

**THREATS TO THE
BRAZILIAN ENVIRONMENT
AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY**

WORKSHOP REPORT

THREATS TO THE BRAZILIAN ENVIRONMENT
AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

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SUBMITTED BY:

THOMAS J TREBAT, COLUMBIA GLOBAL CENTRE S | RIO DE JANEIRO
LAURA NORA, COLUMBIA GLOBAL CENTRE S | RIO DE JANEIRO
IN A CALDWELL, ELISABETH HUBER, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

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PARTICIPANTS IN THE CONFERENCE

Andrew Orta - 'LUHFWRU RI WKH &HQWHU IRU /DWLQ \$PHULFDQ DQG &DULEEHHQ 6WXGL

Breno Pietracci - (FRQRPLVW DW (QYLURQPHQWDO 'HIHQVH)XQG

Daniel Wilkinson \$FWLQJ 'LUHFWRU (QYLURQPHQW DQG +XPDQ 5LJKWV
DW +XPDQ 5LJKWV :DWFK

David Casuto - 'LUHFWRU %UDJLO \$PHULFDQ ,QVWLWXWH IRU /DZ DQG (QYLURQPHQW

Douglas Daly \$GMXQFW 3URIHVVRU DW <DOH 6FKRRO RI)RUHVWU\ (QYLURQPHQWDO

Flavia da Costa Viana -XGJH LQ WKH 6WDWH RI 3DUDQ< %UDVLO

abriel de Jesus Wedy)HGHUDO -XGJH

João Paulo Braga 'LUHFWRU DW 0LQDV *HUDLV ,QYHVWPHQW DQG 7UDGH 3URPRWLRQ \$

Maria Antonia Tigre 'HSXW\ 5HJLRQDO 'LUHFWRU IRU /DWLQ \$PHULFD DW *OREDO 1HWZ
+XPDQ 5LJKWV DQG WKH (QYLURQPHQW *1+5(

Mariana Pargendler 3URIHVVRU DW)*9 'RFWRU DQG 0DVWHU RI /DZ
DW <DOH /DZ 6FKRRO

Michael errard \$QGUHZ 6DELQ 3URIHVVRU RI 3URIHVVLRQDO 3UDFWLFH
DW &ROXPELD /DZ 6FKRRO

Natalie Unterstell - 3ROLF\)XWXUH ,QQRYDWLRQ 6XVWDLQDELOLW\

Ricardo M. O. alvão - %UDJLOLDQ SK\VLFLVW DQG HQJLQHUU IRUPHUO\ WKH 'LUHFWRU
,QVWLWXWH IRU 6SDFH 5HVHDFK

Ro ulo Sa paio - 'RFWRU DQG 0DVWHU LQ (QYLURQPHQWDO /DZ
DW 3DFH 8QLYHUVLW\ 6FKRRO RI /DZ

Ruth S. DeFries - 3URIHVVRU RI HFRORJ\ DQG VXVWDLQDEOH GHYHORSPHQW DW &ROXPE

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First Morning Session: Legal Perspectives

David Cassut summarized the environmental devastation that we are facing in the United States. He noted that the Trump administration has rolled back 53 environmental rules and is in the process of rolling back 32 more. Pollution is up 14 percent since President Trump took office. One study coming out of Harvard notes that, under the most conservative estimates, the most aggressive rules will likely cost the lives of 80,000 U.S. residents per decade and lead to respiratory problems for more than one million U.S. residents. This does not even deal with the horrific impacts of climate change.

In Brazil, President Bolsonaro, before becoming President, was personally fined for violating environmental regulations. He dismissed the idea of setting aside federal lands for native peoples, arguing that such lands were an obstacle to economic growth and promised to open them up to environmental exploitation. As of July 2019, the Amazon has lost more than 1,330 sq. miles of forest cover since President Bolsonaro took office. That is a 39 percent increase over the same period prior. He has ignored the data on deforestation compiled by his own government. He called the loss of the Amazon a "disaster" and has requested billions of dollars of international aid to fight the fires in the Amazon and claimed that the fires were set by pro-conservation NGOs in order to undermine him personally.

everybody, regardless of their political orientation. Today, media outlets have been segregated

President Trump filled his cabinet with people who are skeptical of climate science. EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt, Attorney General of Oklahoma suing EPA to try to cut back on regulations. Mr. Pruitt has been

replaced by Andrew Wheeler, who is a former coal industry lobbyist. The Secretary of the Interior was Ryan Zinke, a Congressman, who was also a climate denier. He has been replaced by David Bernhardt, who was an oil and gas industry lobbyist. Rick Perry, former governor of Texas, was the Secretary of Energy. The nominee to replace Mr. Perry is Dan

Professor Gerrard listed six central actors that have been pushing back against the Trump administration:

- i. civil society;
- ii. the courts;
- iii. the media;
- iv. subnational governments;
- v. the private sector; and
- vi. the scientific community.

Daniel Wilkinson presented findings of a report that Human Rights Watch released in 2019. The report found that the Brazilian government has been covering up the extent of deforestation and the impact of fires on the environment and human rights.

The Brazilian government has been covering up the extent of deforestation and the impact of fires on the environment and human rights. The Environment Minister stated that the fires had nothing to do with deforestation, but were caused by dry weather. Human Rights Watch assembled satellite images of one of the regions studied for the report, the State of Mato Grosso do Sul, and found that the fires are happening where the rainforest has been cleared. You do not have forest fires in the rainforest.

With respect to the Report, the team in Brazil spent almost 1.5 years in Brazil and interviewed more than 170 people. About one half of the interviewees were in government agencies, and the other half were in civil society. The Report documents 28 killings of forest defenders.

Over the last 6 or 7 years, the indigenous people in the rainforest have organized what they call "councils" because authorities are not doing their job.

The consequences of the failure to protect the rainforest extend far beyond the rainforest and beyond the borders of Brazil. It is the largest tropical rainforest in the world and an important

carbon sink. In 2009, Brazil committed to reducing deforestation to 4,000 sq. km per year by

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development and environmental protection in the Amazon. In September 2019, countries in the region came together to sign the Letícia Accord to protect the Amazon.

However, the issue of sovereignty still remains. Perhaps it is time to ~~re~~ ^{re}visit the concept of sovereignty in light of the limitations of Principle 2 of the Rio Declaration. The sovereignty over natural resources is not absolute, but rather limited by the responsibility of States not to damage the environment (which is happening ~~ow~~ ^{ow} with the fires in Amazonia).

Following the first session in the morning on legal issues, ~~attention~~ ^{attention} the second session turned to perspectives from the scientific community.

Breno Pietraccian economist from the Environmental Defenders ~~Fund~~ ^{Fund}

gives rise to the prospect of substantial potentially legal deforestation in the years to come.

In the state of Mato Grosso, for example, there are approximately 7.3 million hectares of excess legal reserves. EDF developed an econometric model that forecasts that, out of this total, around 1.4 million hectares are at risk of deforestation by 2030, potentially without violating the Forest Code and, as a result, cannot be addressed by law enforcement.

As a solution, IPAM (Institute for Amazon Research), WHRC (Woods Hole Research Center) and EDF propos

Brazil also has globally recognized scientists working in this field. Professor Nobre of INPE, distinguished by virtue of his pioneering efforts in the understanding and protection of the

Amazon. Another INPE scientist, Dr. Antonio Moura, has also received global recognition for his work in meteorology and climatology, including the Directorship of the International Research Institute for Climate and Society at Columbia University from 1996 to 2002.

With that, Dr. Galvão turned to his main topic: how the

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scientists means the annihilation of contemporary German science, then we shall do without

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We can think as well about developing a programmatic set of steps and operationalizing those by having different institutions from the collaborating group steward additional work. We

economy with obvious potential for damage to the environment. This is the wrong kind of signal to be sending.

For years, Brazil was a leader in environmental policies and its government was able to show that it could mitigate conflicts between economic development and environmental protection. One of the actions implemented was the creation of the Amazon Fund. With the support of Norway and Germany, Brazil was able to leverage more than \$1 billion in REDD investments. The Fund has worked admirably well and with considerable transparency. It is ironic, therefore, that Brazil's current Minister of the Environment has cast doubt on the future of the Fund and created a political crisis with its funders.

So, how should Brazil go about attracting new funds to protect the Amazon?

First, it is necessary for Brazil to make clear how much the funding gap really is for the protection of the Amazon region.

Second, discussion must revolve around the types of funds that are needed to fill this gap, along with new instruments, such as carbon taxation, capable of generating more funding.

Third, a concerted effort is required to bring on board the broader international financial system, including private investment funds.

Fourth, Brazil needs its own version of the Green New Deal, one that is not just energy and other infrastructure, but forest protection as well.

Natalie Untersell

(Indigenous People Protection Agency). This movement was stopped through Congressional action.

The new role of the Brazilian Congress adds a new dynamic. The Congress used to be a space that no one wanted to go in order to discuss environmental issues. Now, even with the presence of the pro-agriculture block, the Congress is holding the line on key issues, e.g., allowing mining in indigenous areas which Congress will approve.

There are also new coalitions being formed in the Congress by politicians who previously were not familiar with environmental issues. These, too, are creating a new middle ground to protect the legislation. President of the House of Deputies Rodrigo Maia deserves credit for erecting this legislative barrier in Congress.

Despite these reactions from the Congress and from civil society, the present stressful times could be just the beginning of the worst part of the story. There is much more to come and this is related to how the economic expectations are also changing in the environment in Brazil.

also under attack. There is a deterioration of the civic space. I think that is where the US and Brazil, both academia and civil society, should try to come together. How can we mutually

Ruth S. DeFries (a time of early in the 2000s of strong scientific collaboration between the U.S and Brazilian governments. During that time, she worked with Professor Carlos Nobre and with INPE on the deforestation warning monitor.

The concrete result of this collaborative endeavor is there to see a dramatic reduction in deforestation which made (c)10312 (i)12.9defo whi.004 ()-1004 (c)10T0 1.46

In order to address the problem what we need is focus; we need to create an interdisciplinary and international unit because all of the topics that were discussed in this Workshop are part of a larger collective problem. We cannot solve a collective action problem without joint effort.

The present gathering at Columbia is a great first step, bringing scholars and specialists from different fields together. The challenges faced by the United States and Brazil are similar, but they vary on a micro level. We need to work from the micro to the macro. If we can expand the scope of gathering like this one, we can form an intellectual and international collective that can speak with the power of many voices saying the same thing.

Ricardo Galvão commented on global pressures on Brazil to change its environmental policies. It need not impinge upon the issue of Brazil's sovereignty.

To preserve the forest, it is essential to have models of economic development based on the biodiversity of the Amazon. In that sense, many countries can work together with Brazil. Some examples can be found, for example, in the supply chain for açai. Another example is that of

for the sustainable production of palm oil in the State of Pará.

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Douglas Daly commented on the tipping point of the Amazon. Nobody knows what the tipping point is, but everybody agrees that there is a minimum forest cover below which it will not be

