

Additionally, the Rural District Development Law and the General Law of Ecological Balance and Environmental Protection influence decisions in this sector.

5.1 THE FORESTRY LAW

This law defines and regulates:

- The preparation and control of forestry programs;
- The administration of forestry resources;
- The integral management of forestry resources within their ecological system;
- The creation of reserves and other areas for preservation;
- The forestry related education, culture, training and research;
- The protection of forests against fire, infestations and other sanitary problems;
- The development and restoration of forestry resources and nurseries;
- The preservation, protection, certification, reproduction and distribution of seeds and vegetative material;
- The exploitation of forestry resources and technical services;
- Forestry production;
- The creation of roads and transportation infrastructure;
- The supply of raw materials to the industry;
- The proper operation of industrial plants and warehouses;
- Inspection and vigilance.

The above, within the following objectives:

- Obtaining higher yields;
- Protecting and preserving existing forestry resources;
- Maintaining high productivity levels;
- Promoting production, exports and employment in the sector;
- Promoting the industrialization of forestry resources;
- Attaining a domestic industry capable of satisfying local demand;
- Improving productivity of parastate companies in the sector;
- Promoting forestry development through incentives, tariffs and financing;
- Promoting the active participation of land owners in the production, industrialization, use and vigilance of existing resources;
- Promoting education, training and research to satisfy human capital and technological needs;
- Promoting a forestry culture among the population at large;
- Developing an integral rural development;
- Promoting the cooperation of private, public and state entities in the field.

The Secretariat of Agriculture and Hydraulic Resources (SARH) is the administrative body for the enforcement of the law and the signature of multilateral agreements. It is also responsible for the preparation of an inventory of existing resources (the most recent one was done in 1975) and of statistical data on the sector, as well as of policy guidelines and development programs for the sector. Basically, the SARH is in charge of regulating, developing and overseeing all aspects related with the exploitation, preservation and reforestation of forestry resources, as well as their distribution and industrial transformation.

Any change in the use of forestry land towards agricultural, cattle raising, urban, recreational and other uses requires the preparation of a technical and socioeconomic study to evaluate the feasibility of such a change and the conformity with existing regulations. Unless the study is approved, no such changes can be made. The