

Germany Applying US\$ 325 Million in Conservation in Brazil

Contributed by Benedito Mendonça
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The Brazilian Minister of Environment, Marina Silva, affirmed that the creation of conservation units in the Amazon will prevent squatting and will give communities health posts, schools, and means of communication, as well as security.

They will also support communities in the Amazon region through activities connected with the extraction of Brazil nuts, rubber, and resins, such as tar.

Silva made these declarations during a ceremony at which a contract was signed between the German Reconstruction Credit Bank (KfW) and the Brazilian Biodiversity Fund (Funbio).

The KfW will contribute 17.6 million euros to the Amazônia Protected Areas Program (Arpa).

The funding, which will be spread over a period of four years, will help in the creation and consolidation of conservation units in the Amazon and the purchase of equipments, goods, and services for these units.

According to the Minister, the program will make it possible "to reach the goal of establishing 18 million hectares of protected areas, of which 9 million will be for environmental protection and 9 million for sustainable use."

The Arpa is a Brazilian government initiative aimed at the preservation of a representative sample of the various Amazonian landscapes through the conservation units.

According to Silva, it represents the biggest initiative of this type in favor of the world's tropical forests.

The Arpa is expected to involve investments of US\$ 311 million over a 10-year period for the protection of 50 million hectares of Amazon forest.

The Ministry's Secretary of Biodiversity and Forests, João Paulo Capobianco, who is also coordinator of the Arpa, affirmed that the German donation, which was signed by the Deputy Director of the KfW, Alfred Schweitzer, will also make it possible to preserve the forests and protect an important contingent of the traditional population which is currently jeopardized.

For Schweitzer, the agreement confirms Germany's interest in environmental preservation in Brazil, in both the Amazon and the Atlantic Rain Forest.

Together with other commitments the Germans expect to assume this year, including 15 million euros for the Ecological Corridors project, the resources will amount to 250 million euros (US\$ 325 million).

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