



Understanding the Food System in the Amazon

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About Amazon 2030

The Amazon 2030 project is a Brazilian research initiative with the purpose of developing an action plan for the Brazilian Amazon. Our objective is to achieve conditions for a higher standard of economical and human development in the region, and to achieve a sustainable use of natural resources by 2030.

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Keywords

Amazon, Food, Food System, Nutriment, Occupation, Informal Labor, Food Chains, Employment

Executive Summary

The food production system - a set of pre-production, production and post-production activities related to food – is a strategic theme worldwide due to its repercussions in different spheres: in the economy, in particular, with the generation of income and employment; socially, related to food security; and the climate agenda, interfering with greenhouse gas emissions. This set came to be called the Food System by bodies such as the United Nations Food and Agriculture Agency (FAO) and the World Bank, which includes food production, processing, distribution, consumption, and disposal.

The objective of this study is to present a profile of the Food System in the Legal Amazon.¹ Therefore, we analyze indicators of occupation and income in order to better understand the peculiarities of this system and propose more effective approaches with regard to public policies.

The Food System has a considerable weight in the region's labor market. There are now more than 3.5 million people – or a third of all employed people – who work in it. This result is higher than the proportion in the rest of Brazil, where those employed in the system represent 23% of the total. In rural Amazonian areas, the Food System employs 69% of the workforce.

The informality rate of those employed in the Food System is as high as 71% in the Amazon region. The incidence of informality is, therefore, much higher than that obtained in general for all economic sectors in the Amazon (50%). The participation of those working in the Food System in the total informal labor market, on the other hand, is more than 41% in the Amazon, versus 29% in the rest of Brazil. The income of those employed is also lower than the regional average income, especially in the group of employees.

Despite this scenario of strong disparities, there is currently no prioritization of public policies related to the Food System in the Amazon region, which translates into a wasted opportunity.

Thus, this report reveals a reality that has been underlying until now, but which is of great relevance for the formulation of public policies on economic development in the region. This is

¹ Referred to as only Amazon in the rest of this paper.

a particularly important reality and understanding it may help implement more targeted social policies for vulnerable players and combat informality.

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