

Ruptures from the cattle policy: An analysis according to the Sustainable Development Goals

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Abstract: Brazil has experienced a notable weakening of its institutional framework related to the implementation of an agenda for sustainability since the Jair Bolsonaro Administration. Aiming to identify trends and ruptures, this paper explores four axes of current Brazilian environmental governance, taking four Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as an analysis tool: Gender (SDG 5), Energy (SDG 7), Solid Waste (SDG 12), and Life on Land (SDG 15). The study is structured as a critical essay, supported by the historical evolution of the indicators associated with the analyzed SDGs. It is concluded that there has been a weakening of environmental governance, within an understanding of the importance of a multi-stakeholder articulation and participatory governance. It is verified that there cracks have developed since 2019 at the federal level, with a discontinuity in a number of key policies, while at the territorial levels, there are historical trends that already showed injustices in the social and environmental scope, which have been aggravated in the face of the COVID-19 crisis.

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1. Introduction

Environmental governance refers to multi-stakeholder, multisectoral and multilevel interactions that result in actions aimed at addressing environmental issues, biodiversity conservation, and the use of land and natural resources (LEMOS; AGRAWAL, 2006). Its structure is composed of formal and informal institutional arrangements, which may include governmental, civil society and private sector stakeholders (ADAMS et al., 2020; LEMOS; AGRAWAL, 2006; SEIXAS et al., 2020; WEISS, 2016). The global agenda on environmental governance has emerged in response to the energy-intensive expansion of modern civilization, which has irreversibly threatened the permanence of life on the planet (VALENTIM, 2020).

Currently, two global agendas for sustainability prevail, both established in 2015: the Paris Accord and the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. The former seeks to define the average increase in global temperatures, setting a limit of 2°C and aiming not to exceed the mark of 1.5°C. Agenda 2030, in turn, is a universal action plan guided by 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets (KUZEMKO et al., 2020).

In Brazil, environmental governance has been configured mainly from the 1930s onwards (MOURA, 2016), and is currently articulated by cooperation between federal, state and municipal agencies (BRASIL, 2011), in addition to arenas that include the performance of the private sector, representatives of civil society, and social movements (MOURA, 2016; SEIXAS et al., 2020).

Faced with the threats to the biophysical limits of the planet (ROCKSTRÖM et al., 2009) and the worsening of social and environmental injustices in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic (ECLAC, 2021), it has become relevant to reflect on the adequacy of the current environmental governance structure in preventing or mitigating scenarios of environmental degradation and social fragility, in order to remain cooperative with the global agenda. This study aims to explore whether the current Brazilian environmental governance is aligned with the global environmental and human rights agenda, focusing on the dimensions of environmental justice. The assumption is that environmental justice aims to:

[...] the right to a safe, healthy and productive environment for all, considering the environment in its entirety, including the ecological, physical, built, social, political, aesthetic and economic dimensions. It thus refers to the conditions in which this right can be freely exercised, preserving, respecting and fully realizing individual and group identities, the dignity and autonomy of communities (ACSELRAD, 2004, p. 16).

The discussion was outlined based on the analysis of the performance of indicators associated with the topics of gender (SDG 5), energy (SDG 7), solid waste (SDG 12), and forests (SDG 15) in Brazil.

2. Research contours

2.1. Context

Under the support of the Luíz Inácio Lula da Silva (2003-2010) and Dilma Rousseff (2011-2016) Administrations, Brazil became a world leader in reducing socioeconomic inequalities – between 2001 and 2015, 24.2 million Brazilians arose above the poverty line – the diplomatic articulation of the Global South and the crusade in favor of creating an agenda for sustainability (MENEZES; VIEIRA, 2021; WORLD BANK GROUP, 2017). Nevertheless, economic development based on intensive exploitation of raw materials, a model that had been gaining strength for some decades in the Latin American region, was not abandoned. According to Svampa (2019), there was a tacit (or explicit) agreement on maintaining an extractive dynamic on the continent – the Commodities Consensus.

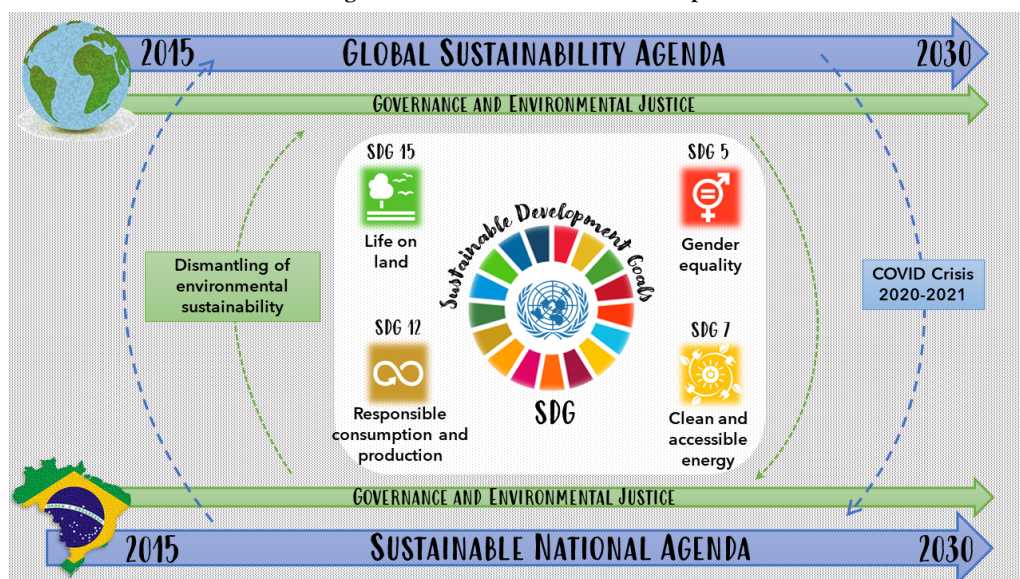
Based on the democratic breakdown and impeachment of Dilma Rousseff in 2016, Michel Temer (2016-2018) resumed the neoliberal path, which had been withheld with the beginning of progressive governments, accompanied by strong political and social instability (PINHO, 2021). With the election of Jair Bolsonaro in 2018, what has been referred to as a dismantling of policies related to social protection, human rights, and environmental issues began, coupled with the emergence and crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic, declared in 2020 (MENEZES; VIEIRA, 2021).

In 2019 and 2020, the Federal Executive Branch was responsible for measures that are part of the policy popularly known as the “cattle policy” (Decree No. of Act 490/2007, Bill 3729/2004, among others), due to the speech of Ricardo Salles, Minister of the Environment, at a ministerial meeting held on April 22, 2020, in which he declared that the COVID-19 pandemic brought an opportunity to “let the cattle through” and approve changes in the rules of environmental policies and “watershed” agriculture, avoiding criticism and lawsuits, as public attention would be focused on the issues brought on by the coronavirus (WERNECK et al., 2021).

2.2. Methodology

This article explores SDGs 5, 7, 12 and 15 as tools for analyzing the Brazilian scenario in relation to the global agenda for sustainability. Faced with the guiding question “How can dialogues and confrontations between the different stakeholders involved in environmental governance be expanded in order to promote environmental justice and the search for better social and environmental conditions?” we propose to develop a critical essay using the indicators of these SDGs in order to identify trends and ruptures in Brazilian environmental governance since the emergence of the current Brazilian Federal Government (2019-2022). Access to information, social participation and public policies were the components used to systematize information and deepen the analysis (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Research focus and scope



Source: Axel Bastián Poque González, 2021.

Access to information represents the existence and availability of up-to-date data, with a clear understanding of the SDGs and their targets, in order to provide public knowledge and a current diagnosis of the Brazilian environmental scenario. Social participation refers to the existence of spaces for the inclusion of non-governmental stakeholders, mainly representatives of civil society, in the discussion and decision-making process regarding environmental issues, as well as in the construction and monitoring of indicators within each SDG. Finally, information on the preparation, implementation and monitoring of policies, plans and programs related to the four SDGs herein discussed was considered.

Information related to the aforementioned components and the four SDGs was obtained from available literature, such as scientific publications and technical reports, as well as normative and regulatory acts at the Brazilian federal level.

3. Implementation of SDGs 5, 7, 12 and 15 in Brazil

This section will discuss the selected targets of SDGs 5, 7, 12 and 15 that support the discussion on governance and social and environmental justice in the current political context.

SDG 5 – Gender Equality

SDG 5 presents the proposal to “achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls,” based on the understanding that gender equality is essential to achieving a just society. The goals were adapted to the Brazilian territory, and the incorporation of

concepts was made more consistent with the political and social studies regarding gender. The changes expand the targets of SDG 5 and recognize the intersectionalities of gender when considering the cross-sectional approach regarding race, ethnicity, sexualities, age, and territorial occupation, which impact realities and subjectivities, generating different inequalities and discrimination for subjects.

To assess compliance with the targets, fourteen indicators were established by the United Nations (UN), although Brazil, only indicators linked to targets 5.4, 5.5 and 5.b have public data (IBGE; SEAS, 2022). These are the proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic work and care, by sex, age and location (2016 to 2019); proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments (2006, 2010, and 2014) and (b) local governments (2004, 2008, 2012, and 2016); proportion of women in managerial positions (2012 to 2019); and proportion of people who own a mobile phone, by sex (2016 to 2019) (IBGE; SEAS, 2022). Below, a few targets and indicators are highlighted in order to enable an understanding of how SDG 5 has been developed in the Brazilian territory, in the context of governance and social and environmental justice.

In the case of Target 5.1, although there are no official indicators related to the existence, or not, of a legal framework in place to promote, reinforce and monitor gender equality and non-discrimination, it is possible to carry out a historical assessment of the evolution of the legislation and policies aimed at combating gender inequalities.

Until 2016, throughout the decade that preceded the impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff, a number of advances took place in the portfolio related to gender equity, such as the creation of the Special Secretariat for Policies for Women in 2003, responsible for creating the National Plan for Policies for Women, proposing 199 actions, contributing to the fight for gender equality, creating, for example, the Maria da Penha Act (Act 11,340/2006) (SEVERIANO; DA SILVA NETO, 2019).

In 2019, with the elections, a new organization was given to federal governance, and the women's portfolio became part of the newly created Ministry of Women, Family and Human Rights (MDH), with the Evangelical pastor Damares Alves in charge of the Ministry, representing so-called "Christian conservative values and interests" (KALIL, 2020).

There was a worsening in the rates related to the elimination of gender violence (Target 5.2), according to the Brazilian Public Security Yearbook 2020 (BUENO; LIMA, 2021). The number of victims of femicide increased from 929 in 2016 to 1,326 in 2019. Of these, in 2019, 66.6% were black women, and according to the 2020 Atlas of Violence, while the homicide rate of non-black women (white, Asian, and indigenous) fell by 11.7% in the period evaluated, there was an increase of 12.4% among black women. There was also an increase in the number of rapes and rapes of the vulnerable in the period between 2011 and 2019, allowing the painful realization that, in Brazil, one rape occurs every 8 minutes (BUENO; LIMA, 2021).

One key indicator of gender violence in Brazil (Target 5.2) is related to the transgender and transvestite population. Nevertheless, the official reports contain no data on this group, even though Brazil's target acknowledge the transgender population in

terms of gender. According to a survey by the National Association of Transvestites and Transgender People (ANTRA), in 2020, there were at least 175 murders of transgender people, and of these, 72% involved trans women and transvestite sex workers, and 78% involved people of color (black and brown), indicating the importance of race and class cutoffs when evaluating the vulnerability factors of this population (BENEVIDES; NOGUEIRA, 2021).

The number of hours spent by women on domestic and care work has increased over the years, with black and brown women being the category that spends most of their time on this type of unpaid work (Target 5.4). Regarding women occupying positions in national parliaments (Target 5.5), there was an improvement in 2018 compared to 2014, from 51 to 77, out of the 513 total seats in the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies. It should be noted, however, that the greatest growth occurred among white women. Even with specific laws that regulate gender relations in candidacies, Brazil ranks 140th in the Inter-Parliamentary Union rankings, which assess the percentage of women in parliaments in more than 180 countries (IPU, 2019).

SDG 7 – Clean and Affordable Energy

SDG 7 seeks to ensure universal access to reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all. Thus, although the energy transition to sustainability underway around the world has stimulated visible improvements in the use of less polluting energy sources, each corner of the globe has experienced its own changes (IEA et al., 2020; UNITED NATIONS, 2020). There are three goals raised from SDG 7, all of which expire in 2030, namely: (1) ensure universal, reliable, modern and affordable access to energy services; (2) substantially increase the share of renewable energies in the global energy mix; (3) doubling the overall rate of energy efficiency improvement. In turn, these targets have associated indicators. Table 1 presents the indicators for the Brazilian case (IBGE; SEAS, 2022; UNITED NATIONS, 2020).

Table 1: SDG 7 indicators in Brazil

Indicator	Value	Measurement Unit	Year
Percentage of the population with access to electricity	99.8	%	2019
Percentage of the population with primary access to clean fuels and technologies	96.1	%	2015
Share of renewable energies in the Internal Energy Supply (OIE)	46.1	%	2019

Energy intensity measured in terms of primary energy and Gross Domestic Product (GDP)	0.095	(toe/thousand USD PPP 2011)	2019
International financial flows to developing countries to support clean energy research and development and renewable energy production, including hybrid systems	No data		
Installed capacity of renewable energy generation in developing countries (in watts per capita)	0.68	(Renewable watts per capita)	2019

Source: IBGE – Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics; SEAS – Statistics and the Special Secretariat for Social Articulation, 2022.

Brazil has historically paid special attention to energy, as a strategic component in its development. Furthermore, it is a global role model with regard to the use of low-emission resources (GOLDEMBERG, 1979; SANTOS, 2018). According to the Latin American Energy Organization (OLADE), in 1970, only 41% of the total energy supply in Brazil came from fossil fuels. Over time, however, oil and its byproducts gained prominence. Thus, in 2019, 50% of primary energy came from fossil fuels, which is still a low proportion when compared to other countries in the region, such as Mexico (88%), Argentina (87%), and Colombia (77%) (OLADE, 2021). Additionally, within the Latin American region, the country has been exemplary in the introduction of unconventional renewable energies for the production of electricity (POQUE GONZÁLEZ, 2020).

Conversely, Brazil has shown a permanent concern for the universalization of electricity. Thus, the programs “Luz da Terra” ((1995), “Luz no Campo” (1999) and “Luz para Todos” (2003) were created. The “Luz para Todos” program alone granted access to electricity for 16.9 million people (CARDOSO; OLIVEIRA; SILVA, 2013; ELETROBRAS, 2021). Starting from an electrified population coverage of 68.5% in 1980, it reached the mark of 99.76% in 2019 (OLADE, 2021).

It should be noted that the social and environmental issues arising from development in the energy field occur mainly in the territorial dimension, which is sometimes not measured in the scope of the goals of Agenda 2030. For example, the configuration of an electricity based on hydropowerity has low emissions, compared to fossil-based thermal power; however, the construction of large dams and major infrastructure has generated social and environmental impacts at their respective sites. It should be noted that, in 2019, 63.53% of the electricity generated in Brazil originated from hydropower sources, with the country having the largest installed hydropower capacity in the Latin American region (109,155 MW) and the second in the world, behind only China. (IHA, 2020; ORGANIZACIÓN LATINOAMERICANA DE ENERGÍA, 2020). Thus, since hydropower is considered a renewable power source, the social and environmental conflicts associated with it are often neglected (POQUE GONZÁLEZ, 2021).

One of the most emblematic cases is Belo Monte. With 11,233 MW of installed capacity, the project located in the Brazilian state of Pará was the largest hydropower plant opened in the world in 2019. The project, however, seriously affected the livelihoods of adjacent populations and destroyed social arrangements, local ecosystems, and cultural manifestations (IHA, 2020; REIS, 2021). It should be noted that, due to the dimensions of the infrastructure, during the years of its construction, large amounts of population were mobilized to the site, which resulted in the emergence of social phenomena (e.g. violence, crime, racism, and inequality), which damaged the harmony of native inhabitants of a territory that was not prepared to receive such a large number of people (OLIVEIRA, 2017).

SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production

SDG 12 aims, through eleven targets, to rethink the forms of global production and consumption, aligning human practices with the concept of responsibility and transforming the life cycles of products. It also aims to ensure that everyone has access to information and awareness in favor of sustainability. The indicators provided in SDG 12 are qualitative and quantitative, with approximately 69% remaining without official data for Brazil. Officially, there are four indicators produced (12.1.1, 12.4.1, 12.6.1, 12.a.1), and another nine indicators that do not have data (IBGE; SEAS, 2022).

It is observed that SDG 12 aims to transform the ways in which natural resources are used and in the entire production chain of consumer goods. This includes dealing with externalities, such as the release of solid, liquid and gaseous waste into the air, water, and soil, which occur throughout the entire life cycle, i.e., from the stage of extraction of raw materials to the consumption of goods and subsequent final disposal. Therefore, actions aimed at solid waste (SW) of all types are an essential part of achieving SDG 12. With that, we will discuss targets 12.1, 12.3, 12.5 and 12.8, relating to the aspects proposed in this study.

In Brazil, indicator 12.1.1 is considered produced due to the launch of the Action Plan for Sustainable Production and Consumption (PPCS) in 2011 (IBGE; SEAS, 2022), in the country's commitment to the Marrakech Process (MMA, 2014). The plan had an initial implementation cycle with six priorities, which took place between 2011 and 2014 (MMA, 2014), but which was not followed by the implementation of the other planned steps (GTSC, 2020; OLIVEIRA et al., 2021). This stagnation of the Plan and, therefore, of target 12.1 is included in actions in recent years that indicate that the current development model is not guided by policies that are in line with sustainable consumption and production (GTSC, 2020). This resulted in the release of new pesticides and reclassification of toxicity (GRIGORI, 2021), environmental crimes (GTSC, 2020) and the total increase in the value of fossil fuel subsidies between 2019 and 2020 (INESC, 2021).

As for target 12.3, Brazil does not officially have the Food Loss Index (FLI) or the Food Waste Index (FWI) (IBGE and SEAS, 2022). This can be considered complex to obtain, since despite efforts to collect information, estimates vary due to the different methodologies used and production systems analyzed (HENZ, 2019). Failure to monitor

Food Loss and Waste (FLW), or even its reduction, contributes to maintaining negative impacts on the environment, economy, and the population at the macro-, meso- and micro- levels (BELIK, 2018). These include the contribution of the high generation of organic SW (SANTOS et al., 2020). The failure to reach target 12.3 is also related to the insufficient or slow implementation of public policies related to FLW in the country for decades (BELIK, 2018; SANTOS et al., 2020). Moreover, the National Council for Food and Nutrition Security, a collegiate body that provided for the participation of civil society, was vetoed as part of the government structure (Veto Message No. 254/2019).

Target 12.5 aims to substantially reduce the generation of SW through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse by 2030. In developing countries, the priority on prevention is still at an early stage: Brazil's collection coverage is still at 92% (ABRELPE, 2020), while 40.5% of the SW generated in Brazil is destined for dumps and controlled landfills (ABRELPE, 2020). As noted by GTSC (2020), the country finds it difficult to consolidate data on the generation of SW, and there is virtually no information on compliance with the SW hierarchy. This causes the target to be more obscure and distant from its effective fulfillment. The only Brazilian indicator for target 12.5 is the national recycling rate per metric ton of recycled material, whose status indicates the lack of official data. Nevertheless, data from the National Sanitation Information System (SNIS) indicate that only 0.19% of the total SW was recovered in composting units (out of a total of 62.78 million metric tons), and 1.7% of the 1.05 million metric tons of recyclable waste were referred to sorting units (SNIS, 2019). Further, only 56.6% of Brazilian municipalities have waste sorting initiatives (ABRELPE, 2020), which do not always cover the entirety of their urban area.

Finally, target 12.8 is the mechanism with the greatest potential for success and integration, as it aims to ensure that all people have not only information, but also knowledge and a reflection on lifestyles that allow for a more harmonious coexistence of human beings in nature. Its only official indicator should cover the degree to which education for global citizenship and sustainability are integrated into national education policies, but it is non-existent. The National Environmental Education Policy (PNEA) has become virtually innocuous, as has the Management Agency and its Advisory Committee (a collegiate body that had major civil society participation), which have remained inactive since 2019 (GTSC, 2020).

SDG 15 – Life on Land

SDG 15 aims to protect, restore and promote the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, and halt the loss of biodiversity (IPEA, 2021). The National System of Conservation Units (SNUC) established in 2000 for the creation and management of protected areas for conservation and the Plan for the Prevention and Control of Deforestation in the Amazon (PPCDAm), of 2004, are examples that have made key contributions to this SDG. Nevertheless, the federal government revised a number of targets as it understood that they were below national possibilities (IPEA, 2021) and made the legislation more

flexible to be more tolerant of actions with negative impacts on the environment.

In target 15.1, Brazil took on the commitment to conserve and recover terrestrial ecosystems, in particular forests. In target 15.2, it assumed the goal of zero illegal deforestation across all Brazilian biomes by 2030. Nevertheless, illegal logging and unauthorized deforestation still rank among the main threats throughout the Brazilian Amazon (INPE, 2021). Brazilian government actions such as the PPCDAm brought results, such as the decrease in deforestation from 2004 to 2012, although an increase in the deforested area in the Amazon was observed after 2012. According to data from PRODES (INPE, 2021), after the deforestation peak of over 27,000 square kilometers in 2004, deforestation was decreasing, reaching less than 5,000 square kilometers in 2012. Deforestation rates started to grow again, however, reaching almost 8,000 square kilometers in 2016. It had a reduction in 2017 and then grew again in the last 3 years, exceeding 11,000 square kilometers 2020 and reaching a record rate of deforested area in the last 10 years.

The institution of SNUC, as well as programs to support creation and consolidation of protected areas, with resources from international cooperation initiatives such as the Amazon Protected Areas Program (ARPA), created in 2002, and the Amazon Fund, created in 2008, were crucial in achieving legal protection for more than 40% of the Legal Amazon region, such as Nature Conservation Units, Indigenous Lands, and deforestation control regions. Nevertheless, even though these areas should be protected, deforestation has occurred, mainly in the Amazon. Considering the 50 most deforested Conservation Units (UCs) by 2017, 89% of the deforestation has taken place in the states of Pará and Rondônia (ARAÚJO et al., 2017). Legally protected areas may have reduced restrictions (downgrading), reduced size (downsizing), or full extinction (Degazettement), as occurred in 37 UCs in the Amazon in the period between 1988 and 2018 (PADDD – Protected area downgrading, downsizing and degazettement events). In 2018, 23 UCs were identified with PADDD attempts (WWF, 2019).

Target 15.7 focuses on combating poaching and animal trafficking, and even if fulfilled, it may not achieve the expected result regarding the protection of wildlife. Since 2019, the debate on the amendment of national legislation to authorize the practice of hunting has gained strength in the National Congress, as well as facilitating access to firearms. Authorizing hunting and easy access to weapons, in an environment of low governance and reduction of command and control actions, may lead to an increase in the threats to wildlife even if such hunting is legal. The path of legalizing practice without sufficient control for species management may not be effective in effectively reducing hunting and threats to wildlife.

There were setbacks related to targets 15.a and 15.b regarding the feasibility of financial resources. The allocation of public resources to the agencies responsible for the environment has been reduced since 2019 with the new government, as well as the raising of funds from international cooperation. The Amazon Fund, which was the largest fund destined to reducing deforestation in the Amazon, had the approval of new projects interrupted and no new resources raised that could contribute to achieving the targets of SDG 15.

Finally, in this SDG, a reduction in institutional capacity was observed at the federal level. The government workgroup dedicated to the merger of the Brazilian Institute of the Environment and Renewable Resources (IBAMA) and the Chico Mendes Institute for Biodiversity Conservation (ICMBio), reducing the budget of environmental agencies and appointing people to positions of trust without qualifications in the environmental area were a few that weakened environmental governance at the federal level.

4. Ruptures: The “Mass Repeal”

The policy of the Jair Bolsonaro Administration is marked by the distancing of civil society organizations, environmentalists, and social movements, damaging the institutional arrangements at the national level that had been consolidated around the implementation of the SDGs. With Decree 10,179/2019, the National Commission for the SDGs, responsible for preparing the action plan for the implementation of Agenda 2030, was extinguished. The pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goal targets was also removed from the Multiannual Plan 2020-2030 text (Act 13,971/2019) through Veto No. 61/2019.

According to the analysis of the regulatory acts of the first 18 months of the Bolsonaro Administration, it was possible to identify a strategy of centralizing environmental governance in the top executive management, reducing the number of councils, commissions, groups, and forums, changing funds and commissions, excluding participants from civil society, changing the structure, and even changing the decision-making character of some councils to a merely consultative role (GUSMÃO; PAVÃO, 2020).

Decree 9,759/2019, known as the “mass repeal decree,” affected various agencies and collegiate bodies related to social and environmental safeguards, extinguished the National Social Participation Policy and the National Social Participation Service, established in 2014, which aimed to strengthen and the articulation of democratic mechanisms of dialogue and joint action between the federal public administration and civil society in the formulation, execution, monitoring and evaluation of public programs and policies, evidencing the centralizing and excluding approach of the current government. By limiting or disrupting existing participatory spaces, as witnessed in the cases mentioned here, current government actions are in the opposite direction to the multi-stakeholder character considered for the concept of environmental governance.

Table 2 summarizes the main advances and setbacks of the current government in relation to the SDGs studied in this paper. This information indicates that the achievement of the targets has encountered new obstacles in the face of the ruptures of the current federal government, whether in relation to access to information, social participation, or the construction and implementation of public policies, with only 103 indicators produced as of January 3, 2022, out of a total of 254 (IBGE; SEAS, 2022).

Table 2 – Advances and setbacks of the current Brazilian Management in relation to SDGs 5, 7, 12, and 15

SDG	Access to information	Participation	Development / Implementation of Public Policies
5	Continued lack of official data on part of the SDG indicators.	Reduction of citizen participation through the extinction of the National Policy for Social Participation and the National Service for Social Participation, in addition to Councils related to agendas linked to the discussion of gender.	Low budget execution in the field of public policies for women; setbacks in international agreements linked to the gender agenda and women's reproductive rights.
7	Continuity of the availability of information.	Continuity of low citizen participation; reduction of the participation of specialized institutions in energy planning.	Continuity of policies in line with the pre-2015 SDGs.
12	Continuity of the official absence of data on part of the SDG indicators.	Inactivation of the National Food and Nutrition Security Council and the Advisory Committee of the National Environmental Education Policy.	Continuity of the insufficiency of targeted policies; Actions contrary to the SDG targets from 2019 (Pesticide Authorization); Creation of Decree 10,240/2020; Creation of the Zero Waste Program (2019).
15	—	Extinction of the Technical Committee of the Amazon Fund (CTFA) and the Guiding Committee of the Amazon Fund (COFA)	Creation and processing of Bills that reduce the protection of ecosystems: Reduction of licensing requirements (Bill 2159/2021); Cattle farming authorization in Extractive Reserves (Act 313/2000); Dissolution of Conservation Units (WWF, 2019).

Source: Galbiati, González, Santos, Palmieri e Rodrigues, 2021.

Although the challenges to achieve the goals predate the current government, the new Administration that took over in 2019 accentuated these challenges by adopting a discourse and policies that are similar to those used in the last century, prior to the Rio-92 world environmental conference, with a developmental tone, placing the environment as an obstacle to the economic agenda.

5. The COVID-19 Pandemic and the Worsening of Social and Environmental Injustices

The context of the pandemic threatens the advancement of Agenda 2030 (ECLAC, 2021), with Latin America and the Caribbean being among the most affected regions. Among the multiple causes that turned this into a humanitarian crisis in Brazil is the weak (and sometimes null) action of the federal government (HALLAL, 2021). The economic recession resulting from the pandemic has increased levels of unemployment, poverty, and inequalities, while highlighting the immense fragility of the most vulnerable sectors of the population in the face of COVID-19 and its consequences (ECLAC, 2021; TAVARES; BETTI, 2021), mainly because it added to a pre-existing social vulnerability framework (ECLAC, 2021). In the energy case, for example, in 2020, Brazil had one of the highest electricity costs in the Latin American region (ORGANIZACIÓN LATINOAMERICANA DE ENERGÍA, 2021), which, added to the crisis imposed by the pandemic, conflicts with development and dignity of the population.

As a result of the weakening of the gender agenda in the country, coupled with the context of the pandemic, there was an increase in cases of femicide, domestic violence, rapes, and violence against women, especially black women, children, the elderly, people with disabilities, LGBTI+ people, indigenous, and quilombolas (inhabitants of settlements established by descendants of enslaved people) (GTSC, 2021). It is emblematic that the first person to die from COVID-19 in Rio de Janeiro was a black woman, a domestic worker, contaminated by her employers (PINHEIRO; TOKARSKI; VASCONCELOS, 2020).

6. Conclusions

This study sought to stimulate a debate and discussion about the current Brazilian environmental governance and its alignment – or not – with the global environmental and human rights agenda. Considering the SDGs 5, 7, 12 and 15 of the Agenda 2030 as global benchmarks, the areas of energy, gender, solid waste and life on land were explored. In the context of the period 2020-2021, two elements configure a conjunctural scenario of threat in the achievement of some of the goals listed in the search for sustainability. The first, with a global dimension, is the social crisis imposed by the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, declared in early 2020. The second, with a nationwide dimension, is the performance of the federal government led by President Jair Bolsonaro. One third element raised from the debate developed is the lack of formal bodies that aim at the articulation and attunement of global and national measures with the territorial dimension, which are important aspects for an effective environmental governance.

Brazil took a step forward in this regard, by adapting the goals and indicators to the country's reality (IPEA, 2021). It is necessary, however, to make a greater effort to articulate between the different levels of governance, reaching the municipal level, so that in fact there is an integrated governance based on and guided by the materiality of the environmental issues to be addressed emerging in the territories. Given its global perspective, the measurement of SDG indicators leaves something to be desired in the sense of apprehending local realities, which make up the sphere in which social and environmental issues and conflicts actually occur. The production of municipal indicators is a strategy that may contribute in this regard, by subsidizing the construction of public policies based on local data.

Furthermore, the strengthening of local governance may represent a greater approximation of the population to spaces for discussion and decision making (LEME, 2016), since, as discussed here, social participation is seen as a pillar for effective environmental governance and for achieving environmental justice. Faced with a federal government that is refractory to environmental policies, the importance of other levels of governance becomes even greater, in the sense of offering resistance and alternatives to the dismantling being witnessed.

The idea that social and environmental issues such as those related to energy, gender, solid waste and life on land are complex and require multilevel, multi-stakeholder action is not new, but the permanence and worsening of injustices, as in the context of the pandemic, has indicated that there is a need to address environmental issues in new ways and in the long term. This is the case of building and maturing more collaborative and adaptive governance models, which also require the integration between environment and society, as a single system to be considered (BERKES, 2017).

In a dialogue with Leff (2021), we believe that territorializing the SDGs is perhaps the necessary way to build sustainability in a world that is made up of several worlds, as is the case of Brazil, and this construction is only possible in a participatory, transparent and collaborative environmental governance project – the opposite of what we are experiencing in the current Brazilian federal government.

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Rupturas a partir da política da boiada: uma análise segundo Objetivos do Desenvolvimento Sustentável

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Resumo: O Brasil experimenta um notável enfraquecimento da institucionalidade relativa à implementação de uma agenda para a sustentabilidade, a partir do governo de Jair Bolsonaro. Visando identificar tendências e rupturas, o presente trabalho explora quatro eixos da atual governança ambiental brasileira, tomando quatro Objetivos do Desenvolvimento Sustentável (ODS) como ferramenta de análise: Gênero (ODS 5), Energia (ODS 7), Resíduos Sólidos (ODS 12) e Vida Terrestre (ODS 15). O trabalho está estruturado como um ensaio crítico, subsidiado pela evolução histórica dos indicadores associados aos ODS analisados. Conclui-se que há um enfraquecimento da governança ambiental, dentro de um entendimento da importância de uma articulação multi-atores e de governança participativa. Verificam-se que existem fissuras a partir de 2019 no nível federal, com uma descontinuidade em várias políticas importantes, mas nos níveis territoriais existem tendências históricas que já mostravam injustiças no âmbito socioambiental, que se agravam diante da crise da COVID-19.

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Palavras-chave: Energia; Gênero; Resíduos Sólidos; Floresta, ODS.

Disrupciones desde la “política da boiada”: un análisis en función de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible

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Resumen: Actualmente, Brasil experimenta un notable debilitamiento de la institucionalidad relativa a la implementación de una agenda hacia la sustentabilidad, desde el inicio del gobierno de Jair Bolsonaro. Buscando identificar tendencias y rupturas, el presente trabajo explora cuatro ejes de la actual gobernanza ambiental brasileña, tomando cuatro Objetivos del Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) como herramienta de análisis: Género (ODS 5), Energía (ODS 7), Residuos Sólidos (ODS 12) y Vida Terrestre (ODS 15). El trabajo fue conducido bajo el formato de ensayo crítico, subsidiado por la evolución histórica de los indicadores asociados a los ODS analizados. Se concluye que hay un debilitamiento de la gobernanza ambiental en lo que respecta a la articulación multi-actores y la gobernanza participativa. Se verifica que existen fisuras a partir del año 2019 en el nivel federal, con una discontinuidad en varias políticas trascendentes, no obstante, en los niveles territoriales existen tendencias anteriores que ya mostraban injusticias en el ámbito socioambiental y que se agravan en frente de la crisis de la Covid-19.

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