

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE REPORT: 'SUSTAINABLE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT IN BRAZIL'**

The following is a summary of key findings from the report *Compras Públicas Sustentáveis no Brasil* which provides an up-to-date review of academic literature, government and NGOs reports and research in the area of public procurement in Brazil.

The report explores the actions by the Brazilian government in the area of sustainable public procurement and how these actions are integrated into the environmental and development policies in Brazil.

Public procurement is a sector of Brazilian e-government that has progressed considerably. The tools allow citizens to follow online what the government is buying, at what price, in what way and of what quality. *ComprasNet* is the Internet portal for Federal Public Procurement. It processes purchases and contracts of common goods, making available to the public information relevant to state expenditure.

In Brazil, public procurement is often framed as an economic policy with the potential to deliver social, environmental and economic justice. Despite considerable advances in the last decade, a lot still remains to be done to deliver on this potential.

Environmental issues have been included on the political agenda of the Brazilian government and have been translated into public policies, especially after the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg and following the Brazil's integration in 2007 into the UN Marrakech Process toward sustainable procurement.

Since then, the Brazilian government has taken some important steps. These culminated with the Action Plan for Sustainable Production and Consumption (PPCS), launched in 2011, and linking the economic, social and environmental aspects of development. This plan was the result of an extensive public deliberation process among various sectors of Brazilian society and government: six ministries, a diverse group of social and non-governmental organisations, representatives from industry, commerce, consumer associations, social enterprises and academia. Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) is one of the action lines of the plan. However, there is as of yet no official data or monitoring of how much the government spends through sustainable purchases.

This report was produced as part of the international Project '*Leveraging Buying Power for Development: Ethical Consumption and Sustainable Procurement in Chile and Brazil*' financed by the ESRC and DFID, both from the UK. In Brazil, the Project was carried out by a team of researchers from Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro. The other project partners are: Royal Holloway, University of London; Universidad Diego Portales (Chile); the NGO Ethical Consumer Research Association (ECRA); the Chilean NGO Fundación Ciudadano Responsable and the Brazilian NGO Instituto Akatu.

- 1) The National Policy on Climate Change which establishes that preference in public procurement should be given to processes and technologies that reduce carbon emissions and make better use of energy, water and other natural resources.
- 2) The National Policy on Solid Residues which states that priority should be given to the acquisition of recycled and recyclable products, and that social and environmental sustainability should be taken into consideration in the acquisition of goods and services and in the agreement of major construction contracts.
- 3) The Instruction Number 01 from 2010, which complements the law of public tender (8.666/93). Following international recommendations from the European Commission, this piece of legislation states that aspects of environmental sustainability - such as energy efficiency, reduced water consumption, use of renewable energy, waste management, biodegradability and traceability - should be included as criteria for the purchasing of goods and contracts for services and public works.
- 4) There is an increase in institutional recognition and support for the inclusion of social criteria. For example, there was the creation of the National Secretary for the Solidarity Economy, in 2003, and the creation of the Programme of Affirmative Action which sets out rules for the active inclusion of afro descendants, women, and disabled persons when contracting personnel. The Programme of Affirmative Action suggests that preference in procurement would be given to companies who show proof of adopting policies of positive action toward disadvantaged groups.
- 5) There have been many initiatives in SPP in local, state and federal level. One well-known example in federal level is the Law 11.947/2009. It sets out the principle of healthy meals in the state school meals system. Its understanding of healthy food is 'a diet which has a variety of safe products and respects the culture, tradition and nutritious eating habits'. This law says that 30% of school meals have to be bought directly from small family farmers. Each farmer can sell up to R\$ 3,000 a year and organic produce can be up to 30% more expensive than conventional ones.

The report questions whether government actions are already leading to adaptations in production processes. It also argues that although e-government in Brazil was created to make the process of public procurement more transparent and democratic, this by itself does not guarantee more sustainable procurement decisions. Furthermore, so far the legislation supporting the inclusion of social and environmental criteria in public procurement only makes suggestions, and does not have sufficient mechanisms for enforcement or for measuring what has been achieved.

The full report can be downloaded from the ERSC-DFID Choices website:  
<http://sustainablechoices.info>

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