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Carvalhoes talked about the importance of the Planted Forests at the 6th ICFPA International CEOs Roundtable

FOREST BASE INDUSTRY BETS ON SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

In June, Brazil hosted the 6th ICFPA International CEOs Roundtable, the most important event for the global forest base industry. More than 50 CEOs and directors of associations from all over the world participated in this biennial event, held by the International Council of Forest and Paper Associations (ICFPA) and organized by Bracelapa in São Paulo.

Company presidents from Canada, China, United States, Japan, Portugal, Russia and others joined Brazilian CEOs to discuss issues that will influence the sector's development worldwide in the next years. The themes selected for discussion included the consequences of economic pressures on account of demand for food, fuel and fiber; the impact of government policies and programs for the forest product industry, and how to position this industry in the future.

In the meeting's opening, Chairman of Bracelapa's Decision Council, José Luciano Penido, pointed out the challenges and opportunities for the sector in view of the planet's population growth, which will have more than 9 billion people by 2050. He also mentioned the importance of using biotechnology and the needs of creating conditions to ensure the supply of wood for the forest base product industry.

In addition to biotechnology, Brazil positioned itself favorable to nanotechnology, another important tool for increasing productivity and multiple uses of planted forests and ensuring the supply of forest base products to the growing global population. The participants agreed that ICFPA should advance discussions in this area in order to disseminate the knowledge and benefits of these technologies.

The multiple uses of forests gained importance at the event given the forecast that the forest base industry shall become one of the main players in the global scenario due to the growing demand for wood fibers. Within this context, investments in Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) in South America and innovation projects in Canada were mentioned as examples of the pursuit towards adding more value to existing products.

With all the evolution in the areas of research and production, Brazil's pulp and paper sector also defended that the entire forest base chain also needs to be renewed. Certification systems, for example, must come up with mechanisms for certifying new uses and products. The industry and its chain links must head together into the future so that end consumers can understand the reality of what is being designed.

Canada's position matched the posture defended by Brazil, by emphasizing the importance of forest industry elements: innovation, different business models, transformation and development of markets not yet explored. The country's recommendations emphasized that the forest base product industry is part of the solution for future challenges. It was defined that ICFPA will develop key messages for highlighting the industry as supplier of renewable products.

ICFPA Annual Meeting 2013

Prior to the CEOs Roundtable, ICFPA's Annual Meeting was also held in São Paulo on June 4. Representatives from 18 forest base industry associations worldwide, partners of Bracelapa, discussed themes such as planted forests, government incentives, forest certification and climate change, among other topics.

For Brazil, one of the most important points of the meeting was the creation of a Planted Forests Task Force to be led by Bracelapa, with the main objective of increasing the perception that these plantations are essential in the pursuit of solutions for global challenges associated to population growth.

54th ACSFI/FAO Session

Completing the agenda, São Paulo hosted the 54th Session of FAO's Advisory Committee on Sustainable Forest Industries (ACSFI), which brought together representatives from the United Nations, ICFPA and guests.

One of the main points of this meeting was the proposal presented by FAO's Forestry Department Managing Director, Eduardo Rojas, for industry associations in Brazil, United States, European Union, South Africa, New Zealand, Japan and Canada to form a new ACSFI/FAO Steering Committee based on the new bylaw approved by FAO's General Director, José Graziano. This committee will advise Graziano in the field of pulp and paper industries and related themes.

At the end of the meetings, it was clear that the forest base industry is undergoing a positive moment and should face more opportunities than challenges in the future. With new technologies, the sector will be able to supply increasingly better and more sustainable products to the world population. ■