

Public policies regarding the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions in the Legal Amazon forest region

National audit abstract	
Country	Brazil
The Name of the Audit	Public policies regarding the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions in the Legal Amazon forest region
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The national audit objectives

To assess public policies on mitigating greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the “Legal Amazon” forest region. This topic was chosen because 75 percent of national carbon dioxide emissions come from land-use change and the forestry sector.

The scope of the audit

- Public policies for the Legal Amazon that create relevant negative impacts on the emissions and any mechanisms to compensate or reduce those impacts; public policy planning considering GHG emission mitigation; coordination, integration, governance, and accountability in order to promote GHG emission reduction.
- Audit period covered or end date of audit process: 2008.
- Audited entities: Civil Cabinet of the Presidency, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of National Integration, National Institute of Colonization and Agricultural Reform, and Superintendency of the Amazon Region Development.

Conclusions of the audit findings and key recommendations

Supervision, control, and monitoring actions conducted by the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Science and Technology have had significant results in reducing deforestation and, as a consequence, the GHG emissions of the sector. However, actions of other government agencies in the region, such as policies related to agriculture and rural settlements, have generated negative impacts on emissions of greenhouse gases. The audit found that, despite initiatives indicating that these bodies are placing an increasing importance on environmental issues, the initiatives were not enough to obtain significant results in environmental preservation and, therefore, in mitigation of GHG emissions in the region. Also, actions to promote sustainable production activities, important for maintaining a continuous decline in deforestation, are not yet properly structured.

The National Plan on Climate Change was important to identify and organize climate change public policies, bringing the matter into the spotlight. Additionally, specific targets were proposed to reduce GHG emissions for the forest sector. However, the plan did not detail the mechanisms necessary to implement the proposed actions. Furthermore, aspects related to governance and accountability are still at an early stage. This might compromise the expected results, considering the historically low level of cooperation among the federal government institutions responsible for the policies related to deforestation in the Legal Amazon region.

The SAI recommended that

- the institutions responsible for the coordination of the National Climate Change Plan make an action plan with activities, roles, responsibilities, and resources necessary to implement the proposed measures and mitigation targets, as well as make information available on the Internet about actions and results achieved; and

- the ministries with public policies in the region promote conservative environmental measures and sustainable production activities, according to the opportunities for improvement identified in the audit.