Novos Estudos Jurídicos

[NEJ], vol. 30, n. 3, 2025

EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL AND THE PRODUCTION OF FOREST-BASED INDUSTRIES IN THE CAÇADOR-SC REGION

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Contextualization: The European Green Deal, a set of environmental policies adopted by the European Union, projects effects that extend beyond its borders, directly affecting exporting countries such as Brazil. Municipalities whose economy depends on the forestry sector, such as Caçador (SC), face pressure to adapt their production to European environmental standards, especially in a context of global commitment to sustainable development aligned with the 2030 Agenda.

Objectives: This article aims to analyze how the policies of the European Green Deal impact the economic sectors of Caçador, with an emphasis on forestry exports. It seeks to identify how these sectors can adapt to European requirements and, simultaneously, take advantage of new opportunities for sustainable growth.

Methods: This research adopts a qualitative approach, based on document analysis and literature review. Economic reports, European environmental legislation, and case studies related to sustainable practices in related sectors were examined. The article is structured in two parts: the historical-political context of the European Green Deal and an analysis of the economic reality of Caçador, including possible adaptation strategies.

Results: The results indicate that the requirements of the European Green Deal represent significant challenges for Caçador's forestry exports, especially regarding compliance with strict environmental criteria. However, they also reveal opportunities for the municipality to align its production with international sustainability standards, strengthening its competitiveness in the European market and promoting more responsible economic practices.

Keywords: European Green Deal; 2030 Agenda; Forest-Based Industry; Caçador-SC.

PACTO VERDE EUROPEU E A PRODUÇÃO DAS INDÚSTRIAS FLORESTAIS NA REGIÃO DE CAÇADOR-SC

Contextualização: O Pacto Ecológico Europeu, conjunto de políticas ambientais adotado pela União Europeia, projeta efeitos que ultrapassam suas fronteiras, afetando diretamente países exportadores como o Brasil. Municípios cuja economia depende do setor florestal, como Caçador (SC), enfrentam pressões para adequar sua produção às normas ambientais europeias, especialmente em um contexto de compromisso global com o desenvolvimento sustentável alinhado à Agenda 2030.

Objetivos: O artigo tem como objetivo analisar de que modo as políticas do Pacto Ecológico Europeu impactam os setores econômicos de Caçador, com ênfase nas exportações florestais. Busca-se identificar como esses setores podem se adaptar às exigências europeias e, simultaneamente, aproveitar novas oportunidades de crescimento sustentável.

Método: A pesquisa adota uma abordagem qualitativa, fundamentada em análise documental e revisão bibliográfica. Foram examinados relatórios econômicos, legislações ambientais europeias e estudos de caso referentes a práticas sustentáveis em setores correlatos. A estrutura do artigo se organiza em duas partes: o contexto histórico-político do Pacto Ecológico Europeu e a análise da realidade econômica de Caçador, incluindo estratégias de adaptação possíveis.

Resultados: Os resultados apontam que as exigências do Pacto Ecológico Europeu representam desafios significativos para as exportações florestais de Caçador, sobretudo no que diz respeito ao cumprimento de critérios ambientais rigorosos. Entretanto, também revelam oportunidades para o município alinhar sua produção a padrões internacionais de sustentabilidade, fortalecendo a competitividade no mercado europeu e promovendo práticas econômicas mais responsáveis.

Palavras-chave: European Green Deal; Agenda 2030; Indústria de Base Florestal; Caçador-SC.

EL PACTO VERDE EUROPEO Y LA PRODUCCIÓN DE INDUSTRIAS FORESTALES EN LA REGIÓN DE CAÇADOR-SC

Contextualización: El Pacto Verde Europeo, un conjunto de políticas ambientales adoptadas por la Unión Europea, proyecta efectos que trascienden sus fronteras y afectan directamente a países exportadores como Brasil. Los municipios cuya economía depende del sector forestal, como Caçador (SC), se enfrentan a la presión de adaptar su producción a las normas ambientales europeas, especialmente en un contexto de compromiso global con el desarrollo sostenible alineado con la Agenda 2030.

Objetivos: Este artículo busca analizar cómo las políticas del Pacto Verde Europeo impactan en los sectores económicos de Caçador, con énfasis en las exportaciones forestales. Busca identificar cómo estos sectores pueden adaptarse a los requisitos europeos y, simultáneamente, aprovechar las nuevas oportunidades de crecimiento sostenible.

Método: Esta investigación adopta un enfoque cualitativo, basado en el análisis de documentos y la revisión bibliográfica. Se examinaron informes económicos, la legislación ambiental europea y estudios de caso relacionados con prácticas sostenibles en sectores relacionados. El artículo se estructura en dos partes: el contexto histórico-político del Pacto Verde Europeo y un análisis de la realidad económica de Caçador, incluyendo posibles estrategias de adaptación.

Resultados: Los resultados indican que los requisitos del Pacto Verde Europeo representan desafíos significativos para las exportaciones forestales de Caçador, especialmente en lo que respecta al cumplimiento de rigurosos criterios ambientales. Sin embargo, también revelan oportunidades para que el municipio alinee su producción con los estándares internacionales de sostenibilidad, fortaleciendo la competitividad en el mercado europeo y promoviendo prácticas económicas más responsables.

Palabras clave: Pacto Verde Europeo; Agenda 2030; Industria Forestal; Caçador-SC.

INTRODUCTION

The environmental impact of human activities has been debated globally for decades, especially since the emergence of the concept of sustainable development. Over time, the perception that environmental issues are inseparably linked to social and economic dimensions has grown stronger, making sustainability a central element of international political agendas. The European Green Deal, launched by the European Union in 2019, emerges as one of the most ambitious political initiatives aimed at sustainability and the mitigation of climate change. This plan not only seeks to make Europe the first carbon-neutral continent by 2050, but also establishes an economic, social, and environmental transition aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) advocated by the 2030 Agenda.

However, the implications of the EGD transcend European borders, directly impacting exporting countries such as Brazil, whose economies depend significantly on the export of commodities and certain manufactured products. In this context, municipalities such as Caçador, in Santa Catarina, with an economy based on the export of reforested wood, face specific challenges related to compliance with the new standards required by European legislation. Such compliance is essential to ensure continuous access to the European market, which is highly regulated and increasingly committed to strict environmental practices. Furthermore, these dynamics reveal how global climate policies can shape the economic trajectories of local communities, forcing them to rethink their development models in order to remain competitive.

Among the main changes promoted by the EGD are the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) and the new rules for importing products associated with deforestation and forest degradation. These policies demand an unprecedented level of traceability, environmental compliance, and transparency of production chains, imposing on Brazilian companies the need to review their practices and processes in order to meet the demands of the European market.

The objective of this article is to analyze how the policies of the EGD impact the economic sectors of Caçador, a municipality located in the state of Santa Catarina, in southern Brazil, especially forest-based exports. The aim is to understand how this sector can adapt to European requirements and to explore the opportunities for sustainable growth that may arise from this process. To achieve this objective, a qualitative methodology was employed, based on documentary analysis and literature review, focusing on economic reports, European environmental legislation, and case studies on sustainable practices in related sectors. Secondary data on exports were drawn from reports by the Brazilian Ministry of Development, Industry, Commerce and Services and official publications of the European Union.

The article is structured into two essential parts. Initially, it presents the historical and political context of the EGD, highlighting its main goals and expected impacts. In the second part, it addresses the economic reality of Caçador, identifying the main challenges imposed by the EGD on local production chains. At this stage, it also discusses the need for adaptation strategies and the emerging opportunities for the municipality in the global sustainability scenario.

By introducing the debate on the impacts of the EGD on local economies such as that of Caçador, this study seeks to contribute to the understanding of the transformations required in order to align regional policies with global sustainability trends. This analysis becomes even more relevant in light of the growing pressure for solutions that balance economic development and environmental conservation, while also promoting resilience and innovation in local contexts that are directly affected by global decisions.

1. THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL: A NEW MILESTONE IN THE PURSUIT OF SUSTAINABILITY IN EUROPE

The history of the European Green Deal is deeply linked to sustainable development, to events and reports promoted by the UN, of which almost all European Union countries are signatories. The first discussions restricted to the European Union took place in the Single European Act, signed in 1986 and in force since 1987. The main focus was economic harmonization and the creation of the common market, but this treaty marked the first moment in which provisions on the environment and sustainable development were incorporated into the European Community. This is evident in Magalhães[1]:

> The Single European Act defined: the increase in the number of issues and cases in which the Council could deliberate by qualified majority instead of unanimity; the bases that made possible the creation of the Court of First Instance (CFI); a community and social policy to reduce the asymmetries of economic development among the Member States, through the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) and the Structural Funds; and it adopted the date proposed by the White Paper, thus defining the construction of a single market and the European Union by the end of 1992. It is understood, therefore, that the Single European Act was the pillar for the Treaty of Maastricht, which gave rise to the European Union on January 1, 1993.

The first mention of the environment in the Single European Act (SEA) appears in Article 130R: "[...] the Community's action in the field of the environment shall aim at

[1] MAGALHÃES, Juliana Ribeiro. **A formação do mercado único europeu em um contexto de assimetrias econômicas:** impactos e implicações da crise do euro. 2018. Dissertação (Mestrado em Relações Internacionais) - Universidade Federal da Bahia, Salvador, 2018. Disponível em: https://encurtador.com.br/kXxE. Acesso em: 5 dez. 2024.

preserving, protecting and improving the quality of the environment, protecting human health and ensuring the prudent and rational utilization of natural resources"[2]. According to Knill and Liefferink[3], the SEA represented a turning point by bringing environmental concerns to the core of European policies, facilitating cooperation and coordination among Member States to address transnational problems such as pollution and the degradation of natural resources.

Still in the text of the Single European Act:

> The Community action on the environment shall be based on the principles of preventive action, of rectifying damage to the environment at source, and on the polluter-pays principle. Environmental protection requirements shall be a component of the other Community policies[4].

The text of the Single European Act makes explicit environmental policy principles, such as the precautionary principle, rectification at source, and the polluter-pays principle. The precautionary principle establishes that "[…] the lack of absolute scientific certainty does not justify failing to take the necessary measures to prevent potentially serious and irreversible damage"[5].

As for the polluter-pays principle, according to Sarlet and Fensterseifer[6]:

> To establish the need to legally bind the generator of such environmental costs (that is, the polluter), whether the supplier (or producer) or even the consumer, so that they are held liable and, consequently, bear such ecological costs, relieving society of this burden. The polluter who uses the environment free of charge to discharge pollutants into it invades the personal property of all others who do not pollute, confiscating the property rights of others.

It should be noted tat the SEA recognized the international dimension of environmental issues. Problems such as air pollution, the degradation of the seas, and the cross-border impacts of certain economic activities required cooperation among the Union's Member States, as well as with countries outside the European Union. In this sense, the Community intervened in environmental matters insofar as the stated objectives could be better achieved at the Community level than at the level of the Member States considered individually. Without prejudice to certain Community measures, the Member States would

[2] UNIÃO EUROPEIA. **Ato Único Europeu.** Disponível em: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/PT/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:11986U/TXT. Acesso em: 05 mai. 2025.

[3] KNILL, Christoph; LIEFFERINK, Duncan. **Environmental politics in the European Union:** policy-making, implementation and patterns of multi-level governance. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007.

[4] UNIÃO EUROPEIA. Ato Único Europeu. s.p.

[5] SUPERIOR TRIBUNAL DE JUSTIÇA (STJ). **Princípio da precaução:** a obrigação de proteger o meio ambiente mesmo quando o dano é incerto. 2024. Disponível em: https://encurtador.com.br/OWCd. Acesso em: 05 mar. 2025.

[6] SARLET, Ingo W.; FENSTERSEIFER, Tiago. **Curso de Direito Ambiental**. 4. ed. Rio de Janeiro: Forense, 2023.

ensure the financing and implementation of other measures.

According to Jordan and Adelle[7], the internationalization of environmental policies promoted by the European Union after the Single European Act turned the EU into a prominent actor in global environmental forums, contributing to the consolidation of the concept of sustainable development. It is worth noting that, in the SEA, it became clear that the functioning of the internal market depended on the responsible management of natural resources and environmental protection. With the future free movement of goods, people, capital, and services in the European Union, it became necessary to harmonize environmental standards among the Member States so as to avoid distortions of competition. Thus, the SEA encouraged States to adopt common environmental regulations, ensuring high standards of environmental protection across all countries, in addition to promoting sustainable development in alignment with the market.

Lenschow[8], in turn, argues that the integration of environmental concerns into internal market policies was an essential step toward building a greener and more sustainable European economy, seeking to reconcile competitiveness with ecological responsibility. Thus, the Single European Act placed sustainability and sustainable development at the center of the European Union's policies, encouraging Member States to adopt environmental standards and positioning the Union as a leader in global discussions on sustainable development and the environment.

In 1992, the Maastricht Treaty[9], also known as the Treaty on European Union (TEU), was signed and entered into force in 1993, inaugurating a new phase of European integration. This treaty laid the groundwork for Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and expanded the signatory countries' commitment to sustainability and sustainable development. In the TEU, sustainable development is established as a central objective of the European Union, as provided in Article 2:

> To promote, throughout the Community, the harmonious and balanced development of economic activities, sustainable and non-inflationary growth that respects the environment, a high degree of convergence of the performance of economies, a high level of employment and of social protection, the raising of the standard and quality of life, economic and social cohesion, and solidarity among the Member States.

[7] JORDAN, Andrew; ADELE, Charlotte. **Environmental policy in the European Union:** actors, institutions and processes. London: Routledge, 2012.

[8] LENSCHOW, Andrea. **Environmental policy integration:** greening sectoral policies in Europe. London: Earthscan, 2002.

[9] UNIÃO EUROPEIA. **Tratado da União Europeia.** Disponível em: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/PT/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:11992M/TXT. Acesso em: 05 dez. 2024. s.p.

According to Baker[10], establishing sustainable development as a central objective of the TEU elevated sustainability to the same level as economic and social policies, making it a cross-cutting priority in the Union's legislation and policies. With this inclusion, environmental issues began to be addressed in an integrated way within legislation and policy, preventing such norms from being subordinated solely to economic policies. It should be noted that the polluter-pays and precautionary principles introduced in the SEA were reaffirmed in this treaty. As Article 130R provides:

> Community policy on the environment shall aim at a high level of protection, taking into account the diversity of situations existing in the different regions of the Community. It shall be based on the principles of precaution and preventive action, on rectifying environmental damage at source as a priority, and on the polluter-pays principle. Environmental protection requirements must be integrated into the definition and implementation of the other Community policies.

In this way, environmental policies were no longer treated in isolation and became one of the pillars of the European Union, integrating with trade, agriculture, transport, and industrial policies.

It is observed that the TEU sought to harmonize the environmental legislation of the signatory countries, which represented a major challenge given the diversity of economic priorities and the different levels of development among the countries. Furthermore, tensions arose between environmental protection goals and economic priorities. In Lenschow's[11] analysis, although sustainability was formally integrated into EU policies, short-term economic pressures often outweighed environmental considerations, particularly in the energy and transport sectors.

In this context, the European Union faced the challenge of balancing regional differences in regulation and in the enforcement of environmental policies. The TEU included a policy of economic and social cohesion, with the objective of reducing regional inequalities. For this purpose, structural funds were created to promote sustainable regional development. According to Bomberg[12], many of these less developed regions faced difficulties in implementing strict environmental policies due to lack of infrastructure and financial resources.

It is important to note that the TEU recognized that environmental problems, such as climate change and ocean pollution, require global cooperation, turning environmental

[10] BAKER, Susan. **The politics of sustainable development:** theory, policy and practice within the European Union. London: Routledge, 1997.

[11] LENSCHOW, Andrea. **Environmental policy integration:** greening sectoral policies in Europe.

[12] BOMBERG, Elizabeth. **Environmental politics in the European Union:** policy-making, implementation and patterns of multi-level governance. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

policy into a transnational issue. With this treaty, the European Union committed itself to fostering and participating in international agreements on climate and the environment, consolidating its role as a fundamental actor in the 2015 Paris Agreement[13].

Oberthür and Pallemaerts[14] show that the TEU made the European Union a global leader on climate policy, encouraging the bloc to establish greenhouse gas reduction targets and to initiate a low-carbon energy and economic transition. Even after this treaty, the European Union began developing policies on energy efficiency and renewable energy that were essential to mitigating the effects of climate change.

Thus, the Maastricht Treaty was of great importance to the European Union's sustainable development policies, making these issues central objectives of the bloc. Through this treaty, the polluter-pays and precautionary principles became mandatory in European countries' legislation and likewise inspired policies in countries such as Brazil. Beyond the legal scope, the treaty symbolized a turning point in the perception that environmental protection should be treated as a structural component of economic integration, not as a peripheral concern. After this treaty, the European Union became a global leader in climate negotiations, driving the emergence of a greener and more sustainable economy, and establishing a regulatory framework that served as a reference point for other regions of the world.

In light of this contextualization, it is necessary to reflect on the impact of these transformations within the European Union's context from a historical perspective, from its inception with the Maastricht Treaty to the present day. This historical trajectory demonstrates that sustainability in Europe has not emerged suddenly but has been progressively built through successive treaties, directives, and policies that have expanded the scope of environmental governance. For this reason, and within the framework of sustainability, it is now appropriate to briefly discuss the EGD and its role in the European journey toward consolidating the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

The European Green Deal was announced on December 11, 2019, by Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, with the goal of addressing climate change and promoting sustainable development in contemporary times. The EGD presents an agenda to transform the European Union's economy into a carbon-neutral economy by 2050, while also promoting social justice and sustainable economic development. More than a simple climate plan, the EGD represents a comprehensive strategy that combines environmental, economic, and social dimensions, signaling Europe's ambition to redefine its role on the global

[13] UNITED NATIONS. **Paris Agreement.** 2015. Disponível em: https://brasil.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-08/Acordo-de-Paris.pdf. Acesso em: 10 jan. 2025.

[14] OBERTHÜR, Sebastian; PALLEMAERTS, Marc. **The new climate policies of the European Union:** internal legislation and climate diplomacy. Brussels: Brussels University Press, 2010.

stage as a pioneer of sustainable transformation.

Thus, by 2050, the EU must balance greenhouse gas emissions with the capacity to remove carbon from the atmosphere through natural processes or carbon capture technologies. In this way, the EU expects to limit the global temperature increase to 1.5ºC, as established in the Paris Agreement. This neutrality goal, according to Meadows *et al*.[15], is essential to avoid the worst impacts of climate change, which include the intensification of extreme weather events such as floods, droughts, and rising sea levels. In addition to mitigating climate change, the Green Deal seeks to create a long-term sustainable economic model and to reduce dependence on fossil fuels. As Soares[16] points out:

> [...] the Union decided to increase its commitment to the decarbonization of the economy, setting a binding target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 55% by 2030, through the so-called climate law, with the aim of achieving neutrality by 2050. As a result, the EU initiated a climate legislative reform, which includes the revision of the directive on energy taxation, as it does not take into account the environmental impact of fuels.

Thus, the EGD seeks to promote the transition to clean and renewable energy sources, so that the EU gradually replaces fossil fuels with wind, hydroelectric, and solar energy. The EU must also promote research and investment in more efficient technologies, in addition to modernizing the bloc's energy infrastructure.

The energy sector is the largest emitter of greenhouse gases in the EU, and according to Birol[17], the transition to clean energy is not only essential to achieving climate goals but also represents a historic opportunity to foster innovation, create millions of new jobs, and promote sustainable economic growth.

Another topic addressed in the EGD is the adoption of the circular economy, whose objective is to reduce waste and promote the sustainable use of natural resources. The circular economy is based on principles of recycling, reuse, and material efficiency, reducing pressure on natural resources and minimizing environmental impacts. With this agenda, the EU intends to increase the durability, reparability, and recyclability of products. According to Lacy and Rutqvist[18], the transition to a circular economy represents an opportunity not only for environmental preservation but also for the creation of new markets and business models

[15] MEADOWS, Donella et al. The limits to growth. *In:* CONCA, Ken; DABELKO, Geoffrey D. (org.). **Green planet blues:** critical perspectives on global environmental politics. 6. ed. New York: Routledge, 2019.

[16] SOARES, Antonio Goucha. The European Green Deal. **Revista Jurídica Portucalense**, p. 44-67, 2024. DOI: 10.34625/issn.2183-2705(35)2024.ic-03.

[17] BIROL, Fatih. **The role of clean energy transitions in building a more sustainable and resilient economy.** Paris: International Energy Agency, 2020. Disponível em: https://www.iea.org. Acesso em: 01 dez. 2024.

[18] LACY, Peter; RUTQVIST, Jakob. **Waste to wealth:** the circular economy advantage. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

based on sustainability. On the circular economy, Martinelli[19] states:

> The projects financed by the European Green Deal Financing Plan will contribute to achieving the objectives of the EGD, to the emergence of a clean energy matrix, and to industries with a circular economy. From this perspective, the aim is to create quality jobs, focused on future trends and present needs, for a competitive European economy suited to the twenty-first century.

In turn, the Sustainable Products Policy focuses on reducing material waste, promoting reuse, and strengthening recycling processes. The goal is to ensure that products such as textiles, construction materials, vehicles, batteries, electronic components, and plastics have a prolonged useful life and are reused whenever possible.

In addition, the European Union seeks to eliminate the export of waste outside its territory by revising the rules on waste transport and illegal exports. The EU also plans to propose changes to the rules for the disposal of end-of-life vehicles[20], encouraging more circular business models that prioritize the reuse and recycling of components.

In the EGD, the transport sector is also addressed, since it accounts for 25% of greenhouse gas emissions in the EU. The EGD aims to reduce transport sector emissions by 90% by 2050, promoting more efficient and cleaner means of transport such as electric cars, maritime transport, and railways. According to Geels[21], change in the transport sector is fundamental not only to reduce carbon emissions but also to improve air quality and reduce congestion. Thus, the EU plans to install electric vehicle charging infrastructure across Europe and to seek sustainable fuels for the aviation and maritime sectors.

Regarding transport, Soares[22] highlights:

> In addition to energy, transport is the sector with the greatest weight in greenhouse gas emissions, accounting for a quarter of emissions in the Union. It is certain that this is a sector whose emissions remain at a level higher than that recorded in 1990, despite the measures adopted in previous decades aimed at controlling emissions. Thus, the Fit for 55 package contains a set of proposals to achieve less polluting vehicles and fuels. These proposals include the revision of applicable standards on CO2 emissions for new passenger cars and light commercial vehicles, a new regulation on alternative fuel

[19] MARTINELLI, Marcelo Terra Bento. **O Pacto Ecológico Europeu e seus efeitos sobre a comunidade internacional.** 2021. Trabalho de Conclusão de Curso (Relações Internacionais) - Universidade Federal de Uberlândia, 2021. Disponível em: https://repositorio.ufu.br/handle/123456789/32297. Acesso em: 5 dez. 2024.

[20] EUROPEAN COMMISSION. **Green Deal could lead to ban on EU waste exports.** EUWID Recycling and Waste Management. Disponível em: http://www.euwid-recycling.com. Acesso em: 15 out. 2024.

[21] GEELS, Frank W. A socio-technical analysis of low-carbon transitions: introducing the multi-level perspective into transport studies. **Journal of Transport Geography**, v. 24, p. 471–482, 2012. Disponível em: https://ideas.repec.org/a/eee/jotrge/v24y2012icp471-482.html. Disponível em: 10 mai. 2025.

[22] SOARES, Antonio Goucha. The European Green Deal.

> infrastructure, as well as the adoption of sustainable fuels in the aviation and maritime transport sectors.

Moreover, in the EGD, the policy for construction and renovation aims to address currently unsustainable methods used in the sector, which still relies heavily on non-renewable resources. The focus is on encouraging the use of more energy-efficient practices, such as the construction of buildings more resilient to climate change, the adoption of digital technologies, and the implementation of strict standards to ensure the energy efficiency of constructions.

An important point of this policy is the renovation of social housing, with the goal of reducing energy costs for people with lower financial capacity. In addition to reducing environmental impact, these measures aim to triple the rate of building renovations to reduce the pollution generated during construction and renovation processes.

Furthermore, the Protection of Biodiversity and Sustainable Agriculture is another urgent need for the EGD. Extensive agriculture in the EU has degraded natural ecosystems and caused loss of biodiversity, currently representing one of the greatest environmental crises faced by the planet. In this regard, the EGD included the Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, which aims to restore degraded ecosystems, protect natural areas, and expand protected areas in the EU. In the agricultural sector, the "Farm to Fork"[23] concept promotes an integrated approach to make food systems more sustainable and resilient. This includes reducing the use of pesticides and fertilizers, promoting organic farming, and improving animal welfare.

According to Frison[24], this more sustainable approach to agriculture is crucial to ensuring long-term food security, while at the same time reducing the environmental impact of agricultural production. Still on the theme of "Farm to Fork," the Executive Vice-President of the European Commission, Frans Timmermans[25], emphasizes:

> The coronavirus crisis has shown how vulnerable we all are, and how important it is to restore the balance between human activity and nature. Central themes of the Green Deal, the 'Biodiversity' and 'Farm to Fork' strategies point to a new and better balance between nature, food chains, and biodiversity, so as to protect the health and well-being of our population and, at the same time, increase the competitiveness and resilience of the EU. These strategies are crucial parts of the great transition we have embarked upon.

The Farm to Fork[26] program has the following goals:

[23] EUROPEAN COMMISSION. **Farm to Fork Strategy.** Disponível em: https://food.ec.europa.eu/horizontal-topics/farm-fork-strategy_en. Acesso em: 4 dez. 2024.

[24] FRISON, Emile A. **From uniformity to diversity:** a paradigm shift in agriculture. London: Routledge, 2020.

[25] EUROPEAN COMMISSION. **Farm to Fork Strategy.** s.p.

[26] EUROPEAN COMMISSION. **Farm to Fork Strategy.** s.p.

To make 25% of EU agriculture organic by the year 2030.
To reduce pesticide use by 50% by 2030.
To reduce nutrient loss by at least 50%.
To reduce the use of antimicrobials in agriculture and aquaculture by 50% by 2030.
To create food sustainability labels.
To reduce food waste by 50% by 2030.
To dedicate 10 billion euros to research and innovation related to this topic.

Thus, the Farm to Fork approach will contribute to a circular economy by reducing environmental impacts at various stages, such as food processing, transportation, packaging, and storage, as well as combating food waste. The proposal also includes investments in research to introduce new foods for animals and humans, such as algae-based products, in addition to encouraging the consumption of marine food.

Such a broad approach can also be analyzed, although it is not the focus of the present research, from the perspective of the transcomplex vision, as discussed by Bonin, Hülse, and Gonzalez Velasco[27], who affirm in the mentioned article that it can be found in various situations, just like the perspective of sustainability, which can be analyzed by combining multiple views that converge toward a single purpose. As the authors highlight: "[…] the emancipation of people through a process of transforming the way of looking at the world (which implies sustainability, education, and transcomplexity), in which the common good gains strength and recognition".

In this sense, as Garcia and Garcia[28] point out when advocating for a conceptualization of sustainability that integrates solidarity, since they are intrinsically connected, it cannot be overlooked that it is impossible to separate environment, human dignity, and solidarity, as "Sustainability focuses on ensuring the first two, and solidarity is an indispensable means to achieve them".

As can be seen, the EGD seeks to promote sustainable consumption, with the aim of offering healthy and affordable products to the entire population. Thus, the EGD will not allow "[…] the introduction into EU markets of imported foods that do not comply with the applicable EU environmental standards"[29].

[27] BONIN, Joel Cezar; HÜLSE, Levi; VELASCO, Juan Miguel Gonzalez. A transcomplexidade como viés hermenêutico de compreensão do mundo contemporâneo. **Novos Estudos Jurídicos**, v. 29, n. 1, p. 77–99, 2024. DOI: 10.14210/nej.v29n1.p77-99. Disponível em: https://periodicos.univali.br/index.php/nej/article/view/20234. Acesso em: 10 mai. 2025.

[28] GARCIA, Denise Schmitt Siqueira; GARCIA, Heloise Siqueira. Sustentabilidade solidária ou solidariedade sustentável? Em busca de um conceito uníssono. **Revista de Direito Administrativo**, v. 277, n. 1, p. 75–100, 2018. DOI: 10.12660/rda.v277.2018.74802. Disponível em: https://periodicos.fgv.br/rda/article/view/74802. Acesso em: 10 mai. 2025.

[29] UNIÃO EUROPEIA. **European Green Deal.** EUR-Lex, 2019. Disponível em: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/PT/TXT/?uri=celex:52019DC0640. Acesso em: 21 nov. 2024. s.p.

In the same logic of sustainable consumption and contribution to the circular economy, Hülse and Pasold[30] point out that: "Addressing the issue of Sustainability without rethinking the forms of production and consumption in society is impossible, since Sustainability depends on raising awareness among the population." This may also encompass, in the same way, an ethical imperative of sustainability and empathetic attitudes, as emphasized by Garcia and Garcia[31]:

> Another factor of utmost importance, in addition to those raised so far, is the need to observe humanity's current paradigm, which is sustainability. The fact is that survival on Earth will only be possible by achieving sustainability in its dimensional balance, and this will only occur through empathetic human attitudes.

For all the goals and objectives to be implemented, social justice, a just transition, and financing are necessary. Thus, this just transition mechanism aims to support the most affected regions and workers. This mechanism, which includes the Just Transition Fund, will mobilize up to 100 billion euros to help regions dependent on fossil fuels such as coal and gas, diversify their economies, and create green jobs.

2. THE ECONOMIC REALITY OF CAÇADOR-SC AND THE MAIN CHALLENGES IMPOSED BY THE EGD ON LOCAL PRODUCTION CHAINS

Given the explanation of the EGD, it is now necessary to present the real impacts of this pact on the regional economy of Caçador-SC, considering that the forest-based industry of the Caçador region is a major exporter to the European market. In this way, with the commitment to align its supply chains with sustainability objectives, the EU undertakes to combat deforestation and to avoid the importation of products produced under conditions that violate human rights or cause environmental degradation. Thus, the EGD proposes new regulations for imported products, requiring them to meet strict environmental and social criteria.

As a result, products such as soybeans, beef, timber, and sugar may be affected by the new European policies. Soterroni *et al*.[32] emphasize that deforestation associated with agricultural expansion in Brazil, especially in the Amazon and the Cerrado, is a major concern

[30] HÜLSE, Levi; PASOLD, Cláudio L. Corporação de Mondragon e a sustentabilidade. **Revista Justiça do Direito**, v. 36, n. 1, p. 30–44, 2022. DOI: 10.5335/rjd.v36i1.12519.

[31] GARCIA, Heloise Siqueira; GARCIA, Denise Schmitt Siqueira. Enfrentando la pandemia de COVID-19: la sostenibilidad empática como medida de unión ante la realidad trasnacional. **Opinión Jurídica**, v. 19, p. 533–550, 2020.

[32] SOTERRONI, A. C. *et al*. Expanding the soy moratorium to Brazil's Cerrado. **Science Advances**, v. 5, n. 7, jul. 2019, eaav7336. DOI: 10.1126/sciadv.aav7336. Disponível em: https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/sciadv.aav7336. Acesso em: 10 mai. 2025.

for the EU, which may hinder the entry of Brazilian products into the European market if they do not comply with the environmental criteria of the EGD.

Another important factor is the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) of the EGD, which is expected to affect Brazil's exports to Europe. The CBAM imposes charges on imported products with high carbon emissions such as steel, aluminum, cement, and fertilizers. Countries exporting to the EU will need to adopt environmental measures similar to those of the EU, thus avoiding "carbon leakage" (i.e., the transfer of emissions to other countries). According to Krenek, Sommer, and Schratzenstaller[33], the CBAM has the potential to increase costs for Brazilian exporters who fail to meet the EU's carbon emissions standards. To adapt, Brazil will need to invest in low-carbon technologies and improve energy efficiency, especially in the most carbon-intensive export sectors.

The CBAM entered into force in October 2023 and had an adaptation period until January 31, 2024. The CBAM initially applies to the import of certain selected goods and precursors whose production is carbon-intensive and presents the highest risk of carbon leakage: cement, iron and steel, aluminum, fertilizers, electricity, and hydrogen.

Another objective of the EGD is to combat global deforestation. As Europe is one of the largest markets for Brazilian agricultural products, Brazil will need to implement measures against deforestation to maintain its competitiveness.

For their part, Rajão *et al*.[34] argue that, without concrete initiatives to reduce deforestation and promote sustainable agricultural practices, Brazil may lose competitiveness in the European market. Therefore, the adoption of strict environmental policies and sustainable practices offers Brazil an opportunity to stand out as a supplier of agricultural products that meet the new European standards.

In this way, the EGD also presents new opportunities for Brazilian exports. One of its goals is to promote clean energy, which opens space for biofuels such as ethanol and biodiesel, which can become viable alternatives to fossil fuels in Europe. In addition, Brazil has great potential in organic products, reforestation, and sustainable soy.

Sparovek, Barretto, Matsumoto, and Berndes[35] emphasize that, with adequate investments in sustainable innovation and regenerative agricultural practices, Brazil can take advantage of the EGD to transform its agriculture into one of the most competitive and

[33] KRENEK, Alexander; SOMMER, Michael; SCHRATZENSTALLER, Margit. The EU carbon border adjustment mechanism: challenges and opportunities. **International Economics and Economic Policy**, v. 18, n. 2, p. 385–400, 2021. DOI: 10.1007/s10368-021-00506-5.

[34] RAJÃO, Raoni *et al.* The risk of Brazilian soy for the EU market: impacts of deforestation and sustainability certification. **Science**, v. 369, n. 6501, 2020, p. 246–249. DOI: 10.1126/science.aba9357.

[35] SPAROVEK, Gerd *et al*. Effects of governance on availability of land for agriculture and conservation in Brazil. **Environmental Science & Policy**, v. 104, p. 01–11, 2019. DOI: 10.1016/j.envsci.2019.01.003.

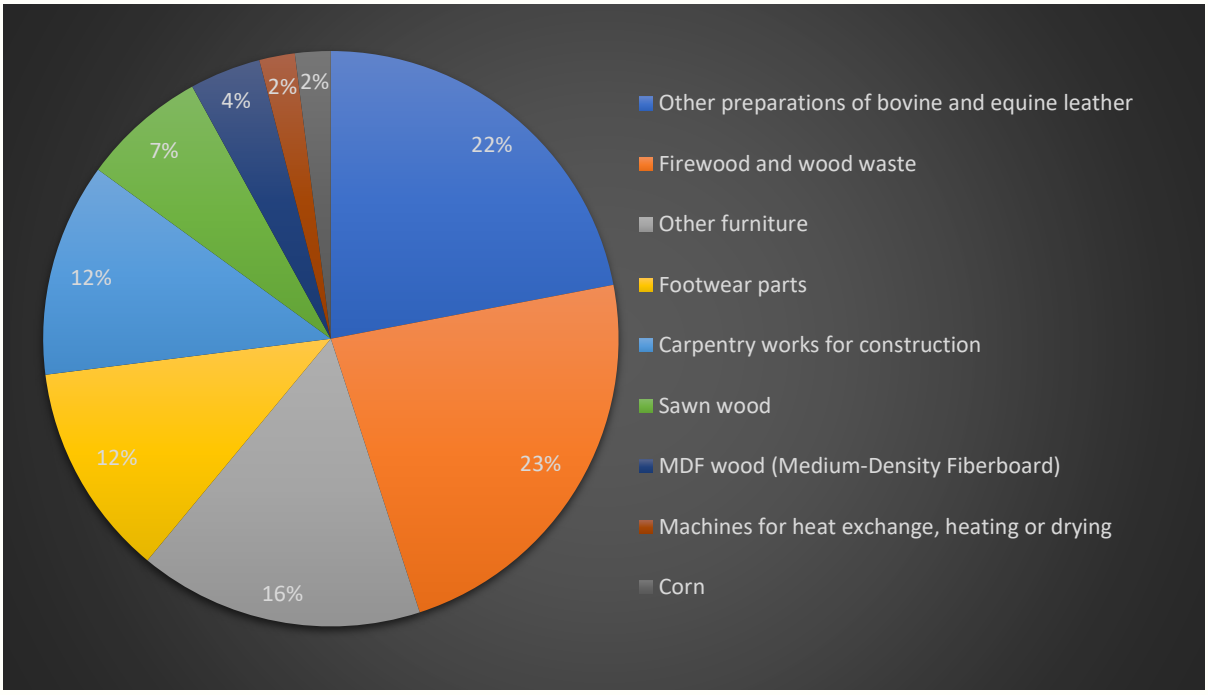
sustainable in the world. However, this requires a joint effort between the private sector and the government to adopt new technologies, improve the traceability of production chains, and implement environmental preservation policies.

Therefore, it is necessary to understand how the reality of Caçador adapts to the dictates and requirements of the EGD, particularly with regard to exports from the forest-based industry, considered the main source of economic production in the locality.

Caçador, a municipality in the state of Santa Catarina with 73,720 inhabitants, is known as the industrial capital of the mid-western region of the state. The local economy initially developed around the extraction and industrialization of wood, especially native forests such as araucaria and imbuia. With the exhaustion of these resources, the city shifted to the exploitation of planted forests, such as Pinus elliottii, consolidating itself as one of the largest timber hubs in southern Brazil. Agriculture also plays an important role in Caçador's economy, particularly the production of horticultural crops, especially tomatoes, a crop that once positioned the municipality as the largest producer in its region. In addition, the city is home to diversified industries, including plastics, copper wire, metallurgy, and transportation.

According to data from the Ministry of Development, Industry, and Commerce and Services, between 2012 and 2024, Caçador exported to the European Union products such as reforested wood, agricultural derivatives, and industrial items. This can be observed from the pie chart below, particularly in the last three years:

Participation of the Main Products from 2022 to 2024 in Caçador-SC's Exports to the European Union.



Fonte: Adapted from the Ministry of Development, Industry, Commerce and Services (2024).

When analyzing the chart, it is observed that, in the totalization of items derived from the forest-based industry, they account for 50% of the products exported by the municipality to the European Union (EU). For comparison purposes, data from the Ministry of Development, Industry, Commerce and Services (2024) show Brazil's exports to the EU in 2022. The main product was coffee (over 50%), followed by wood/pulp, palm oil, soybeans, beef, cocoa, and rubber.

It becomes evident that wood-derived products exported by Caçador are among the main products exported by Brazil to the EU. Thus, Brazilian products, in order to be exported to the EU, must comply with the EGD, which was established on December 11, 2019, defined as "[...] the Commission's commitment to address climate and environmental challenges, the defining task of this generation"[36].

In addition, the EGD is described as a:

> [...] new growth strategy that aims to transform the EU into a fair and prosperous society, endowed with a modern, resource-efficient, and competitive economy, which, by 2050, will have zero net greenhouse gas emissions and in which economic growth is decoupled from resource use. The EU will continue to lead international efforts and wishes to build alliances with those who share the same spirit.

Based on this proposal of the EGD, the EU must transform its industry, making it more efficient for a clean and circular economy. This requirement is to be extended not only to European companies but also to companies that export to the bloc. In this way, the same environmental standards applicable to local industries will be required of trade partners.

According to the EGD, between 1970 and 2017, the extraction of raw materials for industry tripled, and only 12% of the raw materials used by European industry came from recycled products. Currently, the European industrial model remains mostly linear, relying heavily on the extraction of natural resources. For this reason, the EGD emphasizes the need for a transition to sustainable economic activities capable of generating jobs and reducing environmental impact.

In this context, the EGD seeks to accelerate this transformation through investments that promote industrial sustainability. This change, however, also applies to exporting countries that wish to continue accessing the European market. Thus, the adaptation of Brazilian industry, and particularly of Caçador's industry, to the rules established by the EGD is essential to maintain its competitiveness and compliance with the EU's environmental requirements. From this perspective, Brazilian products exported to the EU will be subject to the same scrutiny regarding taxation as products produced within Europe.

[36] UNIÃO EUROPEIA. European Green Deal.

In June 2023, EU Regulation 2023/1115[37] was approved, "[...] on the making available on the Union market as well as the export from the Union of certain commodities and products associated with deforestation and forest degradation." This regulation demonstrates the EU's concern with deforestation across the entire planet and also seeks new forms of conservation actions and sustainable forest management, as the EU believes that previous policies have not been effective. Accordingly, under this new rule, products must meet the following requirements: local origin standards, indigenous rights, land use laws, and anti-corruption standards. The regulation entered into force on December 30, 2024. For small and micro-enterprises, the law came into effect on June 30, 2025.

It should be noted that the products affected by the rule are: (1) rubber and its derivatives, such as tires; (2) coffee; (3) cocoa in various forms and chocolate; (4) cattle, beef, and leather; (5) books and paper; (6) wood, pulp; (7) palm oil; (8) wood products (such as furniture); (9) chemicals and preparations; and (10) soybeans.

The information gathering process must contain geolocation data, with latitude and longitude coordinates to at least six digits, as well as the date and period of production. These must be presented together with verifiable data in order to prove that the commodity or manufactured product to be exported was produced in an area free of deforestation, in full compliance with the applicable local regulations.

With respect to risk assessment, the following aspects must be verified: (1) whether extraction occurred in native forests; (2) the existence of indigenous peoples in the extraction area; (3) risks associated with the origin of the product; (4) issues related to corruption; (5) falsification of documents; (6) the lack of effective enforcement of local laws and violations of human rights; and (7) the prevalence of deforestation or forest degradation in the country of production.

As for risk mitigation, in the event that a risk is identified which cannot reasonably be considered insignificant, measures may be adopted that include the request for additional information, the carrying out of further research and audits, as well as investments in the supply chain. The costs arising from risk mitigation actions may be passed on to Brazilian producers and exporters. Alternatively, importers in the European Union may choose to work with suppliers located in countries or regions considered to be of low risk.

When the product is to be exported, a due diligence declaration must be issued and sent to the EU authorities before leaving the country of origin, in order to certify that

[37] UNIÃO EUROPEIA. **Regulation (EU) 2023/1115 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 May 2023 on the making available on the Union market as well as the export from the Union of certain commodities and products associated with deforestation and forest degradation.** EUR-Lex, 2023. Disponível em: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/PT/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32023R1115. Acesso em: 04 mai. 2025. s.p.

verification was carried out prior to the acquisition of the good.

With respect to due diligence efforts and annual reports, it is essential that these be made public, including the steps adopted for information gathering. It should be emphasized that these additional costs will be unavoidable, even if the Brazilian producer fully meets the sustainability requirements and the applicable local regulations, since it will still be necessary to prove compliance through the proper due diligence process.

Failure to comply with these obligations may result in sanctions, such as the imposition of fines and restrictions on the activities of European importers. Moreover, the names of those involved and the nature of the breaches may be disclosed publicly, which could generate significant reputational impacts for the companies and individuals concerned.

Furthermore, it is important to highlight that Article 3 of Regulation (EU) 2023/1115 provides as follows:

> The commodities concerned and the relevant derived products may not be placed or made available on the market, nor exported, unless all of the following conditions are met:
> a) They are not associated with deforestation;
> b) They have been produced in compliance with the applicable legislation of the country of production; and
> c) They are covered by a due diligence declaration.

In light of the above, it becomes clear that Brazilian industry will face the challenge of adapting to the requirements established by the EGD, which aims to promote sustainability and the transition to a low-carbon economy. To continue accessing the European market, it will be indispensable for Brazilian companies—and, in our case, those in Caçador-SC—to demonstrate compliance with strict criteria related to environmental sustainability, product traceability, and the reduction of socio-environmental impacts.

This adjustment may involve investments in technology, certifications, changes in production processes, and greater transparency throughout the supply chain, especially in sensitive sectors such as agribusiness. Although such adaptation may represent additional costs in the short term, it is crucial to ensure the competitiveness of Brazilian industry in an international market that is increasingly demanding in terms of sustainability. Those who succeed in positioning themselves proactively will not only preserve their exports to the European Union but may also gain competitive advantages in a global context that increasingly values economic, social, and environmental practices carried out with responsibility and solidarity.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The research revealed that the European Green Deal (EGD), with its rigorous environmental and social requirements, exerts a direct impact on Caçador's exports, especially in the forest-based sector. The regulations established by the European Union, such as the CBAM, demand significant structural changes in local production chains, including compliance with traceability criteria, mitigation of environmental impacts, and conformity with international legislation.

The analysis highlighted that, although challenging, these requirements also offer strategic opportunities. The production model of Caçador, with its strong dependence on planted forests, already presents characteristics that can be valued in the European market. However, in order to take advantage of these benefits, it becomes indispensable to implement practices that ensure transparency in the production chain and alignment with sustainability standards, such as reducing the use of natural resources and monitoring deforestation-free areas.

One of the main considerations identified is that adaptation to the new regulations is not limited to legal compliance, but rather represents a broader strategic repositioning. Local companies, by investing in low-carbon technologies and environmental certifications, can not only meet European standards but also achieve a competitive advantage in global markets. This repositioning, however, requires support through public policies that encourage sustainable innovation and reduce the costs of transition.

In addition, the research identified that alignment with the EGD criteria requires stronger articulation among different actors. The private sector, public administrators, and small producers must work together in an integrated manner to develop efficient and economically viable solutions. This collaborative approach is essential for overcoming financial, technical, and logistical barriers that would otherwise hinder the fulfillment of sustainability goals.

Another relevant point is that the impacts of the EGD transcend economic issues, directly influencing the social and environmental dynamics of the region. The incorporation of more sustainable practices may not only protect natural resources but also create qualified jobs and foster a more resilient and innovative economy. This transition to a greener production model reinforces the need for investments in technical training and in strengthening environmental governance.

The analysis demonstrated that compliance with the EGD policies depends on a broader understanding of global dynamics in their connection to the local context. Integration into the European market is not merely an economic goal, but a strategic step toward aligning local practices with international demands for sustainability. The link between Caçador and

the European market illustrates how regional economies can be directly influenced by global geopolitical decisions.

Among the findings, it stands out that the absence of investments in traceability technologies and certifications may lead to the exclusion of companies from highly regulated markets. This realization underscores the urgency of strategic planning that considers both the costs of adaptation and the long-term benefits of achieving a sustainable position in the global market.

Finally, the research also contributed to a deeper understanding of the practical implications of global climate policies on local economies. By presenting Caçador as a case study, it became evident that sustainability, competitiveness, and innovation are interdependent, reinforcing the importance of integrating environmental and economic policies at all levels.

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HOW TO CITE

HÜLSE, Levi; GARCIA, Heloise Siqueira; BONIN, Joel Cezar. European Green Deal and the production of forest-based industries in the Caçador-SC Region. **Novos Estudos Jurídicos,** Itajaí (SC), v. 30, n. 3, p. 350-372, 2025. DOI: 10.14210/nej.v30n3.p350-372.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Acknowledgment to the Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa e Inovação do Estado de Santa Catarina – FAPESC for funding the present research, which is part of the project entitled "The European Green Deal under the Aspect of Sustainability and its Influence in the Amarp Region (a study on the impact of Europe's green restrictions on Santa Catarina society)," approved under the Public Call Notice FAPESC n. 54/2022 – Program For Science, Technology and Innovation to Support Research Groups of The Associação Catarinense das Fundações Educacionais – ACAFE, approved by FAPESC. Acknowledgments also to UNIARP and FUNIARP for their support in the research.

Recebido em: 01 de jun. de 2025.
Aprovado em: 30 de out. de 2025.