



# Climate and International Strategy

## New Paths for Brazil

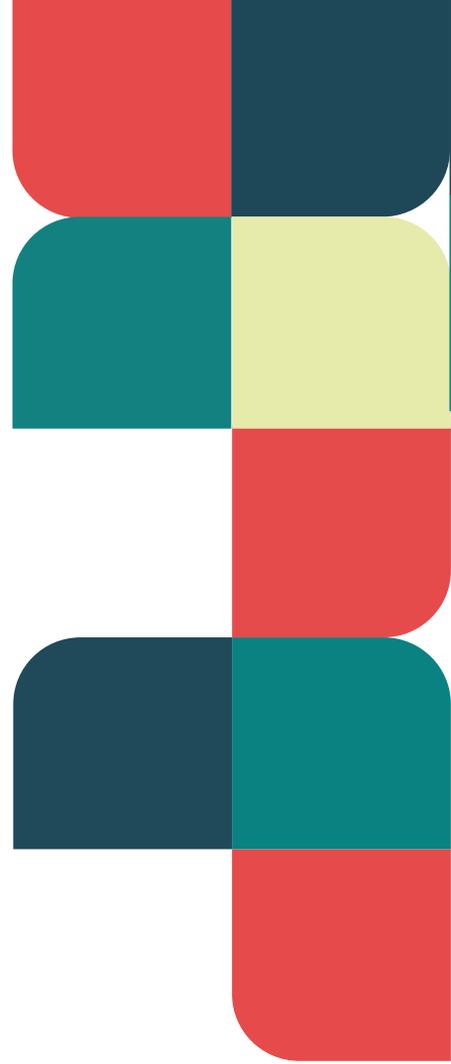
*Ideas for discussion*

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Preface:  
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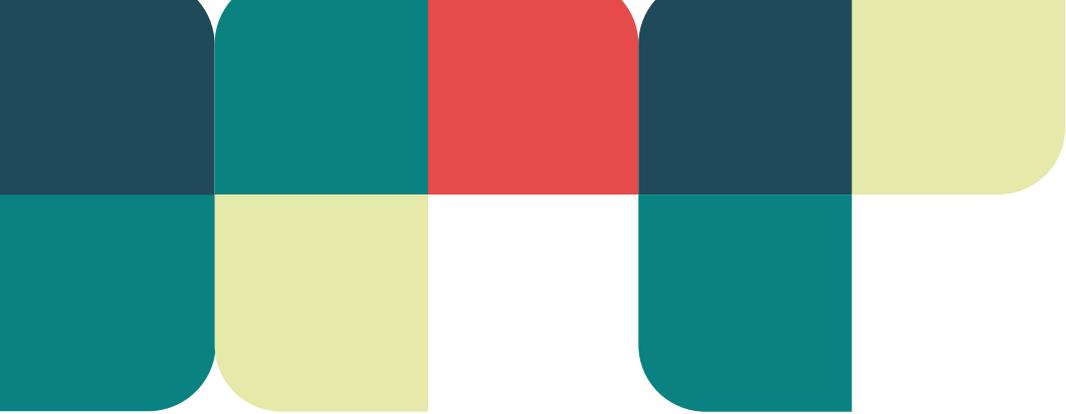
## About the document

The document “Climate and International Strategy: New Paths for Brazil”

The document “Climate and International Strategy: New Paths for Brazil” draws on consultations with over 70 actors from different sectors and proposes a strategy that combines climate action with inclusive and sustainable development, as well as the defense of multilateralism and a fair and effective global governance.

The paper is part of a project led by Plataforma CIPÓ in partnership with the Perseu Abramo Foundation.

The project team is grateful to those who accepted our invitation to discuss the intersection between climate and foreign policy.



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## Preface

On October 30, with the election of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, Brazilians chose to start a new political cycle, reaffirming their democratic values and leaving behind a period of retraction at the international level, including on climate and environment issues. During the past four years, the world has also changed. The highly inequitable response to the Covid-19 pandemic has deepened socioeconomic inequalities and brought further setbacks in the fight against poverty and the eradication of hunger. Major geopolitical challenges, such as the war in Ukraine, demonstrate the limitations of a global governance that still reflects the post-World War II distribution of power.

Climate change is another salient feature in this scenario of high uncertainty. With impacts that cross national borders, the climate emergency makes multilateral cooperation an existential imperative. It is no coincidence that the theme is no longer confined to negotiations within the scope of the Conference of the Parties (COPs) on climate change and has come to occupy a central place in international relations and global geopolitics. Brazil, under a denialist government, was left behind. But now, under a new democratic and progressive command, it will be able to resume a proud and active international role. To this end, the fight against the climate crisis will occupy a central role in the country's international activities. This effort will be supported by significant advances at the domestic level, starting with the resumption of the fight against deforestation in all Brazilian biomes, especially in the Amazon forest.

This document, built on the basis of dozens of consultations with actors from different sectors of Brazilian society, provides inputs so that climate can be accorded a central role in Brazil's international insertion strategy. More specifically, the text brings three essential statements. Climate is no longer a niche; it has to be mainstreamed even at the international level. In this sense, the document shows how the climate can be incorporated into international cooperation initiatives, whether at the bilateral, regional, or global level. Secondly, the document invites us to think about how international action should reflect and feed domestic policies. It defends, for example, a conception of just and sovereign transition built from the particularities of the Brazilian context, allowing Brazil to position itself on a theme that, in global spaces, has been guided predominantly by industrialized countries. Finally, the text reinforces the need to resume the channels of dialogue between civil society and the state for the debate and formulation of foreign policy. This process will benefit from the fact that Brazilian organizations, institutes, think tanks and universities that work with the climate issue have never enjoyed such high levels of capacity and coordination in generating knowledge and innovation.

Therefore, the document serves as an invitation to think about a more just Brazil and a more democratic global governance, one that harnesses multilateralism and international cooperation to more effectively face our shared contemporary challenges, including those imposed by climate change.

*Celso Amorim*  
*Former Minister of Defense and External Relations*



## Executive Summary

The global order is undergoing a moment of deep transformation, with great uncertainties – and therefore, new imperatives for international cooperation. The world is possibly moving in the direction of greater multipolarity. However, the path is long and winding: old geopolitical rivalries resurface at the same time as new tensions appear between the great powers. Much is said about a “Second Cold War,” but the world faces challenges that are more diverse and complex than those associated with that era. Structural inequalities are worsening, and the fight against poverty has suffered setbacks. Armed conflicts linger on with no prospect of resolution, sometimes for decades, and the nuclear threat resurfaces in the context of the war in Ukraine. At the same time, new risks emerge. For example, while enabling important advances, cutting-edge technologies have produced significant risks worldwide, such as disinformation campaigns – capable of eroding democratic systems and values.

Moreover, the Covid-19 pandemic has had devastating effects not only on human health, with more than 6 million deaths recorded around the world, but also on local and global economies. The health crisis has led to an exponential rise in unemployment, food insecurity, poverty and debt – particularly in developing countries.

Far from posing an isolated threat, climate change exacerbates all of the key challenges faced by humanity, including hunger, poverty and pandemics. Rising

sea levels, ocean acidification, changes in rainfall patterns, intensified droughts, and desertification, among other phenomena, already undermine food production and availability, disrupting livelihoods, posing hurdles to the implementation of public policies, triggering disasters, causing migration and forced displacement and worsening social tensions, among other challenges.

The effects of climate change converge and interact with two other factors linked to the destruction and degradation of the environment: the loss of nature and biodiversity and the pollution and contamination of air, water, and soil. The adverse effects of these three threats, called by the United Nations (UN) the “Planetary Triple Crisis”, cross international borders, representing an existential risk for humanity. The scientific consensus about the worsening crisis, underscored by the reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), and the widespread recognition of the challenges it creates **have placed climate at the center of international politics**. The issue has moved front center not only in global governance institutions such as the United Nations (UN) system, but also in the foreign policy formulation of many countries and regions.

However, Brazil has fallen behind by failing to pay attention to the challenges posed by climate change. On the contrary: in addition to causing massive environmental destruction and undermining the well-being of Brazilians, Jair Bolsonaro’s government led Brazil – a country widely

known for its proactive stance and for its assertive contributions to global discussions – to lose its credibility and space at the international level. By working to dismantle federal institutions in charge of environmental protection; attacking bodies that produce data, scientific activities and research; working to legalize crimes such as invasions of public land, illegal extraction and trade in timber and gold; encouraging climate change denial; turning a blind eye to human rights violations, including violent attacks on environmental activists; and weakening international cooperation mechanisms for environmental protection, such as the Fundo Amazônia (Amazon Fund), Brazil's current administration has severed partnerships and long-lasting relationships built over the past century. And the new peaks in deforestation and forest fires, especially in the Amazon and the Cerrado, triggered strong negative reactions, both in Brazil and abroad.

At the same time, the retraction in Brazil's international cooperation – a significant source of exchanges, partnerships, and innovations in public policy – ended up undermining Brazil's sovereignty, insofar as it weakened the country's capacity for negotiations. It is thus urgent that Brazil resume its proactive and constructive role in international forums, incorporating innovations in the fight against climate change and in environmental preservation. The topic of climate change, in other words, should be treated actively rather than passively in Brazil's international strategy.

The purpose of this document is to identify some priority lines for Brazil's international strategy, with a focus on **climate and sustainable development**. To speak of climate and sustainable development is to merge climate-related mitigation and adaptation goals with the pursuit of socio-environmental development, so as to ensure every Brazilian's well-being and dignity. The only way that Brazil will be able to achieve a sustainable, sovereign, and solidary approach is by combining these elements. This concept, moreover, should not only help to devise a **just and sovereign transition** at the domestic level, but should also be used to structure the country's international strategy. This includes making sure that core sustainability agendas are discussed, such as agriculture, energy, and mining; reinvesting in scientific research, innovation, and education as catalysts for spurring growth; fostering responsible reindustrialization and resuming poverty alleviation and hunger eradication in Brazil and around the world.

Brazil's international strategy should be based on two pillars; on one hand, **the pursuit of an inclusive, solidary, and sustainable development** that seeks improvements and yields tangible benefits for Brazilian society through international cooperation; and, on the other, the **defense of a multipolar, democratic, and just global order** that fulfills developing the needs, realities, and priorities of developing countries, including with respect to climate and the environment.

In both realms, domestic as well as international, decision-making should take into account the concept of **climate justice**: the recognition that, even though climate change is a global issue, its impacts are not felt the same by everyone, including in terms of geography, gender, and race. Increased efforts and funding are needed to further climate mitigation and adaptation as means to ensure the rights of peoples, populations and countries that are more vulnerable to climate change. At the international level, this requires balancing the **principle of common but differentiated responsibilities** (enshrined at the Rio-92 meeting, and which determines that industrialized countries should bear the greater costs for sustainable development) so as to advocate for the expansion of climate cooperation, but avoiding making it into a shield against the implementation of responsible attitudes in dealing with the crisis.

At the same time, it will be essential to combat climate denialism, which has taken roots in Latin America and the Caribbean due to the presence of a far-right movement that has become highly structured, including at the transnational level, and which poses a serious threat to democracy and to human rights both in Brazil and in the wider region.

From 2023 to 2026, Brazil could host a series of international conferences, beginning with an Amazon Summit and including those of the G20, IBSA, BRICS, as well as a new climate COP. This sequence

of major international events presents an opportunity to shape the agendas of several multilateral spaces, allowing Brazil to reach the year 2026 with a revitalized and well-consolidated international strategy. It will be essential for Brazil to define priority agendas for each space, in order to progressively advance a broad, coherent and propositional multilateral agenda towards a multipolar global order.

This document was drafted based on 70 bilateral conversations held with 70 decision-makers and other actors across all fields – government bodies, civil society, private sector, financial market, and international organizations – in different regions throughout Brazil. It will be launched at the *Brazil Climate Action Hub*, a space conceived and run by civil society at the 27th Climate Change Conference of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations (COP27), to be held in Sharm el-Sheikh, in Egypt, in November 2022.

After four years of significant backsliding on its participation in international debates and efforts, including in the field of climate governance itself, and of a government that promoted climate change denialism, anti-environmental policies, and human rights violations, COP27 will be the ideal stage to kick-off a new Brazilian cycle. Our hope is that this document will **contribute to high-level discussions on Brazil's role in the field of climate and in international politics more broadly**. Some recommendations will be relevant for the first 100 days of government; others will demand a series of medium and long-term measures.

Below are some of the main recommendations:

- To announce Brazil's intention to **reverse the high rates of deforestation and forest fires**, as well as a more ambitious Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), while putting forth a plausible and transparent strategy for short, medium, and long-term emissions;
- To signal the intent to immediately restore the **Amazon Fund (Fundo Amazônia)** and to collaborate with other actors to establish additional measures aimed at attracting new investments for curbing deforestation;
- To launch a coalition with other countries that are home to tropical forests (Brazil-Indonesia-Democratic Republic of Congo - **BIC**) that will be open to other developing countries later joining in, thereby sending a strong message that tropical forest-related solutions must be led by developing countries;
- To uphold the concept of a **just and sovereign transition** that reaches well beyond energy transition and conventional mitigation strategies, encompassing measures such as pressing for a sustainable, food sovereignty-based agriculture, cutting back on deforestation rates and swiftly reestablishing **the demarcation of Indigenous and Quilombola lands**, promoting green reindustrialization

and land title regularization, while endeavoring to create new jobs and foster the well-being of individuals and communities potentially impacted by the transition and, finally, promoting responsible socio-environmental infrastructure and mining activities;

- To champion a **just, solidary, and sustainable vision of development or the Amazon**, combining efforts to prevent environmental crimes and related violence through bioeconomy efforts that generate wealth, dignified jobs, food sovereignty, and well-being, expanding infrastructure and basic services and launching new measures **to protect socio-environmental defenders**;
- To establish dependable, effective, and widely accepted **tracking and certification systems for commodities** that pressure the Amazon and the Cerrado, advocating in favor of an international trading system that brings together effective sustainability concepts and due diligence mechanisms in line with the World Trade Organization's (WTO) multilateral trading and guideline system, ensuring that the framework is not used for protectionism by rich countries;
- To revitalize regional arrangements undermined by the current administration, underpinning its new regional strategy on the **Mercosur-Unasur-OTCA triad**, while also

upgrading both its conceptual and organizational chart workflows as well as bolstering CELAC so as to expand climate and environmental-related regional cooperation and coordination;

- **To put an end to the flexibilization of Mercosur**, working to add Bolivia to the block and strengthening the organization’s socio-environmental agenda;
- To establish a **South-American Council on Climate and Sustainable Development** under Unasur, focusing on themes that intersect with the field of climate governance: public health (including pandemics), the fight against transnational organized crime (which includes environmental crimes) and energy and infrastructure integration;
- To ensure swift approval by the National Congress of the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (the **Escazú Agreement**), while harnessing the agreement to help broaden the scope of regional cooperation and coordination in efforts to further the region’s climate and human rights agendas;
- To endorse a climate COP agenda that extends well beyond mitigation and garners support for the adaptation, loss and damages and climate finance

agendas, convening a “**Climate Summit**” in Brazilian territory and launching the **second edition of the South Commission** to push for a global governance reform underpinned by a Global based vision of climate action, and bringing an Action Plan to enhance The Group of 77 (G77);

- To signal Brazil’s intent to **host a future edition of the United Nations Framework** Convention on Climate Change Conference of Parties (COP);
- To harness Brazil’s term at the helm of the **G20**, in 2024, to draw attention to, and garner funds for, the climate agenda, with a particular focus on sustainable agriculture, food sovereignty, and climate finance for low-income developing countries;
- To enhance **South-South and Triangular Cooperation**, using climate and the environment as new cornerstones for these exchanges and focusing on resuming technical cooperation with African countries, while simultaneously acknowledging the value of, and de-bureaucratizing, the Agência Brasileira de Cooperação (Brazilian Cooperation Agency – ABC), which should also entail creating a department within the agency dedicated to identifying best practices and sharing them with other government bodies in charge of designing public policies in that field, both in Brazil and abroad;

- **To uphold, bolster and acknowledge the value of science, technology and innovation** – and, in broader terms, public education – as core elements required to grasp and monitor climate changes and to draw up efficient and just public policies, thereby ensuring exchanges between government organizations and the main research centers in Brazil and in countries, while additionally financing new international cooperation measures aimed at generating know-how and the development of green technologies in Brazil;
- To enhance the subjects of climate governance and sustainability – beyond their intersections with efforts aimed at poverty alleviation and hunger eradication – as the core subjects for the **BRICS coalition**; and to revamp **IBSA** for purposes of streamlining political liaising in areas of common interest, such as (in the case of IBAS) the protection of oceans;
- To draw up, with China, a **joint statement on climate and environment-related commitments**, to be focused on protecting forests and fostering deforestation-free commodity chains, in addition to assessing in a more consistent way, and in unison with other industries, the possibility of Brazil joining the Belt and Road Initiative, while additionally taking into account not only potential socio-environmental effects, but also opportunities for investments in green infrastructure; and regionalizing the cooperation strategy with China from Unasur;
- **To review the Mercosur-European Union Agreement**, with the aim of including clauses requiring socio-environmental, climate and human rights measures for all parties involved, and preventing harmful impacts, such as exports of carbon emissions from Europe to Mercosur or industrialization in Brazil and other Mercosur countries;
- To explore new cooperation, investment, and financing possibilities created by the new **U.S. Inflation Reduction Act** to build new cooperation opportunities in the covered areas, such as decarbonization, efficient energy use, and prevention of deforestation and forest fires, with special attention to the development in Brazil of new green technologies, including those related to the exploitation of hydrogen, the electrification of public transportation, low-carbon agriculture, the traceability of commodities, and green digitalization;
- To enable an effective climate governance agenda in Brazil and abroad by establishing an **institutional framework** based on four core

principles: *legitimacy, coordination, mainstreaming, and inclusion*; locating this agenda within the Office of the President of the Republic and providing it with a comprehensive and multi-sectoral mandate reflected in priorities for both the domestic and international spheres;

- **To revitalize and establish new institutional spaces for sustained and meaningful dialogue with civil society** so as to ensure that the climate agenda, both in its domestic and international realms, draws on broad and effective participation by a wide range of societal segments, particularly those groups most impacted by climate change and environmental degradation, such as women, Indigenous peoples, Quilombola and traditional communities, black citizens and low-income segments of the population.



**1**

**Background: Geopolitical  
turbulence and the  
transformation of the  
global order**

## Background: Geopolitical turbulence and the transformation of the global order

The global order is undergoing a moment of deep transformation, bringing great uncertainties — and therefore, new imperatives for international cooperation. The world is possibly moving in the direction of greater multipolarity. However, the path is long and winding: old geopolitical rivalries resurface at the same time as new tensions appear between the great powers. Much is said about a “Second Cold War,” but the world faces challenges more diverse and complex than those associated with that era. Structural inequalities are worsening, and the fight against poverty has suffered grave setbacks<sup>1</sup>. Armed conflicts linger on with no prospect of resolution, sometimes for decades, and the nuclear threat resurfaces in the context of the war in Ukraine. At the same time, new problems emerge. For example, while enabling important advances, cutting-edge technologies have also produced significant risks worldwide, such as disinformation campaigns that are capable of eroding democratic systems and values.

Moreover, the Covid-19 pandemic has caused devastating effects not only on human health, with more than 6 million deaths recorded around the world, but also on local and global economies. The health crisis has led to an exponential rise in unemployment, food insecurity, and poverty — particularly in developing countries.

Far from posing an isolated threat, climate change exacerbates key challenges faced by humanity, including hunger, poverty and pandemics. Rising sea levels, ocean acidification, changes in rainfall patterns, intensified droughts, and desertification, among other phenomena, already affect food production and availability, disrupting livelihoods, causing social tensions, and driving migration and forced displacement in several parts of the world, including Brazil. Furthermore, the effects of climate change converge and interact with two other factors: the loss of nature and biodiversity and the pollution and contamination of air, water, and soil. The adverse effects of these three threats, called by the United Nations (UN) the “Planetary Triple Crisis”, cross international borders, representing an existential risk for humanity. The scientific consensus about the worsening crisis, underscored by the reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), and the widespread recognition of the challenges it creates have placed climate at the center of international politics. The issue has become central not only in global governance institutions like the United Nations (UN) system, but also in the foreign policy formulation of many countries and regions. For example, in Brazil, only in 2018 more than one million people were affected by floods, almost 43 million were

<sup>1</sup> The last years in Brazil and worldwide have been of deepening inequality, that was intensified with the covid-19 pandemic. At the international level, according to the World Inequality Lab report (<https://wir2022.wid.world/>), since 2019 there has been a noticeable process of income concentration. In Brazil, the increase in inequality and poverty is followed by the expansion of hunger. According to the 2nd National Survey on Food Insecurity in the Context of the Covid-19 Pandemic in Brazil, 33 million people are hungry in Brazil, a 70% increase in the number of severely food insecure people since 2020. Source and more information: <https://bit.ly/3NFj0Bl>.

affected by droughts and more than 85,000 people were internally displaced due to environmental and climate disasters<sup>2</sup>.

The United Nations Secretary-General and other global governance leaders have started using the term Anthropocene in recognition that the planet has entered a new geological era, characterized by the impact of humans on the Earth. Scientists increasingly refer to the concept of planetary boundaries, which establish how far socioeconomic development can go without irreversibly affecting the Earth's regenerative capacity. These new concepts demand not only an intergenerational view of decision-making, but also greater international cooperation.

Despite this scenario, the responses of UN member states have fallen short of the urgency imposed by the triple crisis. Even with the landmark Paris Agreement, through which 196 countries agreed to make efforts to keep the global average temperature increase to less than 2°C (preferably 1.5°C), the accumulation of decades marked by setbacks or timid improvements demands more immediate, ambitious, innovative, and integrated collective actions. However, economic shocks – especially those resulting from the conflict in Ukraine – concentrate the attention of countries in the Northern

Hemisphere. While the war has emphasized the importance of more agile and significant investments in renewable energy, in the short term the opposite movement prevails. In Europe, we see an increase in power generation using coal, and on a global scale, a race to increase the supply of fossil fuels from alternative suppliers; in China, for example, coal still accounts for more than 60% of electricity generation<sup>3</sup>.

There is also a growing risk that financial resources that should be used for the protection of biodiversity, for the fight against pollution, for the promotion of climate mitigation and adaptation and, more broadly, for the fulfillment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will be significantly reduced due to economic fluctuations caused by unilateral economic sanctions and the prioritization of massive defense investments. Against this highly complex and uncertain global backdrop, the improved resumption of Brazil's climate and environmental foreign policy is not only necessary, but urgent.

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2 Source: “Quem precisa de justiça climática no Brasil?”. Available at: <https://generoeclima.oc.eco.br/lancamento-quem-precisa-de-justica-climatica-no-brasil/>.

3 More on the contradictions and complexities of China's energy transition in “China's energy transition will be powered by coal” (available at: <https://qz.com/2169213/chinas-energy-transition-will-be-powered-by-coal/>) and “China's Five Year Plan for energy: An eye on security today, an eye on a low-carbon future” (available at: <https://chinadialogue.net/en/climate/chinas-five-year-plan-for-energy-one-eye-on-security-today-one-on-a-low-carbon-future/>).



**2**

## **The crisis of multilateralism and regional integration**

## The crisis of multilateralism and regional integration

Major tectonic shifts in geopolitics occur precisely at a time when multilateralism is facing a crisis of legitimacy, with broad erosion of the cooperative global order based on respect for international law and the UN Charter. The election of Donald Trump as President of the United States in 2016 inaugurated a period of blunt attacks on the United Nations and other multilateral organizations that make up global governance — rhetoric that includes climate denialism and continues to be propagated by far-right governments and groups in different regions of the world, from Southeast Asia to Europe and Latin America.

These political challenges are compounded by practical bottlenecks faced by multilateral institutions, including the recent failure to ensure the equitable, solidary, and just distribution of vaccines, treatments, and equipment needed to address the Covid-19 pandemic. Moreover, the difficulties faced by the UN in preventing or resolving armed conflicts in a lasting manner, made explicit in recent years by the wars in Syria and more recently in Ukraine, weaken the legitimacy of the organization and underscore the need to reform the Security Council, whose mode of operation has proven too obsolete to effectively perform the function of maintaining international peace and security.

At the same time, once-agile arrangements such as the G20, which, despite having played an important role in responding to the 2009 international financial crisis,

had already been losing steam as a space for coordination among the world's largest economies, risk being further weakened by political disputes, especially over Russia.

Finally, governance arrangements led by countries of the South are also largely weakened, not least because of the disproportionate impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on their societies and economies, which face high inflation rates, reduced growth, and increased debt, among other effects. Political divergences among members and extra-regional rivalries, such as attempts by other world powers to contain China's rise, and reactions to Russia's recent invasion of Ukraine also undermine the effectiveness of once-efficient channels of South-South political cooperation and coordination, such as the G7, BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) and IBSA (India, Brazil, and South Africa).

In South America, specifically, the weakening of regional integration results not only from political differences between states, but also from the lack of leaderships committed to international cooperation. The current lack of mutual trust is reflected in the underutilization or even the scrapping of cooperation spaces, including Mercosur and Unasur. And new initiatives, including in the environmental area, such as the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Escazú Agreement), are advancing slowly. In this case, sluggishness can be attributed to

the lack of ratification by many countries – including Brazil – and the still limited space for civil society participation in the monitoring of the agreement’s implementation.



**3**

## **A new climate diplomacy for Brazil**

## A new climate diplomacy for Brazil

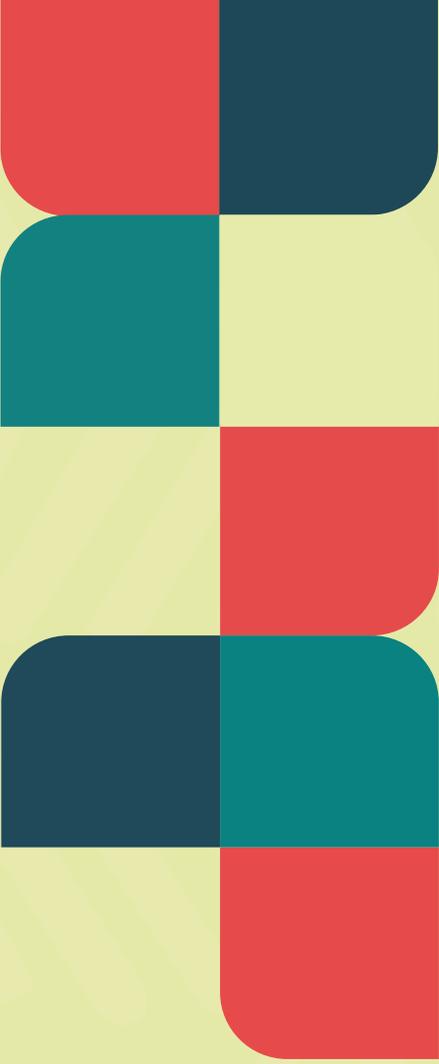
The impacts of the Triple Planetary Crisis of climate change, pollution and the loss of biodiversity mean that agendas that for a long time were treated as independent, discussed in different spheres of decision-making in global governance, are now addressed in a more integrated manner by different sectors of society: states, subnational governments, civil society and the private and financial sectors. Nevertheless, in the absence of legally binding global instruments such as a global convention to protect forests – in contrast to the agreements on climate, biodiversity and desertification that came out of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, also known as Eco-92 or Rio 92 – international cooperation against illegal deforestation (an essential complement to efforts at the national level) remains fragmented and highly susceptible to setbacks depending on the global political environment.

This combination of factors illustrates the importance of Brazil resuming an assertive foreign policy governed by principles that include national independence, the prevalence of human rights, the defense of peace and cooperation among peoples for the progress of humankind, in line with Article 4 of the Federal Constitution.

In the climate and environment agendas, past experiences show that Brazil has the capacity not only to actively participate in innovative diplomatic efforts, but also to lead them, especially when environmental and climate policies advocated abroad are

accompanied by consistent advances at the domestic level.

If combined with concrete efforts towards the strengthening of environmental and climate performances – such as the significant reduction in deforestation rates; the generation of green jobs through approaches such as green infrastructure, bio-economy and circular economy; investments in green technologies and infrastructures – an active, innovative and proactive climate and environmental diplomacy will be fundamental for Brazil to reverse the loss of soft power and influence in global geopolitics and international forums in the last four years. This will require the development of action strategies aimed at reinserting the country as a protagonist in key issues, such as the protection of forests and the rights of their inhabitants, and the promotion of food security, climate finance and climate justice. Such strategies must rely on participatory mechanisms that engage indigenous peoples, quilombola communities (settlements first established by escaped enslaved people) and other traditional groups, and that encourage the participation of youth, who are disproportionately affected by intergenerational climate injustices while representing a source of knowledge and leadership in addressing environmental and climate challenges.



**4**

## **The damage caused by climate denialism**

## The damage caused by climate denialism

In addition to causing massive environmental destruction and undermining the well-being of Brazilians, Jair Bolsonaro's administration led Brazil – a country long known for its proactive stance and for its assertive contributions to global discussions – to lose credibility and space internationally. By working to dismantle federal organizations in charge of environmental protection; attacking bodies that produce data, scientific activities and research; trying to legalize crimes such as public land invasions, illegal logging and gold mining; encouraging climate denialism; turning a blind eye to human rights violations, including violent attacks on environmental activists; and weakening international cooperation mechanisms for environmental protection, such as the Fundo Amazônia (Amazon Fund), Brazil's current administration has severed partnerships and long-lasting relationships built over the past century.

At the same time, a decrease in international cooperation – a significant source of exchanges, partnerships, and innovations in public policy – ended up undermining Brazil's sovereignty, insofar as it diminished the country's capacity to negotiate. New records in deforestation and forest fire rates, particularly in the Amazon and the Cerrado, resulted in a strong backlash, both in Brazil and abroad<sup>4</sup>.

The Bolsonaro administration's anti-environmental, denialist, inhumane policies raise alarms not only in other countries – to which Bolsonaro's Brazil shut doors in favor of a blind allegiance to Washington during Donald Trump's term in office – but also in Brazilian society, where large segments increasingly acknowledge the importance of protecting the environment and addressing climate change. At the same time, the attacks on multilateralism and the break with Constitutional principles that govern Brazil's foreign policy put Brazil on a collision course with the international community. This scenario calls for an urgent change and a robust, long-term strategy.

Brazil's backtracking in global discussions and international cooperation unfolds exactly when the climate crisis intensifies. Today, far from posing an isolated threat, it is a widely acknowledged fact that climate change has aggravated the main challenges that humanity is facing, including hunger, poverty, and public safety. Sea level rise, ocean acidification, changes in rainfall patterns, worsening droughts, desertification and increasingly extreme weather events, among other phenomena, are already associated with a decrease in the production and availability of food, hampering means of subsistence, leading to setbacks in the implementation of public policies, causing disasters, triggering migration and forced displacements and

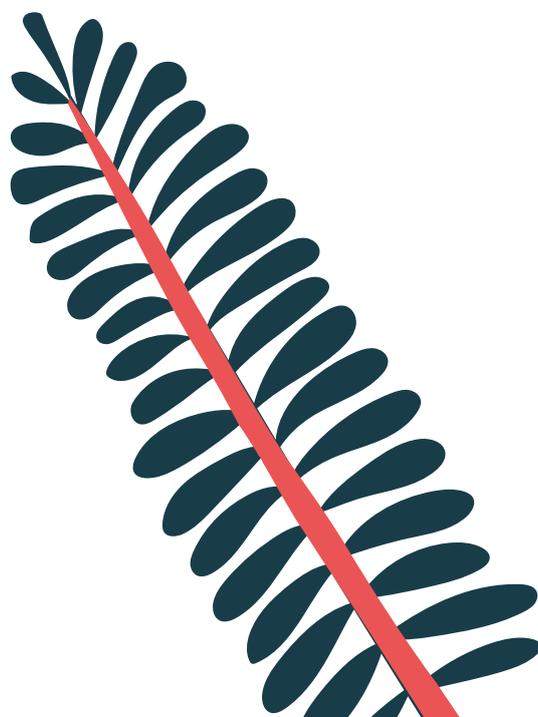
<sup>4</sup> On the environmental institutional dismantlement, the expansion of environmental crimes and the increase in violence against socio-environmental defenders during the Bolsonaro government, see “Brasil: 100 dias de destruição”, report produced by Observatório do Clima (available at: <https://bit.ly/3sT07Bt>), and “Crimes ambientais como crime organizado: a extração ilegal do ouro na Amazônia”, strategic report by Plataforma CIPÓ (available at: <https://bit.ly/3h7CLp3>).

escalating social tensions, among several other challenges.

Moreover, science shows that climate change merges and interacts with two additional elements: the loss of nature and biodiversity, and the pollution and contamination of air, water, and soil. The adverse effects caused by these three threats, named the “Triple Planetary Crisis” by the United Nations, cross international borders, posing an unprecedented existential threat to humanity. Due to the planetary scope of the problem, no single country or actor can take on, by itself, the growing challenges posed by climate change.

The crisis demands joint action to mitigate climate change, and the Paris Agreement is the main framework for cutting back on greenhouse gas emissions. Nevertheless, mitigation alone is not enough. Climate change-induced impacts are already an issue, making it even more necessary to also invest in climate adaptation and in the support of loss and damages, including by means of increased financing, transfer and development of green technology (including in the South) and, more broadly, by adopting a development model based on inclusion and sustainability. Implementing this model will require not only a greater level of cooperation among different countries, including developing countries, but also more effective participation by civil society, the private sector, and international organizations to further climate justice, acknowledging that climate change

impacts affect different social groups in distinct ways and intensities. That is why the subject of climate governance also takes on a new strategic weight when it comes to strengthening multilateralism and developing a more inclusive, solidary, and sustainable multipolar order. This is the backdrop against which Brazil’s new international strategy should be devised.





**5**

## **Restoring international credibility**

## Restoring international credibility

The first step towards restoring Brazil's lost credibility at the international level is to put in place a domestic measure: to roll back high rates of deforestation and forest fires, particularly in the Amazon. Despite the dismantling of environmental institutions over the past four years, **Brazil has the capacity and expertise needed to address the destruction of the planet's largest tropical forest.** During nearly a decade, starting from the mid-2000's, Brazil managed to significantly curb illegal deforestation at the same time that it increased agricultural production in the Amazon through enhanced productivity; moreover, deforestation-related emissions in Brazil dropped by more than two-thirds during that period. These breakthroughs were widely acknowledged internationally and helped Brazil to garner credibility in climate and environment-related negotiations.

Thus, in 2023, the most pressing measures required in the field of climate governance should be to **rebuild government institutions** such as Ibama, ICMBio and Funai; to revoke and replace decrees that contributed to dismantling climate governance and environmental bodies; and to advance policies based on climate justice and scientific evidence, with a focus on reliable and transparent data. Equally important measures include **upgrading and improving deforestation-focused control and prevention plans** in the Amazon and the Cerrado (PPCDAm and PPCerrado, respectively); **ramping up inspection efforts** (on-site and remotely); duly enforcing penalties (fines and embargos);

and **improving the traceability of beef and other commodities responsible for pressuring the forest.** The end of a culture of impunity around environmental crimes will lead to improvements in core mechanisms such as the Cadastro Ambiental Rural (Rural Environmental Registry – CAR) and the Sistema Nacional de Rastreabilidade da Produção Agropecuária (National Bovine Traceability System). Combining prevention of illegal logging with the restoration of degraded lands and biome reforestation will considerably cut back on deforestation and, consequently, emissions.

Moreover, it is critical that Brazil introduces, even before approving the Escazu Agreement, instruments to **ensure the protection of land and environmental defenders' physical integrity**, particularly with regard to attacks and threats against socio-environmental, Indigenous and Quilombo community leaders. This entails ensuring the population's access to justice, investigating, and taking to court all relevant actors that committed violations, while demanding that companies and financial institutions be held accountable for all acts of violence and other damages to the land and to environmental defenders along their entire global operations and productive chains, as part of the due diligence process.

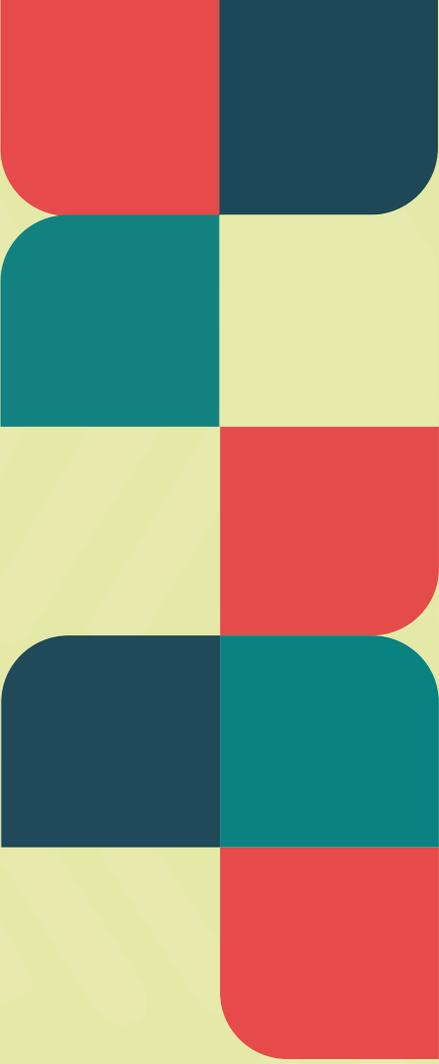
At the international level, Brazil should signal its unquestionable dedication to protecting its environment, taking action to prove that this public stance is underpinned not only by tangible and immediate measures, but also by a long-term strategy.

Decarbonization aimed at achieving a low-carbon economy is one of the pillars of this strategy. One of the first measures should be to announce a more ambitious Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), together with a plausible and transparent emissions reduction strategy. Brazil should additionally resume its bilateral cooperation with partner countries and work to enhance international fundraising mechanisms to tackle deforestation and to preserve biodiversity, while also disclosing its desire to immediately restore the Fundo Amazônia (Amazon Fund). All these measures, in addition to other ones that we will describe in detail further ahead in this paper, will be instrumental not only for recovering Brazil's political credibility, but also for attracting new investments to the Amazon.

Brazil should additionally show leadership in forging new cooperation, such as deals on forest protection-related matters, alongside other developing countries that encompass similar biomes, in accordance with the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use. Finally, Brazil should reclaim its proactive and constructive role in multilateral forums and in global discussions on climate governance and the environment, including in climate and biodiversity-focused COPs, while stressing that the climate agenda is about much more than just mitigation. With respect to South-South cooperation with countries outside the region, measures like launching a **new coalition comprising Brazil, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Indonesia (BIC)**, with the possibility of

adding new members in the future, would offer a space for developing countries facing similar challenges in their forest areas to share experiences, with an end goal of pushing for deforestation-free forest product chains and raising awareness on the need for financing that is geared specifically to tropical forest areas. Launching the BIC coalition would send a strong message that solutions for tropical forests should be led by tropical countries, even if alliances with industrialized countries are required for purposes of ensuring fair international trade for commodities that pressure these forest areas.

In all these spaces, it will be necessary to underscore a new vision of national sovereignty, one that contrasts with the current administration's interpretation: more specifically, efforts will need to be made to push the idea that, provided that it is conceived in a respectful manner, international cooperation is a key tool for strengthening Brazil's sovereignty, since it enhances the country's negotiating capacity in international spaces.



**6**

## **A new vision for the Amazon and other threatened biomes**

## A new vision for the Amazon and other threatened biomes

In terms of both Brazil's national development and international strategy, curbing environmental crimes that lead to the destruction of biomes is not enough. Ensuring the population's well-being and protecting the environment also requires changes to the structure of incentives that have long encouraged a predatory use of the region's resources and fostered violence, hunger, and poverty. The development of the Amazon – as well as Brazil's corresponding positions in international politics – should be based on social inclusion and the protection of its environmental assets. Thus, while simultaneously resuming its efforts to end deforestation, Brazil should draft and deploy a vision that is attuned to the well-being and sustainability of the Amazon, a region home to over 28 million Brazilians, according to Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) recent data<sup>5</sup>. This vision should be underpinned by efforts aimed at providing wider access to basic services such as education, health, and basic sanitation; generating income and dignified jobs, particularly for youth, women, and other vulnerable populations in the Amazon's urban centers; and building and putting in place green infrastructure such as composting plants, sustainable landfills and broadband internet in communities. Other measures worth implementing include expanding and diversifying effective bioeconomy-related solutions, protecting flora and fauna, and preventing greenwashing by enhancing

regulations as well as by close and ongoing collaborations with universities, research centers, and civil society organizations.

A regulated carbon market should be a part of Brazil's net zero global strategy, but only if it is devised effectively and fairly alongside the NDC, with the aim of generating local income and well-being. For instance, carbon credits should be tied to consultation protocols that comply with all appropriate socio-environmental norms and that ensure that communities that are potentially impacted are entitled to full and effective participation. This market should adopt rules that stop outside actors from establishing predatory relationships with local communities and can be also linked to a dedicated fund created to support populations that are more exposed to climate change.

Moreover, Brazil should focus on regional land title regularization processes based on existing legislation, with the purpose of cutting back on agrarian violence and inequalities, in addition to enabling development that is based on sustainable agro-silvo-pastoral activities. This regularization should be carried out with special attention paid to the demarcation of indigenous and quilombola community lands, as well as other supporting policies, ensuring their leadership role in drafting policies geared specifically to these populations. A key requirement will be to assign funds and technical staff to

<sup>5</sup> More information and data on the Legal Amazon can be found in the "Amazônia 2030" report, available at: <https://bit.ly/3U4BH3S>.

Funai and Fundação Palmares, in order to ensure the protection and well-being of traditional communities.

Political programs and organizational flowcharts of regional cooperation arrangements related to this concept also need to be urgently revamped and updated. Enhancing the political dimension and resources of the Amazon Treaty and Cooperation Organization (known in Latin America as OTCA), which will require holding annual meetings of Heads of State, should be the anchor of regional cooperation for the Amazon forest and its peoples. The Amazonian Parliament and the Amazon Regional Observatory represent additional platforms that should be leveraged to achieve deeper and longer-lasting Pan-Amazonian cooperation. Moreover, there is an urgent need to hold a 4th Meeting of Amazonian Country Presidents, a non-permanent dialogue forum under OTCA that brings together presidents of countries comprising the organization (Mercosur and Unasur, which complete the regional approach triad in the new international strategy, will be discussed in depth later in this document).

Beyond these regional agreements, Brazil's bilateral cooperation with other Amazonian countries – equally damaged by the Bolsonaro administration – requires special attention. In the case of Colombia, the possibility of a new political alignment opens up a window of opportunity for developing mutual trust and broadening the exchange of experiences and technical cooperation efforts. These dialogues will enable

potential innovations in sustainability-related subjects, such as cooperation in low-carbon agriculture and food sovereignty by fostering family farming, in addition to energy transition issues.

Although other Brazilian biomes – the Cerrado, Mata Atlântica, Caatinga, Pantanal and the Pampa – draw less attention in current debates than the Amazon, they also need appropriate and tailored environmental protection and socio-environmental development policies. Except for the Mata Atlântica forest, which borders the Atlantic Ocean, all these biomes cross international borders, thereby requiring international cooperation efforts to complement domestic policies. The Cerrado, for example, is home to eight of the country's 12 hydrographic basins and is deemed the world's most biodiverse savannah. Still, the biome accounts for 30% of all deforested lands in Brazil and has been a constant focus of vegetation fires and deforestation, due to the swift expansion of the agricultural frontier. Since, in addition to being Brazilian territory, the Cerrado also encompasses parts of Bolivia and Paraguay, it should also be the object of new climate cooperation arrangements in that region. Moreover, the relationship between these biomes should be taken into consideration, particularly so as to avoid that any headway made in curbing deforestation in the Amazon occurs at the cost of destroying the Cerrado or other biomes due to continuous agricultural encroachment. In other words, the goal of zeroing deforestation (and not only the end of illegal deforestation) calls

for a tailored approach, as well as one that simultaneously considers the distinct biomes comprising Brazil's territory.

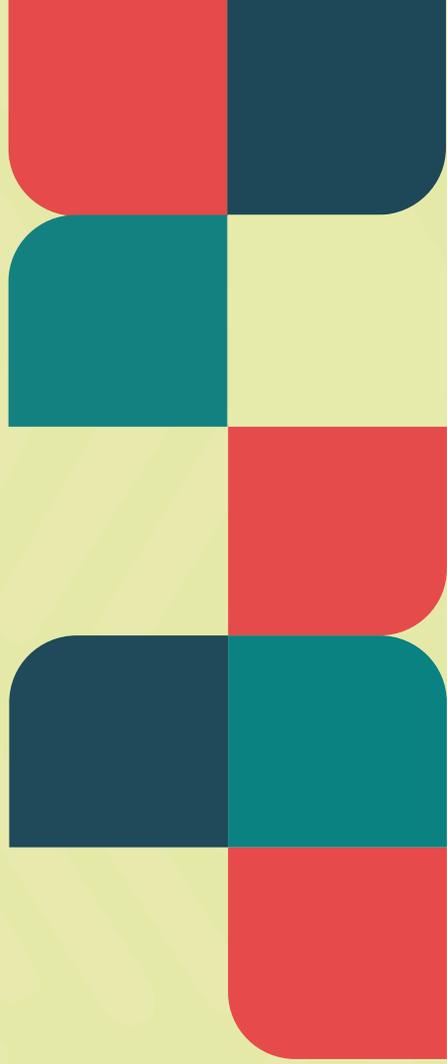
It is also necessary to develop a strategy to protect the marine space, since Brazil officially controls a maritime territory of 3.6 million km<sup>2</sup> – an area larger than the Northeast, Southeast and South regions combined. Brazil must develop a strategy for the protection of this marine space by strengthening the relevant institutions; implementing the Marine Spatial Planning as a public management instrument aiming the development of a sustainable blue economy; and placing Brazil as a protagonist in several multilateral forums (such as the United Nations Conference on the Ocean – UNOC; the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea - UNCLOS; and the Convention on Biological Diversity - CBD) in the development of the post-2020 Global Framework for biodiversity.

In sum: development of the Amazon, as well as that of other biomes, whether in Brazil's terrestrial or maritime space, should be conceived with a focus on **social inclusion, climate justice<sup>6</sup>, and the protection of its environmental assets**. A new international strategy may help to bring this about

through better climate cooperation and through more effective climate governance – a system capable of fostering climate justice without casting a narrow look at conservation, but rather more broadly promoting sustainable development and the creation of jobs and income for the population of the Amazon, among other objectives. This vision should be disclosed very clearly both at the domestic and the international level.

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6 In this paper, we use the concept of climate justice as discussed in the book “Quem precisa de Justiça climática no Brasil?” (Available at: <https://generoeclima.oc.eco.br/lancamento-quem-precisa-de-justica-climatica-no-brasil/>). The book points out that the concept, enshrined in the 2015 Paris Agreement, is closely linked to issues of equity and accountability, with strong emphasis on race, gender, and geography (north vs. south): “Climate justice propositions that climate change be analyzed and fought with a view to holding responsible those who actually caused the imbalance and who are better able to face them - mainly countries and companies in the Global North -, thus avoiding the socialization of climate burdens and the privatization of its benefits. In other words, this means that those who, historically, have benefited and developed from the greenhouse gas emissions accumulated to this day in the atmosphere cannot share with others the responsibility for the damages and impacts of climate change”.



## **In defense of a just and sovereign transition**

## In defense of a just and sovereign transition

Global discussions on ecological transition are currently dominated by industrialized countries – and, therefore, focus on those countries’ priorities. The parameters of these debates do not always match the demands and realities of Brazil, a country whose energy matrix, gas emission patterns and socio-economic framework are considerably different. Solutions geared to Brazil should be drafted according to its social, economic, and biodiversity characteristics.

However, furthering the Brazilian debate on ecological transition is not simply a matter of upholding certain stances in international forums. Brazil’s next political cycle poses considerable challenges. Development models introduced in the past led to substantial socio-environmental damages and were extremely unjust at their very core; they must thus be updated. The country’s international strategy should take this new model into account and uphold it abroad.

The first step needed is to attain greater clarity on key concepts that will govern Brazil’s new paths and which should be reflected in its international strategy. What do we understand sustainable development to mean within the context of a climate crisis? And to whom does development apply? How does the notion of transition dialogue with this new development vision?

Talking about climate and sustainable development means talking about combining climate mitigation and adaptation goals with the pursuit of socio-economic and environmental development in a way that ensures the well-being and dignity of every Brazilian. The only way for Brazil to ensure a sustainable, sovereign, and solidary approach will be to bring together the realms of climate and development. And this notion should not only prevail in the drafting of a just and sovereign transition at the domestic level; it should also be upheld in the country’s international strategy. This entails empowering key agendas, such as energy, agriculture, and mining, with greater sustainability; reinvesting in and recognizing the value of scientific research, innovation, and education as tools for leveraging growth, reindustrialization and poverty alleviation, while pursuing an ecologically sustainable and solidary economy.

In terms of energy, the unique traits of Brazil’s matrix, in which aeolic and solar energies already account for nearly 9% of its overall electric energy, according to the 2021 National Energy Balance<sup>7</sup>. The focus should be on expanding renewable sources for domestic generation and, in the future, expanding green hydrogen, particularly for the iron and steel industry, and setting forth intermediate goals as well as clear-cut instructions on exactly how these will be achieved. Brazil can

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7 The National Energy Balance of 2021 is available at <https://bit.ly/3NEssVF>.

emerge as a potential leader in the global race to produce green hydrogen, as long as it develops policies that ensure appropriate conditions for guaranteeing and promoting human, labor and territorial rights while expanding this matrix.

Petrobras, a company that plays a key role in Brazil's energy sovereignty, should continue to diversify its portfolio by investing in clean energies, including aeolic and solar energy, as well as bio-inputs, in addition to stopping oil and gas extraction activities in ecologically sensitive areas, in compliance with a more thorough ocean-targeted planning. It is extremely important to resume plans aimed at turning Petrobras into a broader energy company, as opposed to a strictly oil-centered company. For this to happen, though, Brazil's energy policy must necessarily focus on the concept of energy democracy and sovereignty, so that the expansion of access to energy takes place with climate and environmental responsibility.

Nevertheless, a just and sovereign transition in Brazil should reach far beyond the realm of energy: it should also entail devising a more sustainable agricultural agenda, thereby ensuring that a greater productivity is aligned with maintaining the forest standing; that parts of the agrobusiness's production chain bring forward a higher aggregated value; and that the Plano Agricultura de Baixo Carbono (Low-Carbon Agriculture Plan – ABC), as well as family farming and agricultural ecology-related projects, receive more financing. It should endeavor to advance

the food sovereignty agenda – and not only regarding food safety – so that production, access to, and consumption of food are all carried out with sustainability and dignity and through the use of biodiversity and bio-inputs, rather than an excessive use of agrochemicals. The transition will also require a new and more sustainable approach to mining – one that shuns predatory extraction activities and that takes into account socio-environmental, scale, and decentralization factors during the design of policies. Finally, it should endeavor to make progress in the field of green industrialization and responsible digitalization as necessary elements to help Brazil recover from the Covid-19 pandemic.

It is also worth noting that a just and sovereign transition entails a significant and long-term decrease in deforestation and forest fire rates; creating green jobs through conservation and reforestation efforts, as well as by recovering previously degraded ecosystems, in addition to other environmental measures; ramping up income transfer, which will help to change the fiscal incentive framework that results in environmental crimes; sustainable infrastructure in urban centers as well as in rural areas; incentives for a greenwashing-free bioeconomy that does not violate the rights of local communities; a circular economy and reverse logistics; investments in the fields of science and technology and in traditional knowledge; and transforming transportation, among a host of other measures.

The intersection between climate and sustainable development demands two key and complementary priorities. The first one is to ensure that inclusion policies are socio-environmentally responsible: in other words, fostering a climate and environmental transition that ensures the population has a decent life, in line with efforts to fight poverty, hunger, unemployment, violence, and discrimination.

At the same time, however, an international outlook is also required to plan for this transition, aimed at fully grasping and preventing impacts that transitions in rich regions and countries will have on Brazil. Regulatory changes foreseen in the European Union and the United States, for instance, can bear a negative impact on global value chains, significantly impacting local extractivist practices and consumption patterns in Brazil. On one hand, transition in industrialized countries opens new windows of opportunities – for example, to produce lithium responsibly and sustainably, in addition to other types of rare earths that are critical for clean technologies, such as electric batteries, and to strategically create production chains for these metals. On the other hand, the same process can lead to detrimental consequences, such as carbon exports by rich countries which, upon setting their national or regional goals, will then export this carbon to developing countries. Thus, in a global economy that is already undergoing change due to the Covid-19 pandemic and due to the fast-paced and uneven growth of the digital economy, preventive measures required to tackle

the predatory use of natural resources and biodiversity will need to be put in place; to deal with increasing poverty and inequality rates; and to diminish precarization of the labor market. To this end, Brazil must publicly voice its opposition against carbon emission compensation schemes: we will only reach goals that ensure humanity's survival if mitigation efforts by the North do not entail transferring emissions to, and causing harm to, countries of the South.

Due to the scope and complexity of this transition, there is a need to think of new ways of financing the process. Multilateral development banking institutions like the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and the Development Bank of Latin America (CAF) already finance both national and industry-related climate and biodiversity policies in several countries in the region and can be engaged to support parts of Brazil's just transition process. In 2016, the BRICS New Development Bank (NDB) announced its intention to ramp up investments in renewable energies, a stream that may be harnessed to advance the just transition in Brazil. Moreover, cooperation channels that facilitate exchanges of experiences need to be bolstered, in addition to mechanisms to attract investments; and introducing, if applicable, guidelines and best practices from the OECD, an institution with which Brazil already works closely in energy transition and environment-related working groups focusing on topics like economy decarbonization, urban energy transition, and the circular economy.

In sum: if the transition is devised in a more comprehensive manner and reflected in Brazil's international strategy, it would also help to recover the credibility, influence, and spaces lost during these past four years. Far from being mutually exclusive, social inclusion, sustainability and solidarity should be deeply intertwined at the very core of this transition, so as to promote well-being and climate justice for several generations to come.



8

## Brazil in the Conferences of the Parties (COPs)

## Brazil in the Conferences of the Parties (COPs)

Since the beginning of the global climate regime, Brazil has played a proactive and constructive role in environmental negotiations, often regarded as a leader among developing countries. The country hosted the first-ever United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development (Eco-92) and Rio+20, organized in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and 2012, respectively. Brazil also actively participated in negotiations surrounding the 1997 Kyoto Protocol and the 2015 Paris Agreement. Moreover, Brazil has played a key role in developing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Addis Ababa Agenda on Financing for Development. In 2015, it was the first developing nation to state, in its NDC, a commitment to zero its greenhouse gas emissions in the aggregate economy.

Nevertheless, in the past four years, Brazil's climate ambitions have either backtracked (especially in terms of deforestation) or stagnated; the country left COP26 (Glasgow) with the same ambitions it had committed to in Paris seven years before – in other words, it maintained the same goals it had planned for back in 2015. And, given the goal of keeping the planet's temperature increase up to a threshold of 1.5°C compared to pre-industrial levels, this baseline is neither commensurate with Brazil's potential to contribute to climate actions nor in line with commitments it has made to put in place progressive goals for emissions reductions.

Moreover, the planet's context has changed considerably. Science shows that the

climate crisis has taken a turn for the worse, posing an existential threat to humanity. More than ever, the time has come for all polluting countries to ramp up their climate governance ambitions, considering both migration and adaptation, and regardless of whether industrialized countries bear greater responsibility for their cumulative emissions. To this end, Brazil, as an emerging economy and in line with a new, more sustainable approach to development, should set, without enduring any other type of setback, an inclusive path to neutralize emissions and decarbonize its economy. The country should thus immediately announce a more ambitious NDC, along with a plan for emissions reductions that can be monitored by both Brazilian civil society and the international community.

A more proactive stance adopted by a potential new administration – not only in the eyes of government officials from other countries, but also before civil society and the private sector – should focus, in addition to the Paris Agreement, on other commitments assumed since then. In Glasgow, for instance, Brazil shared its guidelines for a neutral climate-oriented strategic agenda aimed at zeroing illegal deforestation by 2028; restoring and reforesting 18 million hectares in forest lands by 2030; also by 2030, having 45% to 50% of its energy matrix composed of renewable energies; recovering 30 million hectares of degraded pasture lands; and ramping up efforts to expand its railroad network. Furthermore, the country signed the Global Methane Pledge, thereby

promising to decrease its gas emissions by 30% up to 2030. Thus, in order for Brazil to successfully reclaim its role in global discussions as a responsible and proactive actor, it needs to make these goals official and discuss them in greater detail ahead of COP28.

For its mitigation agenda, Brazil should take on a critical and assertive stance with respect to the carbon market and its pricing, in accordance with Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. Even though economic tools for decarbonization are important, it is vital to have guarantees – signed and documented at COPs – of consultation protocols that incorporate territories into carbon-pricing dynamics. Moreover, additional efforts are needed to avoid carbon emission offsets from reproducing a colonial logic of climate governance.

With regard to the negotiations, advancing this agenda requires balancing the principle of **common but differentiated responsibilities** (enshrined in the Rio-92 conference, and which determines that industrialized countries should bear the greater costs for sustainable development) in a way that calls for the expansion of climate cooperation, while avoiding making this principle into a shield against the adoption of responsible attitudes in addressing the climate crisis.

Beyond simply fulfilling commitments taken on in international discussions, Brazil should seize the chance to host key conferences at such a critical moment for global climate action. Even though, in

2018, then President-elect Jair Bolsonaro pushed for Brazil to waive its option of hosting COP25 – causing the country to pass on an important opportunity to take on a leading role in the climate governance agenda –, Brazil should volunteer to host a future edition of the climate COP. Holding this conference would represent an important opportunity to influence the global agenda in this field, highlighting the South's priorities and enhancing civil society participation in the discussions.

It is worth noting that United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) efforts remain disproportionately focused on mitigation. Despite some recent progress made regarding adaptation, the subject is still put on the back burner and shows few considerable results when it comes to the establishment of quantifiable goals. Even though mitigation no doubt must be addressed, international climate governance spaces also need to yield clear and proactive stances for the global **adaptation, loss and damages, and climate finance agendas, thereby mainstreaming the concept of climate justice.**

Much more so than just resilience, adaptation means ensuring that subsistence and survival will persist in spaces where climate changes are posing a threat to the population's well-being and physical integrity, especially in the South and in more vulnerable territories. Although the agenda is gaining momentum, clear goals are still lacking, which is why developing quantifiable adaptation-related goals is key. Although the Paris Agreement's Article

7 addresses the subject, it is discussed in a qualitative manner, and no instruments required to develop quantifiable goals are provided. The Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) is yet to be completed and incorporated into different agreements. This development will be of particular interest not only to Brazil, but also to all of Latin America and the Caribbean. In Central America, for instance, climate change has been responsible for decreasing the soil's productivity, contributing towards the forced displacement of millions of people within that region. In the Caribbean, certain island countries that are highly dependent on family farming are suffering massive losses because of increasingly destructive hurricanes. Thus, in the spirit of solidarity that should govern Brazil's foreign policy, the country's support for demands made by vulnerable, low-income countries calling for greater clarity and assistance in implementing climate adaptation (for example, climate-smart agriculture) will contribute towards political integration in the region.

A related issue is that, despite commitments previously agreed upon by industrialized countries, climate finance remains scarce – not only for purposes of adaptation, but also to allow more vulnerable countries and populations to cope with climate change-induced loss and damages. The issue of loss and damages is a step beyond adaptation; in other words, it arises when adapting to climate change is no longer an option because the damage following the impact has already been done. Since this is an agenda that addresses social

processes such as migration and forced displacement, related concepts, such as responsibility (with respect to those primarily responsible for greenhouse gas emissions, especially in the cumulative sense), compensation, reparations, and distribution, are key issues for countries of the South. The war in Ukraine resulted in a 35% increase in the difference of commitments taken on by industrialized countries for climate finance, as well as funds that were actually allocated; in 2022, estimates for this gap range from US\$ 102 trillion to US\$ 135 trillion.

Given that funding is critical for COP27's main agenda – boosting the means of implementation and support – and that this theme will resurface at COP28, which is set to take place in the United Arab Emirates in 2023, Brazil should endeavor to further mechanisms like the L&D Finance Facility (LDFF), which was proposed by the G77 along with China, and which seeks to ensure technical support and finance mechanisms for the loss and damages agenda. In a broader sense, Brazil can help to push this issue well beyond the realm of climate governance by ensuring that it also underpins discussions on global governance reform and particularly advocating in its favor during its leadership of the G20 in 2024.

Brazilian diplomacy, whose tradition of universalism (once it is reinstated) allows for the creation of new coalitions made up of emerging economies around specific issues, should endeavor to establish alliances to address specific

subjects, in accordance with the “BASIC+” configuration (Brazil, South Africa, India, and China, with one or two additional countries later joining in). BASIC, in and of itself, is far from a novelty; the coalition has come together for climate negotiations intermittently since 2008, when it operated under the principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities, or CBDR. A tighter coalition comprising these large developing countries in global decision-making spaces (during preparatory meetings as well as in the COPs), featuring a broader composition and attuned to the current context, can be a catalyst for bringing together a significant part of South countries around, for instance, the subject of climate finance for disaster prevention, preparedness, and response.

Placing the concept of climate justice at the center of its international strategy, Brazil will be able to influence, from a South standpoint, an agenda that is usually set by industrialized countries. This will consequently enable Brazil to more effectively back an agenda that reaches well beyond the subject of climate mitigation (or, as the case may be, adaptation itself), while reinforcing that it only makes sense to think about climate change if sustainable development and social inclusion are mainstreamed in such discussions.

This reasoning should not apply only to global climate change conferences. Compared to climate COPs, **global convention spaces for discussing biodiversity and desertification** – both of which are core subjects for the South

– receive little attention and scarce resources. If Brazil successfully combines forces with other Latin American and Caribbean countries and, in a broader sense, the South on this agenda, it will be able to garner support for both agreements. More specifically, as the world’s most biodiverse country and under the scope of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Brazil should advocate for a robust post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework that is attuned to the Paris Agreement and that should lay the foundations, by 2050, for changes made to society that cause it to become “increasingly harmonious with nature,” in addition to acknowledging and strengthening the rights of Indigenous peoples and local communities, including their rights to territory, water and previous, free and informed consultation.

At the same time, Brazil, which is already prone to desertification in its Northeast (more specifically, in the Caatinga ecosystem) and South regions, should use its space at the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) to push for the creation of new mechanisms aimed at increasing the productivity of farmed lands without drying up the soil or destroying forests. Furthermore, it should uphold ways of mitigating the expansion of arid lands and, to this end, push for increased climate finance. As a country prone to droughts and their consequences, particularly in the so-called “Drought Polygon” (Polígono da Seca), an area encompassing parts of Brazil’s Northeast and Southeast regions, Brazil should use the G-77 to leverage South-South

ties, with the purpose of supporting the current African-led efforts to establish mechanisms for drought prevention, management, and response.

In accordance with the principle of climate justice, and in the democratic spirit that encompasses all these global decision-making spaces, Brazil's role in global climate change negotiations should always be underpinned by constant dialogue with the civil society, using regular channels of effective participation, and should include the participation of populations that are most susceptible to climate change, such as **indigenous, quilombola and low-income communities, as well as predominantly black populations in Brazil's urban centers**. To achieve this, Brazil should boost its universities, think tanks, non-governmental organizations and community leaderships at each COP, as well as other decision-making spaces related to climate change and the environment.



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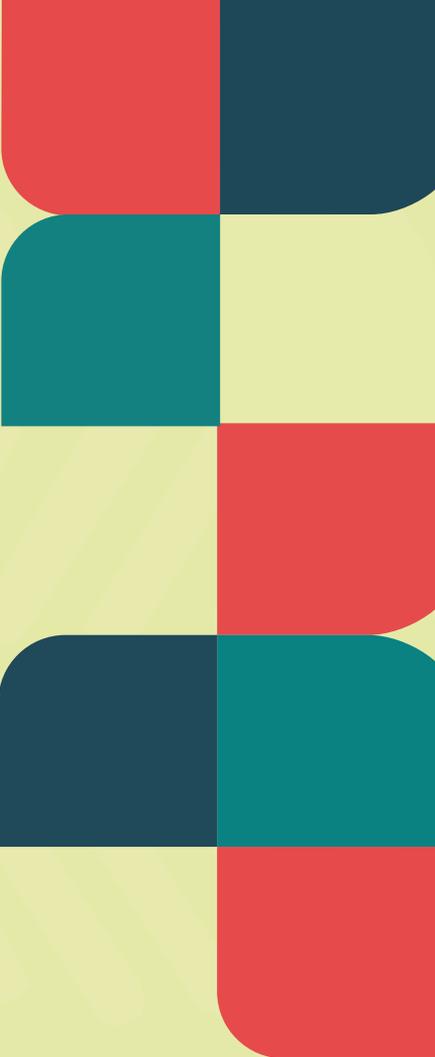
## International and South-South cooperation

## International and South-South cooperation

Despite the geographic, political, socio-economic, and cultural heterogeneity of South countries, it is possible to trace a common denominator based on the shared experience of overcoming colonialism and the pursuit of development through solidarity. This has already been done in the past, when the South Commission (1987-1990) led by Julius Nyerere under the scope of the United Nations offered a collaborative diagnosis for the challenges then faced by developing countries, in addition to finding ways to strengthen South-South Cooperation and foster these countries' development and sovereignty. Nowadays, these affinities are enmeshed with other issues experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic, including a highly unjust global response; the soaring levels of debt that several countries have accrued; and the constraints imposed upon them by the increasing geopolitical tensions between global powers. The climate agenda offers new possibilities for a common vision to be adopted by South countries and societies, and Brazil can play a leading role in these efforts by mobilizing other developing countries that are strongly focused on the subject of climate governance, such as Costa Rica, Barbados, Kenya, and Bangladesh, so that a second edition of the South Commission is launched.

Moreover, to Brazil, South-South and Triangular Cooperation, which was ignored by Bolsonaro's administration in favor of a blind allegiance to Washington, offers a wide host of potential economic, cultural, and political benefits for

Brazilian society – not all of which are quantifiable. Thus, given the growing demand for sustainable solutions and innovations, Brazil should pursue new paths for South-South Cooperation, not only with Latin American and Caribbean countries, but also with African and Asian partners, focusing on key issues for a just and sovereign transition in the South and, following the guidelines that govern the South-South Cooperation, guided by the demands voiced by partner states.



**10**

## **Climate as a basis for integration in Latin America and the Caribbean**

## Climate as a basis for integration in Latin America and the Caribbean

In the international arena, in addition to reaping the benefits of climate-related cooperation and diplomacy for the Brazilian population, Brazil should also seek to work in solidarity with other developing countries and, more broadly, take on a more proactive role in global affairs. With the start of a new political cycle in the country, Brazil possesses all the conditions and capabilities needed to lead a climate agenda that is developed from the perspective of the South. This will entail combining climate action with sustainable development, under the umbrella of a just and inclusive transition paradigm that is attuned to the demands, realities and priorities of developing countries.

Latin America and the Caribbean should be the priority for Brazil's climate-related foreign policy. It is precisely together with its neighboring countries that Brazil shares the impacts of climate change and environmental destruction, through the rivers, storms, floods, droughts and other phenomena that cross international borders. But it is also with these countries that Brazil has consolidated its long-standing tradition as a peaceful settler of conflicts, resolving disputes through dialogue and cooperation in favor of shared development. Nevertheless, regional integration organizations, particularly Unasur and Mercosur, currently lack up-to-date institutional frameworks to advance the climate agenda. This is exactly why, as Brazil revitalizes and upgrades regional spaces that were emptied during the Bolsonaro administration, Brazil should pursue new paths for regional

integration, setting climate and inclusive, solidary and sustainable development as its cornerstones, while overhauling institutional organizational frameworks in order to make them robust enough to address the current political context.

More specifically, Brazil's regional strategy should be based on the **Mercosur-Unasur-OTCA triad**, with agendas split into different arrangements. The first steps will entail reversing the current flexibilization agenda in Mercosur, allowing Bolivia to join the block and strengthening the organization's socio-environmental agenda, whose long-standing role in establishing peace and developing the region – which additionally helped Brazil and Argentina to overcome their strong geopolitical rivalry – should not be underappreciated. Mercosur should also play a key role in two other agendas: those of climate adaptation, and the development of a regional governance for lithium. Regarding adaptation, Mercosur should follow internationally established climate governance paths, devising mechanisms such as aggregated goals, technical cooperation, and financing mechanisms. The organization should be the catalyst for a regional adaptation system. Moreover, Mercosur should play out a key role in ramping up the region's lithium governance. This mineral has a growing geopolitical significance, as it is essential for digitalization technologies as well as in the energy transition, and has therefore become the object of increasing contention between global powers. The main lithium reserves encompass Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, and Brazil.

And, despite minor breakthroughs in this area, there is still a need for more robust institutional measures aimed at the socio-environmentally responsible extraction, production, and trade of the mineral. Mercosur should therefore put in place a sound framework to manage lithium and ensure Chile's participation in all related matters.

At the same time, the revitalization of Unasur, which Brazil should immediately rejoin, should include the creation of a Council on Climate and Development focused on two subjects that intersect with the environmental realm: public health and the fight against transnational organized crime. This should be based on and approved at a regular Head of State meeting and should become a priority for the organization's political governance. Moreover, it should work closely together with Energy Councils and the South American Council for Infrastructure and Planning (Conselho Sul-Americano de Infraestrutura e Planejamento - Cosiplan) to ensure that energy and infrastructure policies take into account climate and scale elements, as well as decentralization and socio-environmental impacts. Finally, OTCA, as previously mentioned, can be used as a cooperation platform for all Amazon-related matters, and its significance can be further enhanced by adding other countries in the region as observers.

It will also be possible to undertake coordination and cooperation efforts with Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean under the scope of the Community of Latin

American and Caribbean States (Celac), which already receives support from the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (CEPAL) to develop its sustainability and climate action agenda.

A key space for climate-related science and knowledge, which can propel new cooperation ties in research and defense – always incorporating the goal of promoting social well-being – is Antarctica. The Brazilian Antarctic Program, PROANTAR, is aimed at generating scientific knowledge about Antarctica and its relationship with Earth systems, encompassing the cryosphere, oceans, the atmosphere, and biosphere – all of which are key elements for monitoring climate change. Since the melting of ice sheets and extreme temperatures recorded in Antarctica can lead to climate impacts with global reach, Brazil should, within the scope of the Antarctic Treaty, enhance its cooperation efforts to monitor these phenomena and their effects on the South Atlantic.

In addition to regional arrangements that are already consolidated, efforts must be made to build new spaces, more specifically by ensuring the speedy ratification of the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (the Escazu Agreement), which will help to foster transparency, inclusion and climate justice in Brazil and the region as a whole. This agreement is politically innovative because it proposes to bring

together the environmental and human rights agendas with the goal of building a regional environmental democracy backed by a Regional Public Mechanism and the Conference of the Parties, which are key instruments for ensuring civil society's participation in the agenda and for updating it. That is precisely why this agreement, which must be swiftly approved by Brazil's National Congress, should be harnessed as an instrument to advance Latin America's climate and human rights agendas. For instance, the **Escazu Agreement** should be used to foster regional cooperation seeking to prevent, monitor and respond to climate-induced migration. It can also be wielded to generate transparent and updated data as well as to protect, ensure access to legal rights and guarantee rights for individuals who are forcibly displaced. The Escazu space can also be leveraged for purposes of launching regional educational and environmental education efforts aimed at preventing climate denialism and raising awareness in Latin American and Caribbean populations on impacts resulting from the climate crisis, as well as the importance of pursuing joint solutions.

The region is experiencing new political dynamics. In addition to new, progressive national governments, innovative policies and programs begin to emerge, including in the realm of climate governance. The rise to power of Chile's Gabriel Boric and Colombia's Gustavo Petro's came about after social groups demanded, among several other things, trade that caused less damage to the environment, for purposes of guaranteeing a dignified life. Working

together with both these countries, Brazil can make headway in policies that include bilateral cooperation on energy transition and socio-environmentally responsible extractivist agendas, but that also help to regenerate the region's integration organizations. On the streets, in the ballots, and inside government offices, there is a feeling of change in the air.

Nevertheless, the region still experiences a lack of funding needed to successfully implement public policies. During the previous "pink wave", physical and infrastructure integration was led by Brazil and funded mostly by the Banco Nacional de Desenvolvimento Econômico e Social (the Brazilian National Development Bank – BNDES). In contrast, the current setting is vastly different. A scarcity of regional banks capable of financing projects, regardless of whether this is due to a lack of resources or inadequate climate-related planning – and the dismantling of the Bank of the South (Banco do Sul) project, one of the main initiatives conceived by progressive segments of society – only widened the gap between the demands and the available funds needed to address the region's climate crisis. It will therefore be necessary to seek the support of actors from outside the region, not only bilaterally but also via development agencies.

All these cooperation spaces are also shaped by an increasingly tangible element in the region's geopolitical dynamics – the growing rivalry between China and the United States. When it comes to the climate agenda, it is particularly important

for the region to be politically united, so that it can successfully negotiate with both these powers to ensure that cooperation ties, including direct investments made in Latin America, yield concrete benefits for local populations. Transport-related infrastructure projects that cross international borders, such as railroads and highway bridges, should be discussed by all impacted Latin-American countries, with subnational administrations in relevant countries also playing an active role in the negotiations.





**11**

## **Cooperation with African and Asian partners**

## Cooperation with African and Asian partners

The African continent continues to be strongly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, with the region's GDP rates falling 3 to 5.4% since the start of the sanitary crisis. Even as discussions on "economically resetting" the continent continue, African leaders have been discussing how to make headway in the climate agenda. Africa, after all, is the continent with the least responsibility in global warming, but which endures its most dire consequences. African countries have become increasingly outspoken on climate talks, including in the field of climate adaptation, in which they have called for more support and cooperation. Efforts like the Great Green Wall – a project designed to reforest the strip that crosses the Sahel from West to East – signal an ability to innovate and to diversify external partnerships in the field of climate governance.

This changing context poses new challenges and opportunities for Brazil's South-South cooperation. Ties with African countries are important for Brazil not only for their historical legacy and for bilateral exchanges, but also for the role that African partners play in multilateral spaces, where they frequently negotiate positions as a bloc.

**The African continent should once again be accorded a key space in Brazil's foreign policy.** Brazil should not restrict its efforts to rebuilding South-South cooperation and resuming commercial and economic ties; it should also work to include those partners in a more comprehensive political

process that seeks to align Brazil's political and commercial interests with those of African countries. Moreover, ties with African actors should be incorporated and conceived alongside a South-focused Brazilian foreign policy aimed at building a multilateralist multipolar world.

For this to happen, though, Brazil's resumption of its cooperation with African partners must have the climate and environmental agendas front and center. To successfully bolster the climate-related elements of this cooperation, Brazil can enhance exchanges on matters related to **food sovereignty**, in which Embrapa already plays a key role in technical cooperation. Brazil can also expand cooperation in the field of **energy sovereignty**, always addressing the concern of generating income and dignified jobs as part of a just and sovereign transition. Regarding energy, Brazil's policy towards Africa should be thought out within the energy transition program, in other words, with the goal of pushing for a sustainable and sovereign energy agenda. To this end, efforts must be made, for instance, to rethink Brazil's biofuel exports to Africa, since this policy led to considerable issues. The focus should be instead on fostering cooperation efforts in the continent's energy industry. After all, this represents a structural bottleneck and a demand voiced by several African countries.

Garnering support from the **BRICS New Development Bank (NDB)** and ensuring that the institution complies with high socio-environmental standards in its

investments will be key elements in financing these measures. Moreover, Brazil should leverage its cooperation ties in sustainable infrastructure, green industrial policies, and inclusive digitalization, complementing efforts in areas in which Brazil was once a reference in its South-South cooperation, such as public health, education, science, and income transfer programs.

The expansion of trade agreements, whether these are in the multilateral realm or resulting from agreements signed by blocks and regional organizations, should include environmental protection and facilitation clauses. Since Brazil-Africa relations are underpinned by themes at the core of the climate and environment agendas, there is a pressing need to ensure environmental clauses with updated goals for decarbonization and adaptation. To this end, cooperation arrangements and facilitation of investments (ACFI), provided these are drafted in a responsible way, can be important tools.

In the political realm, South Africa, in particular, has been and should continue to be a key partner to Brazil for furthering important South-South issues in global climate change discussions, often alongside India (or, depending on the subject, through BASIC's more straightforward composition). Collaboration plans between these three great multiethnic democracies, which are also regional leaders within their respective continents, could be reframed as a "climate IBSA" focused on climate and environmental cooperation,

and specifically addressing subjects like biodiversity, renewable energies, and water resource management. There should be an additional focus on the protection of oceans, since the coalition already has a significant maritime aspect (which, today, is run by these countries' Navies) and considering that the three countries are home to massive coastal areas.

Our strategic partnerships, such as those with South Africa and with the Portuguese-Language Countries, Portuguese-Speaking African Countries (PALOPs), should be restored. Cooperation agreements related to just energy transition signed by South Africa with the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, and the European Union can be sources of inspiration for Brazil's road ahead. Priority should also be given to the setting of new agendas with the countries of the Gulf of Guinea countries, a strategic space for political cooperation, as well as security-related dialogues with Brazil due to the increase in maritime piracy activities in the region.

In the Middle East and North Africa, both Egypt and the United Arab Emirates – which will respectively host the COP27 and COP28 conferences – have signaled their intent to boost climate cooperation ties. With Egypt – the main destination for Brazilian exports to the region – Brazil can branch out beyond trade and into areas of common interest within the scope of climate change, such as fighting desertification and promoting food sovereignty. With the United Arab Emirates, which is working to become

carbon-free by mid-century, Brazil should work on renewable energies and hydrogen, both listed as priorities in the UAE's energy transition plan.

Asia is home to Brazil's main commercial partner: **China**. Even though Brazil has had a strategic partnership in place with the Asian giant since 1993, planned and long-term strategies by Brazil are missing. Today, China's global significance reaches well beyond just economic cooperation. It is also one of the main actors in global discussions on the environment and climate governance. In addition to setting forth decarbonization goals and a medium-term, national-scope transition, China officially speaks out in favor of sustainable development, including within the realm of its foreign policies, such as, for instance, by stressing its goal to make the trade, logistics, and infrastructure projects comprising its Belt and Road Initiative greener. Despite its current position as the world's leading greenhouse gas emitter, historically China accounts for only 12% of all global emissions; moreover, the country is expected to reach its decarbonization goals by 2025, following a peak in its emissions.

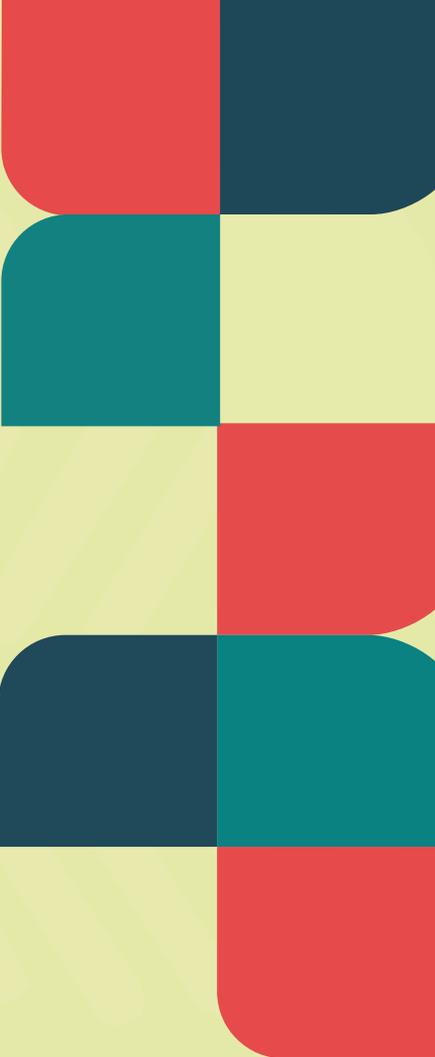
In the international arena, China has launched new environmental and climate governance cooperation efforts. With industrialized countries like the United States, however, this cooperation is jeopardized by geopolitical rivalries. On the other hand, China's climate cooperation with other developing countries has been prone to less contention and brings forth

a wide host of cooperation opportunities that Brazil should harness.

At the same time, however, China's activities in developing countries call for greater attention. Due to the disruption, within the context of the pandemic, of global logistics and a considerable restructuring of global value chains, in addition to escalating geopolitical tensions, the Chinese government has stepped up efforts to branch out its international source of energy and food. In Africa, in particular, the Chinese government has fostered large-scale investments in infrastructure projects like ports, railroads, and highways, which, in turn, have catalyzed structural changes in several parts of the continent. Along with China's strategy of diversifying commodity imports, which was enhanced due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and which is responsible for an expansion in lands and cultivation areas (including soybean) in African countries, these investments may represent new source of competition for Brazilian cooperation and exports, including agricultural products. Thus, ensuring that Brazil's exports remain highly competitive requires enhancing the sustainability of Brazilian agriculture, for instance by establishing credible and widely accepted certification systems, in addition to bringing about innovations in effective due diligence methods in line with the World Trade Organization's (WTO) multilateral trading system and guidelines, while ensuring that the WTO framework is not used for purposes of protectionism by rich countries.

Beyond trade, Brazil needs to identify its priorities for green investments in its own territory and region, not only meeting China's interest in the transport of commodities, but also channeling investments so as to sustainably advance South America's infrastructure and national integration. Given Brazil's export relationship with China, which focuses heavily on commodities like soybeans, iron ore and beef, ties with the Asian superpower are instrumental in consolidating an environmentally responsible agenda in Brazil. A bilateral commitment declaration along the lines of the agreement signed by China and the United States in Glasgow (the "U.S.-China Joint Glasgow Declaration on Enhancing Climate Action in the 2020s"), or a bilateral agreement to bolster tracking capabilities of exported products, should be incorporated into Brazil's goals within the scope of this strategic partnership. More broadly, efforts should be made to assess, in a more consistent fashion, and in dialogue with other industries, the possibility of Brazil joining the Belt and Road Initiative.

Brazil should also work together with other important historical and geopolitical partners in Asia — such as Japan, South Korea and Singapore — on issues related to the climate and the environment, focusing on the just transition agenda and on technological catch-up in areas such as digitalization. Brazil should also deepen dialogue with India in climate discussions and, when it comes to forest-related matters, with Indonesia, including through the BIC arrangement.



**12**

## **Climate cooperation with industrialized countries**

## Climate cooperation with industrialized countries

Beyond the realm of South-South cooperation, it will be necessary to restore ties with industrialized countries and regions, ensuring that they are based on mutual respect and reciprocity.

The European Union (EU) is going through a deep crisis due to the war in Ukraine, but it remains an important cornerstone in the emergence of a new multipolar order. Brazil-EU ties should, first and foremost, be underpinned by political dialogue – which was cut short by the Bolsonaro administration. In accordance with Brazil and the EU’s historical relations, the Mercosur-EU Agreement should be reviewed so as to boost its political cooperation dimension, underscoring that this agreement should not lead to deindustrialization in Brazil or in other Mercosur countries. It will also be important to proactively address the agreement’s dimensions of sustainability and the defense of human rights, particularly due to the urgent measures that the new administration will be required to take to tackle deforestation and to implement a new vision of sustainability for the Amazon. More specifically, the chapter on Sustainable Trade and Development should be strengthened for purposes of introducing stronger commitments related to curbing deforestation and protecting environmental activists, indigenous peoples, quilombola communities and other social groups impacted by the trade in commodities with the European Union.

It will also be necessary to pay attention to the fact that, within the context of energy

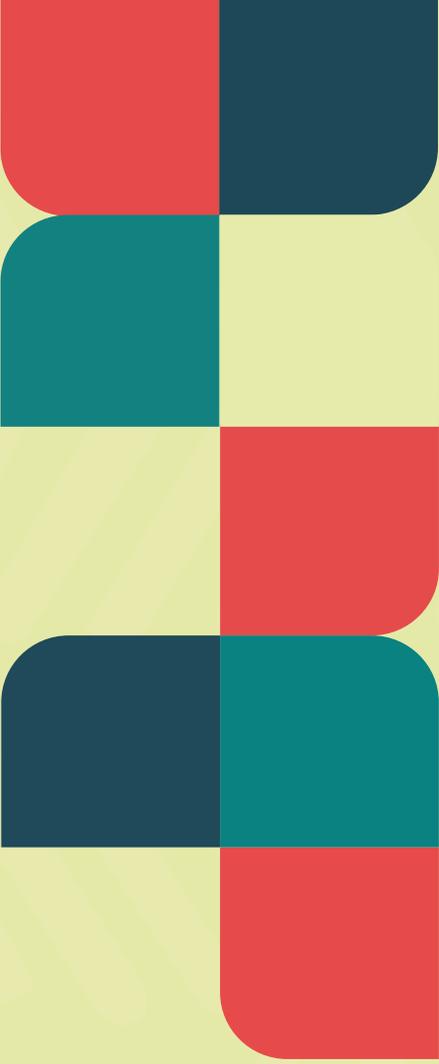
transition already in course in the European Union, the region should endeavor not to transfer negative impacts, such as carbon exports, to Brazil – for example, by shipping cars that are no longer compliant with new greenhouse gas emissions reductions requirements.

Even though Brazil already follows many OECD-set norms, dialogue on standards and regulations related to due diligence may continue to render exchanges and lessons that are of interest to Brazil. A thorough assessment of risks and opportunities related to fully committing to the organization’s economic and political plans, as well as a general consultation made with the civil society, the private sector, and additional stakeholders is also worth considering.

In relation to the United States, it might be possible to harness the new possibilities for cooperation, investment, and financing created by the U.S. Inflation Reduction Act to open new cooperation fronts in the areas covered by this legislation, such as decarbonization, the efficient use of energy, and the reduction of deforestation and forest fires, always with differentiated attention to the transfer of new green technologies, including those related to the exploitation of hydrogen, the electrification of public transportation, low-carbon agriculture, and green digitalization.

Moreover, **it is possible to innovate in cooperation with industrialized countries** (among others) against deforestation and forest fires by establishing a register and

mechanisms for enhancing traceability (including using new technologies, such as artificial intelligence and blockchain) to ensure that Brazilian products and services do not contribute to deforestation, are free from human rights violations, and emit less greenhouse gasses. Devising transparent and reliable forest product certification accepted by a wide host of countries would enable Brazil to reclaim its proactive role not only in the environmental realm, but also in international trade. Brazil should therefore strengthen international cooperation with importing countries so as to move towards cleaner commodity chains – or, to put it in better terms, “responsibility chains.” This expression refers to interconnected sets of socio-environmental ties that link commodity producers to consumers, starting from the financing source and primary production, all that way up to extraction and manufacturing (where applicable), export and import and, finally, ending at final consumption.



**13**

## **The South, climate change and global governance**

## The South, climate change and global governance

Historic demands voiced by Brazil and, more broadly, by the South regarding global governance have not been met. Seventy-six years after the UN's foundation, for instance, its framework continues to reflect the post-war distribution of power. This obsolescence inevitably leads to efficacy gaps, including issues traditionally defended by Brazil – and, to a wider extent, by the South – that continue to backtrack significantly: poverty eradication and the fight against inequality, inclusive development, fair terms of trade, disarmament, and a successful reform of the UN peace and security architecture, particularly the Security Council. A considerable part of the problems that humanity faces today potentially would not even exist had these issues been addressed in the past. Nevertheless, despite these gaps, global governance must tackle challenges that are increasingly transnational in nature, including those stemming from climate change, and Brazil should reclaim its defense of a more just, democratic, and effective global governance.

How to place the issue of climate change squarely at the center of these discussions without, however, reinforcing the biases that characterize negotiations? From 2023 to 2026, Brazil could host a series of international conferences and summits, starting with an Amazon Summit, through the G20, IBSA, BRICS, and possibly a new climate COP. This sequence of major international events represents an opportunity to shape agendas across several multilateral spaces, allowing Brazil to reach the year 2026 with a renewed and

well consolidated international strategy. It will be essential for Brazil to define priority themes for each space, in order to progressively advance a broad, coherent and propositional multilateral agenda towards a multipolar global order.

With the goal of formulating a global climate agenda that more efficiently addresses the demands of developing countries, **the new administration could convene, within the Legal Amazon, an enlarged OTCA during the first year of office.** This high-level meeting would provide momentum for a strategy for global governance reform that would address the issue of climate change based on the viewpoints of key developing countries. Through this meeting, the Brazilian Amazon would welcome Heads of State from Latin America and the Caribbean, in addition to a smaller number of leaders from other developing countries (such as South Africa, India, China, and, because of the BICs Indonesia and the Democratic Republic of Congo) to mobilize support and South-South exchanges in the fields of adaptation, loss and damages, and climate finance – and, more broadly, climate justice. The Summit could additionally be used as a catalyst to raise awareness on the issue of a just and solidary transition within the scope of the G20, a theme addressed in greater detail later in this document.

The meeting could be a launching pad for a **second edition of the South Commission, with the issue of climate change at the center.** The initiative would update efforts made by the 1987-1990 South Commission, whose findings influenced the Eco-92

conference, the conventions resulting from it, and the sustainable development agenda. The Commission would focus on generating a diagnosis for climate-related challenges and competences, in addition to their intersection with other key issues, such as sustainable development and the eradication of hunger globally. The Commission could then use this assessment to devise an Action Plan to be implemented, within the UN system, by the Group of 77 (G-77). The G-77, which is currently deeply fragmented and assuming mostly defensive stances in discussions on UN reform, would consequently take on a more proactive role, including in devising new South-North partnerships.

Another climate-related issue that requires more attention and that can also be addressed through multilateral channels is climate finance. In times when setbacks resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine and rising national debt hamper the South's possibility of implementing sustainable development and a just transition, Brazil – working together with other in developing countries – should press, including via the BRICS, for structural and substantial reforms in Bretton Woods Institutions. These demands should include recommending innovative measures to leverage new forms of funding, such as blended finance models, which merge funds originating from different sources so as to enable climate adaptation and just transition in developing countries.

Notwithstanding Russia's partial isolation due to its invasion of Ukraine, the BRICS –

whose five members total over 3.6 billion people, or half of the global population – continues to be a relevant arrangement, not only for cooperation among BRICS members and with other countries, but also as a tool for advancing global governance reform, particularly given the G8's loss of relevance. Despite recurring forecasts, especially those made by Western actions, that political, economic, and strategic differences among BRICS members would surpass their common points, the BRICS block has managed to secure a level of cooperation that has exceeded expectations.

However, the BRICS agenda needs to be updated to better address the climate crisis, something that could be done, for instance, by prompting exchanges on their respective decarbonization strategies – as reflected in their NDCs and just transition processes. Even though these five countries have different oil, gas and carbon-related production and consumption levels, it is possible to pinpoint common areas of interest within the climate agenda. Brazil, in particular, should set agendas around the issues of food sovereignty, the eradication of hunger, the promotion of low-carbon agriculture, and humanitarian cooperation.

In the current geopolitical context, which has been heavily impacted by the war in Ukraine, attach on the legitimacy of the UN and the loss of steam of the G8, the G20 may become an increasingly relevant space for discussions of global issues, provided that member states are able to

restore its ability to tackle global financial crises. For Brazil, who will lead the group in 2024, the G20 represents a strategic space in the coming years, particularly for agendas around food sovereignty agenda and more equitable land use, taking into consideration the socio-environmental challenges brought on by inflation, by the disruption of global supply chains and by the downward trend in commodity prices. Since in 2025 Brazil is set to host the 15th Clean Energy Ministerial Conference and the “Innovation Mission” Ministerial Meeting, it should draw attention to and mobilize support for the South’s demands for clean and accessible energy.

One area of intersection with the climate agenda that warrants caution is peace and security. At the UN Security Council, a number of mostly Western countries have been defending the systematic inclusion of the climate issue as part of the body’s discussions. However, in December 2021, a draft Council resolution on climate and security was shelved after receiving vetoes from Russia and India (China abstained). Since January 2022, Brazil has occupied a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council, with a mandate for the 2022-2023 period – the 11th time that the country has served on the body since the foundation of the organization – and will assume the presidency once again in October 2023. As a country that has existed for over 150 years without armed conflict with any neighboring country, and as the first state to sign the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPAN), **Brazil possesses strong credentials to contribute to the**

### **debate on climate and security from the perspective of prevention.**

Consistent with the caution adopted in the past by Brazilian diplomacy in relation to attempts to expand the concept of security used in the Council, as in the case of the War on Terror, when new and exaggerated justifications for military interventionism were adopted, Brazil must emphasize the importance the adoption of preventive approaches, in particular through socio-economic development, diplomacy and climate action – efforts that should be led by other organs of the system, such as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the UNFCCC, the General Secretariat and, ultimately, the Peacebuilding Commission. These other forums allow for the adoption of precautionary approaches, in particular through socio-economic development, diplomacy and climate action. The Security Council does not have adequate responses to the environmental and climate challenges facing the international community, such as the heightened competition for scarce resources, the worsening of climate change and migrations influenced by these factors.

In addition to pointing out the risks of climate securitization, it is equally important to underline that resources should not be reallocated by the UN or by donors in the areas of development and humanitarian assistance – where financing is already below the commitments made by rich countries – for climate and security initiatives, particularly those involving militarization.

Outside the Security Council, Brazilian diplomacy, with the support of civil society, can help to balance this discussion by promoting debates on preventive approaches, in dialogue with the UNDP and the Department of Political Affairs and Peacebuilding or, even, at the General Assembly.



**14**

**Brazil is fully capable of restoring and enhancing its foreign policy legacy**

## Brazil is fully capable of restoring and enhancing its foreign policy legacy

Past experiences have shown that Brazil is capable not only of curbing deforestation and fostering innovations aimed at decarbonization but is also able to propose and mobilize support for new global governance initiatives.

Brazilians from all segments are increasingly concerned with climate change, which affects millions of people in the country, whether directly or indirectly. Partly in reaction to the Bolsonaro administration's climate denialism and anti-environmental policies, **Brazilian organized civil society engaged with climate issues has not been so well coordinated and diversified since the Rio 92 conference** – as reflected, for example, in the organization of the Brazil Climate Action Hub at the climate COPs.

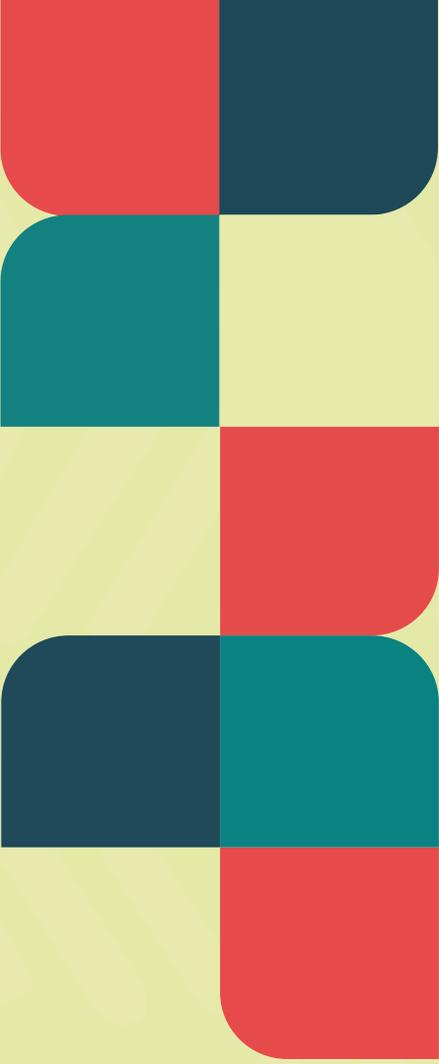
Moreover, several movements historically linked to workers' rights have incorporated climate agendas, both in the domestic realm and in international discussions. Some examples include the Landless Workers' Movement (Movimento dos Sem Terra - MST), which points out distortions created by a productive model that is focused on monoculture and relying on excessive use of chemical inputs; and trade union movements such as the Unified Workers' Central (Central Única dos Trabalhadores - CUT), which is analyzing the implications of the energy transition for workers' rights. Other significant movements – such as the Climate Observatory's 2045 Agenda, the 2030 Amazon Plan, the Concertação pela Amazônia (Concertation for the Amazon),

private sector initiatives for sustainability, the Consortium of Governors of the Legal Amazon, the Climate and Development Initiative: Visions for Brazil 2030, the Brazil Climate Action Hub, and the Climate Action Network – all identify demands, generate knowledge and recommend priorities for public policy.

In addition, movements that address climate justice and other climate-related issues have become more robust. Indigenous and quilombola community leaderships, such as the the Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil (Articulação dos Povos Indígenas do Brasil - APIB) and the National Coordination for the Articulation of Black Quilombola Rural Communities (Coordenação Nacional de Articulação de Quilombos - CONAQ), as well as groups representing other traditional communities, are all working to place the issue of climate governance at the center of Brazilian politics, including in international spaces. Some movements that successfully engage youth around the cause include Engajamundo and Youth Climate Leaders, in addition to periphery-focused organizations like those comprising the A Climate for Change Coalition (Coalizão O clima é de mudança), which have joined forces to raise awareness about environmental racism and to facilitate peripheral populations' access to international discussions on climate, including COPs.

Subnational governments are also gaining momentum as protagonists of climate action, or through new working methods,

be it individually through municipalities or states, or through partnerships such as the C40 global network of mayors, which proposes innovative climate measures for cities, in addition to the Legal Amazon Consortium (Consórcio dos Estados da Amazônia Legal), which is focusing on fostering green economy activities within the region. These actors have gained increasing recognition, as well as the ability to partake in international decision-making spaces like climate COPs. They should therefore be acknowledged as important sources for solutions for the climate crisis.



**15**

## **Governance**

## Governance

Immediately after being sworn in, the new administration will have to put in place a plan aimed at recovering capabilities that the State lost during the Bolsonaro government. It will also have to work to restore relationships with non-governmental actors that are critical for implementing a new vision of inclusive, solidary, and sustainable development. In addition to the institutions that have been dismantled by Bolsonaro, which will have to be “rebuilt with improvements,” efforts are necessary to introduce a governance framework that enables the drafting and implementation of a climate agenda that reflects the two main realms addressed in this document: the domestic and international spheres. For this to happen, four elements are required: legitimacy, coordination, mainstreaming, and inclusion.

- **Legitimacy:** In the context of a state that has been largely dismantled by the Bolsonaro administration and tarnished by state-sponsored climate denialism, and in light of the deepening climate crisis, Brazil’s climate agenda will need meaningful dialogue with both internal and external actors. The climate agenda will require robust political backing by the President’s Office and, more specifically, by the President himself.
- **Coordination:** The new administration will need to feature sound coordination, as well as highly qualified staff capable of defining how tasks will be allocated,

devising an action plan, and avoiding wasted efforts, unnecessary tensions and other organizational problems.

- **Mainstreaming:** The successful mainstreaming of the climate agenda will entail defining focal points in all government ministries, in addition to establishing an Inter Ministerial Group with regular meetings and tasked with two main duties: on one hand, ensuring collaboration and a horizontal flow of information among all federal government divisions; and, on the other, ensuring that there is an effective interface with the coordination of the climate agenda within the Presidency.
- **Inclusion:** The climate crisis impacts everyone, but not uniformly. Formulating responses for the crisis requires comprehensive discussions with different segments of society, particularly those who are disproportionately exposed to the risks and who suffer the direct consequences of climate change, such as women, Indigenous peoples, black people and low-income and peripheral communities. Since, according to current predictions, future generations will disproportionately bear the brunt of worsening climate change, an intergenerational approach is urgently needed.

In practical terms, ensuring these principles calls for the establishment of a

Special Office within the Presidency of the Republic to work closely with the Office of the Special Advisor for International Affairs, as well as ministries and other government departments tasked with the formulation of foreign and domestic policies related to climate and sustainable development.

The **Special Office for Climate Change** would help to coordinate initiatives related to inclusive, solidary, and sustainable development, including decarbonization goals with targets for 2025 and reviewing the NDC. At the domestic level, it would consult with ministries, particularly the Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Economy, the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation. It would also be endowed with full legal authority to hold conversations with subnational governments, civil society, the private sector, and the financial sector, as well as any relevant international organizations. At the international level, this department would work closely together with the Office of the Special Advisor for International Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MRE) and other bodies regarding global climate negotiations and other cross-cutting agendas with other Ministries.

Placing Brazil's climate-centered international strategy squarely within the Presidency of the Republic would also allow the government to maximize the impact of Brazilian diplomacy in rebuilding and

expanding international cooperation and in resuming its defense of multilateralism. It is equally important to ensure that Brazilian civil society – a source of both demands and solutions – has meaningful participation setting the climate agenda, in both its domestic and international realms. Spaces for dialogue and participation – councils and other channels of communication that were dismantled by the Bolsonaro administration – should be reestablished and enhanced. Restoring these spaces and their links to other ministries and the Presidency of the Republic should include the establishment of a “Climate Council” (“Conselhã do Clima”), coupled with greater transparency, including the generation and publication of open data, and strengthening the Law of Access to Information. Finally, there is a need for capacity-building among government officials on climate and environment issues, in addition to awareness-raising on the need for broader dialogue with non-governmental actors, so that the climate agenda can take root within the state and in Brazilian civil society in the long term.





## ▶ About the Project

The Project Climate and International Strategy: New Paths for Brazil is an effort led by Plataforma CIPÓ, in collaboration with Fundação Perseu Abramo, to draft a document with diagnoses and recommendations for Brazil's foreign policy. The document was launched at COP27 in Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt, in November 2022 with members of President-elect Lula's transition team.

## About Plataforma CIPÓ

The project is led by Plataforma CIPÓ ([www.plataformacipo.org](http://www.plataformacipo.org)), an independent, non-profit, women-led Brazilian think tank that works at the intersection of climate and international relations. CIPÓ works to support local and national governments, international organizations, civil society entities and private sector actors in developing effective responses as they face the emerging challenges of the climate emergency.

## ▶ Credits

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