

## **Summary of the National Report**

**Challenges and possibilities of civil society actors in what concerns their participation in the national and international negotiation and decision making processes facing the climate changes.**

### ***A Brazilian civil society action panorama***

*(Preliminar version)*

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## **SUMMARY**

The current report contextualizes the coordinated action of the Brazilian social organizations, in what concerns the climate changes theme and the articulation of several Brazilian initiatives (organizations, networks, movements) with the initiatives and bargaining in the international ambit. Following, a general panorama of the main social organizations and Brazilian networks that act nowadays on the climate changes theme is presented. From that panorama, as we are amid the Conference of the Parts of Climate Changes Convention in Copenhagen (COP-15), a brief analysis is produced about the participation of some of those actors in the negotiations and side agendas under discussion along the Conference. And at last, a reflection is made about the potentialities and challenges that are presented to the Brazilian Civil Society concerning the mobilization around the theme and the agenda of climate changes.

### **General Overview**

Even though Brazil hosted the Conference of the United Nations about the Environment and Development (UNCED), Rio-92, and, at that time, organizations of the Brazilian civil society were mobilized to be present and active at the event, taking part of the debate there developed, this action was considerably shy and had a low national repercussion. It is possible to affirm that until the beginning of the 1990's, the issue around climate changes was discussed by few people. The debate was restricted to little expressive circles of the Federal Government and to scientific and technical institutions. Up to 1997, the occasion of the signature of the Kyoto protocol, the climate changes were able to mobilize only a weak participation from the Brazilian civil society.

Within this context, the main articulation of the Brazilian civil society working with the issue of climate changes is the Brazilian Forum of NGOs and Social Movements for the Environment and Development (FBOMS), especially the Working Group about climate that is part of its structure. Founded in 1992, the Working Group became the national cell of the Climate Action Network and, as we will see, it has an important role in the information and mobilization of the Brazilian civil society on what concerns climate changes. The Forum and the Climate WG, specifically, gathers a great part of the most active organizations on the mobilization and debate about the theme in Brazil. These organizations are identified and described in Chapter 2 of this study.

It is also in the FBOMS ambit where an important mobilization initiative of the Brazilian organized civil society starts for the 15th Conference of the Parts of the UN Convention on

Climate Changes in Copenhagen, in December 2009: the Global Campaign for Climate Action – Brazil.

Another important articulation, the Climate Observatory, was founded in 2002 to mobilize the organized Brazilian civil society around questions referred to MDL and forests devastation. Further, we will see that its creation coincides with the growing repercussion the climate changes theme earns in Brazil since the end of the 2000's.

The Kyoto Protocol signature, in 1997, its launching in 2005 and the advertisement of the Fourth Report of Evaluation of IPCC, in 2007, can be considered important landmarks on this process, from where the issue of climate changes became more visible, determining a wider engagement of the Brazilian civil society.

From then on, other sectors of civil society, such as NGOs involved with themes like the conscientious consumption and familiar agriculture, social movements, indigenous populations and trade unions, became interested in the climate changes theme and, even having little information about the climate regime, they play an important role when they increase the pressure on the government so that it participates in a constructive manner in the international bargaining about the climate changes and work for the enforcement of the global climate regime.

### 1990's Decade

FBOMS - Brazilian Forum of NGOs and Social Movements for the Environment and Development, the main articulation of Brazilian civil society entities involved with the climate changes theme, was founded in 1990 to make possible the participation of the Brazilian civil society at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), Rio-92. It played an active and relevant role at that moment: it integrated the Interministerial Commission of Environment (CIMA) and was in charge of the production of the Brazilian Governments' documentation shown at the Conference, it was also responsible for the publication of the report "Environment and Development: The NGOs' and the Brazilian social movements' point of view" and participated in the organization of the Global Forum 92 and of the International NGO Forum (INGOF) – side events to Rio-92 aiming to gather the organized civil society.

Among the entities and movements members of FBOMS at the time of the Global Forum 92 large organizations were highlighted like "Vitae Civilis – Institute for Development, Environment and Peace", "SOS Mata Atlântica" and Greenpeace Brazil; and social

movements for preservation of the Amazon region.

Still in 1992 the Climate Network Brazil was created linked to the Brazilian Forum of NGOs and social movements for the environment and development. Originated from an initiative of Vitae Civilis and Furpa (Parnaíba River Foundation) in the FBOMS ambit, the Climate Network Brazil intended to be the Brazilian equivalent to the Latin-American NGOs Network of Climate Change (RELAC).

This movement stresses the first coordinated action of the Brazilian entities in what concerns the environmental issues. However, Vitae Civilis, in a study of 2008, affirms that the engagement of entities and Brazilian social movements with the climate change theme is recent. The study shows that the climate changes were consolidated as a theme of the Brazilian civil society agenda only after the end of the 1990's, becoming, specially, an important instrument on the already established debate about deforestation. The Kyoto Protocol signature, in 1997, its implementation, in 2005, and the advertisement of the Fourth Report of Evaluation of IPCC, in 2007, can be considered important landmarks of this process, from which the climate changes issue earned more visibility bringing up a wider engagement of the Brazilian civil society.

The 7th Conference of the Parts of the UN Frame Convention about Climate Changes in Marrakesh, held in 2002, also played an important role in the growing repercussion of the climate changes issue in Brazil. The debate about the use of MDL for forests preservation, that marked COP7 and is a specially sensitive theme for Brazil, pressed many Brazilian social organizations, concerned with the deforestation, to start taking part in the debate about climate changes.

### The 2000's

During nearly a decade, the only articulations joining entities of the Brazilian civil society involved with the climate changes were the Brazilian Forum of NGOs and Social Movements for the Environment and Development and Climate Working Party. Still nowadays, the Climate WP and the Brazilian Forum of NGOs and Social Movements for the Environment and Development are constituted as the main space of dialogue of the organized Brazilian civil society for the discussion of climate change. FBOMS is recognized by the Brazilian Government as an important partner, a privileged space for the dialogue with the civil society about climate changes and acts as a representative in several meetings of Governmental instances that are responsible for decisions concerning the Brazilian environmental policy.

The beginning of the 2000's, as seen before, was nevertheless marked by events that brought more visibility to the theme. It is that context that defines the creation of new relevant articulations about the action of Brazilian civil society towards the climate changes issue.

Amid such organizations, the most important is the Climate Observatory. Founded in 2002, during the debate that surrounded COP7, the Climate Observatory appeared as an articulation of Non-Governmental Organizations inserted, specially, in the discussion about the use of MDL for the preservation of the forests. The Observatory had its activities interrupted by nearly three years. However, nowadays it was reactivated, expanded its scope of action and is configured as an important alliance of entities, whose action is, more and more expressive and relevant.

Recently, another relevant movement referring to the mobilization of the Brazilian civil society around the climate changes issues can be noticed: several local states created their forums to promote the debate about initiatives and programs on climate changes, bringing together Government, private sector, academy and the civil society. These spaces of dialogue are important channels and there are currently around 10 local state forums on climate changes.

The interest on the climate changes theme has grown in many sectors of the Brazilian civil society under this process. Organizations that promote familiar agriculture, entities concerned with the conscientious consumption, social movements, indigenous people and trade unions, for instance, began to take part on the debate about the theme. However, many of these organizations have a lack of information about the climate regime and therefore face difficulties to develop a more systematic action around the issue beyond their own specific agendas.

As we will see next, one among the many actual challenges preventing us from having a more efficient action from the Brazilian civil society on the climate changes is the qualification and training of the social organizations and their representatives, so that they could take part in the debate about the climate global regime.

#### Identifying the main entities involved with the theme today

It is possible to affirm that almost all the entities and social movements involved nowadays with climate changes are members of either one of the these two important articulations shown above: Climate Working Party and the Climate Observatory. Great

international entities present in Brazil, such as Greenpeace, WWF and OXFAM, have a highlighted role in the debates and in the activities developed in the ambit of such spaces of dialogue; although, Brazilian organizations, with different profiles and sizes, also develop a relevant role.

Regarding the outline that the debate about climate changes assumes nowadays in Brazil, it is possible to affirm that climate appears, normally, associated with the deforestation issue that composes a traditional theme of the Brazilian civil society agenda. “Amigos da Terra” (Friends of Earth); IMAZON; “SOS Mata Atlântica”; INPE; Socio-Environmental Institute; Centro Vida (Life Center), IPÊ – (Ecological Research Institute); Environmental Institute, GTA – (Amazon Working Party) and Aliança Povos da Floresta (Forest Peoples’ Alliance) are some of the entities that head this discussion on the National plan.

There are, also, the entities involved not only with the climate policy, but also with the development of the debate on the international scene, following the bargaining at the UNFCCC ambit. Among those, Vitae Civilis and IPAM were highlighted - apart from international entities like Greenpeace, WWF Brazil and OXFAM.

Vitae Civilis – Institute for Development, Environment and Peace, current coordinator of Climate Working Party, is one of the most active Brazilian entities in what concerns climate changes. Involved since the 90's with the national and international policy for the climate, the organization follows the international negotiations since CoP 3 in Kyoto. Such as Vitae Civilis, IPAM – Environmental Research Institute for Amazon, founded in 1995 and concerned with the issue around forests preservation, follows the bargaining at the UNFCCC ambit and directs the national debate about the climate.

Nevertheless, the current debate about climate changes isn't restricted to issues connected with the forests. Other three axis of the debate can be identified: the reduction of carbon emission that implicates on the discussion of the development of clean and sustainable technologies of energy production; the adaptations needed for the impacts resulted from the changes imposed by climate changes and the assistance to vulnerable populations; and changes on the production and consumption standards.

### **Some Challenges**

*“The climate changes theme was, no doubt, included in the schedule of different social actors in Brazil. Scientists, businessmen, NGOs and civil society, media, Government and congressmen consider the relevance of the theme as being ‘high’”.*

But would it be enough to consider the theme "relevant"? Is this conscientiousness about the climate changes matter taking the Brazilian society into a larger mobilization towards the reflection and action? What is missing?

A research, made by ISER at the beginning of 2008 tried to analyze the opinion of several sectors of the Brazilian society about the climate changes and it was able to point out that all of them promote the idea that climate changes represent one of the most important and strategic issues of our time. The interviewed representatives - 210 people considered leaders in their respective segments - have still shown interest in "assuming their roles" on the climate changes issue.

For the interviewed ones, the climate changes are an incontestable scientific fact and they will affect all the society's segments, specially the poor population. Although they consider that they know too little about the subject, the main leaderships present the data of the last evaluation report from IPCC as an important benchmark on the consistent opinion making about the issue.

Even though over the last two years we have been watching a flood of headlines on the subject on the press, studies and researches published about the climate changes theme; and even though many sectors of the society already recognize the issue as relevant, which are the strengths and the current challenges that are put for the Brazilian civil society on the mobilization around the climate changes?

A central point that came up with all the interviews and information raised during that study, is the absence of good information, focused and didactic for the entire population, about the climate changes theme and Brazil role, government and society itself, facing that issue.

As we have seen during this study the Brazilian civil society is very active on this field since the 1990 decade. Many Brazilian organizations or Brazilian representations of international organizations are references in the research, reflection and mobilization on the climate changes field. However, "they are always the same talking to the same", as one of the interviewed in this research pointed up. It is necessary that different organized groups and social movements (students, universities, grassroots, etc) are also able to enter this debate and join the efforts of mobilization around the theme, without the need of being specialists of the issue or knowing the technical matters behind it.

It is important that not only organizations with a strong environmental agenda are

protagonists in this discussion. The social, cultural and economic issues are transverse to the debate about the climate changes and it is important that entities and groups that work with these other "agendas" are also active in the debate and militancy around the climate changes issue.

Business entities and trade unions have already been participating in this debate for some years in Brazil, but it is important to stress, for example, the debate about production and sustainable consumption on the climate changes schedule. Which is the companies' role? How have workers and trade unions been taking this discussion? What is at stake when in Brazil when we discuss cleaner production and consumption?