

BRAZIL

Associação Brasileira de Normas Técnicas (ABNT)

Promoting greenhouse gas inventories in SMEs

Overview

Back in 2012, Brazil's national standards body (ABNT) in partnership with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), launched an initiative designed to promote greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories and third-party verification in Brazilian SMEs. The main objective of the project was to provide SMEs with technical support to prepare emissions inventories and identify opportunities to improve their processes. This was in addition to ABNT obtaining its accreditation as a verification body for corporate inventories, in accordance with internationally accepted standards and protocols. Before the start of this project, voluntary greenhouse gas initiatives in Brazil had only involved large companies. Now, for the first time, resources were made available to assist SMEs in training staff and implementing a GHG management system.

The project trained up professionals to work with SMEs in compiling their emissions inventories, in collaboration with several important Brazilian institutions such as INMETRO (metrology and industrial quality), INEA (environment) and SENAI (industrial training). The scheme included training on GHG standards ABNT NBR ISO 14064 and ABNT NBR ISO 14065 as well as on GHG protocols, with a particular focus on the Brazil GHG Protocol Program. This was the first time that lead verifiers in GHG emissions inventories had been trained up in Brazil.

Seminars were held across the country to get companies to actively participate in the project by preparing their own GHG inventories and emissions reduction initiatives. Another positive development was the creation of two methodological guides to assist companies in their efforts. The first described how to conduct a GHG inventory while the second looked at actions that can be taken to reduce GHG emissions. It also explained how to optimize an organization's management processes to reduce energy consumption and operating costs.

In the final phases of the project, a number of seminars were conducted on the subject of knowledge transfer. These were run in conjunction with the National Institute for Standardization (INN) in Chile, INDECOPI in Peru, the IDB in Washington, the Ministry of Environment and IDB in Panama, and the Ministry of Environment and Colombian Institute of Technical Standards and Certification (ICONTEC)

in Colombia. A prospective study on the behaviour of countries and companies in relation to climate change was also carried out across Latin America.

Outcomes and benefits

The world economic context is critical to a country's climate strategy and the progress of the GHG inventories initiative was affected by external economic factors. But the signing of the Paris Agreement in 2015, along with increased involvement of countries like the United States and China, brought renewed focus to the project.

Brazil has always been a leader among developing countries in matters of climate action and emissions reduction targets. Over the years, the country has strengthened its national climate policy, calling for more active participation of companies, especially with respect to inventories and mitigation projects. ABNT and the IDB believe this project will contribute to reinforcing Brazil's leadership in climate action and get companies to modernize their environmental approach.

The GHG project was positive in many respects:

- In addition to the first group of lead GHG verifiers, Brazil managed to train up more than a hundred professionals.
- Equipped with better tools, such as methodologies and case studies, as well as newly acquired skills, SMEs became more proficient in developing new mechanisms in pursuit of a low-carbon economy.
- ABNT obtained its accreditation as a verification body for corporate inventories, in accordance with internationally accepted standards and protocols.

For ABNT, this project should serve as an example and foundation for the development of actions aimed at strengthening Brazil's sustainability awareness in the future. With its accreditation as Verification Body (OVV) of GHG Inventories under the Brazilian Conformity Assessment System, ABNT makes available to companies of all sizes and sectors another service within the "ABNT brand of excellence".

Partners involved

Requesting organizations:

- Associação Brasileira de Normas Técnicas (ABNT)
- Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)

Supporting organizations:

- Agência Brasileira de Desenvolvimento Industrial (ABDI)
- Banco Nacional do Desenvolvimento (BNDES)
- Confederação Nacional da Indústria (CNI)
- Federação das Indústrias do Estado de São Paulo (FIESP)
- Financiadora de Estudos e Projetos (FINEP)
- Federação das Indústrias do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (FIRJAN)

- Instituto Nacional de Metrologia, Qualidade e Tecnologia (INMETRO)
- Ministério do Meio Ambiente (MMA)
- Serviço Brasileiro de Apoio às Micro e Pequenas Empresas (SEBRAE)
- Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (UERJ)

Timeline

The project ran over a four-year period from 2012 to 2016.

References

- Methodology for GHG inventories and emissions reduction
- Methodology for actions to reduce emissions and process optimization