

BRAZIL



Instituto Regional da Pequena Agropecuária Apropriada

Working on the recovery of the Caatinga with traditional collective pastoral communities that live directly from Caatinga resources.

Map

The Caatinga recovery program takes place in the Caatinga biome in the Brazilian semiarid region, within the Sertão do São Francisco Territory. Approximately 50% of this region is seriously affected by desertification.

The soils are characterized as young, shallow soils with little organic matter, but rich in minerals. Historically, communities have realized that because of rainfall irregularity, cropping is not suited to these territories and they have dedicated themselves to goat and sheep rearing in the native pasture of Caatinga.



Context



Pastoral communities raise goats and sheep and extract fruits and fibres on communal lands in the Caatinga biome. In the late 1990s local communities became aware that conservation of the Caatinga provides greater security. With support of technical advice, the traditional collective pasture communities learned how to restore the degraded areas. The term “recaatingamento” was created to describe the full scope of this complex process of regeneration of the natural vegetation.



Description

The initiative created processes of **Recaatingamento** in order to keep the Caatinga ecosystem productive and healthy. Recaatingamento is an approach for the **recovery** of degraded areas and the elaboration of a **management plan** for the sustainable use of the Caatinga for goat and sheep grazing, implemented in **partnership** with **traditional collective pasture communities**. The approach consists of :

- **Identification** and **isolation** of degraded areas
- Development of a **management plan** for the territory of the community
- Development of **new activities** that contribute to food security and income generation
- **Involvement** of entities, social movements, research agencies and universities in the implementation and evaluation of the actions developed
- **Dissemination** of the concept of Recaatingamento to various institutions and constituencies (elementary schools and universities).

The initiative was established on 1900 hectares of Caatinga vegetation. The community actively participates in the recovery of the Caatinga – they selected the area and have implemented the management plan. They perform all the activities needed for the Recaatingamento process to succeed and are responsible for maintaining the necessary management regime for at least 20 years. The State has donated the necessary material and equipment and provided technical assistance in order to contribute to combating desertification and mitigating the effects of climate change. NGOs provide advisory support.

Trajectory

1990s : coexistence
with semiarid
conditions state's
program

1990s : communities
perceive the
degradation of the
Caatinga

2015 :
Communities off
the UN hunger
map



Results and Benefits

The initiative strengthened **traditions of collective action** and increased **household income**. Moreover the initiative created new **agricultural activities** to preserve the **Caatinga**. It increased the visibility of communities as **guardians of the Caatinga**, as the restored areas have once more become a healthy biome.



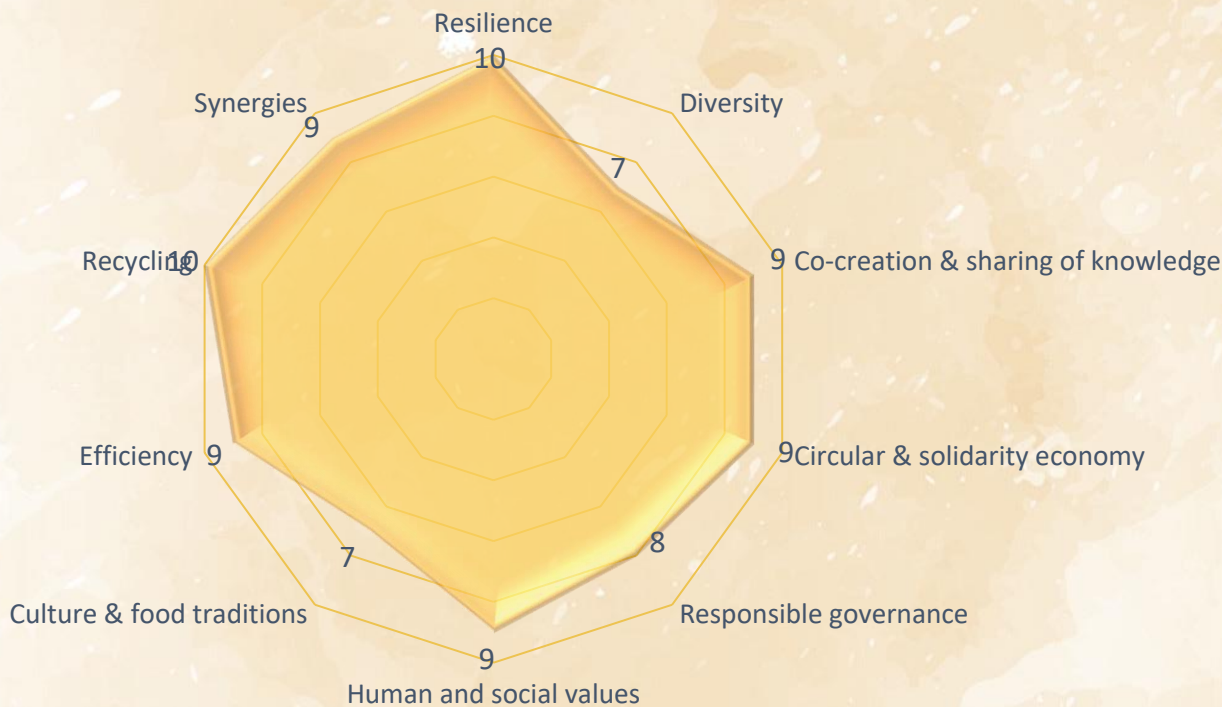
The initiative puts value on healthy Caatinga as a source for many new activities that generate **income** and **food security**. This counteracts projects that are aimed at deforestation of the Caatinga for short-term profit, including mining. Communities value the quality of life in rural semiarid regions.

The initiative permits to the communities to continue their **collective use** of the Caatinga. New economic activities such as **raising chickens**, **apiculture** with native bee varieties, **fruit processing** and **agroforestry** systems have attracted interest of **young people** and **women** because they don't require large land areas



Even when degraded the Caatinga has great potential for **regeneration**. The recovery of Caatinga ecosystems is a slow process and mainly depends on the average rainfall in an initial 5-year period. Planting **seedlings** should not be the main strategy. The process only works when the community is **fully engaged** and requires a lot of **community persistence**.

Alignment of the initiative with FAO factors



Resilience: 10

The Caatinga biome is fundamental to building knowledge of resilience to climate change. Communities and Caatinga hold fundamental knowledge for today. Protecting, knowing and disseminating this resilient knowledge is what Recaatingamento has been doing.

Human & social values: 9

The development and implementation of the concept of 'coexistence with semiarid conditions' has contributed to deconstruct the patriarchy. Women realized that it is possible to improve their social conditions with new knowledge and new technologies e.g. rainwater storage.

Diversity: 7

Recaatingamento strengthens the tradition of collective and communal land use, as it promotes collective work involving men, women and young people. Recaatingamento takes place in the interaction between traditional land use knowledge and technical knowledge regarding soil recovery.

Culture & food traditions: 7

The initiative promotes activities that generate healthy food and income, such as production of chicken, honey fruits and vegetables on family farms. It has also questioned the consumption model of industrialized products and seeks to value the identity of local foods.

Co-creation & sharing of knowledge: 9

Recaatingamento was developed as an interaction between the advisory services and the community, with participation of academia and research. The knowledge generated has been appropriated by the communities, IRPAA and academia.

Efficiency: 9

The cultural practice of collective activities was fundamental for the implementation of the proposal in the size and dimension that has been given. Without the participation of the communities, investments up to ten times larger would have been necessary.

Synergies: 9

The Caatinga is the basis of life and production of the collective pasture communities. Recaatingamento contributes to a greater appreciation of the various services that Caatinga offers to communities and the environment.

Responsible governance: 8

Recaatingamento has given more visibility to the collective pasture communities as guardians of the Caatinga. Also, the communities participate in the solidarity economy and the family farming product commercialization network.

Recycling: 10

Livestock breeding in native pastures is the most efficient activity for food and income generation. Well managed, the animals can transform dry leaves and thorns into protein in a sustainable way. The manure produced by the animals is a source of organic matter for the productive backyards.

Circular & solidarity economy: 9

Most communities are already part of the organization 'Central da Caatinga' for collective marketing of their products, with added value and strong identification with the preservation of the Caatinga biome.

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The Avaclim project aims to create the necessary conditions for the deployment of agroecology in arid areas.

For more information : www.avaclim.org

Financial partners:



FONDS FRANÇAIS POUR
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