



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EXTRACTIVIST POPULATIONS - CNS

Statement from the CNS on the Adopt a Park Program from the Brazilian Ministry of Environment

EXTRACTIVIST RESERVES ARE NOT PARKS

The National Council of Extractivist Populations – CNS wants Extractivist Reserves to be excluded from the Adopt a Park Program currently being implemented by the Brazilian Ministry of the Environment as it violates the legislation and misrepresents the objectives for which the reserves were originally created.

Extractivist Reserves were conceived in 1985 by rubber tappers in the Amazon under the leadership of Chico Mendes, with the aim of reconciling property rights over territories where they had lived for generations and the natural resources they had always depended on for their own subsistence.

Since 1990, Extractivist Reserves have been created and jointly managed by environmental agencies and community associations under a contract with the public administration for the concession of right of use in rem (CCDRU).

Extractivist Reserves were incorporated into the National System of Conservation Units (SNUC) in 2000, which defined an Advisory Board, presided over by ICMBio (Instituto Chico Mendes de Conservação da Biodiversidade) and comprising community associations, non-governmental organizations and local public agencies, as their administrative body, which is responsible for approving the Management Plan of the conservation unit.

CNS's criticism regarding the inclusion of Extractivist Reserves in the Adopt a Park Program is based on the objectives for which they were created and on the current legislation:

1. Extractivist Reserves and Parks are distinct categories of protected areas. Whereas parks protect nature and may be adopted by private companies, Extractivist Reserves protect communities that ensure environmental protection by their traditional usage of natural resources, while also preventing deforestation and illegal land occupation, thus providing a service to the country.
2. No provision is made in the Contracts for Concession of the Right of Use in rem (CCDRUs), celebrated with the associations of local traditional populations, authorizing the Ministry of the Environment to use the land without the authorization of the concession holder and the Advisory Board of the Conservation Units for purposes not foreseen in the respective Management Plan.

3. No prior consultation was made with the resident populations regarding the inclusion of Extractivist Reserves in this Program, as foreseen under Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization (ILO) of 1989, which is recognized and valid in Brazil.

We find it quite startling that the Ministry of the Environment has declined to use billions of reais available in the Amazon Fund and has refused to receive new international cooperation donations that are defined in contracts with clear and transparent rules, but is now collecting donations that do not even cover the cost of devising a management plan for a conservation unit and, more critically, are not subject to clear and public regulations as to how these resources will be used.

State responsibilities regarding protected areas that support human populations cannot be shared with the private sector without clear cooperation agreements, as well as the active participation of that population, effectively the concession holders.

The communities in Extractivist Reserves are not orphaned, nor are they available for "adoption". The territories where they live have already been adopted by their ancestors and are being looked after as a legacy for future generations.

The inclusion of Extractivist Reserves in the Adopt a Park Program is yet another attempt by the controversial Minister Salles to "let the herd through" and carry on with the accelerated process of destroying the Amazon rainforest.

Finally, we should note that the governments, multilateral organizations and above all the "adopting" companies that support this maneuver to divide the organizations and the traditional communities that inhabit the Extractivist Reserves, perhaps at the worst moment of the pandemic and within a context of complete lack of assistance from the Ministry of the Environment, will be accomplices in accelerating the process of destroying the Amazon rainforest, with serious impact on climate change.

CNS will appeal to the courts, in all instances, and, working alongside allied national and international NGOs, will promote awareness campaigns in the countries of these "adopting" companies in order to clarify the damage to the Amazon brought about by the senseless idea of Minister Salles to treat Extractivist Reserves as Parks.

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