

## COORDINATED AUDIT IN THE BRAZILIAN AMAZON

Between 2012 and 2013, the Federal Court of Accounts of Brazil (TCU) and the nine state Courts of Audit in the Brazilian Amazon carried out a coordinated audit to assess all the federal and state protected areas in the Amazon biome. The audit allowed the oversight bodies to work in an integrated way to obtain a systemic assessment of the 247 protected areas in that biome, 107 being federal and 140 state level.

### Protected Areas in the Amazon Biome

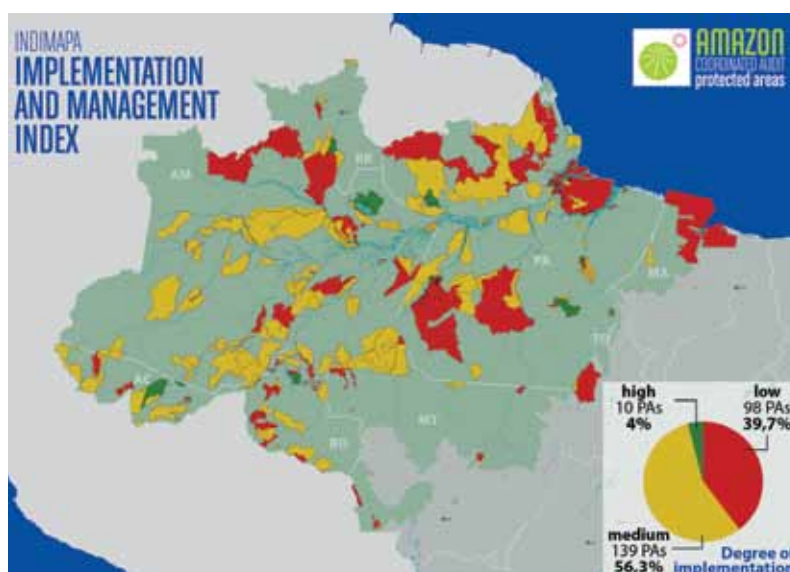
Protected areas (PAs) are part of a worldwide strategy for biodiversity conservation. Inside PAs you can find water springs, mineral deposits, wood logs, latex, nuts and other natural resources with economic, social and environmental value. PAs are protected spaces due to relevant natural characteristics, being instituted by public authority considering that they are an important part of the environmental heritage. Due to the relevance of the Amazon region in this context, the audit assessed to what degree the normative, institutional and operational conditions are sufficient for the PAs achieve their goals.

### TCU's Assessment

Brazil has been reaching significant results in reducing deforestation, achieving 76% of the voluntary commitment made in the United Nations (UN) Conference. Protected areas (PAs) are part of the Brazilian policy to control deforestation, aside from being internationally recognized as strategic for biodiversity conservation. To assess the role PAs have in the protection of biodiversity in the Amazon region, TCU used as proxy the rate of deforestation in that region. A relation between the creation of PAs and a reduction in deforestation was established, indicating the effectiveness of these areas for controlling deforestation.

Between 2008 and 2012, of the total deforested area, only 6% were areas inside PAs, even though they occupy ¼ of the Brazilian Amazon territory. Controlling deforestation also brings about the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, for example, carbon dioxide gas (CO<sub>2</sub>). The green house effect can lead to global warming and impact climate change. In this context, Brazil was praised in the international arena for reducing its total green house gas emissions according to its commitment, while also expanding its productive activities. To assess the impact of the PAs in the CO<sub>2</sub> flux dynamic in the Amazon biome, TCU calculated the contribution of each of the 247 PAs, using data from 1996 through 2006. An estimate of carbon emissions and removal due to land use change in PAs in the Brazilian Amazon was obtained, and the conclusion was that the territories give a relevant contribution in the context of the reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

To assess the PAs in the Brazilian Amazon, TCU created the Protected Areas Implementation and Management Index (Indimapa), an instrument to evaluate, communicate and monitor PAs, through geo-referenced maps. The instrument classifies PAs in three levels: red, yellow and green, using 14 indicators: Management plan; Managing board; Public use; Financial and Human resources; Research; Biodiversity monitoring; Access to public policy; Local articulation; Territorial consolidation; Physical infrastructure; Surveillance; Community management; and Forest concessions.



Based on this analysis, the audit verified that only 4% of the federal and state PAs in the Brazilian Amazon are considered to have a high degree of implementation and management, the necessary level to the complete fulfillment of its objectives.

Finally, it was observed that the creation and maintenance of PAs offer important benefits like the contribution to deforestation control and the reduction of carbon emissions. However, these areas have objectives that go further than conservation. Other activities are also part of their objectives like: visitation, tourism, research, sustainable logging, etc. These activities depend on management efficiency to be developed, which requires actions that go beyond the simple creation of PAs.

### TCU's Main Findings

By evaluating the implementation and management of PAs in the Brazilian Amazon, findings related to results, articulation and input were identified, respectively:

- a. a. suboptimal use of the economic, social and environmental potential of the areas (parks with no public use, forest with no sustainable logging, biological reserves with no research);
- b. b. coordination problems in the Brazilian National Protected Areas Systems – SNUC (difficulties of articulation between actors, low cooperation and fragile communication); and
- c. c. incompatibility between the available and necessary conditions for the good management of these areas, for example, the inexistence and inadequacy of the management plans.

### TCU's Determinations and Recommendations

The main deliberations were to encourage the effective coordination of the Brazilian National Protected Area System (SNUC) under the responsibility of the Ministry for the Environment, in order to increase the articulation between the actors involved to promote the economic, social and environment potential of these areas.

To the Chico Mendes Institute for the Conservation of Biodiversity (ICMBio, in Portuguese), it was determined to present a plan of action with measures to complete management plans, an instrument of planning and management that should be adequate to the reality of the PA so that its actions can be effectively implemented.

Furthermore, considering that the scope of this audit extrapolates, in certain aspects, the realm of responsibility of the ICMBio, the results were shared with the Office of the President's Chief of Staff and the National Congress, among other stakeholders, with emphasis on the risks involved in maintain that institute without the necessary resources to fulfill its mandate.

### Expected Benefits

It is expected that protected areas, if well managed, are a source for local economic development, using tourism to encourage and make the local economy more dynamic; and that, through the sustainable use of forest resources, they contribute to reducing deforestation by offering legally extracted wood products. This means that PAs, besides protecting biodiversity, can also contribute to generating jobs, income and improvement in the quality of life, to reconcile the protection of natural resources to the subsistence of traditional communities. Lastly, the expectation is that the improvement in PA management will allow these areas to fulfill all the objectives established in their creation.

### TCU's Deliberation

Decision: 3101/2013 – Plenary

Date of session: 11/20/2013

Rapporteur: Minister Weder de Oliveira

To access the Report, the Vote and the Decision, as well as the maps developed in the audit, consult this *link*:  
[http://portal2.tcu.gov.br/portal/page/portal/TCU/imprensa/noticias/detalhes\\_noticias?noticia=4913062](http://portal2.tcu.gov.br/portal/page/portal/TCU/imprensa/noticias/detalhes_noticias?noticia=4913062)