



Southern Bahia Virtual Study Tour Notes



 **DIÁLOGO
FLORESTAL**
Forum Florestal da Bahia

 **NEW
GENERATION
PLANTATIONS** platform
For People, Planet And Prosperity

SECTION 1

Introduction

In July 2020, as Covid-19 restricted movements around the globe, New Generation Plantations (NGP) held its first ever virtual study tour. The destination was southern Bahia in Brazil, home to some of the most biodiverse areas of rainforest in the world. The aim of the study tour was to explore ways to co-create a more sustainable future in Bahia, meeting the development needs of local people while restoring the health of vital forest landscapes.

Our partner in southern Bahia is Forum Florestal da Bahia (FFBA; Bahia Forests Dialogue), who have been working in the region since 2005 to support dialogue and encourage sustainable land use.

On the virtual study we wanted to:

- Hear from communities, farmers and companies
- Understand how FFBA is helping them become more sustainable and restore the Mata Atlantica (Atlantic Rainforest)
- Determine how we could best scale up these activities and accelerate restoration.

A key outcome was the co-development of the Southern Bahia Nature Fund – a partnership between FFBA and NGP, with a private investor. The Fund will support projects to support sustainable land use and help the Atlantic Forest make a comeback in the region.

How we organised the study tour

The event was spread into six two-hour sessions over three days. Presenters and local stakeholders used homemade videos and live interviews to communicate with over 100 delegates. We used YouTube to live broadcast the main plenary sessions, and online breakout rooms for the group work.

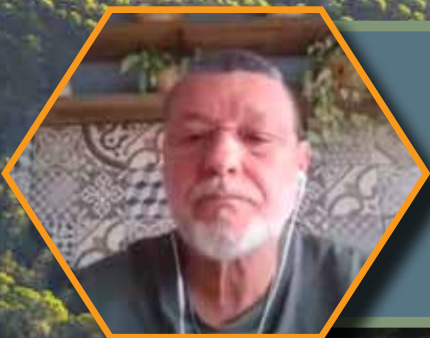
Opening session

Two of the key partners in the regions are pulp and paper companies Suzano and Veracel. Between them, they directly employ over 7,000 people in the region, and have land agreements with 2,000 families covering around 27,000 hectares.



"It is inspiring to see the organizations working together, to develop better and smarter solutions. No one company or single person has the answer to these complex challenges."

Malu Pinto e Paiva, who is the director of sustainability at **Suzano**, stressed the value of co-operation and developing trust between companies and communities.



"We've had 15 years of positive experience, transforming conflict into agreement, and bringing new partners to the table. We believe this has helped improve the quality of life for our neighbours and restored the forest."

This was echoed by **Renato Filho**, director of sustainability at **Veracel**

The study tour also heard from several farmers, producers and representative of local communities.



Karkaju Pataxó, from the Pataxó indigenous community, welcomed us – via video link – to his home and explained about the economic opportunities from agroforestry, traditional crafts and ecotourism, and the impact of Covid.

[Click Here... To See More...](#)

To hear from the speakers and re-watch the presentations.

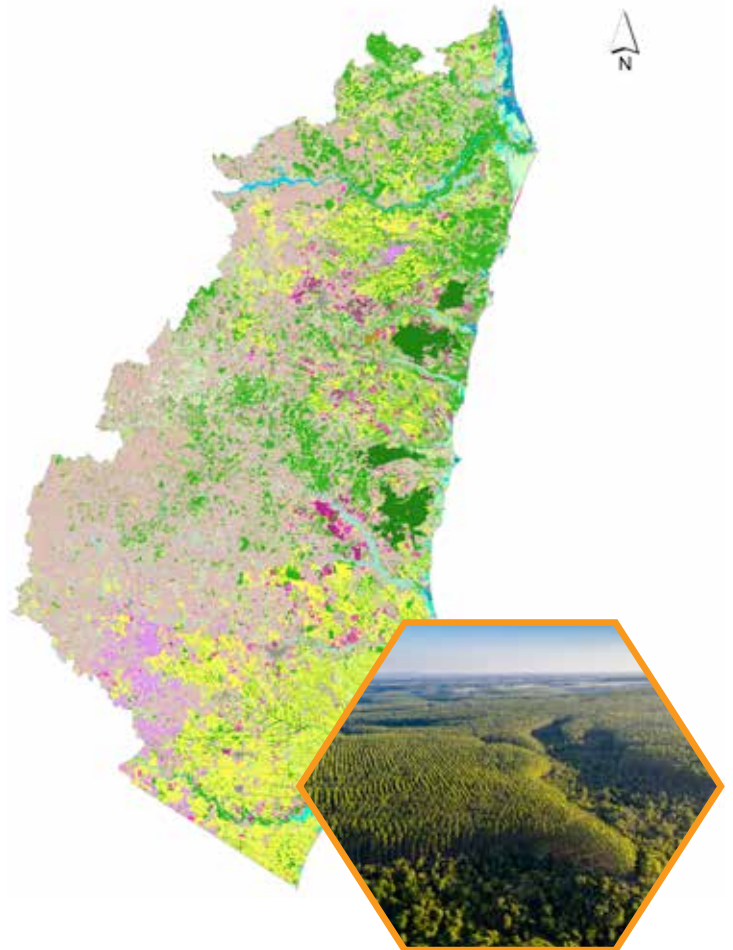
SECTION 2

15th Anniversary of FFBA and Brazilian Forests Dialogue

Over the last 20 years, southern Bahia has seen a steady increase in the area of eucalyptus plantations to produce pulp and paper. In some cases, this has resulted in tension between communities, environmental NGOs and the large plantation companies. To resolve this tension and promote positive change there were proposals to develop a formal dialogue process.

Using Yale University's The Forests Dialogue as a template, the national Brazilian Forests Dialogue was developed with a range of companies from the pulp production sector and environmental NGOs. In the southern Bahia region, the Fórum Florestal da Bahia was formed including representatives from local NGOs and the three main forestry companies, Aracruz Celulose (now part of Suzano), Suzano and Veracel.

2020 is the 15th anniversary of both the Brazilian Forests Dialogue and FFBA, and there's been a lot to celebrate in these long-running programmes' achievements in reducing social tension, improving understanding and developing solutions. FFBA is increasingly looking beyond forests and plantations to develop a landscape-scale approach, supporting regional sustainable development and landscape planning. Working with its members, the local university and other stakeholders, FFBA has developed a land-use monitoring tool, which will support local farmers growing coffee and fruit and rearing cattle. A key aim of the study tour was to learn more about FFBA's work and how this multi-stakeholder platform could be used to support new projects via the Southern Bahia Nature Fund.



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SECTION 3

Local Traditional Communities

The preservation of the Atlantic Rainforest can help guarantee the wellbeing of traditional communities, who are dependent on the forest's environmental resources. We wanted to hear directly from these communities on the study tour, so using images and interviews filmed on cell phones they prepared a short video. The video included members of various communities, including the indigenous Pataxó, landless settlers, family farmers and fishers, some of whom were available to answer questions during the live events.

Karkaju, an indigenous Pataxó leader, introduced participants to his community and the people he represented, and gave an explanation of what he meant by the solidarity economy: "During the pandemic, we have had no tourists, so we opened an online market to sell our arts and crafts," he explained. "Some of the community are doing really well and have had to increase production."

The next two speakers were representing local family farming – Adriana Severino, who described her community's certified organic horticulture project, and Danilo Ferraz, a landless settlement agronomist. They highlighted the growing demand in markets and fairs for locally grown food, produced using agro-ecological techniques.

Also presenting was Aroldo Barbosa, who represents an association of local fishermen which developed during the construction of a hydroelectric river dam. They produce over 300 tonnes from their fish farms, which is sold in local markets.



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SECTION 4

Agroforestry, plantations and conservation



Southern Bahia is region rich in biodiversity and contains many important fragments of the Atlantic Rainforest. Many of these are on private land, so landowners and farmers are vital to any rainforest restoration and conservation efforts.

We heard from two producers, Antônio Massaro and Renato Doria, who are using agroforestry techniques on their farms, growing a diverse range of fruit trees such as coconut, cacao, acai and papaya. According to Renato, a big variety of birds and animals “have breakfast” in his plantations, proving that diverse productive can be used as an ecological corridor to connect forest fragments. Antonio stressed that farms need to be economically sustainable, and that requires tractors and mechanized cultivation – he said that realistically farms need to be at least 30 hectares in size.

While large companies like Suzano and Veracel include large conservation and restoration areas within their holdings, smaller-scale tree farms can do the same. According to Gleyson Resende, a plantation forester, farms with eucalyptus plantations preserve native forests on 40% of the area on average.

Felipe Marques is focused on growing mixed plantations of native timber species. These plantations contain rows of different tree species and will be selectively harvested to avoid the need for large-scale “clear felling” – a different model from the intensively managed eucalyptus plantations.

The final presentation was from public attorney Fabio Fernandes, who explained the responsibilities of landowners under environmental law – including preserving areas of native vegetation on a portion of their land and in key areas such as around water courses.



SECTIONS 5 and 6

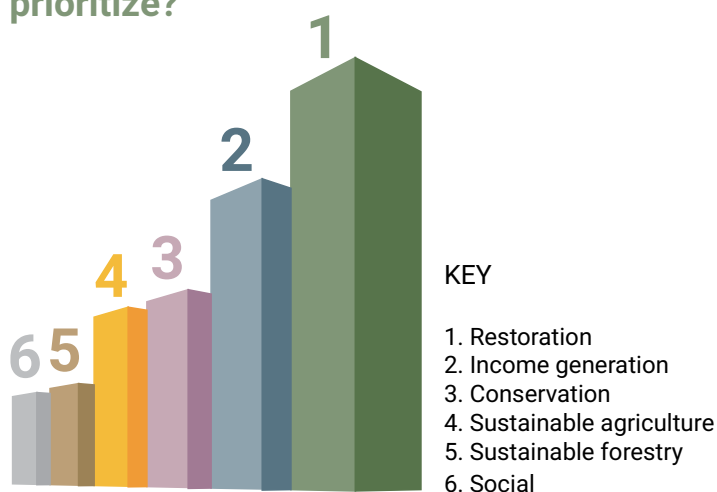
Southern Bahia Nature Fund – feedback from stakeholder workshops

An important objective of the study tour was for participants to help co-create how the Southern Bahia Nature Fund could operate. We wanted their input to help us prioritize key objectives and to identify risks.

For the Fund to be successful and sustainable it must reflect local challenges and be developed sensitively to meet the needs of key stakeholders.

We asked participants...

What type of projects should SBNF prioritize?



What main indicators should SBNF use to measure the success of projects?

- (1) Achieving gender balance
- (2) Area under restoration
- (3) Total area of forest fragments connected
- (4) Income increases per family

The answers to these two questions reflected our conversations over the three days. Stakeholders identified “rainforest restoration” as the main goal, but understood that this could only be achieved in a wider landscape of sustainable land-use. Community development and social equity were also important objectives, with “gender balance” the most popular indicator.



SECTIONS 5 and 6

Southern Bahia Nature Fund – feedback from stakeholder workshops



What are the three main risks for SBNF?

- (1) Delay in obtaining the necessary authorizations from governmental agencies.
- (2) A substantial change in the exchange rate (Euro to Reais), resulting in a budget reduction.
- (3) Demand for additional resources due to lack of budget planning and management.

Organizing a stakeholder workshop during a pandemic helped people think about risks and impact. Hearing directly from local people about the challenges of working with governmental agencies and the risk of delay in getting formal authorization demonstrates the value of engaging early with stakeholders. Financial management and currency fluctuations were also identified by a majority.

Identifying risks is step 1; we will continue to work with local stakeholders and partners to help develop our controls and mitigation measures.

What's in a name?

A clear majority of people thought we should change the name of SBNF and suggested that it should include reference to people and social issues, and possibly Brazil for people not familiar with Bahia.

Some suggestions included:

- A Fund for Nature and People
- Southern Bahia Nature Based Solutions Fund
- Southern Bahia Socio-environmental fund



CONCLUSION

The Next Steps ...



2020 Calendar

- **August** – NGP and FFBA continue to work to develop the Fund
- **October** – Formal investment decision about the Fund
- **November** – Forests and Land Use Dialogue event in Brazil. If we are successful the Fund could be launched

We will use the great ideas and suggestions from the study tour to fine tune and improve the proposals for the Fund.

If we are successful in securing funding and investment, it will be announced as part of the next Forests Dialogue event in November.

Landscape approach

A landscape approach is about balancing competing land-use demands in a way that is best for human well-being and the environment across a defined landscape. It means creating solutions that consider food and livelihoods, finance, rights, restoration and progress towards climate and development goals.

Multi-stakeholder platform

Multi-stakeholder platforms bring together representatives from different interest groups to discuss shared challenges, opportunities, policy actions and ideas. They have the potential to tackle complex development challenges and to assist in the scaling up of necessary innovations



Forum Florestal da Bahia

Project Promoters

Forum Florestal da Bahia (FFBA) is a multi-stakeholder platform convening local and indigenous communities, local and regional government agencies, academia and the private sector in a land-based dialogue. FFBA has three main focuses:

- Sustainable forest mosaics and water
- Relationship of indigenous peoples, traditional communities, rural villages, and isolated communities with natural resources
- Identifying good practices in forestry, agriculture activities, tourism, urbanization and other activities.



New Generation Plantations (NGP) is providing technical assistance and sustainable land management advice, based on a long-term WWF knowledge-sharing platform on sustainable plantation management. NGP has four key principles:

Maintain ecosystem integrity

- Protect and enhance high conservation values
- Be developed through effective stakeholder involvement processes
- Contribute to economic growth and employment.

THE PARTICIPANTS

Some of the voices ...



Haroldo Baspape - President of ASBAPE, a local community-based association of small-scale fish producers. They are producing circa 300 tonnes of fish each year.



Talita Pataxo - Youth Leader / Lideranca da Juventude



Gleyson Araujo of "Aspects" - an association for growers of Eucalyptus in Bahia - circa 40,000 ha in total, circa 50/50 plantation & restored "natural" forest. They are supporting their members to become certified.



Pedrina Rodrigues - Fisherwoman / Marisqueira - Belmonte



Antonio Massaro, a farmer from Fazenda Santa Maria, telling us how he is diversifying into growing vanilla, cassava and papaya. The vanilla needs 50% shade so he is experimenting with growing it amongst the trees in his areas of restored Atlantic forest.

 **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**



Forum Florestal da Bahia

www.dialogoflorestal.org.br



www.newgenerationplantations.org

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