

# **MANAGEMENT OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF OCARA – CE: AN ANALYSIS ABOUT THE GREEN SEAL GRANT**

**Magda Helena de Araújo Maia**  
**MBA em Perícia, Auditoria e Gestão Ambiental**

**Natália Reis da Silva**  
**MBA em Perícia, Auditoria e Gestão Ambiental**

**Regilane Cunha Costa**  
**MBA em Perícia, Auditoria e Gestão Ambiental**

**Gustavo Aveiro Lins**  
**CEDERJ/SEE-RJ/CEDAE**

**Josimar Ribeiro de Almeida**  
**Escol Politécnica/UFRJ e Instituto de Química/UERJ**

## **ABSTRACT**

The current environmental of Brazilian cities particularly the ones in the country side of the country's northeast make evident a scene of degradation due to the immense exploitation of natural resources what has been jeopardizing the productive potential of these resources, besides having influence on the low levels of quality of life of the population. Hence, some counties have been looking for solutions so their management processes may help in some way to minimize the harms caused by the exploitation of these resources. Inside this context is this county of Ocara which has been showing a very evident scene of degradation but it was awarded with the "selo verde" (green label) for its projects and environmental policies. This fact made necessary to analyze why this county it was awarded with the green seal. To achieve this aim it was designed a project divided into 3 chapters: Chapter 01 – Concepts of management, public policies and environmental management and a presentation of the "selo verde"; Chapter 02 – Green seal concepts, historical data, methodology and requirements of evaluation and Chapter 03 – An case study is done in the county of Ocara.

**Key words:** Green Seal, Management, Environmental Policies.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Problems which disturb the big cities have generated great discussion and uncountable theses within all sectors of the human knowledge (ALMEIDA, 2002). This is not different with the municipality of Ocara; this has been presenting frames of degradation because of soil improper use, what will bring even more grave problems to environment at medium and long-term period. Ecosystems possess mechanisms

that operate to restrain the impact from stressful factors, at least in any level (ALMEIDA *et all.*, 2009). Such degradation, however, comes from problems against *caju* monoculture and the intense use of familiar agriculture through unsuitable management techniques. But, even facing this situation, the municipality was given the named Green Seal, one incentive for a good environmental management.

As seeking for better comprehension about the requisites required for municipalities being rewarded with that label, the current work proposes to accomplish one analysis of the evaluation applied methodology as well as the current situation of the environment of the municipality chosen as study object. That is, based on the comprehension of the exposed matters the current work aims to analyze the Green Seal abet in the municipality of Ocara, from confronting it with the model of natural resources management adopted.

## LITERATURE REVISION

According to BOURDIEU (1997), understanding the public policies as one agreed agenda due to individuals', groups, or classes segments' interests who fight for theirs arguments and actions legitimacy, the power which permeates these interactions consist of a practical virtuality and does not stop being itself a kind of representation of the social relations network and of measuring and controlling act.

TEIXEIRA (2002) affirms that it is important to consider some kinds of policies, so that it will be able to define the type of action to be conducted, due to their formulation and implementation, and several are the typologies which can be used like: a) structural (turned to income and employment); b) cyclical (directed to emergency situations); c) universal (focused on all citizens); d) fragmented (turned to social groups within each societal segment); e) distributive (focused on benefits distribution between social groups; f) Regulatory (directed to the rules definitions); among others.

Concerning the environmental public policies, specifically, according to BARBIERI (2007) "environmental public policy is understood as one set of objectives, guidelines and instruments of action which the public power makes available for producing desirable effects on environment."

The environmental matter has been relegated to the second place many times (ALMEIDA, 2001), that's why it has been even more relevant to promote the joint of the adjective *environmental* to the term *planning*, what has been establishing within the academic group with enough relevance in the last years, but, with low domain, because according to SANTOS (2004), there is not still one accurate definition of the term *environmental* planning, once in its explanation, the environment is interpreted regarding the human questions as much as physical and biotic. Therefore, several are the approaches and definitions received, interlinking mixing concepts. On this issue, SLOCOMBE (in SALEM, 2004) states that environmental planning "now mingles with the territorial planning itself, but is an extension of other more known sectorial planning (urban, institutional and administrative) plus environmental consideration". The same is true for environmental management, sometimes understood as planning, others as management, and other as the sum of both.

Environmental management is the process of articulation of actions from different social agents which interact within one given space aiming to guarantee the fitness of the means of exploitation of natural resources – natural, economic and social-cultural – to environment specifications, based on principles and directives previously agreed/defined (FISCHMANN; ALMEIDA, 2005).

Accomplishing the environmental management of a municipality is to promote its sustainable development, conserving the features which give it life quality and enhancing those which need to be improved. For this, it is required awareness and consciousness, managers, functionaries and all process participants capacitation, so that they will be performing their role, responsibilities and attributions (BRASIL apud HEMPEL, 2007, p.50).

Ao adotar uma gestão municipal comprometida com a manutenção da qualidade ambiental, torna-se evidente que os benefícios não se restringem apenas às melhorias ambientais, mas também sociais e econômicas. (?) O aumento dos índices de qualidade de vida dos munícipes e a redução de custos, através da eliminação dos desperdícios, com a utilização racional dos recursos naturais e a redução das multas decorrentes das ações legais, por descumprimento da legislação.

Adopting a municipal management compromised with the maintenance of environmental quality, makes evident that the benefits are not only restricted to the environmental enhances, but also social and economic (?) The growth of the index of the residents' life quality and the costs reduction, through the wastes elimination, with the rational use of the natural resources and the reduction of the fines resulted from legal actions, due to law noncompliance. Besides, municipalities also considerably have the serious environmental accidents probability reduced, bringing smaller environmental passives, and acquire one greater facility on obtaining resources and financial support (HARRINGTON, H. J; KNIGHT, A.; 2001).

Some mechanisms to incentive the adoption of one environmentally responsible municipal management, like the creation of Ecological *ICMS* and the Green Municipality Seal Program were developed in the State of Ceará. The Ecological *ICMS* is a legal instrument introduced by some states in the rules for calculating the *ICMS* share with the municipalities to stimulate investments, actions and programs of the environmental area. The idea birthed Paraná, coming from an alliance between the State Public Power and the municipalities.

In accordance with the Manager Committee, the Green Municipality Seal Program – GMSP, regulated by the Decrees nº 27.073 and nº 27.074 of 2003, expects to contribute for the effective implementation of the environmental public policies within the local ambience, as well as the internalization of the environmental matters in programs, plans and projects which aim the cultural, social, economic, political and ecological development of the *cearenses* municipalities. The Green Municipality Seal is a program of public environmental certification of annual character, which identifies the *cearenses* municipalities which are in accordance with the legislation for conservation and sustainable use of the natural resources and that has as basic principle to incentive the municipalities for implementing the environmental public policies, aiming the sustainability and population life quality. This program intends, besides boosting the municipalities to implement environmental policies, serving as a channel through which the societal participation expectation will flow by her needs and priorities establishments.

MENDONÇA (2002) already stated that nature and society possess development and evolution according to distinct laws. However, conciliation between economic

growth and sustainable development is an indispensable action to formulate public policies which aim to encourage sustainable forms of development.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The evaluation process is guaranteed by the Manager Committee of the Green Municipality Seal that, with the Technical Committee, which evaluate the municipalities and certify those that fill a minimum of requirements to assure the sustainable development.

In its wholeness, the process of certification involves three systems of evaluation: a) evaluation of environmental management; b) evaluation of environmental performance; and c) evaluation of environmental mobilization.

In the evaluation of environmental management, the municipal initiatives for implementing the Environment policies, through one survey sent to *COMDEMA* will be evaluated. The survey is focused on collecting information within the municipalities' ambience, that, by their proposal were subscribed in the GREEN SEAL MUNICIPALITY PROGRAM.

In the evaluation of environmental performance, the municipality performance considering its Public Health, Environmental Education and Infrastructure (Basic Sanitation) and Solid Residues will be evaluated, where those will be provided to the Technical Committee by the proper institutions like: Secretary of health, Secretary of education, Secretary of infrastructure, among others.

And finally, the evaluation of environmental mobilization, which will evaluate the forms and levels of civil society organization: counsels, associations, public audiences, petitions, plebiscite to shared actions. The flow chart below depicts the construction of the Methodological process of the Green Seal Municipality Program.

Along the evaluation process, the Technical Committee analyses the implementation of the projects subscribed by prefectures, which are agreeing with the pre-established criteria by the Manager Committee. For the correct filling of surveys, the answers will be validated through documentation, provided by Counsel and/or Prefecture, and local analysis, accomplished by the Technical Committee. For

making comprehension easier, in the end of the 45 questions, there is an alphabetical order glossary, with the used environmental technical terms.

The program analyzes the municipalities in their diverse stages of environmental policy development. In the evaluation of environmental management, items like environmental legislation, management instruments, infrastructure, health, biodiversity and environmental education are verified. Otherwise, in the evaluation of environmental mobilization, the program considers the social participation in the decisions referring to environment and sustainable development of the municipality, through the existence of forums like the *Conselhos Municipais de Defesa do Meio Ambiente (Comdemas)* and public audiences. For the evaluation of environmental performance, the indicators considered obtained by the city are education, health, biodiversity, infrastructure and solid residues.

The process of certification of the Green Municipality Seal Program will evaluate the following requirements:

**Sewage** – the Green Municipality demands that the municipalities have sewage treatment.

**Garbage** – the Project requires the implantation of the policy for solid residues management, promoting the selective collection and recycling, and landfill permitted by authorized body, meeting all environmental legislation.

**Riparian Recovering** – riparian forests are those which protect rivers and streams margins. The document requires that the municipality take part in state programs for those areas coverage. Seedlings are donated by prefecture. Replanting will avoid erosion along the margins. Through the program, technicians analyze the area and chose the specie most suitable for planting.

**Urban afforestation** – the protocol requires that the municipality implements a program of urban afforestation and green areas maintenance. Public roads green coverage with native natives and fruits species, according to municipal land use and occupation.

**Environmental Education** - other requirement is the establishment of a program of environmental education for public schools. Prefecture must institute the Environmental Education at the municipal schools, as well as State and private ones. It must also offer awareness programs that stimulate community's interest for environment.

**Sustainable House** - the protocol requires the definition of a program for reducing waste of water, energy and wood reuse.

**Water Use** – also takes part of the proposal for implanting a municipal program against water waste.

**Air Pollution** – another requirement is to support the State Government in the program of atmospheric pollution and greenhouse gases control.

**Environmental Structure** – the project requires the creation of a proper body related to the municipal administration which is responsible for the environmental protection policy. In 1983, under the Law 993/83, of 25<sup>th</sup> of January, the Municipal Secretary for Environment was created. Nowadays, it has been adapted to the new norms of environmental license and supervision, by contracting specialists on agronomy and biology.

**Environmental Counsel** – the protocol demands the creation under law, of the Environmental Counsel. The Municipal Counsel for Environment Defense must count with representatives of the public and civil society with advisory and deliberative profile.

In accordance with the methodology of evaluation of the Green Municipality Seal Program, the method used is to analyze the municipality through three evaluations (environmental management, environmental mobilization and environmental performance) was the “Forest Service of the United States Agriculture Development” by the “Range Project Effectiveness Procedure Handbook”, 1986, modified, applied to transform the qualitative into quantitative variables through numerical values and weights, reaching the significance index of the several variables of each type of environmental evaluation (HEMPEL, W. B., 2007).

Each variable analyzed in any one of the three forms of evaluation receives a grade of significance comprehended in the interval 0 to 3, including how the level of compatibility and the compromise of the variables within the process construction reflected; each variable receives a weight, also expressed in the interval of 0 to 3, that represents its importance when comparing with the other variables (CABRAL, 2005).

The municipal management index (MMI) resulted from each one of the three evaluations are obtained from the calculation of weighted average product of

significance by the weight of each variable. For each evaluation index, the Technical Committee establishes one minimum limit, named cutting note.

The municipality that is below the minimum limit is unclassified. In 2004, the minimum limit considered by the Technical Committee was 1,1. But, in 2005 and 2006, the minimum value considered was 1,2.

According to CABRAL (2005), the method used for the evaluations of the Green Seal Municipality Program is dynamics, due to be one continuous process, and is passive of revising in its significances and weights yearly, because presupposes constant updating of its data and social, cultural, economic, political and ecological information.

The final evaluation of the municipality is done through the total sum of the three evaluations (environmental management, performance and mobilization), being attributed one specific weight to each evaluation: Environmental Management with weight 5; Environmental Performance with weight 3; and Environmental Mobilization with weight 2 (HEMPEL,2007).

For being certified, the municipality will have to obtain the general punctuation of 5, having to obtain, at least, 3 points in the evaluation of management, 1 point in the evaluation of performance and 1 point in the evaluation of mobilization, that is, the municipality cannot have 0 as a result of any of the evaluations. The classified municipalities will be certified according to the following categories: Category A – the municipality is totally committed with the environmental sustainability; Category B – the municipality is in one intermediate stage with the environmental stage; and Category C – the municipality has a low compromise with the environmental sustainability.

The Environmental Sensitivity Award will be granted to the municipality which obtains major index in the three spheres of evaluation: Environmental Management; Environmental Performance; and Environmental Mobilization.

## **FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The current stage of an ambience is not the products of independent individual impacts, disconnected from past and future. Otherwise, it is a consequence of



actions and effects combined, that ended determining the situation of conservation or degradation observed in the studied period.

Regarding the Environmental Management, 136 items were evaluated, subdivided within the themes: Environmental Legislation Management Instruments, Infrastructure, Public Health, Biodiversity and Environmental Education. From the themes evaluation, it is clear the importance the municipality shows for environment subject, with actions, programs and projects, all of them embracing the Program themes, some being implanted and others already in full development.

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