consumers applaud the progress of the Soy Moratorium

São Paulo, July 15, 2010

The group of European customers of Brazilian soya, made up of important oilseed retailers and consumers, published a joint declaration of support and recognition for the efforts of the business sector and civil society to promote sustainable production in the Amazon Biome. This document was presented at the event on July 8th, held to celebrate the initiative's fourth anniversary.

The anniversary event was broadcast live via the Internet and included a report on the findings of the third monitoring cycle. It was followed by a press conference. At the event, Izabella Teixeira, Minister of the Environment, Paulo Adario, Greenpeace Director for the Amazon Campaign and the civil society representative, Carlo Lovatelli, president of ABIOVE, and Sérgio Mendes, Director of ANEC, renewed the commitment for another year.

Carlo Lovatelli praised the partnership established with INPE, the National Space Research Institute, represented by Professor Bernardo Rudorff. This partnership allowed a significant increase in the area and number of polygons monitored during the third cycle. Lovatelli pointed out that, because of the change in methodology, the results of the third cycle cannot be compared to those of the two prior cycles.

Bernardo Rudorff explained that all polygons with over 25 hectares of deforested land were included in the third year's monitoring, a substantial increase in its extension as, in prior years, monitoring had covered only areas with over 100 hectares and the 70 polygons in the pilot project. The 52 towns responsible for 98% of the soy produced in the Amazon Biome were monitored.

Of the 194 areas identified from satellite images as having signs of agricultural crops, 76 were planted with soy on an area of 6,300 hectares. The low relevance of this amount becomes evident when it is compared to the 2.49 million hectares deforested in the states of Mato Grosso, Pará and Rondônia during the three-year period 2007-2009. In other words, soy was planted on just 0.25% of the total deforested area. "If the Moratorium had not been in effect" said Rudorff, "this number would have been much greater".



In her presentation, the Minister of the Environment, Izabella Teixeira, said “The results of INPE’s monitoring show us the true dimension and complexity of the problem and it isn’t possible to say that new deforestation is associated with soy”. The business sector developed good dialogues and showed it is possible to produce soy in a sustainable manner.

Minister Teixeira emphasized the federal government’s diligence in improving governance. The big challenge is to promote the registration of rural properties in the appropriate environmental entities, and the priority is to create favorable conditions, giving credit support to producers, in the 47 towns that had the most deforestation and which are the target of intense inspections through the Green Arch operation.

The Economic-Ecologic Zoning in the states of Mato Grosso and Pará should be concluded by this December. Brazil’s National Congress has already approved a low-carbon policy and the country is seeing the environmental axis in a more strategic light. “The Soy Moratorium is a promising path and is setting an example for other crops”, ended the Minister.

Paulo Adario recognized the improvement in the monitoring system brought about by the partnership with INPE, and noted the increased number of polygons with soy acreage, commenting that the Moratorium interrupted the oilseed’s expansion in the Biome at the right moment. One crucial task of the GTS Soy Work Group is to identify the owners of the farms that planted soy and, therefore, rural property registration must be incentivated.

Commenting on the Forest Code amendment currently being debated in Congress, Adario restated the civil society position, which defends zero deforestation. European customers want products that preserve the Amazon Forest and “those who deforest and don’t sell their product are losing money”, he declared.

In answer to a question about the initiative’s impact on the market value of soy, Lovatelli commented that “there was no increase in the price of soy but, with the Moratorium, the sector met a demand of the international market, especially the European market, and avoided the imposition of barriers”.

Sérgio Mendes concluded, “The market can rest easy because the soy sold by ABIOVE and ANEC members does not come from deforested areas of the Amazon Biome. An external audit was made of these companies, guaranteeing that they are all in compliance with the commitment assumed in the Soy Moratorium”.



ABIOVE

The Declaration by the group of European customers, the Statement of Commitment and the Report on the 2009/2010 Monitoring Cycle, including the methodology used, aerial photographs, satellite images and the results achieved are available on the site www.abiove.com.br.



Left to right: Sérgio Mendes (ANEC), Paulo Adario (Greenpeace), Izabella Teixeira (Minister of the Environment) and Carlo Lovatelli (ABIOVE).