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PARTNERSHIPS FOR NEW TIMES

More and more, the path towards sustainability broadens relationships between players involved in the pursuit of balance between economic development, social inclusion and environmental preservation. Governments, private initiative, non-governmental organizations and society are sharing their concerns regarding the pursuit of sustainable solutions for the planet. In the current scenario, there no longer is room for isolated and specific actions that aren't associated to this greater objective.

A clear signal of this trend is the approximation of organized civil society movements with private initiative, which aim to join forces and establish productive partnerships in order to achieve positive results for both sides. And this is extremely positive for the pulp and paper sector.

Within this context, it is necessary to recognize initiatives such as WWF International's, which created the New Generation Plantations Project (NGP), with the objective of joining different players from the sector worldwide to exchange experiences regarding forest base production, with a focus on plantations. In fact, WWF has been working hard to disseminate the important role of forest plantations in satisfying demand for bioenergy, wood and fibers, as well as mitigate pressure on natural forests, which are part of the so-called 4Fs (Food, Fuel, Fiber and Forests), also underscoring their potential to capture and store carbon.

The organization defends that plantations, when not managed properly, can also result in negative social and environmental impacts. In this sense, NGP aims to assist in plans for mitigating the environmental impacts of productive activities, based on successful actions on the part of forest plantation companies throughout the world. It is here that the initiative's main value resides, which foresees establishing principles and concepts for the production of a new generation of plantations, committed to land management that's compatible with protecting biodiversity, natural resources and also satisfying human needs.

Bracelpa is participating in the NGP project with the objective of learning about case studies in Brazil and abroad. The Association recently had the opportunity to share this experience as guest at the Annual Summit, an event organized by WWF that brings together all

members and parties interested in the project. This year, in addition to companies deemed case-studies, like Fibria, Suzano and Veracel, which represented Brazil, WWF International's Forest Director, Rodney Taylor, also presented the recently published report "Living Forests Report: Wood and Forest Products".

In one of the workshops held simultaneously with the main plenary – "Social Value of Forest Plantations", Bracelpa shared the experiences of Brazilian companies, highlighting their commitment in areas such as education, healthcare, culture, among others. At present, there are more than 50 projects - with investments amounting to roughly R\$100 million -, involving approximately 500 actions and benefiting more than 1 million people in 1,100 communities of various regions throughout the country.

Another factor that causes a very positive impression on foreign stakeholders are the development programs applied in Brazil. Through long-term partnerships, small and medium-sized producers can integrate the production chain of forest industries, planting pine or eucalyptus on their properties. The companies offer tree seedlings, technical assistance (production and markets), environmental protection incentives, and guarantee buying the wood produced, among other benefits.

The good results for both sides are many, beginning with the integration of community in the forest business and the complementary supply of wood to mills, as well as a reduction in the need to purchase land and greater environmental protection, via good practices. On the socio-economic side, encouraging the multiple use of forests, the programs create jobs and promote rural development, generate income, develop local economies and encourage the diversification of agroforestry products. Benefits are generated for both the local community as well as the company, allowing for the shared creation of value.

It is also important to point out that, thanks to the seriousness that Brazil's forest industry addresses socio-environmental matters, in Brazil, 7.2 million hectares of forest are FSC certified, of which 3.9 million hectares are planted forests. And another 1.3 million hectares are certified by Cerflor/PEFC. ■