



THE WOODS HOLE RESEARCH CENTER

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Governing the Amazon Rainforest?

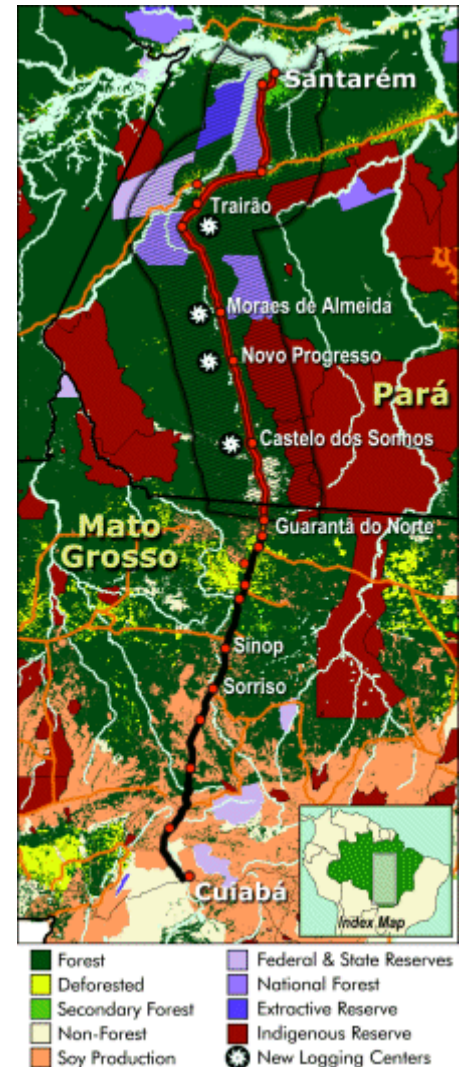
Science Magazine Compass Policy Forum, "Frontier Governance in Amazonia," January 25, 2002

The Cuiabá-Santarém highway corridor, scheduled for paving, with the shaded portion indicating a corridor of 50km to either side of the highway. A thoughtful planning process should preserve most of the forest within this corridor.

The Brazilian government has made important progress in controlling deforestation and fires in the Amazon Basin, as reported in a Center article published in the journal *Science* on January 25. If this progress is reinforced and expanded, three fourths of the Amazon rainforest could still be standing by the end of the century.

Together with the Amazon Institute of Environmental Research (IPAM), in Brazil, Center scientists are promoting "frontier governance" along the major new highways that are being paved through the core of Amazonia, avoiding wasteful destruction of the rainforest while promoting enduring prosperity through natural resource management. This work currently focuses on the Cuiabá-Santarém highway, featured in the article, and the "road to the Pacific" across the Andes, where staff scientists conducted expeditions in recent months.

In a fourteen-day workshop run in Brazil by the Center and IPAM, members of local governments, farmers' organizations, and conservation groups began to build a plan for developing the Cuiabá-Santarém highway in a way that avoids the business-as-usual substitution of forest with cattle pastures of low productivity, and that supports intensive agriculture on small areas of fertile soil.



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