



## GTS NEWSLETTER

### **Second meeting of the GTS (Soy Working Group) defines work plans for 2007**

**Sao Paulo, December 2006.** The Soy Working Group (GTS) was created after ABIOVE (Brazilian Vegetable Oils Industry Association) and ANEC (National Grain Exporters Association) decreed a moratorium on soy crops in areas of the Amazon Biome that were deforested after July 24, 2006. The GTS has already defined part of the work plans for soy sustainability in 2007, for the environmental NGOs and the businessmen.

The meeting that led to the detailed planning was held last December, at the WWF Brasil's headquarters in Brasilia (DF). One of the decisions made was the creation of three subgroups that will work on:

- 1) Mapping and monitoring;
- 2) Education, information and the Brazilian Forest Code;
- 3) Relationships with the government and legislation.

#### **Mapping and Monitoring Subgroup**

Monitoring the Amazon Biome will focus on land use and any deforestation in the area from August 2006 onwards. They will use the Biome map prepared by IBGE (Brazilian Geographic and Statistics Institute) in 2004, with a 1:5 million scale, as the basis for other actions. A 5-km tolerance strip was adopted above and below the Biome's boundary line due to the imprecision that results from the map's scale. The Amazon Biome's boundary line will be refined by the Ministry of the Environment, based on a scale of 1:250,000.

Deforestation after the moratorium was announced will be verified using two important mapping and monitoring tools. INPE (National Land Survey Institute) will provide a map that will serve as the initial reference for the Biome's deforestation as of August 2006, based on 110 satellite images from PRODES (Program for Calculating Amazon Deforestation). And images from the DETER system will be used as an auxiliary tool for preselecting areas for field inspections.

Field visits will be made to map and monitor land use for soy crops in areas that were deforested after August 2006. The visits will be organized by ABIOVE's and ANEC's members, supported by external audit and NGOs.

All the mapping and monitoring work will prioritize the main producing areas, taking into consideration the existence of warehouses, settlements, topography, soil capacity and the actions of ABIOVE's and ANEC's members who, because they finance part of the production, can more easily access information. It will be more difficult to monitor producers who grow soy on their own or with bank financing, who have no ties to member companies or who sell their produce on the spot market (cash sale).

## **The other two subgroups**

The second GTS subgroup is responsible for education, information and the Forest Code. Their objective is to inform rural producers (through training, primers and/or media reports) of aspects related to the moratorium on deforestation for soy crops and how it relates to agribusiness sustainability and good agricultural practices.

One question that will still be much discussed and which touches on environmental legislation relates to Provisional Measure (MP) 2166/67. In 1998, this MP changed the Forest Code, increasing the legal reserve from 50% to 80% of the property's area, except for permanent preservation areas, leaving 20% of the area available for economic activities. The problem involves the acquired rights of the soy producers who deforested area before 1998.

The Government & Legislation Subgroup will handle the relationship with the various governments, mainly the federal government, and with the political forces in the Senate and House, forming communication channels, and presenting and discussing the proposals developed in the meetings. One of the steps approved by the parties is formalizing the meetings with official representatives of the new Lula Administration, whose ministries will be responsible for environmental and agricultural areas.

## **The GTS**

The GTS (Soy Working Group) was created after declaring a moratorium on soy crops in the Amazon Biome, in areas that were deforested after July 24, 2006. ABIOVE and ANEC implemented the moratorium after they had taken part in several international forums that defended sustainable soy. The objective was to show the productive chain's responsible position and to unify the governance of the member companies that act within the Amazon Biome.

The moratorium also served to build a dialogue between the NGOs and the productive sector so that, together, they can collaborate with the Brazilian government to stop the deforestation and contain the disorderly occupation of the Amazon.

The NGO participants so far are: IPAM (Amazonian Environmental Survey Institute), TNC (The Nature Conservancy), Greenpeace, WWF Brasil and CI-Brasil.

It was agreed that all the subgroups would prepare detailed plans of the strategic actions to be developed, with the corresponding budget estimates. The material will be discussed and consolidated at the next meeting on March 29, 2007, in Sao Paulo, so that sources of financing can then be found.