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## RIO+20 AND THE SEARCH FOR A MORE SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

A socially fairer world, economically balanced and environmentally sustainable. This is, almost certainly, one of the most important dreams of everyone. However, mankind walks slowly in its evolutionary process, thinking, instead of acting, towards accomplishing what most desires. It is proper of the human being, in its definition, to walk two steps forward and other four backwards, before it is ready to proceed. Knowing such behavior, it is mandatory to align our expectations, in order to avoid unfounded frustrations.

Among the factors listed in our dreamy basis - society, economy and environment - priorities are different. It is not the case of discussing here if such priorities are right or wrong. Simply, whenever we look at the countries so far considered strong and rich, their major concern is to revive their economy, weak and shaken at the moment, trying not to affect the social equilibrium. This is the starting point. Unfortunately, with such approach low priority is given to the environmental aspects.

A question that arises for everyone that attended the debates during Rio+20: what to expect from a meeting between leaders if the statement of intents leave out a defined, concrete planning and actions to be performed? It is quite probable that the objective is even this, to put on a paper what it is intended to do, without knowing yet how and when it will be done. Or the creators of the several meetings composing the event, which brought together representatives of many countries to discuss matters of mutual interest, expected more? Anyway, you cannot generalize.

However, in relation to our sector, inclusion of the forest carbon credits in the Sustainable Dialogues within the discussions agenda proposed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in partnership with the Pulp and Paper Brazilian Association (Bracelpa), represented one more step towards the recognition of the role of our forests in carbon sequestration and storage. Also, the discussions on the importance of the green economy and the fundamental role of the forests in the regional social development deserved a very important space during the events of those entities. Details are in our special Cover Story for you to check them out.

The forest activity in evidence during the sector meeting of Rio+20 disclosed how important is the subject and the economic impact of the products supplied by forests (fiber, wood, energy and food) to the businesses of the new economy. Besides that, the development of new products as essential factors for adding even more value to the forest asset was discussed. Despite the few definitions and decisions taken, the relevance of the forest activity and its sustainability, under all aspects, became clear.

We cannot forget, however, that our forest-based sector must focus not only on the availability of raw materials, but on the value chain as well. Everything start from getting the raw materials in a sustainable way, followed by transforming that fibrous material into pulp with high productivity and, finally, to its end use in the production of the many types of paper, to be used in manufacturing so many different products - from printed items, books and notebook to packages and hygiene and cleaning goods.

So, the issue we have to address is how to manage our value chain. Based on the *lean manufacturing* concepts successfully adopted in the search for excellence in many companies, one may conclude that the last link is the one to pull the others, and not the first to *push* them. As a matter of fact, the importance of the planted forests in the green economy must always be praised. However, for our sector the raw materials coming from the forest will only make sense if someone turn them into pulp and finally into paper or products that still have to be devised.

Starting from this logical reasoning, the production of papers should *pull* our value chain, enforcing our competitiveness in pulp manufacturing and in the forest activities. So, a reflection remains: to which extent are we thinking the future of paper production and applications? This is the ABTCP challenge, and ABTCP must help the sector to set down a vision to guide our industrial activities and able to strengthen and value our planted forests and green economy more and more.

To overcome such challenge and bring the answers that we, as an Association, are looking for, I invite you, dear reader, to join us in the construction of a vision of the future to lead our industry, as a whole, to a sustainable growth. Get in touch with us! ■