

Bridging the Divide: A Consortium Approach to the Multi-Scale and Multi-Dimensional Challenges of Sustainable Community Forest Management in the Brazilian Amazon

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A consortium of four non-governmental institutions in the Brazilian Amazon (Imazon, IEB, Cifor and FASE) are collaborating on a project to “bridge the divide” between communities and federal agencies that contribute to conservation of locally valued biological diversity and improvements in the living standards of forest-dependent people. The first phase centers on two regions in the eastern Amazon with a range of land use regimes, a variety of land tenure issues, significant pressure from the timber industry, and community organizations committed to sustainable forest-based development. Project activities have focused on three interlinked issues fundamental to resolving the profound inequities facing forest-reliant communities: 1) forest management, which is strongly conditioned by 2) forest tenure and 3) markets.

The forest management component consists of generating information on non-timber forest product species of community importance. Ecological studies are aimed at understanding variation in growth, flowering, fruit production, and natural occurrence of the species. The land tenure component addresses two fronts: 1) developing land use plans for the communities with secure tenure and 2) supporting and fostering discussions and community application processes with government agencies. Lastly, the market component focuses on commercialization supply and demand chains, including tracking variation in prices and quantities both spatially (along the supply chain and in different markets) and temporally (across seasons and years). This information is being disseminated via radio broadcasts, workshops, and forthcoming extension materials. This project operates at both the micro and macro scales working with communities and local institutions, and through partnership with government agencies.

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