

Brazil, Foreign Policy and Climate Change (1992–2005)

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Abstract: Since the emergence of the environmental agenda in the global arena, Brazil has maintained an active position in the debates around this topic. Although Brazil has always been a protagonist, its foreign policy has shown some changes in relation to addressing climate change in recent years. Likewise, the modalities under which this issue has been framed as a problem since 1992 are fundamentally important to interpreting the Brazilian position in international negotiations and the changes in them over the years. The objective of the following article is to understand the discursive framework on which the foreign policy of climate change in Brazil was structured from a constructivist standpoint on International Relations. Using this approach, this article studies both the international influences and the internal conditions of Brazilian climate policy in the negotiations of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The main sources of this research are semi-structured interviews with state and non-state actors in Brazil, complemented with a review of secondary sources such as official documents and academic papers.

Keywords: Climate Change; Foreign Policy; Brazil; Constructivism; International Relations.

Introduction

To understand Brazilian foreign policy in general terms, it is possible to argue that, in the long term, its main objective has been the promotion of development. In a geographical and historical context, as a consequence of being the only Portuguese colony in South America, the construction of the Brazilian international identity placed the definition of the national space as the base on which the international projection of Brazil was consolidated (Merke 2008). Consequently, the preservation of Brazil's sovereignty over its territorial integrity and its natural resources has been a strong component of Brazilian identity, in terms of foreign policy, since the 19th century (Lafer 2014; Merke 2008). Likewise, continuity is usually described as a salient characteristic of Brazilian foreign policy, especially in comparison with other South American countries. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil (*Ministério das Relações Exteriores*, MRE, or Itamaraty) played a central role in the definition of the Brazilian identity, based on its self-identification as a 'permanent institu-

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tion of the nation, suitable for the representation of its interests [...] endowed with authority and memory [due to] the awareness of a diplomatic tradition' (Lafer 2014: 21).

Thus, since the emergence of the environmental agenda in the global arena, Brazil has maintained an active position in international debate on the topic. The specialised literature usually recognises that the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in 1972 in Stockholm, represents that emergence of the global environmental agenda and the politicisation of environmental issues. This conference had its origin in the concerns of the countries of the global North about transnational pollution due to industrial activity and the perceived need to preserve and conserve natural resources, as well as to prevent future losses of biodiversity (Bernstein 2001; Costa 2004; among others). The countries of the global South quickly expressed their rejection of this narrow definition of the environmental problems, indicating that they could not be separated from the development agenda and the reform of the international economic order. In particular, Brazil played a leading role, in conjunction with India and China, in representing the preferences and identities of the global South's countries at the conference. These countries showed a strong opposition to recognising the environmental narrative as a singular topic, isolated from other political, economic and social concerns (Viola, Franchini and Lemos Ribeiro 2012).

Brazil upheld with great intensity, both before and during the Stockholm conference itself, the defence of sovereign control over the Amazon rainforest as a prerequisite for any kind of international dialogue on environmental preservation and conservation. Historically, the environmental issue in Brazil was linked to the protection of biodiversity and the preservation of tropical forests, especially, but not only, the Amazon rainforest (Banerjee, Macpherson and Alavalapati 2009). During the Brazilian military dictatorship, and especially during the 1970s, it is paradoxical to observe the dissimilarities among the different approaches to framing 'the environment' held by the state and the civil society. While the Brazilian state defined environmental protection as an obstacle to economic development, in civil society several environmental movements emerged, both conservationists and preservationists,¹ which adopted both the preservation of nature and biodiversity and the reduction of deforestation, as well as the conservation of the environment as their political frames. Williams (2009) argues that the Brazilian environmental movement arose along with democratisation in a framework of protection of human rights. The 'environmentalism of the poor' and the figure of Chico Mendes with their struggle for the conservation of the Amazon are good examples of this historical moment.

The consolidation of the environmental issue in Brazil since the 1980s has two faces, on the one hand, the consolidation of the environmental movement in Brazil at a national level, and on the other, the democratisation that reinforced the capacity of the Brazilian state. With the recovery of democracy and through the institutional task of the Public Ministry (*Ministério Público*), the state investigated and litigated against environmental crimes committed by private individuals (Williams 2009). On the other hand, since the 1970s, but with special development during the 1980s, Brazil has strengthened a series of scientific research institutions such as the National Institute of Spatial Research (INPE) and the National Research Institute of the Amazon (INPA) that would be significant in the

expansion of state capacities on this matter. In the next few years, this expansion would be of great importance for the definition of a climate policy in Brazil.

It is since the 1990s, as a result of a process of international socialisation, that Brazil has begun to internalise climate change as a problem to be addressed by the policymakers of Brazilian foreign policy. Unlike the position held in Stockholm, where the importance of environmental issues was denied by Brazil, in 1992, as the host of the Earth Summit, Brazil held a leading position on the subject from the beginning. With the signing of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 1992, and its entry into force in 1994, climate change was consolidated as an issue in which Brazil is increasingly pressed to play an important role.

This paper is structured as follows: the first section describes some theoretical and methodological references for the study of Brazil's foreign policy on climate change from a constructivist perspective in International Relations; then, in the main section of the article, the core empirical findings are described in detail. The historical period analysed is divided into two sections with a heuristic purpose. Firstly, the Brazilian position since the signature of the UNFCCC in 1992 until the signature of the Kyoto Protocol in 1997 is defined; then the article narrates the Brazilian foreign policy from 1997 until the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol (2005). The article closes with some comments alluding to the case studied.

Theoretical and methodological approach

To advance the study of foreign policy on climate change, a theoretical approach is employed that is inspired by constructivism in International Relations (Wendt 1999; Guzzini and Leander 2006; among others). The contributions of constructivism to International Relations have been extremely relevant, as they introduce a 'sociological turn' in the discipline (Checkel 1998). Constructivism has allowed us to explore questions about identity, interest, ideas, social rules and norms, discourses, and the mutual constitution between agents and social structures, which has allowed us to expand our knowledge about world politics and to question the methodological individualism and materialism that dominated the field of study until the end of the last century.

A constructivist perspective focuses on two factors that define it as such: the world is socially constructed and there is a mutual constitution between agents and social structures (Checkel 2008). From a constructivist standpoint, it is argued that both the maintenance of the structures and the processes of change are based on the agency, influenced by the social, spatial and historical context in which the social action unfolds (Klotz and Lynch 2007). These contributions are key in terms of the study of foreign policy, since constructivism makes it possible to understand both international influences and the internal conditioning factors of politics from a perspective that takes into account the intersubjective nature of the social world and the role played by ideas, norms and discourses in the definition of identities and interests of social actors. Identities are social relations that change over time and between different contexts. In other words, studying identities

implies exploring the process by which the context is connected with actions tending towards the development of a sense of self, its meanings and its recursive effects. Identity is usually based on a division between 'us' and 'them.' On some occasions, individuals may choose identity definitions for themselves (or for the social groups they represent), but in other circumstances, such definition is imposed by others. From this conceptualisation, the idea of agency can be linked to the definition of identity to the extent that agency manifests itself in the ability of a social group to project identities to others. Similarly, for constructivism, the interests of social actors are not deduced automatically from material bases, but are intersubjectively constituted and conditioned by the identities of social actors (Klotz and Lynch 2007).

It is relevant to emphasise that, for constructivism, actors are guided by the logic of appropriateness against the postulation rooted in the rationalist tradition that assumes that social action is guided by the logic of consequences. The latter assumes instrumental rationality of actors and cost-benefit calculation as guides for action; on the other hand, the logic of appropriateness implies recognising that actors give more importance to their practices being recognised – by other agents and by themselves – as legitimate and appropriate to a given social context (March and Olson 2009). If considerations of 'appropriateness' prevail, the modalities under which climate change is initially framed as a problem will generate path-dependency (David 2007) built along these interpretations, impacting on the discourses and in the future policy itself.

Finally, three related topics have been the object of empirical analysis through a constructivist lens: the origin of the interests of the state bureaucracies and policymakers responsible for defining foreign policy, the communicative and deliberative processes among actors that take place in decision-making processes, and third, the mechanisms that connect international processes with states, such as processes of diffusion of ideas, internalisation of norms, discursive effects, and expansion of the public sphere (Checkel 2008).

Concerning this, the main interest of this paper is to link a constructivist approach with the study of Brazil's climate foreign policy. The main purpose that this article pursues is to study how the ideas and the predominant interpretations of climate change and the discourses around it construct Brazil's climate foreign policy. Engaging this standpoint implies taking into account the ideational/discursive dimension of the political process, which lies as the basis of the agency of the Brazilian actors responsible for the elaboration of the foreign policy. Although there are some relevant studies about Brazilian climate policy that should be highlighted, such as the work of Johnson (2001), Friberg (2009), Aguilar and Bouzas (2010), Lucon and Goldemberg (2010), Viola (2010), Viola and Franchini (2011, 2012, 2018), Viola, Franchini and Lemos Ribeiro (2012), Vieira and Cadner (2013), Lessels (2013), Torres, Besserman, Vianna and Currey (2014), Bratman (2015), among others, as well as the article by Teixeira de Barros (2017) published in this same journal, none of these studies addresses this problem from a constructivist perspective, nor do they focus on how the ideational and discursive factors frame the very definition of foreign policy. At the same time, it is worth underlining the current consolidation of a research agenda that includes various studies approaching a constructivist perspective on

the domestic and international politics of climate change: Fuhr and Lederer (2009), Death (2011), Never (2012), Stevenson (2013), Hochstetler and Milkoreit (2014), among others. In this regard, this is where the present article aims to establish a contribution by linking a constructivist approach with the study of the Brazilian case.

In some previous works (Viola 2010, 2011; Viola and Franchini 2012, 2018; among others), it was argued that the government's difficulty in reducing the deforestation rate of the Amazon was one of the main factors to explain the position of the Brazilian government in relation to the global regulation of climate change. Without denying the importance of these material factors, this article seeks to explore the ideational/discursive dimension in this process which allows these perceptions of the importance of the Amazon in the first place and sustains the link between forests and climate change.

The main sources of this research are semi-structured interviews with state and non-state actors in Brazil, complemented with a review of secondary sources such as official documents and academic papers. In methodological terms, the following paper recognises the importance of discourse analysis for the understanding of the political processes of framing. This idea could be defined as a process tending to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a discourse in a way that promotes a certain definition of a problem, its causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or recommendation for its treatment (Stevenson 2013). In that sense, the words of interviewees are presented as illustrations or captions of wider structures of meaning that relate to the modalities under which social actors frame 'climate policy' and its changes over time. Reading the interviews with a constructivist lens enables us to understand, as is the interest of this article, how the agency of social actors responsible for foreign policy is built on ideas and discourses. So, from the discourse analysis of state and non-state actors, it is possible to understand the modalities under which climate change enters the governmental arena as a foreign policy problem, and how transformations, both in the international context and at the domestic level, enable new discursive definitions and reconfigurations in Brazil's climate foreign policy.

From the Earth Summit (1992) to the Kyoto Protocol (1997)

Scientists have recognised climate change as a phenomenon since the late 19th century; however, it was not until the signing of the UNFCCC in 1992 that this issue was defined and structured as a global political problem. As a result of a process of international socialisation, the first institutional actor that adopted this agenda in Brazil was the MRE itself. At the beginning of the Earth Summit in 1992, Itamaraty postulated two ideas that were to be constitutive of the traditional Brazilian position in the negotiations from then on:

1. Climate change is a subject with a strong scientific-technical component, in which those who have the greater legitimacy to express themselves are scientists specialised in the subject.
2. Climate change is not an environmental issue; the UNFCCC is an agreement on the development and use of energy, therefore, it is mainly a negotiation about economy and politics.

In the words of the representatives of Brazil's delegation at the time:

The technical and scientific dimension (of the negotiations) is something we could not avoid, because later we would have to report about it, and for me this is the convention's greatest achievement. People often criticise the convention, but for me there are two things that are important: the UN started this discussion, and involved all countries, thanks to this process, more science on the subject arises (Senior official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil, interview by Asher Lessels, 12 October 2011).

The response to climate change will come from a change in the technological paradigm, mainly in the energy sector. The question is how energy can be used, emitting less. Some people say that [there is a] need to have a big change related to fossil fuels [...] I do not think we can abandon fossil fuels in the near future. The big challenge is how to change the technological paradigm. In addition, to Brazil since the beginning of the negotiations – the UNFCCC is not an environmental convention, it is a convention that has to do with development, although it has a very strong environmental dimension. The UNFCCC has to do with the use of energy, natural resources such as forests, like the oceans, and how we can avoid new emissions and not only mitigate, but adapt to the increase of greenhouse gases (Senior official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil, interview by Asher Lessels, 19 October 2011).

In that sense, the representatives of Brazil's delegation at the time saw the UNFCCC not as an environmental convention, but an agreement that is based on environmental science as a support for discussions about development models:

We do not see the UNFCCC as an environmental convention. It is basically science – climatology and technology due to the application of the convention. It is more related to governments than to the environment. It is about a change in the consumption patterns of the products. It is much more related to development than the environment, due to energy and the change of land use. We are going to see the impacts on the environment only in the long term, 100 or 200 years. The problem is how to mitigate emissions, basically a matter of science and technology, not of the environment. It has nothing to do with meteorology; it is not about climate, but about climate change. It is about emissions. The environmentalists mix the themes. We do not deal with the impact; we take care of the patterns of production and consumption, of the use of energy. In our case, the most important is land use change and agriculture. It is a prob-

lem of development, not an environmental problem (Senior official of the Ministry of Science and Technology of Brazil, interview by Asher Lessels, 10 October 2011).

The conjunction of these ideas generated several consequences, principally the exclusion of the recently created Ministry of the Environment (*Ministério do Meio Ambiente* (MMA)) from the possibility of approaching the problem, as this led to the interpretation that it did not have competences in the matter. This becomes evident in the distribution of competencies in relation to the main international treaties derived from the 1992 Earth Summit: the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The CBD was included in the sphere of competence of the Ministry of Environment, while on the other hand, the responsibility for providing advice regarding the UNFCCC fell on the Ministry of Science and Technology (*Ministério da Ciência e da Tecnologia* (MCT)), in both cases with close supervision of the negotiations of the COPs by Itamaraty.

In addition, it was the first idea related to the strong scientific-technical component of climate change that developed most during the 1990s, with the formation of an explicit alliance between the MRE and the MCT (Lessels 2013). Representatives from both ministries, who annually rotated the headship of the representation, integrated the Brazilian delegations in the COPs throughout the 1990s.

In any case, in general terms, there was the perception among Brazilian presidents at that time – Fernando Collor de Mello, Itamar Franco and Fernando Henrique Cardoso – that the climate change agenda was actually an important topic. Even though none of these presidents was an environmentalist, all of them agreed that Brazil should adopt a leadership role in this subject, as they perceived it was considered highly relevant by other heads of state.

The presidential initiative on the topic was channelled by a political position adopted by Itamaraty, aligning Brazil to the ideas held by the G77 + China. The basis of this space articulated around the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities between countries of the North and the global South and in the historical responsibility of the countries of the global North.

During the Earth Summit, the Brazilian delegation was led by officials from the Ministry of Science and Technology. As a senior official noted:

In addition to the Itamaraty officials participating in the negotiations, you had a person who understood the science that was involved in climate change. This was the reason why the president chose me and there, by my position, it was natural that I was the head of the delegation [...] I was the person who had a scientific career in that area, it was not an important decision of the president [...] they [Itamaraty] are very competent as diplomats. They are good negotiators, but the content of the negotiation, they do not understand the content of the negotiation [that was] of the most varied matters, and you have

to negotiate on all the issues. Therefore, due to the interest that the president had in climate change, and that all the governments of the most important countries were interested in the matter, he believed that it was not an issue to be passed only to diplomats but to Brazilian scientists. And naturally I was placed in the direction of that delegation (Senior official of the Ministry of Science and Technology of Brazil, interview by Asher Lessels, 12 September 2012).

As already observed, in the context of the preparations for the Earth Summit in 1992, the executive functions in relation to Science and Technology and the Environment (still with the rank of Secretary) were centralised in the same person. Accordingly, with the agreement of Itamaraty, MCT took a leading role in climate negotiations.

However, within the Ministry of Science and Technology, there were certain critical voices that denounced the increase on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' influence in the definition of the Brazilian position at the negotiations in the first COPs:

After I left the government in 1993, all the negotiations were left to Itamaraty. Its influence [the MRE's] has increased so that until today the MCT participates very little in the negotiations, it is the MRE who directs the negotiations now. The general line that I wanted to apply in the negotiations ended up not being applied in practice for solidarity with the G77. But our influence was important enough to help the signing of the Kyoto Protocol.

[...]

Itamaraty, as it worked with all the countries, was closely associated with the G77, so it had political positions, without looking at the content very much. Scientists like me had significant differences with that position, because it was a very conservative and very political position, of solidarity with the developing countries, always [...] already at that time I argued that China was going to become a great emitter of greenhouse gases. And China wanted to be treated as if it were Nigeria or Tuvalu- they did not want any commitment to reduce emissions (Senior official of the Ministry of Science and Technology of Brazil, interview by Asher Lessels, 12 September 2012).

For Itamaraty, on the contrary, the division of tasks between both Ministries was based on clear criteria that worked to the benefit of the delegation:

We have to combine the political aspects and the technological aspects, the delegation was very solid from the political and technical point of view... in Brazil, we see it as absolutely necessary that Itamaraty plays the role not of forming the position, but of contributing with the political elements, taking into account the technical aspects

of the MCT, and this has worked very well (Senior official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil, interview by Asher Lessels, 11 October 2011).

At COP 3 held in Kyoto, Brazil had a leading position, bringing to the negotiating table two concrete proposals that in the following years would be subject to reformulations:

1. Create a mechanism called the Clean Development Fund, which would establish a fine for the Annex I countries² of sixteen dollars per metric ton of carbon emitted outside the commitments that they would assume for the signing of a Protocol to create a fund for financing sustainable development, which was later transformed into the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM).³
2. Calculate the historical impact of countries' emissions, responsible for the actual increase in temperature, to work with a single dimension of the carbon emissions over time. This initiative was later known as 'the Brazilian proposal.'

The first mechanism was proposed in 1997, but it was reformulated by the US delegation, who indicated to Brazil that 'countries do not pay fines' (Costa 2004). The USA was at that time interested in introducing mechanisms of flexibility to achieve the fulfilment of the Annex I countries' goals. Based on the idea presented by the Brazilian delegation, a trilateral meeting was held between the delegations of Brazil, the USA and Japan, which concluded with the elaboration of the Clean Development Mechanism.

On the other hand, the Brazilian proposal to assess the responsibility of countries based on historical emissions was born in the context of COP 1 together with the Berlin Mandate;⁴ an MCT official indicated the following:

We felt that there would be a great push in Kyoto to try to incorporate Brazil into Annex I or with some kind of objectives. We maintained that this was not fair due to historical responsibilities. There we thought that you could try to imitate with supercomputers and modelling the historical trajectory of the emissions of the countries, since the industrial revolution, and there the Brazilian proposal was born (Senior official of the Ministry of Science and Technology of Brazil, interview by Asher Lessels, 10 October 2011).

The Brazilian proposal consisted of adjudging the responsibilities of a country for reducing emissions to the degree to which they had contributed historically (and therefore effectively) to the changes in the global average temperature (Johnson 2001). This implied that the emissions were not measured annually but in accumulated terms, which assigned strong emission reduction responsibilities to developed countries, especially the USA and European countries. After being considered, the proposal was finally rejected as a result of the opposition presented by Annex I countries.

Viola, Franchini, and Lemos Ribeiro (2012) argue that during the negotiation of the Kyoto Protocol, Brazil held five positions that have been substantive to defining Brazil's so-called 'traditional position' on climate change negotiations:

1. The right to development as a framework in which the climate change policy is inserted;
2. Defence of the notion of sustainable development to integrate economic processes with environmental protection;
3. Brazil's global leadership on climate change;
4. Avoidance of linking climate change with the regulation and preservation of forests;
5. Radical interpretation of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities (Viola, Franchini and Lemos Ribeiro 2012).

Since the signing of the Kyoto Protocol until its entry into force

Johnson (2001) recognises that, since the signing of the Kyoto Protocol on 29 April 1998, there are three issues on which Brazil adopted a position that allow a characterisation and description of Brazil's stance in the negotiations in the years immediately following Kyoto until the COP 5 held in Bonn. These topics are responsibility for reducing emissions, the mechanisms of the protocol, and the situation in the Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry sector (LULUCF) (Johnson 2001). The first two correspond to 'the Brazilian proposal' mentioned before, which was submitted to the Secretariat of the Convention in 1997 and then refined methodologically in 1999; and then the third one is the financing mechanism for the global South that eventually became the CDM after the COPs in Bonn and Marrakech. In relation to the CDM, and in terms of institutional design, Johnson argues that Brazil was interested in obtaining fair representation of the developing countries in the CDM executive board, maximising opportunities to transfer financial resources to developing countries, and preventing the creation of a structure of supranational authority that weakens the sovereignty of countries in the climate change regime (Johnson 2001). Similarly, in relation to emissions trading as a flexibilisation mechanism, Brazil was interested in placing limits on the possibility of Annex I countries purchasing permits, so that no country could 'buy' all of its domestic commitments in the global market.

The LULUCF sector deserves to be evaluated in detail in this section, because at the moment, most of Brazil's emissions come from that sector. Since 1992, Brazil has opposed considering LULUCF to calculate the reduction of GHG emissions for three main reasons:

- a. The Kyoto Protocol does not explicitly mention preservation or conservation of forests; Brazil noted that there were other international agreements that more adequately governed the topic, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Authorized Declaration of Principles for a Global Consensus Regarding the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of Forests, both from 1992. In that sense, for Brazil the discussion on forests under the UNFCCC was going to divert the issue from developed countries reducing their emissions in their energy sector towards the assignment of responsibility to Brazil to combat deforestation:

We have been very careful not to cause deviations from the main source of emissions, which is the energy sector and fossil fuels. In the 1990s, the main ones responsible for emissions were the industrialised countries. Our concern was that if we dealt with deforestation, we would be helping those countries that do not want to take adequate, strong measures to reduce their emissions derived from the use of energy by placing responsibility on the shoulders of developing countries (Senior official of the Ministry of Science and Technology of Brazil, interview by Asher Lessels, 24 September 2011).

[Why did Brazil never mention the topic of deforestation in the Amazon in climate negotiations?] Because [forests were] not covered by the convention. Brazil's emissions were never a point of negotiation, there was no reason to mention that. It becomes a factor as we begin to discuss the contributions that developing countries could make, and then there we started talking about deforestation (Senior official of the Ministry of Science and Technology of Brazil, interview by Asher Lessels, 10 October 2011).

- b. For Brazil, there were certain scientific doubts about the impact of the preservation of forests in relation to the mitigation of climate change. In that sense, it is relevant to bring up the statements of an official of the MCT, a member of the Brazilian delegation for more than a decade, about forests as carbon sinks:

People wanted to use the change in land use as a scapegoat for emissions. The idea was that the sinks are permanent, but they are not. Of course they are not. People tend to see trees as permanent carbon storage, which is completely wrong, you have to reduce emissions. Carbon from fossil fuels comes from geological storage that is being placed in the atmosphere. The forests are different. If the trees die, the carbon will be emitted again. You have to stop the emissions, because in this issue [forests] you have no control (Senior official of the Ministry of Science and Technology of Brazil, interview by Asher Lessels, 10 October 2011).

- c. Forest preservation projects could not prevent deforestation from happening due to the difficulty of execution. This argument has a double dimension: firstly, Brazil manifested opposition in the negotiations to introduce forests into the CDM due to the problem of the potential non-permanence of carbon captured by forests. Therefore, at the end, in the agreement reached with the USA, it was established that the CDM would cover only the energy and industry sectors for the generation of CER credits. On the other hand, the difficulty the Brazilian government had in reducing and preventing deforestation made this issue partially 'taboo' for Brazilian negotiators (Lessels 2013).

In addition to these three explicit arguments, Johnson (2001) also highlights Brazil's implicit interest in maintaining sovereign control over the Amazon for both economic and security reasons. By the beginning of the 2000s, the threat was not the internationalisation of the Amazon, but the loss of sovereign control over development decisions. In terms of a senior Itamaraty official:

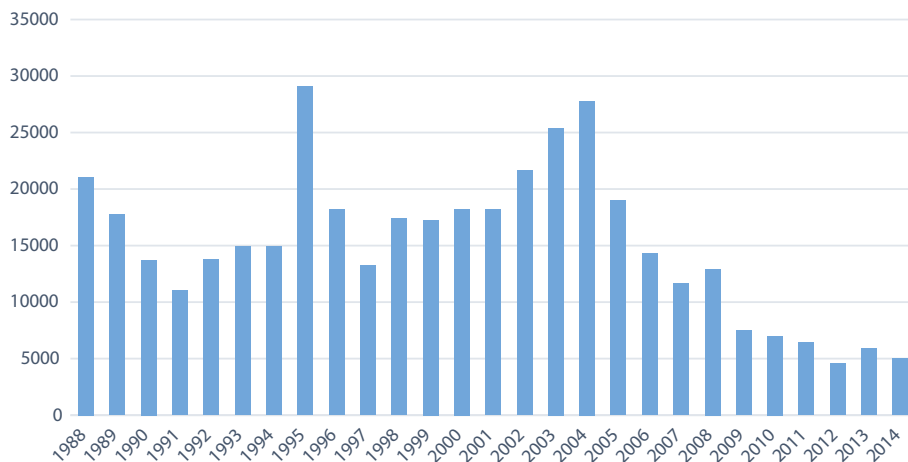
I participated in several external meetings related to climate change and never heard any argument based on the internationalisation of the Amazon. This is in the minds of some people who know nothing about climate change, or the Amazon, although they were responsible for making decisions. The reason why we were very careful is that nowadays, international relations are rules based relations. What we were doing in climate change was to create international agreements that in some way imposed limits on the action of the States in their development and management of their territories. Our question was: how much could we grant of our sovereignty, how much could we grant in our internal decision making to supranational decision-making in development, energy and environmental policy? That was at the centre of our work with regard to climate change (Senior official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil, interview by Asher Lessels, 19 October 2011).

It is, however, in the LULUCF sector that a transformation in the traditional Brazilian position in international negotiations began towards the year 2003. As a consequence of the high level of Brazilian emissions due to deforestation during the 1990s, especially towards the middle of the decade, there was a fear among Brazilian negotiators that Brazil had to adopt some kind of binding commitment to reduce emissions.

This idea, even said by the United States, that emissions from deforestation were the most important in the world, then Brazil was the culprit. The United States and the IPCC were saying this [that Brazil should be incorporated as Annex I] in public in 1996. [This was] very disturbing for us; they change the idea of historical responsibility for current emissions (Senior official of the Ministry of Science and Technology of Brazil, interview by Asher Lessels, 10 October 2011).

Although Brazil's emissions inventory was not yet publicly available, both Itamaraty and the Ministry of Science and Technology acknowledged that emissions from the LULUCF sector grew year by year due to the alarming rate of growth of deforestation, especially in the Amazonian States from 1997 onwards:

Figure 1: Annual rate of deforestation of the Amazon (Km²/Year)



Source: Adapted from the National Institute of Spatial Research of Brazil (2017)

It should be noted that until 2000, the political discussion on climate change was almost exclusively developed by Brazilian government officials and channelled through the foreign policy of the Brazilian government. The participation of Brazilian civil society in Kyoto was extremely limited, and public demonstrations to influence the government's direction in the negotiations were scarce. Even the business sectors were virtually absent from this debate, with the exception of some specific initiatives that emerged in the 1990s promoting corporate social responsibility or 'corporate citizenship,' such as the Ethos Institute. Moreover, it should be noted that there was a strong divergence at that time between the perceptions of government officials and non-state actors on climate change. While the Brazilian government identified climate change as a problem of development and use of energy, NGOs clearly pointed to climate change as an environmental problem.

It is only after the creation of the Brazilian Forum of Climate Change (*Foro Brasileiro de Mudanças Climáticas*, from now on, the Forum) in 2000 that Brazilian civil society begins to emerge as a social and political actor in the subject. This forum was created as an initiative of the president Fernando Henrique Cardoso to facilitate the dialogue between government actors and Brazilian civil society in the climate change arena.

The first president of the Forum was the federal deputy, Fabio Feldmann, who was at the same time its main ideologist. About the reasons that led to the creation of this body, Feldmann himself points out:

When I returned from Kyoto, I met Fernando Henrique to say that I believed that this was a very important issue and that Brazil had a very important role, but that we would have to prepare the country to work with the issue of climate change. Hence, the idea was to create the Forum and prepare the president of the republic for talks that were to happen. In all the conversations that FHC [Fernando Hen-

rique Cardoso] had with heads of state, Tony Blair, Schröder, George Bush himself. The topic was climate change, and Brazil did not see the issue as a priority. So, it was an idea like, let's design a forum, an instance preceded by the president of the republic who conversed with all the ministries, with civil society, the business sector and academia (Fabio Feldmann, interview by author, 27 September 2016).

With the implementation of the Forum, a meeting with the participation of the president of the Republic was institutionalised in the periods prior to the COPs to discuss the issues that were to be addressed and what the Brazilian position would be. Therefore, the creation of the Forum caused some resistance from Itamaraty, who feared that the president would imprint changes to a policy that had been conducted so far without much external control.

From the new institutionality enabled by the Forum, in October 2000, the Ministry of the Environment and governments of some Amazonian states began to question the Brazilian position against the inclusion of forests within global climate governance, especially in the CDM (Viola, Franchini and Lemos Ribeiro 2012). To this coalition would be added the majority of Brazilian environmental NGOs, which put pressure on the government to support the inclusion of projects related to the protection of forests in the CDM. The most involved organisations in this initiative were particularly those of great performance in the Amazon such as IPAM, IDESAM, ISA, with Greenpeace and WWF being the only ones opposed to this idea. The position of Greenpeace Brazil and WWF Brazil aligned with its international centres (Greenpeace International and WWF International) and, strikingly, with the position of the Brazilian government. Only projects leading to the reduction of emissions derived directly from the use of fossil fuels were to be considered for the CDM, so it would not exempt industrial countries from their historical responsibility and achieve long-term reductions in emissions (Segebart and König 2014). The rest of the NGOs published a document in the city of Belém called 'Declaration of Brazilian civil society on the relations between forests and climate change and expectations for COP-6,' where the traditional position of the government on the subject was clearly questioned. From this document began to emerge three areas of tension that were to remain important in subsequent years: within the federal government between Ministries; between the federal government on one side and subnational governments and NGOs on the other; and between Brazilian NGOs and international NGOs. On this last cleavage, an interviewee indicates the following:

In 2000 there was a big discussion here in Brazil in the sector of civil society about the inclusion of forests in the CDM. All the Brazilian NGOs except the big three – I have to correct myself, with the exception of WWF and Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth here in Brazil was in favour of the inclusion of forests in the CDM and that led to the letter from Belém (...) the meeting in Belém confronted the international NGOs with the national ones, including the interna-

tional Friends of the Earth network. The position of Friends of Earth Brazil was different [because] they found the discussion of forests in CDM mechanisms horrendous (Mario Monzoni, interview by author, 21 September 2016).

The Brazilian Congress ratified the Kyoto Protocol on 23 August 2002, in a context in which international negotiations were turning towards a formal schedule to establish basic agreements for the post-Kyoto agenda. In any case, at an informal level, the signatures and ratifications necessary for the Protocol to enter into force were still being sought. Against this background, in January 2003, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva assumed his position as President of the Republic and Marina Silva as Minister of the Environment. Lessels (2013) has argued that this fact was decisive to instilling a change in the Brazilian position in inter-state negotiations. At the COP held in Milan, Italy, in 2003, the Ministry of Environment, disrupting the predominance maintained until that moment by the Ministry of Science and Technology on the subject, led the Brazilian delegation for the first time. On this, diverse interpretations were sustained:

The Minister of MCT [at that time] was less interested in the international dimension of the negotiations, and the international issues related to climate change, and the MMA began to occupy that space (Senior official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil, interview by Asher Lessels, 12 October 2011).

The minister [of Science and Technology], Roberto Amaral, did not have much interest in the subject, but that climate change group [of the MCT] had less relations with the new minister than they had with the old one, but the old one was not a person who – the climate change issue in the presidency of Fernando Henrique Cardoso, President FHC has addressed the issue more directly in the last two years of his mandate derived from the creation of the Brazilian Climate Change Forum, which was coordinated by Fabio Feldmann (Senior official of the Ministry of Environment of Brazil, interview by Asher Lessels, 14 October 2011).

On the other hand, other interviewees focus on the growing influence of the MMA in the subject and in the reasons for that shift:

The main reason was that, unfortunately, the Minister of MCT in 2003 was not able to leave Brazil. The MMA became more involved in this issue because in 2003, the levels of deforestation were very high and that implies a great contribution to increasing the concentration of greenhouse gases. Our emissions came mainly from forests, so stronger MMA action was needed to stop deforestation in Brazil. Also, we had a very strong MMA minister, Marina Silva, who was very interested in the topic. From the MCT, the techni-

cal aspects of the representation of Brazil are still being organised [by them]. The Brazilian position was and continues to be driven mainly by the MRE, which has the responsibility of coordinating all the efforts within the Brazilian government and society and developing a broad Brazilian perspective on this issue (Senior official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil, interview by Asher Lessels, 19 October 2011).

The MMA was increasingly interested in climate change, just as the MCT was increasingly interested in biodiversity. Therefore, after a certain point in time, you mention 2003, maybe then, maybe later, a more balanced situation evolved. In the COPs [climate change], both ministries were present, as well as in biodiversity, both ministries were present as well. Sometimes whoever dictates the speeches depends on which minister could go, due to internal duties. At the political level, both in the negotiators and in the teams, both ministries remain active. Itamaraty leads the negotiation, but with the help of MCT and MMA, because we have many areas to cover and the negotiations are very complex and require the presence of a large number of people. Within the delegation, we make a distribution of tasks (Senior official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil, interview by Asher Lessels, 11 October 2011).

In any case, since this COP onwards, a process of larger involvement of the MMA on the issue and loss of relative importance of the MCT began to take place, as indicated by officials of the Ministry of Environment:

Until 2002 there was an absolute hegemony of the MCT in that agenda. They had a very strong technical group, with a rather restricted vision. As of 2003, the MMA began an inflection that will revert [this hegemony] some years later, including in the executive coordination of that agenda within the government that passes into the scope of the MMA (Senior official of the Ministry of Environment of Brazil, interview by Asher Lessels, 14 October 2011).

In the speech given at the COP in 2003, for the very first time the Brazilian delegation refers to the deforestation of the Amazon as a problem to be addressed in the context of climate negotiations:

In 2003, it was not a convention that was highly valued, with the delay of the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol as a result of certain resistances, expectations were not high regarding that COP, although for Brazil it was very important. Because at this conference in Milan for the first time we sent a signal that was still domestic that Brazil could accept the inclusion of forests in the climate issue. Until

2002, Brazil was inflexible in the non-inclusion...(Senior official of the Ministry of Environment of Brazil, interview by Asher Lessels, 14 October 2011).

During the COP held in Montreal in 2005, the year of ratification of the Kyoto Protocol, Brazil accompanied a proposal led by Costa Rica that sought to include in the framework of the UNFCCC, although outside the Kyoto Protocol, some type of additional mechanism that remunerated the countries to keep the forest standing, which would later be known as RED. In explicit terms, in the speech given in the high-level segment of COP 11, Marina Silva asked for 'recognition by the international community that the conservation of tropical forests is important for the climatic balance of the planet' (Ministry of the Environment (Brazil) 2005). This discourse enabled the possibility of receiving international financing for the implementation of national forestry programmes, changing a long stance in the subject by the Brazilian government.

The roots of this transformation should be traced back to the COP held in Milan in 2003, where a side event took place with the participation of environmental NGOs and the Brazilian government. This initiative was organised by several Brazilian NGOs, with the Institute of Environmental Research of the Amazon (IPAM) taking the starring role:

A side event happened, promoted by several NGOs at the COP in Milan, we participated, the MMA participated, Itamaraty accompanied and in this conference, and in that side event we sent a clear signal that the MMA was looking to discuss the issue of the inclusion of forests in the COP, still in the reserve of the MRE. In Buenos Aires that declined a bit, [but] it was at those two COPs that the political conditions were made feasible so that at the next COP, in 2005 in Montreal, Brazil had a proposal to include and discuss remuneration for avoiding deforestation within the UNFCCC (Senior official of the Ministry of Environment of Brazil, interview by Asher Lessels, 14 October 2011).

This disruption of the traditional Brazilian position on forests was promoted by an alliance between an emerging organised civil society with a growing voice in the subject, and the Ministry of the Environment, which jointly managed to modify the perception of the subject within the Brazilian state.

Final comments

This article presented, from a constructivist standpoint of International Relations, the ideas and the predominant interpretations of climate change and the discourses around it held by the Brazilian actors responsible for the elaboration of the foreign policy from 1992 to 2005, especially in relation to the process of framing the problem. As mentioned in the theoretical and methodological section, there are three factors that a constructivist perspective for the study of foreign policy focuses on: the origin of the interests of the state

bureaucracies responsible for defining foreign policy, the communicative and deliberative processes among actors that take place in a decision-making context, and the mechanisms that connect international political processes with states.

Looking at the first point, as was explained before, in some previous works (Viola 2010, 2011; Viola and Franchini 2012, 2018; among others) it was argued that one of the main interests of the Brazilian government before 2005 in relation to the global regulation of climate change was to prevent debate about forests within the framework of the UNFCCC, especially due to the government's difficulty in reducing the deforestation rate of the Amazon. Without denying the importance of these material factors, this article sought to explore the ideational/discursive dimension in this process, which allows this perception to be sustained in the first place. Environmental problems have historically been interpreted by Brazil as development problems (Teixeira de Barros 2017). Thus, the process of framing climate change as a problem of energy use and development already at the end of the 1980s contributed seriously to the consolidation of a Brazilian identity as an emerging country of the global South represented by the G77 + China, which at the same time reinforced this definition of climate change as a problem. This article has tried to evidence that the position that Brazil would defend in the negotiations had its origin in the process of framing the problem that had an impact on the interests of Itamaraty officials in the execution of foreign policy.

In relation to the alliance between the MCT and the MRE, in which the former provided technical advice to the latter so Itamaraty could represent 'Brazilian interests' in the negotiations, it excluded other actors and visions from the problem, such as those exposed by the MMA and by Brazilian civil society. This coalition between ministries collapsed towards 2003 when the MMA entered to occupy a preponderant role in the decision-making processes on the subject. The appointment of Marina Silva as minister from 1 January 2003 enabled the emergence of new voices in the field that traditionally had not found channels to influence Brazilian foreign policy. However, the change that occurs after 2003 is not radical, but refers especially to the role of forest preservation in climate governance, both domestic and internationally. Since 2003, the design, implementation and execution of Brazilian climate policy has become substantially more complex through the introduction of new actors in the decision-making process, as happened in other arenas of Brazilian foreign policy. We can conclude from this that Itamaraty, as the executive branch responsible for Brazil's international relations, has been (and continues to be) a key player in the definition of Brazilian foreign policy on climate change, although other Ministries have been acquiring new attributions in the subject, resignifying its practices.

Finally, and referring to the third issue, the consolidation of Brazilian foreign policy, and the ideas, discourses, norms that have given it meaning, has taken place in a context of strengthening and contestation on the interpretation of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, which would lead to the signing of the Kyoto Protocol and, in the same process, the self-exclusion of the United States of America from the agreement itself.

In conclusion, constructivism allows us to study the ideational and discursive foundations of the interests that states defend and sustain in international negotiations. However,

the politics and policy of climate change are topics that have not yet received enough attention from a constructivist perspective. Despite the material basis of the issue, associated with GHG emissions, the modalities under which the topic is framed and interpreted have a very important role in defining the agency of the actors in the negotiations, as well as the 'appropriate' options for facing the problem.

Notes

1. Conservationism differs from preservationism because the former pursues the protection of a territory that does not consider the environment isolated from the self-reproduction of the inhabitants who lived there; by contrast, the second defends a vision of the environment as nature without human interference. I thank one of the anonymous reviewers of this article for this assessment.
2. The Annex I Parties are the industrialised countries which have historically contributed the most to climate change. They include both the countries that were members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 1992 and countries with 'economies in transition' (known as EITs), that is, the Russian Federation and several other Central and Eastern European countries.
3. The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) allows a country with an emission-reduction or emission-limitation commitment under the Kyoto Protocol (Annex B Party) to implement an emission-reduction project in developing countries. Such projects can earn saleable certified emission reduction (CER) credits, each equivalent to one tonne of CO₂, which can be counted towards meeting Kyoto targets.
4. The Berlin Mandate was an agreement made in April 1995 in COP 1 in Berlin initiating a period of negotiations to agree on binding targets in the context of the UNFCCC.

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Brasil, Política Externa e Mudança Climática (1992-2005)

Resumo: Desde a emergência na agenda ambiental em arena global, o Brasil tem sustentado uma posição ativa nos debates sobre esse tema. Embora o Brasil tenha sido protagonista, sua política externa tem mostrado algumas transformações na sua abordagem em relação à mudança climática nos últimos anos. Da mesma forma, as modalidades sob as quais esta questão tem sido tratada como problema desde 1992 são de fundamental importância para interpretar a posição brasileira nas negociações internacionais e as mudanças ocorridas ao longo dos anos. O objetivo desse artigo é compreender o arcabouço discursivo sobre o qual a política externa de mudanças climáticas no Brasil foi estruturada a partir de um ponto de vista construtivista das Relações Internacionais. Usando essa abordagem, este artigo estuda as influências internacionais e as condições internas da política climática brasileira nas negociações da Convenção-Quadro das Nações Unidas sobre Mudanças Climáticas (UNFCCC). As principais fontes dessa pesquisa são entrevistas semiestruturadas com atores estatais e não estatais no Brasil, complementadas com uma revisão de fontes secundárias, como documentos oficiais e trabalhos acadêmicos.

Palavras-chave: Mudança Climática, Política externa, Brasil, Construtivismo, Relações Internacionais.

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