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Guide for the dismantling of Brazilian environmental policy

Mariana Gutierrez Arteiro da Paz ^I
Roberto Donato da Silva Júnior ^{II}
Pedro Roberto Jacobi ^{III}

Zenaida Lauda-Rodriguez ^{IV}
Beatriz Milz ^V

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Editorial

^I Editora Adjunta da Revista Ambiente & Sociedade. Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas Espaciais (INPE), São José dos Campos, SP, Brasil.

^{II} Editor Adjunto da Revista Ambiente & Sociedade. Instituto de Filosofia e Ciências Humanas da Universidade Estadual de Campinas (UNICAMP), Campinas, SP, Brasil

^{III} Editor-Chefe da Revista Ambiente & Sociedade. Instituto de Energia e Ambiente, Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, SP, Brasil.

^{IV} Integrante da Secretaria Executiva Editorial da Revista Ambiente & Sociedade. Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, SP, Brasil.

^V Integrante da Secretaria Executiva Editorial da Revista Ambiente & Sociedade. Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, SP, Brasil.

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At the beginning of this editorial, the country was approaching the Brazilian general elections, in which the next president of the republic would be elected. Once again, the environmental theme has been the agenda in formal and daily debates. However, at least one of the candidates has repeatedly posed the environmental agenda in a distorted way. Unlike criticisms of other governments, which might not fulfill all their plans for Brazilian environmental policy, president Bolsonaro has always made his position on the environmental agenda very clear.

The federal administration of Brazil still led by the Bolsonaro government has maintained an aversion to environmental and climate issues since its electoral campaign, always focusing on the discourse of placing environmental protection as an obstacle to the country's economic growth and as an externality to the existing means of production. Since the elections, president Bolsonaro has made statements with denialist content concerning climate issues, even defending the extinction of the Ministry of the Environment (MMA) and of government agencies linked to environmental protection, in addition to the country's withdrawal from the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the cut of research funds linked to the climate issue.

Based on a history of behaviors that are declared to be averse to sociobiodiversity, already as a federal deputy, president Bolsonaro stood out in the 2018 election campaign for a series of speeches with attacks on governmental and non-governmental agencies dedicated to socio-environmental issues, xenophobic statements concerning indigenous peoples and quilombolas, as well as preaching denialism in the face of environmental changes, especially climate change. Phrases such as “in my government, I will not add an inch to indigenous lands,” “I went to a quilombo, and the skinniest weighed seven *arrobas*¹” and “we are going to end IBAMA's² environmental Shiites” sought to build an alliance with economic, social and political sectors more accustomed to the practices of the destruction of forests, water sources, and oceans.

Very consistent with his electoral campaign, the president resisted nominating a ministry for the environment, and when he did, he nominated an actor of dubious nature to assume the ministry, which was evident throughout his administration, which lasted until June 2021. Due to numerous scandals, which will be highlighted in this text, he was replaced by a colleague after much pressure from the media and society, with the consequences of this more than the strategic and efficient management of dismantling Brazilian environmental policy.

The dismantling of environmental policies and scientific denialism has been the symbol of the Bolsonaro government, which begins a movement of setbacks in Brazilian environmental policy through changing federal environmental laws. The dismantling actions were calculated and gained strength with the greatest of all strategies of this government in all areas: the “false controversies,” in which a group of anti-environmental activists articulated to promote doubts about the facts based on science, in particular

1 - Arroba is a unit of measurement used to refer to cattle. One arroba is equivalent to 15kg. In the mentioned speech, Bolsonaro was referring to people living in the Quilombo.

2 - IBAMA is the Brazilian Institute of the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources.

about deforestation.

The materialization of the dismantling begins with a destructuring through the demobilization of executing institutions of the National Environmental Policy, such as the Brazilian Institute for the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources (Ibama) and the Chico Mendes Institute for the Conservation of Biodiversity (ICMbio). These two bodies had a real enemy in the role of the government. In addition to the loss of autonomy and financial and personnel resources, they had a situation of insecurity and not only the lack of protection but also the recrimination of their actions, even if provided for by law. As actions to strengthen this weakening of the two institutions, the Brazilian Environmental Service was transferred from the Ministry of the Environment to the Ministry of Supply and Agriculture, with historical opposition to the environmental sector. In addition, there was an effort by the government to grant pardons for many environmental crimes through the creation of the “conciliation nucleus,” which, in addition to easing and reducing the fines for such crimes, encouraged criminals to commit more harmful actions to the environment.

Along with the dismantling of Funai (National Indian Foundation)³, the weakening of Ibama and the “false controversies” about the data provided by the Deter system of the National Institute for Space Research (Inpe), which provided data on areas deforested since 2004, had repercussions on measures ranging from the political dismissal of the director of Inpe to catastrophic socio-ecological consequences that are still ongoing, such as deforestation, the death of many activists such as Dom Phillips and Bruno Pereira, the explosion of mining and the death of environmental leadership.

The entire Bolsonaro government went through several periods of fires in Brazilian biomes, mainly in the Pantanal and Amazon. Bolsonaro has come under heavy criticism at the national and international levels after the fires were linked to rising rates of deforestation and images that revealed the intensity of damage to the ecosystem, biodiversity, and communities living in the Amazon region. Due to the fires, in 2020, the Brazilian Pantanal lost about 30% of its extension, around 4.5 million hectares. The government’s slow response to the increase in fires in the Amazon is a result of the Bolsonaro government’s environmental dismantling, which has reduced budgets and inspections in the region.

Bolsonaro’s political agenda favored predatory agribusiness sectors, disregarding sustainable models of agricultural production that could be leveraged and modes of production that exploit nature, fighting head-on and trying, at all costs, to weaken the environmental policies instituted in Brazil. With denialist arguments, science was put in check, with guiding decisions based exclusively on the search for development through predatory economic models that degrade the environment. The role of environmental protection instruments built over decades has shrunk, putting biodiversity, the culture of native people, climate balance, and the country’s water security at risk.

Regarding climate change, the discourse of Bolsonaro’s government, Bolsonaro,

3 - FUNAI is a Brazilian governmental protection agency for the interests and culture of the native people from Brazil.

and his allies are loaded with scientific denialism and is opposed to cooperation to face the climate emergency. The country has reduced its participation in the Conferences of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COPs), reducing its performance and protagonism in the international scenario.

The Brazilian setback in environmental policies limits the field of action of the multiple actors involved in biodiversity protection and conservation initiatives. It also creates a climate of economic and diplomatic insecurity since it exposes the Bolsonaro government's lack of interest in complying with international agreements regarding climate, environment, and indigenous rights. From a historical point of view, the government's catastrophic action marks a turning point in building Brazilian environmental governance, which began in the 1970s and intensified between the 1990s and 2000s. In this sense, the solutions that are on the horizon must involve facing the challenges through articulations capable of strengthening production and governance arrangements, building new models of action not yet contemplated in the framework of the current understanding of the climate emergency, in addition to resuming the fundamental presence of civil society in deliberative spaces.

Even with the catastrophic result, perceived by society and guided by various media and the Federal Supreme Court, which has manifested itself in specific decrees, president Bolsonaro was not intimidated and kept his narrative. In addition, there was the anti-democratic movement which was not the object of this editorial but was notorious by the various agents of society. Therefore, it has never been more important to make a coalition to elect the strongest candidate opposed to Bolsonaro in the elections as it was now. For democracy, for Brazilians with all their diversity, for public health and the environment in all its dimensions.

With this necessary and urgent reflection, and with the objective of maintaining the production of knowledge as a fundamental pillar for the development of just and sustainable societies, **Ambiente & Sociedade** presents the **Featured theme 2022: Contemporaneity of environmental policies in the XXIst century: In the breakdown of the present and future perspectives.**

In this release, we present the article: **The Brazilian National Solid Waste Policy: perspectives of the waste pickers' cooperative networks**, by the authors *Viviane Pisano, Jacques Demajorovic* and *Gina Rizpah Besen*, which discusses how this new organizational arrangement can contribute to the expected advances of the National Solid Waste Policy in Brazil (PNRS). The results show the importance of public policies and the extent of partnerships between the waste pickers' cooperative networks. An update of the PNRS to the new dynamics of the recycling market can contribute to overcoming the structural challenges faced.

Next, we also present the latest deliveries from our **Original Articles**. In this last delivery, in the article: **Ruptures from the cattle policy: An analysis according to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)**, the authors *Lígia Amoroso Galbiati, Axel Bastián Poque González, Nathalia Moreira dos Santos, Roberto Hoffmann Palmieri* and *Evelin Ribeiro Rodrigues* explored the gender axes (SDG 5), Energy (SDG 7), Solid Waste (SDG 12) and

Terrestrial Life (SDG 15) of current Brazilian environmental governance. They found that there are cracks from 2019 onwards at the federal level, with a discontinuity in several policies, but at the territorial levels there are historical trends of socio-environmental injustices that worsen in the face of the COVID-19 crisis.

The authors *Andrés Burgos* and *Frédéric Mertens*, applied social network analysis to map the collaborative network between the actors involved in the governance of a mosaic of protected areas in Brazil and test whether the network presented relational patterns favorable to good governance. The network is dense and diverse, containing a variety of actors and collaboration arrangements. The analysis also identified some risks and challenges that provide useful information to improve governance effectiveness. In the article: **Collaborative governance networks: exploring governance success in large-scale conservation.**

In the article: **The importance of local people and institutional arrangements for forest concessions in Brazil**, authors *Roberto Hoffmann Palmieri* and *Mateus Bastistella* analyzed Brazil's experience with forest concessions for private companies since the enactment of the Public Forest Management Law (LGFP), law 11,284/2006, from the perspective of local institutional arrangements. They observe that the challenge of guaranteeing rights to local populations has generated legal uncertainty for the actors involved, compromising the continuity of management of forests already granted and new concession processes.

In the article: **Transforming peri-urban territories through payment for ecosystem services networks in Southern Brazil**, authors *Niklas Werner Weins*, *Christian Luiz da Silva*, *Tatiana Maria Cecy Gadda* and *Leila da Costa Ferreira* documented the configurations of actors in the periurban environment of a water payment for environmental services (PSA) of Curitiba and carried out a Social Network Analysis (SNA). The analysis points to the advantages of access by powerful urban actors to promote the commoditization of nature through PSA, without the participation of actors, increasing inequalities in peri-urban territories.

The authors *Anita Valente da Costa*, *Miraira Manfroi* and *Rafael Chiaravaloti*, in the article **The impact of Protected Areas on the Well-being of Pantaneiro Riverine Communities**, through interviews based on the concepts of freedom, security, health and social relations, evaluated the impact of the creation of protected areas in the Pantanal in two riverside communities in the region. Both communities suffered negative impacts on their well-being. However, experiences on the impact are expressed in different ways, compatible with the history, type of management and category of each protected area.

Using environmental perception as a research strategy, the authors *Joana Rita Galvão* and *Carla Denise Tedesco* showed in the local community, where a Conservation Unit (UC) was implemented, that despite perceiving the Forest as important for biodiversity and quality of life, they coexist with conflicting situations, related to their exclusion in the planning of activities at the UC, as well as how inspections are carried out to prevent the planting of transgenics in the surroundings. In the article: **Contributions of environmental perception to sustainability in the buffer zone of a protected area.**

The authors *Caroline Krüger, Marina Kolland Dantas, Marco Antonio Catussi Paschoalotto, André Cavalcante da Silva Batalhão, Cláudia Souza Passador and Adriana Cristina Ferreira Caldana*, in the article: **The Interconnections between Environment and Health in Cross-border Regions: Contributions to Public Policies**, analyzed the health and environment issues in the municipalities of the border area and demonstrate the lack of sectoral public policies, especially for the environment and health issues in the activities of border municipal governments, with discussions that incorporate intersectoriality in planning even more scarce.

The authors *Maria Cecilia Rosinski Lima Gomes, Leonardo Capeleto de Andrade, Ana Claudeise Silva do Nascimento, João Paulo Borges Pedro and Cesar Rossas Mota Filho*, in the article: **Conditions of use and levels of household access to water in rural communities in the Amazon**, analyzed the conditions of domestic use of water in households in floodable and non-floodable areas. They identified that 71% of the population has basic access to water, with rainwater harvesting and home treatment with hypochlorite. To improve access, investing in improving water capture and using complementary sources is necessary.

Based on authors such as Enrique Dussel, Boaventura Sousa Santos and Enrique Leff, authors *Charleston Silva de Souza and Fernanda Carneiro Romagnoli* discuss how the experiences of university students from different backgrounds can contribute to scientific enrichment and a decolonial science. They show that the knowledge framework of these students has been underused, which is reflected in its devaluation in the academic environment. In the article: **University, traditional knowledge and possibilities of decolonial scientific production**.

The authors *Jacqueline Pereira da Silva and Flávio Morgado*, in the article: **Discharge of in-disuse medications by Itapetininga population, São Paulo State, Brazil**, showed that, of the 182 individuals surveyed, only 2.7% disposed of medicines correctly. 77% of the conducts could cause environmental damage. Also, 65% of respondents kept unused medications for later use and 10% of the respondents donated them, behaviors considered inappropriate due to possible self-medication problems. It is concluded that there is a need for environmental and health education for the population and health professionals.

In the article: **Valuation of the air quality regulation ecosystem service: impacts from a Brazilian Northeast industrial complex**, the authors *Amanda Nunes Ribeiro, Bruna Fatiche Pavani, Aline Canhoto Gonçalves Ribeiro, Pablo Ricardo Belosevich Sosa, Paulo Antônio de Almeida Sinisgalli and Wilson Cabral de Sousa Júnior* analyzed the economic impact of NO₂ and PM₁₀ emissions from an industrial complex. The activities developed at CIPP result in an increase of US\$ 720 thousand per year in health expenditures for the region. These costs represent a 70% increase in costs related to the diseases analyzed.

Seeking to highlight the contribution of urban gardens to the promotion of Food and Nutrition Security, the authors *Manuela Alves da Cunha and Ryzia de Cassia Vieira Cardoso* carried out a descriptive study with data collection and showed that the gardens promote work and income for families and contribute to food security. In addition to producing fresh vegetables, the activity contributes to the balance of ecosystems. The

findings point to the need for gardens to be included in the formulation of public policies. In the article: **Urban gardens in promoting Food and Nutrition Security and sustainable development in Salvador, Brazil.**

Authors *Victor Gaspar Filho and Thauan Santos*, in the article: **Energy Security Transition: clean energy, critical minerals, and new dependencies**, carried out a documental research and quantitative analysis of data from the United States Geological Survey (USGS). They also analyzed documents from the energy and mineral sectors written in the time frame from 2000 to 2020. They conclude that the transition towards less polluting energy matrices can result in the creation of new dependencies and that access to non-energy resources is a condition for the success of the process of energy transition.

Using photographic images about the problem of urban solid waste production and its disposal in mangrove areas, in the article: **Solid Waste in the Context of Environmental Education, the Mangrove Ecosystem, and Photography**, the authors *Cristina Maria Dacach Fernandez Marchi, Patrícia Carla Barbosa Pimentel and Marcia Cristina Nascimento* aimed to diagnose necessary Environmental Education actions for the care and conservation of ecosystems. They conclude that photography, as a means of diagnosis, allowed another look at environmental issues.

The authors *Flávio Amaral Oliveira, Cleci Grzebieluckas and Raimundo Nonato Cunha de França*, in the article: **Ecological ICMS⁴ versus ICMS Agricultural production: approach on the opportunity cost method**, compared the public revenue of the ecological ICMS generated by Indigenous Lands with the ICMS of the agricultural production in Tangará da Serra – MT. The ecological ICMS proved to be an important instrument of environmental policy and a source of municipal public revenue with a better performance than the agricultural ICMS, still insufficient to financially compensate the Municipality for the restriction of economic activity.

In the article: **Sustainability assessment in Colombian educational institutions: Case studies**, authors *Danilo Tovar Mora, María de Fátima Poza Vilches and Yolanda Ladino Ospina* evaluated the processes and impacts of including sustainability in the curriculum of three educational institutions in Colombia. The results showed different environmental pedagogical models in the three institutions due to their approaches, strategy, and processes. However, it is observed that most teachers agree with the institution's preferences for approaching education for sustainability.

The authors *Vanessa Peixoto Giacón, Roberta Averna Valente and Eliana Cardoso Leite*, in the article: **Association between urbanization and the biotic integrity of urban forest remnants** analyzed the quality of native forest fragments close to urban areas. At the landscape scale, the data showed a relationship between the size of the urban forest fragment and its biotic integrity and an inversely proportional relationship between integrity and perimeter/area ratio. At the fragment scale, it was demonstrated that there is a relationship between the quality of urban forest fragments and proximity to urbanization.

Using semi-structured questionnaires and identifying plant species, the authors *Ana*

4 - Tax on Transaction of Goods and Transport and Communication Services (ICMS).

Paula Moura and Alan Martins de Oliveira, in the article: **Ethnobotany in urban home gardens in Mossoró-RN**, carried out an ethnobotanical survey in urban backyards. Plants were found in all sampled residences, with 18 species being cataloged for different purposes. Urban backyards have great potential for botanical cultivation, and the expansion of this possibility could bring many benefits from the point of view of food and environmental security and even expand the possibilities of generating family income.

Finally, closing this issue, the article: **Current status, attractions, and obstacles for ecotourism in protected areas of Amapá, Brazil**, by the authors *Lanna Maissa Lemos Dantas de Almeida, Ana Gabriela da Cruz Fontoura, Ivan Machado de Vasconcelos, Dagui-nete Maria Chaves Brito and Renato Richard Hilário*, sought to diagnose the situation of ecotourism in the conservation units (UC) of Amapá. It was evidenced that ecotourism occurs, but apparently at levels below potential. Most of the obstacles are related to a lack of investment by the government. The high costs associated with transport are also a major constraint.

This concludes **Volume 25 of Journal Ambiente & Sociedade**. We thank all our editorial team, reviewers, authors, and readers, with special mention to those outside Brazil, for their constant support of our work. At the time of closing this editorial, Brazil democratically elected the new President of the Republic, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, signaling the popular will to change the course of this country. Despite the challenges ahead, especially in the context of polarization, we renew our commitment to the dissemination and development of science with the reborn hope of resuming a democratic environmental policy. We hope that Lula's government strengthens actions for the sustainability of all biomes, promotes a healthy environment for all citizens with social justice, resumes protagonism and active participation in climate negotiations, and promotes the delimitation of the territories of native peoples.

We wish you all a good read!

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Mariana Gutierrez Arteiro da Paz

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✉ pazmga@gmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3055-6184>

Roberto Donato da Silva Júnior

✉ roberto.junior@fca.unicamp.br

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9101-7048>

Pedro Roberto Jacobi

✉ prjacobi@gmail.com

ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-6143-3019>

Zenaida Lauda-Rodriguez

✉ zeni.lauda.rodriguez@gmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2432-0255>

Beatriz Milz

✉ beatriz.milz@usp.br

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3064-4486>