The planted tree industry is essential for the fight of COVID-19

The coronavirus pandemic has spread worldwide. The gravity of this pandemic required all of us to be conscientious and act to minimize the impact of this crisis and its social and economic repercussions

The products from **planted tree industry** are essential to tackle the current challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, this sector is a source of more than 5,000 products; some of these are essential for all of our daily lives, and even protect health professionals.

Our products like paper packaging made it possible for food and medications to reach supermarkets, pharmacies, and homes, along with packaging for e-commerce and delivery; and sanitary papers helped fight the virus. They are present in hospitals, in medication package inserts, prescription pads and forms; soluble cellulose pulp is a raw material in protective equipment for health professionals, while charcoal is used as a bio-reducer of making steel to produce surgical instruments.

The year 2020 showed that our industry is resilient and have a strong will to overcome challenges. The coronavirus arrived in Brazil during the first quarter and unleashed a crisis of unimaginable proportions. Soon after a state of public calamity was declared in Brazil, Brazilian Forest-based companies and its representative, Brazilian Tree Industry (Ibá), reinforced dialog with local governments about the essential nature of the planted tree sector, demonstrating the importance of its products and its ongoing activities in the fight against COVID-19. As a result, this sector was declared essential, and allowed to operate and supply domestic and foreign markets.

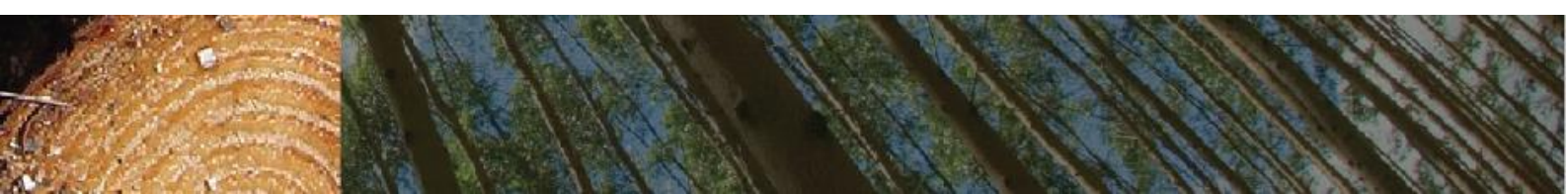
Forest-based companies have developed action plans to protect the health of their employees and outsourced staff so that the market will still be supplied with essential everyday items such as personal hygiene products and packaging. These plans were created in accordance with guidelines from health organizations such as the WHO to adapt their routines. Some of these measures include creating committees to assess the spread of the virus, restricting the movement of visitors in the corporate offices, allowing staff to work at home when possible, advising staff to avoid travel, making factory schedules more flexible, and providing medical seminars featuring preventive guidelines. The celerity and organization of the companies to elaborate efficient protocols was recognized by the government as a successful case of the private sector for the fight of COVID-19.

Besides strict health protocols developed by the forest-based companies, our industry made active investments of nearly R$120 million to help Brazilians fight the coronavirus. These ranged from purchases of equipment for hospitals (like ventilators), acquisition of machinery to manufacture protective gear for health professionals, and donations of hygiene items and food baskets. There were also surgical masks, alcohol hand sanitizer, hospital gowns, and purchase and direct donation of infrastructure or operational materials for 15 hospitals, including three field hospitals.

In addition to the role of the planted forest sector in response to the many global challenges, including the fight to halt COVID-19, we also would like to highlight the commitment to maintain the sustainable forest management and to promote, contribute and reach international goals, including The UNFF Strategic Plan contains six global forest goals that are in line with the sustainable development goals (SDGs), which in turn are related to the Paris Agreement (2015) and Aichi Biodiversity Targets (2010).

Ibá believes that each sector is responsible for disseminating best practices. However, achievement of these goals will depend on the involvement, knowledge, and practices spread by the private sector along with governments, companies, banks, investors, nonprofit organizations, civil society, and academia. Without this involvement, we will always fall short of expectations.

Regarding the global challenges to sustainable development and thematic priorities for UNFF16, including GFG1 (expansion of forest cover) and GFG2 (improving livelihoods), along with three cross-cutting GFGs (GFG4, GFG5, and GFG6), Ibá presents below the contributions of planted tree industry for each thematic priorities which reflect our commitment.



Global Forest Goal 1: Reversing the loss of forest cover

The planted forest sector plays a central role in building and maintaining carbon stocks, whether in commercial plantations or in preserved areas of native vegetation which are associated with planted forests.

The nine million hectares of planted forests in Brazil are responsible for stocking approximately 1.88 billion tons of CO2eq. Furthermore, the 5.9 million hectares of native vegetation preserved by companies in the sector store roughly another 2.6 billion tons of CO2eq. All forest-based products are also important to a low-carbon economy, providing products and services that store carbon and prevent greenhouse gas emissions, unlike products from non-renewable sources.

Carbon removal and storage and emissions prevention are positive externalities generated by planted forests, along with biodiversity and soil conservation that are connected to the production of various essential products.

Production in association with preservation of native forests is a differential that distinguishes the Brazilian planted forest sector. In 2019, Ibá member companies were involved in projects to restore native vegetation over a total of 32,700 hectares, most notably in the Atlantic Forest and Cerrado biomes.

In terms of sustainable management, 7.4 million hectares of planted trees in Brazil are certified by independent organizations such as the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC), which in Brazil is represented by the National Forest Certification Program (Cerflor). Of this total, 4.4 million certified hectares are planted forests, while the rest comprise areas dedicated to conservation and other uses by certified companies.

Good management practices range from planting to harvesting, involving activities such as planting in age mosaics (guaranteeing the composition of forests in different stages of growth), creating ecological corridors which connect planted as well as natural forests that serve as habitat for animals, plants, and microorganisms, measures to harvest trees in a specific direction so that animals can migrate to natural forests, and enriching and conserving soil with harvest byproducts such as bark, branches, and leaves.

Eradicating poverty is a global challenge that involves all countries and economic sectors, including the private sector. Generating jobs and decent work for all is essential for inclusive and sustainable growth. The way each sector creates and maintains jobs will be crucial to overcoming economic turbulence, competitive imbalances, and social inequalities, allowing balance between the economic, environmental, and social pillars of sustainable development.
In 2019, the planted forest sector generated 1.3 million direct jobs. The total number of forest-related job posts is estimated at 3.75 million (direct and indirect) throughout the entire production chain.

In 2019, forest-based companies invested approximately R$ 828 million in social and environmental programs that benefited 6.9 million people. The incentives include programs for outgrowers, income generation (through family agriculture and beekeeping), health (campaigns for drug prevention, physical activity incentives, and nutrition services), the environment (environmental education, ecological trails, and environmental control programs), and education and culture (professional training, scholarships, and providing educational materials).

Integration of small producers through forest outgrower programs is an agenda in this sector that is connected to Global Goal 2. In 2019, 1.6 million people benefited from outgrower programs, planting trees for their own consumption and/or industrial purposes. These corporate programs offer participants technical training, agricultural inputs, and opportunities to increase income and diversify production. At the same time, communities benefited through generation of new jobs and businesses resulting from forestry activities.

The sector also provides support for human development, promoting education for sustainable development. In 2018, the sector developed a pilot project in the state of São Paulo involving 11 technical schools for students aged 13 to 17. The objective was to train 18 teachers about forest-based products and how they are linked to our daily lives, as well as the significance of planting, harvesting, and processing forests to sustainably provide a variety of products. Three thousand students were directly and indirectly impacted, and these in turn raised awareness among 6,000 families about sustainability issues in the planted tree sector.

Global Forest Goal 4, 5 e 6: mobilizing financial resources and strengthening scientific and technical cooperation; promoting governance frameworks to advance implementation; and enhancing cooperation, coordination and coherence for sustainable forest management

Global Goal 4 involves investments, financial resources, cooperation, and innovation in order to advance the forestry sector and to meet the global forest goals. Whether they involve sustainable management of native forests or commercial forest plantations, it is extremely beneficial to address financing mechanisms and policies that support sustainable development in the forest sector.

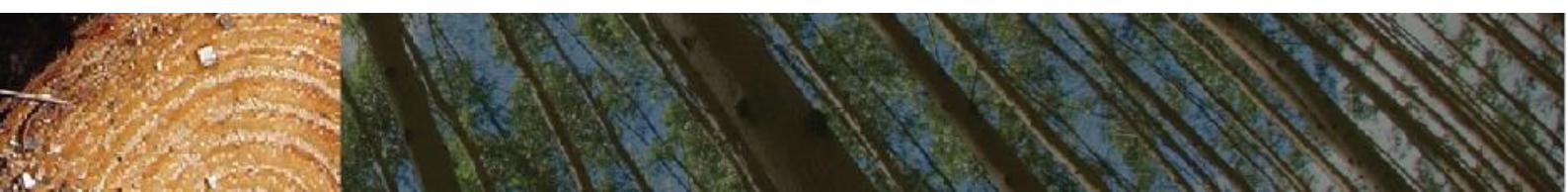
The economic development linked to forest-based industry is intertwined with the entire productive chain surrounding commercial planted forests, and flows through an industry that spans wood pulp and paper, woodchips and biomass, and extends into uses as varied as medicines, the food industry, fabrics and fashion, and charcoal. In 2019, Ibá member companies made investments of R$ 4.6 billion: R$ 3 billion in industrial investments (expanding productive capacity, renovating industrial machinery and equipment, and research and development) and R$ 1.6 billion in forest production (establishing plantations, upgrading machines and equipment, roads, research and development, and land acquisition). On average, every other year a new pulp mill opens in Brazil.

The multiple uses of products from planted forests is essential to how the sector will develop in the coming years. With investments in high technology and added value, forest-based products will be increasingly present in our everyday lives and will supply a variety of industries, for example: replacing petroleum derivatives, comprising surface coatings, asphalt products, disinfectants and detergents, food supplements, cosmetics, packaging, and high-performance cement made from

Regarding the goal 5, in 2019, the Brazilian government approved the National Development Plan for Planted Forests to guide expansion in the sector through training workers, disseminating knowledge and rural extension, attracting investment, research, and innovation, and increasing demand for forest products. The plan includes a diagnostic of the sector, as well as recommendations for growth. An increase of 2 million hectares by 2030 is expected, which will not only help the country's economy, but also assist in recovering degraded areas, creating new carbon stocks, and establishing new preserved areas. In this sense, the plan is fundamental for directing expansion in the sector, in combination with public policies and the scope of the UNFF's global goals, as well as the SDGs and the Conventions on Climate Change and Biodiversity.

As for managing land use in private areas, the Brazilian legislation that protects native vegetation (Law 12.641/2012, known as the Forest Code) created the Rural Environmental Register (CAR) as an instrument to collect, manage, and report data on preservation and restoration of native vegetation in private areas.

Preliminary CAR data up to January 2020 indicate the existence of approximately 244 million hectares of Legal Reserves and 34.6 million hectares of Permanent Preservation Areas. The CAR is a database that will provide the country detailed information on preservation of native vegetation, allowing it to monitor the process of compliance with



the Forest Code, and establish transparency with regard to preserved areas within rural properties and landholdings.

Because the strategic plan is valid until 2030 and serves as a sustaining pillar for relations related to the Agenda 2030 SDGs, it is essential to consider the GFG 6 and also SDG 17, to enhance cooperation, coordination, coordination, address partnerships, synergies on forest-related issues at all levels and means of implementation, making multisector partnerships central to the agenda for promoting, disseminating, and supporting the adoption of actions, policies, and projects that aid in working toward all the other SDGs.

The cooperation and partnerships which the Brazilian planted forest sector has established with different stakeholders over the years have led to the development of cutting-edge science that has made our industry a successful case in terms of productivity, sustainability, transparency, and commitments at the regional, national, and international levels. This cooperation has resulted from developing communication materials about sustainable forestry practices, investing in research projects related to forest management, preservation, technologies, sharing knowledge, and promoting dialog with government, civil society, NGOs, and international organizations.

Ibá and its member companies are active participants in international forums related to the sector, such as the Conventions on Climate Change and Biodiversity, as well as the FAO, the UNFF, the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO), the International Council of Forest and Paper Associations (ICFPA), FSC, PEFC, and others that are fundamental for promoting improvement in the planted forest sector around the world.

We should also remember that the negotiations related to the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, which will be adopted at the 15th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2021, will involve participation by the private sector as a means to promote implementation of the new biodiversity goals which will be set at this event.

Along similar lines, Brazil's contributions to the Paris Agreement are primarily founded on private sector activities. Restoration of native forests, preservation of native vegetation, and planting commercial forests for multiple uses are actions that are directly related to the planted forest sector.

What comes next?

A crisis on this scale demanded unity, organization and solidarity. We cannot predict all social, economic, and environmental effects caused by the pandemic, but the planted tree sector in Brazil has been working to find a balance between minimizing the devastating effects of Covid-19, ensuring that the essential products made in its factories across nearly all Brazilian states reach hospitals and homes, and at the same time adopting a strong stance to protect employees. This is an industry that takes care of its employees, communities and environment as well as all of Brazil. In addition, the social outreach by these companies is proving essential to alleviate the suffering of Brazilians and make Brazil a more supportive and empathetic country by the time this battle is over.

The urgency of the health issues related to the pandemic did not reduce our commitment to improving sustainable forest management. We believe that the bioeconomy is in the DNA of this sector. The planet has been showing signs of responses to inconsequential human actions. The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates that if the man does not change his relationship with the environment, our future will be threatened. Human beings and nature are complementary.

The planted forest industry is an example of how it is possible to produce and conserve; go hand in hand with flora and fauna, while producing essential items for everyday life, generates jobs and income. Bioeconomy is one of the elements for the green recovery of the world economy and the forest-based industry is a reference in the theme.