

Brazil Alerts That 60% of World's Natural Resources Are Being Misused

Contributed by Keite Camacho
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At least 60% of the world's fresh water, sea life, soil and climate have registered some level of degradation or are being used in a non-sustainable manner. The situation tends to become worse in the next years, negatively impacting the survival of human being.

These data are part of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, released Wednesday, March 30, by the Brazilian Business Council for Sustainable Development (CEBDS).

The study, which intends to alert authorities on the development of policies to preserve the ecosystem, states that there is still time to change.

According to Fernando Almeida, executive president of the CEBDS, this is the most important assessment ever done, because it associates environment and economy.

"The study discusses 24 services provided by Nature to human beings and to companies as well. 15 of these services are in advanced process of degradation. For instance, world's fishing capacity has been severely reduced, and water has become scarce."

Climate change and access to nutrients in the world are the most worrisome issues. "In Brazil, we still have enough water, although in different levels according to the region of the country. The deforestation, however, is undoubtedly a crucial issue for us," he said.

For the President of the National Environment Protection Agency (IBAMA), Marcus Barros, the study is important because it indicates ways of executing public policies and fostering entrepreneur's awareness.

Barros also says that the population should contribute to preservation. "We have advanced a lot in Amazon-related sustainable development policies, in the last 2 years and 3 months, reinforcing the Brazilian policy established 2 years ago.

"But this is not an exclusive role of the government. As environmental issues are being discussed, the population should also help by adopting simple habits, such as saving water and selectively disposing of garbage."

The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, an initiative of United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, was first prepared in 2001, to contribute for reaching the Millennium Development Goals. Approximately 1,300 experts of 95 countries volunteered in the 10,000-page study.

Translation: Andréa Alves

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