

Policy Brief

Brazil in Climate Transition: Legislative, Public Opinion and Misinformation

✦ November 2025



Highlights

- Between 2019 and 2023, the Chamber of Deputies was dominated by high-greenhouse-gas-emitting representatives, particularly from right-wing parties and the agribusiness caucus.
- The Brazilian population rejects pesticides, mining on Indigenous lands, and the privatization of sanitation.
- The public sees climate misinformation as “true,” but agreement with it is divided.

This policy brief provides analysis on the current Brazilian climate scenario, presenting specific recommendations to inform ongoing political debates, based on research by members of the National Institute for Democratic Representation and Legitimacy (INCT ReDem).

Executive Summary

Legislative actions in the Chamber of Deputies (2019–2023) were mostly led by representatives with a climate profile associated with greenhouse gas emissions, especially those linked to right-wing parties and the Parliamentary Agricultural Front.

Brazilians reject measures such as expanding the use of pesticides, permitting mining on Indigenous Lands, loosening environmental licensing rules, and privatizing sanitation services. Overall, they support policies to curb global warming and place trust in agencies such as IBAMA. Among residents of the Amazon region, there is clear opposition to logging and mining, but strong support for agribusiness and the expansion of agricultural land in the region.

Qualitative data, however, show potential vulnerability to climate misinformation in Brazil. In focus groups, when presented with climate misinformation, most people believe it and want to share it on social media. The phenomenon is stronger among lower-income people and less accepted among residents of the Legal Amazon.

In light of these findings, several public policy recommendations are proposed, including the creation of an Annual Legislative Climate Impact Report, the prioritization of credit for sustainable producers, and investment in media and scientific literacy to counter climate misinformation. The brief also suggests adopting empathetic communication strategies involving scientists and local communicators, as well as establishing observatories and indicators on misinformation vulnerability within universities and civil society organizations.

In Brazil, the **relationship between the National Congress and environmental conservation and climate change adaptation policies** has been marked by growing tensions.

This scenario contrasts with the preferences of the Brazilian public, which is mostly **concerned about the environment and supports public policies for its conservation.**

However, although Brazilians accept current climate change and its causes due to human action, there is still **an openness to the spread of climate denialism among them.**

Given this contradictory political landscape, this policy brief aims to:

- **Understand how the Legislative Branch contributes to the climate crisis** and how this action relates to ideology and economic interests, using data from the CO₂Index project. This project measured the climate impact of the legislative actions of Brazilian congressmen between 2019 and 2023, during the Bolsonaro administration.
- **Map the preferences of the Brazilian public on environmental and climate policies**, as well as their perceptions of the relationship between the environment and the economy, based on data from the Environmental Values and Attitudes towards the Amazon Research (EVATAR) – a representative survey of the Brazilian population and residents of the North region.
- **Analyze vulnerabilities and resistance to climate misinformation** through qualitative evidence from the research "Climate and crisis: distrust of institutions and disbelief in politics," composed of 12 online focus groups conducted between July and August 2025, totaling 102 participants distributed by biome and socioeconomic profile.
- **Based on this data, develop suggestions for policies and communication actions** that contribute to reducing the gap between public opinion and parliamentary activity, as well as preventing the spread of climate misinformation in Brazil.



Introduction



CO₂-Index: The climate impact of the Chamber of Deputies (2019–2023)

General stance of the Chamber of Deputies: predominantly emitting.

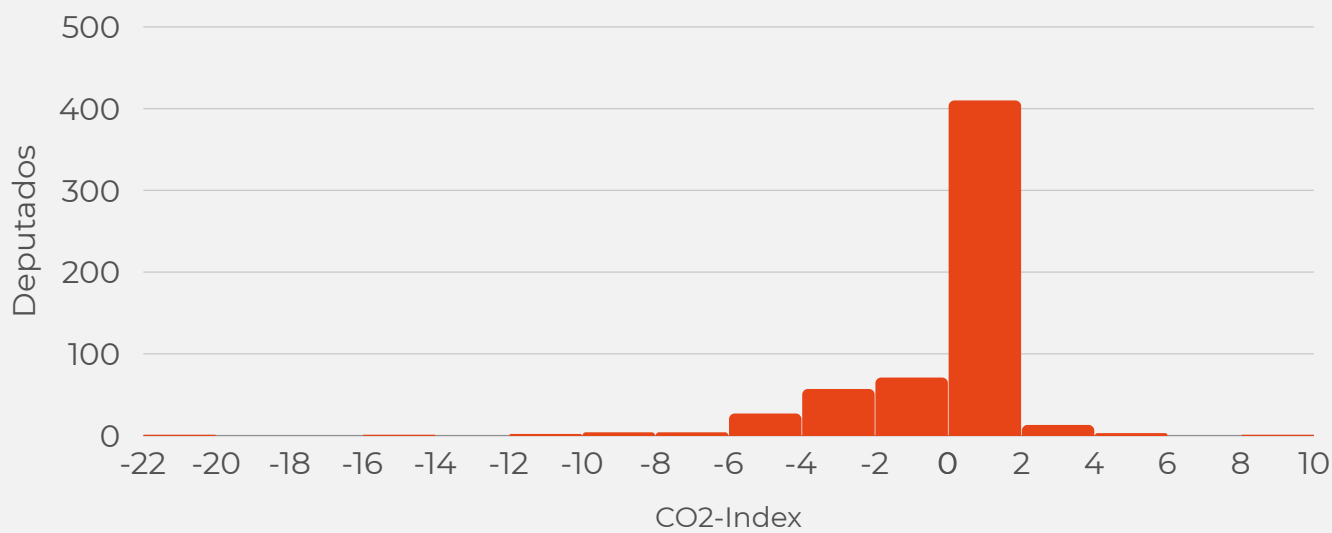
- More than 50% of deputies score above 0.75.
- A consistent, though not extreme, anti-environmental trend.



Results



Distribution of CO₂-Index among Federal Deputies



Largest emitters

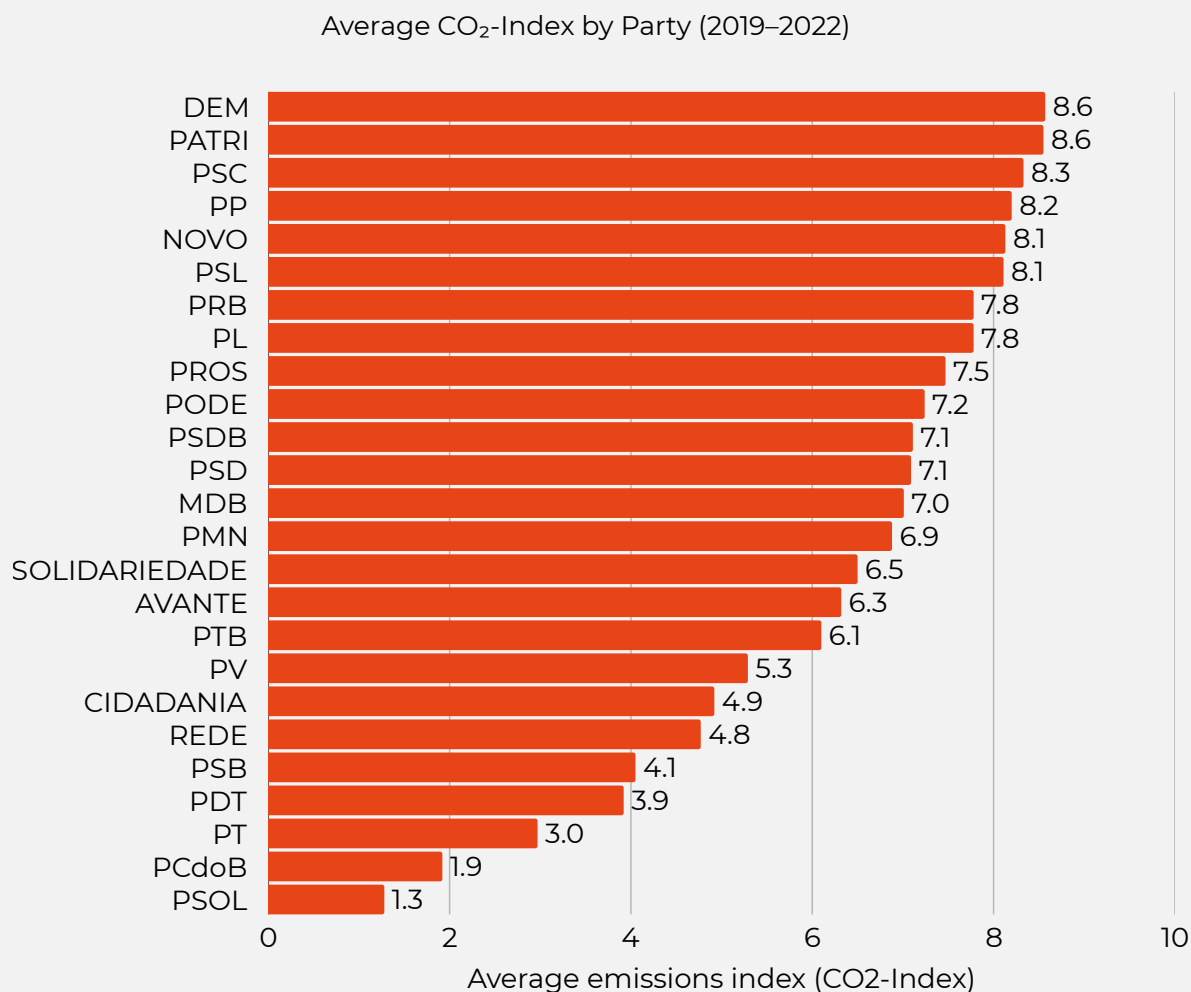
Name	Party	State	CO ₂ -Index
PAULO GANIME	NOVO	RJ	8.89
ALEXIS FONTEYNE	NOVO	SP	5.90
KIM KATAGUIRI	DEM	SP	5.52
VINICIUS POIT	NOVO	SP	4.39
BIBO NUNES	PSL	RS	3.63
MARCELO BRUM	PSL	RS	3.28
JOSE MEDEIROS	PODE	MT	3.24
ALINE SLEUTJES	PSL	PR	3.01
MARCEL VAN HATTEM	NOVO	RS	3.00
MARA ROCHA	PSDB	AC	2.45

Largest mitigators

Name	Party	State	CO ₂ -Index
NILTO TATTO	PT	SP	-20.56
ERIKA KOKAY	PT	DF	-15.62
RODRIGO AGOSTINHO	PSB	SP	-11.76
JOENIA WAPICHANA	REDE	RR	-10.55
ALESSANDRO MOLON	PSB	RJ	-9.43
CELIO STUDART	PV	CE	-8.39
PEDRO UCZAI	PT	SC	-8.24
BIRA DO PINDARE	PSB	MA	-8.03
CAMILO CAPIBERIBE	PSB	AP	-6.99
TALIRIA PETRONE	PSOL	RJ	-6.82

Relationship between ideology and emissions

- There is a strong correlation ($r = 0.72$; $p < 0.001$) between the CO₂-Index and the ideological spectrum of the parties.
- Left-wing parties (mainly PT, PSOL, and REDE) presented lower (mitigating) averages, while right-wing parties (mainly NOVO, PL, and PP) presented higher (emitting) averages.



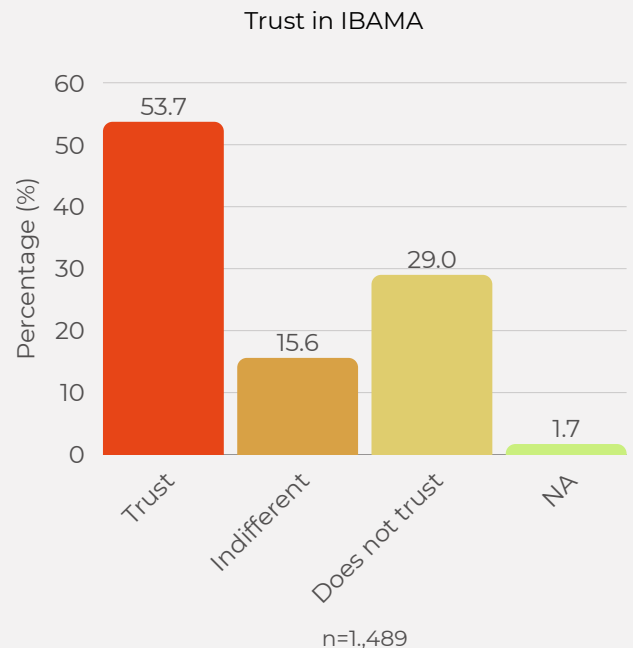
The role of agribusiness

- The agricultural sector dominates proposals related to emissions. Membership in the Parliamentary Agricultural Front (FPA) is associated with a higher likelihood of emissions-generating behavior.
- Participation in the FPA increases the CO₂-Index on average.

Environmental Public Opinion: Environmental Values and Attitudes towards the Amazon Research (EVATAR)

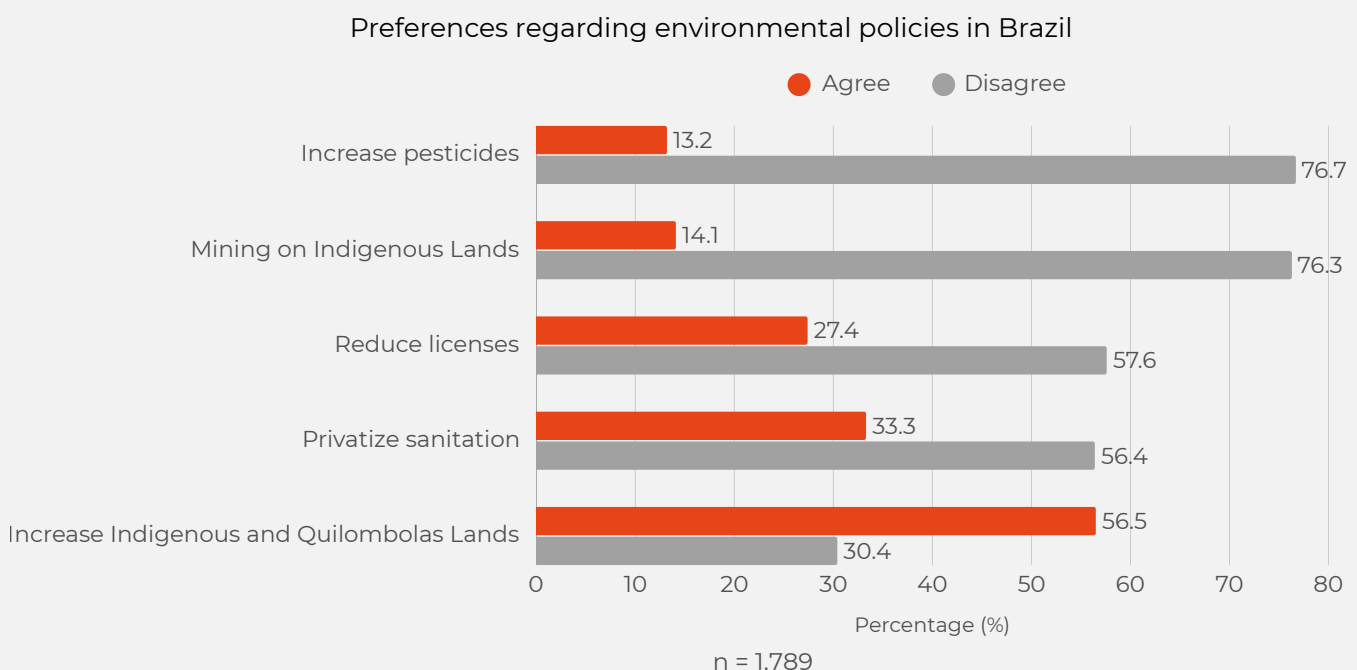
Environment and climate: institutions, trust, and priorities in public opinion

- The Brazilian Federal Government must take action on global warming: 80% of respondents say the phenomenon should be "highly prioritized."
- When presented with a set of four acronyms for federal institutions, 83.2% of Brazilians are able to identify IBAMA as the agency responsible for enforcing and implementing environmental policies.
- The graph on the right shows that, among those who can identify the agency, 53.7% say they trust it "very much" or "somewhat" – [other results are available here](#).



Environmental policies: public preferences

- The majority of the Brazilian public rejects policy proposals that aim to increase the number of pesticides allowed (76.7%), allow mining on indigenous lands (76.3%), reduce environmental licensing rules (57.6%), and privatize basic sanitation services (56.4%).
- On the other hand, public policies for traditional populations, such as indigenous peoples and quilombolas, are widely accepted (56.5%).



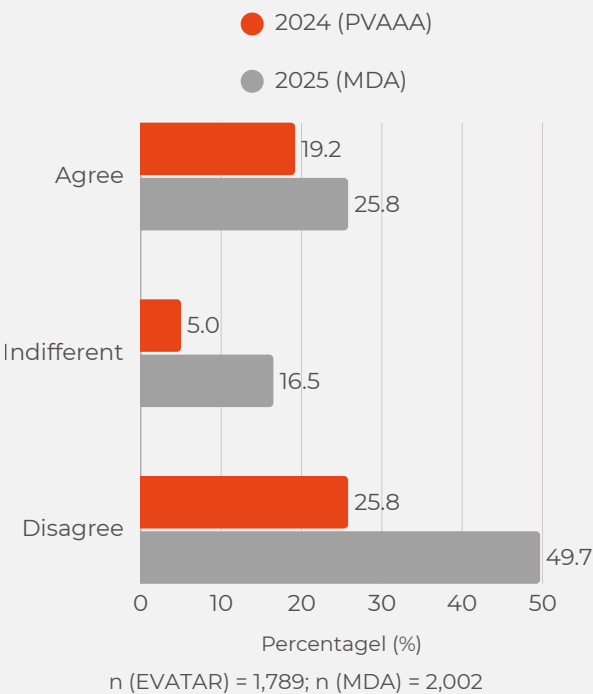
Oil exploration on the banks of the Amazon River estuary

- Rejection of potential oil exploration along the Amazon River mouth has increased among the Brazilian public between 2024 and 2025, rising from 25.8% (according to EVATAR data) to 49.7% (based on the most recent MDA survey)

Public Opinion in the Amazon Region

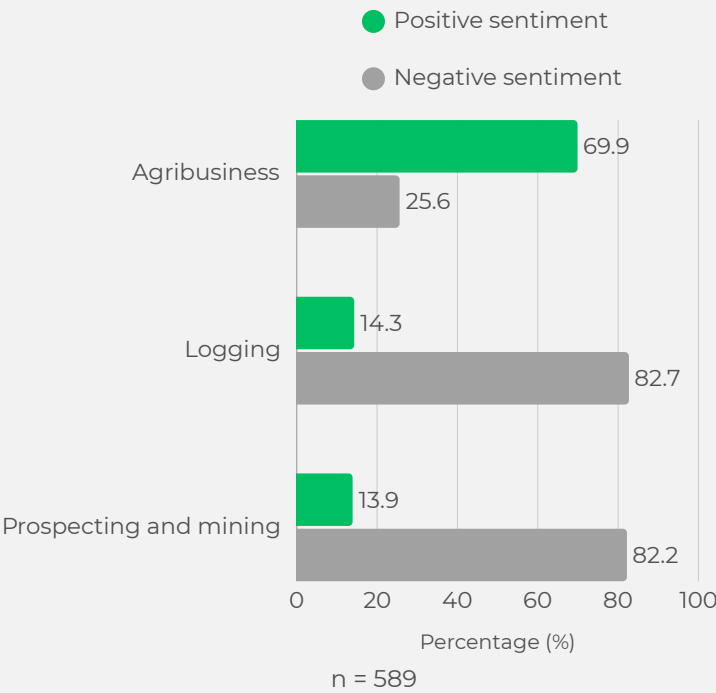
- Logging, gold mining, and other forms of mineral extraction face broad rejection among Amazonian residents, with disapproval levels around 82%.
- Agribusiness, however, receives highly positive evaluations — roughly 70% of Amazonian residents view the sector favorably.
- Regarding the expansion of agricultural land in the Amazon, 55.3% of residents in the North say they agree with this possibility.

Levels of agreement with oil exploration at the mouth of the Amazon River

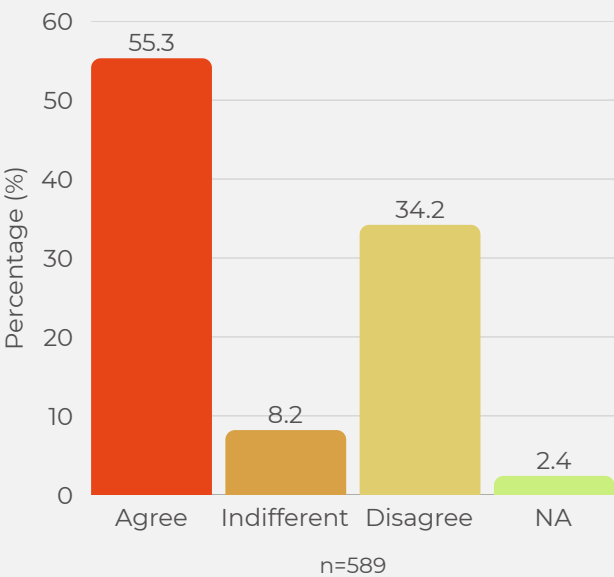


Note: EVATAR percentages calculates only for respondents who correctly identified IBAMA. More information about the [MDA survey here](#).

Assessment of Economic Activities in the Amazon



Preferences on the Proposal to Increase the Farmable Area in the Amazon



Vulnerability and Resistance to Climate Misinformation in Brazil

- Misinformation enjoys a high level of acceptance. When presented with misinformation, 73.5% classify it as "true."
- The intention to share misinformation was also high (70.6%) — even though the content generated reflection and doubt (89% reported that the message made them rethink something).
- However, even among those who judged the misleading content to be “true,” opinions were not uniform. Half of these respondents, drawing on their prior environmental beliefs, reaffirmed the importance of the Amazon for the global climate.
- Cognitive susceptibility is significantly higher in groups with lower educational and informational capital. In Classes C and D, 92% of participants believed the message.
- Residents of the Legal Amazon showed the lowest rate of sharing (53%) of the video.

Reactions to the climate misinformation video (n = 102)

Variables	Categoria	%	Interpretação
PERCEPTION OF VERACITY	True	73,5%	Predominance of cognitive acceptance
	Deceiving	20,6%	Partial perception of manipulation
	False	5,9%	Explicit minority resistance
REFLEXIVE REACTION	It leads to rethinking	89%	False content generates reflection and doubt
INTENTION TO SHARE	Would share the video	70,6%	High propensity for spontaneous diffusion
AGREEMENT WITH THE CONTENT	Agree	73,5%	Apparent support, even among non-believers
	Disagree	25,5%	Reduced critical core

Policies and Legislative Action

Given its Emitter profile, as revealed by the CO₂-Index, **the National Congress needs mechanisms for environmental accountability in legislative decisions.**

Accordingly, the following measures are proposed:

- Create an Annual Legislative Climate Impact Report.
- Link environmental targets to budget amendments and thematic caucuses.
- Establish public indicators of parliamentary climate performance.

In addition, the public opinion data presented in this document reveal a profound **disconnect between anti-environmental projects, sponsored by the majority of Brazil's parliamentary elites, and the public's preferences regarding environmental policies.**

Therefore, based on EVATAR data, it is recommended that the design of climate and environmentally sustainable public policies for the Amazon region take into account the following:

- The widespread rejection of activities such as logging, prospecting, and mining by Amazonian residents. **Accordingly, policies aimed at reducing the labor appeal of these activities should apply targeted criteria to eligible individuals in critical areas, prioritizing their productive reintegration.**
- The social acceptance of agribusiness in the Amazon, as well as the desirability of increasing the area available for agriculture in the region. Taken together, these findings indicate that the first tendency must be leveraged to prevent the second. **Zero deforestation targets, for example, cannot be achieved without concurrent incentives for sustainable rural practices for rural producers already established in the region and tougher sanctions on land speculation cycles.**

In relation to the high informational vulnerability to climate denialism in classes C and D, as evidenced by the Climate and Crisis project: distrust of institutions and disbelief in politics, we propose the creation of:

- **Segmented media and scientific education programs focused on source verification and traceability** by institutions such as MEC, MCTI, MMA, and state and municipal education networks.



Recommendations



Civil Society and Communication Strategies

The data reproduced in this policy brief offer civil society and public policy makers **tools for climate accountability** and communication action planning to strengthen pro-environmental attitudes and behaviors among Brazilians.

Regarding the CO₂Index, NGOs and environmental movements can access the data (available on Harvard Dataverse) to:

- Monitor lawmakers.
- Support environmental transparency campaigns.
- Support the formulation of "climate votes" in elections.

With a view **to planning advocacy strategies**, establishing a public agenda, and pressuring legislators and public managers, activists, technicians, and researchers can use the evidence gathered by EVATAR on the **Brazilian public's preferences regarding environmental and climate policies**.

- Brazilians reject the increased use of pesticides, the permission of mining on indigenous lands, the weakening of environmental licensing rules, the privatization of basic sanitation services, and oil exploration in the Amazon River basin.
- On the other hand, they are enthusiastic about policies such as the demarcation of Traditional Peoples' Lands.



Qualitative data collected by the Climate and Crisis: Distrust of Institutions and Disbelief in Politics project suggest the following actions within civil society:

- In view of the scientific discourse, perceived as distant and elitist by the interviewees, it is appropriate **to train "empathetic authorities"**—scientists and climate communicators who combine technical credibility and accessible language—in specialized media outlets, universities, research support foundations, and environmental agencies.
- The production of campaigns based on lived climate experiences (floods, heat, drought), anchoring the message in everyday life by government agents, social movements, and local media.
- Given the lack of systematic monitoring of climate misinformation, we suggest creating indicators of vulnerability to climate misinformation and environmental observatories at universities, think tanks, and public and private research agencies.

INCT Representation and Democratic Legitimacy (ReDem)

INCT analyzes the causes and consequences of the crisis of democracy in Brazil, based on the connections between changes in the perceptions and values of voters, electoral institutions and rules, and the morphology of the national political class. In doing so, it seeks to explain how these factors affect the legitimacy deficit of political representation.

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Vice-coordenação: Ednaldo Aparecido Ribeiro (UEM).

Parliamentary Performance Carbon Index (CO₂-Index)

This indicator measures how active federal deputies have been in relation to climate change. To this end, it associates parliamentary performance with the estimated carbon emissions of the economic sectors impacted by the proposals analyzed during the 56th legislature (2019–2022).

The CO₂Index was funded by INCT ReDem. Its data can be [accessed through Harvard Dataverse](#).

Authors: Mateus de Albuquerque, Mateus de Albuquerque, Luana Moreira e Pollyana Sora (INCT ReDem/UFPR).

Environmental Values and Attitudes towards the Amazon Research (EVATAR)

Conducted by the Federal University of Pará, through the Graduate Program in Political Science, and funded by the Meliore Foundation and the PROCAD CAPES Amazon Project. It also received institutional support from the Federal University of Pará (UFPA) and the Amazon Foundation for the Support of Studies and Research in Pará (FAPESPA).

Authors: Gustavo César M. Ribeiro (Coordenador; UFPA / INCT ReDem); Ednaldo Aparecido Ribeiro (UEM / UFPR / INCT ReDem); Lucas Okado (UFPA / INCTReDem).



Institutional information

Climate and Crisis: distrust of institutions and disbelief in politics

The project was based on 12 online focus groups (2 hours each), conducted by a trained moderator. A total of 102 respondents participated, distributed by biome and socioeconomic profile.

This policy brief prioritizes the analysis of the excerpt based on the screening of a video with climate misinformation content during the focus groups. This was followed by the completion of individual forms and a collective debate.

The data shows the following variables: perception of veracity, reflexive reaction, intention to share, agreement with the content, and justifications.

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