

Alumni Open Day, Wageningen University, 5th October 2019

Understanding ‘post-truth’ development Conservation, biodiversity decline, and denial in Bolsonaro’s Brazil

Dr. Robert Coates

Sociology of Development and Change, Wageningen University

robert.coates@wur.nl

@robjcoates

INTRODUCTION

- 60% of all wild have disappeared since 1970
(Living Planet Report, 2018)
- Rates of extinction are accelerating – now at 200 per day;
biodiversity thresholds are at risk of surpassing planetary
boundaries
(IPBES Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity, 2019)
- Brazil: holds 15-20% of all global species. 3000 animals
are endangered or threatened, and many more plants
(IUCN, 2013; WWF 2018)

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WELCOME TO THE CLUB, BOLSONARO !



CARTOONSTOCK

Search ID: mkan1165

"The Amazon is practically untouched"

(Jair Bolsonaro, UN General Assembly, 24 September 2019)





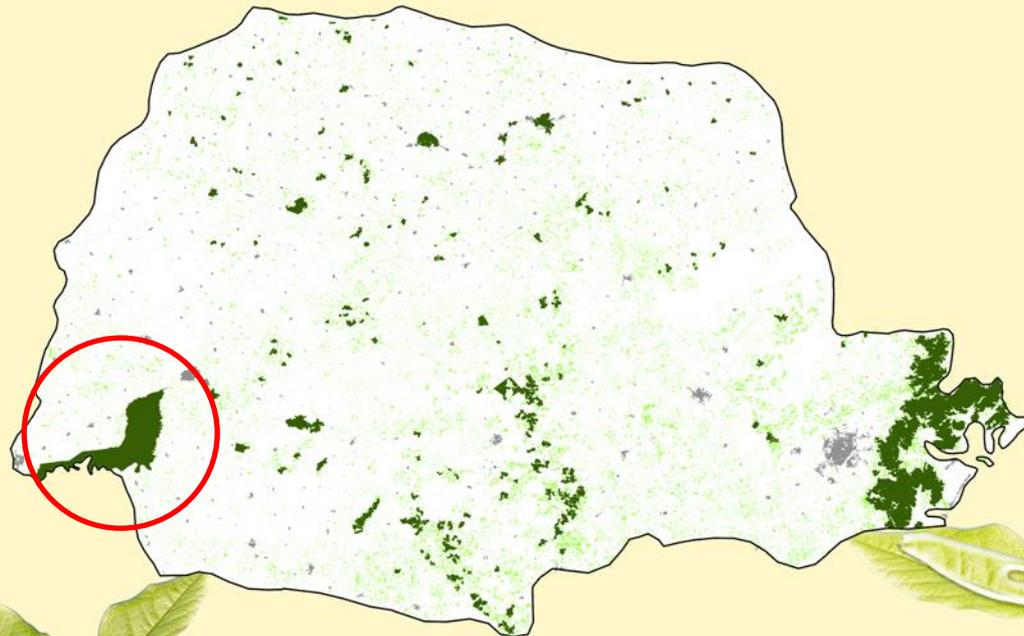
- The argument is that the new authoritarianism is closely linked to environmental governance and conservation processes
- Is this development a new phase of neoliberalism?
- Underpinned by ‘post-truth’: a spread of confusion & obfuscation through which resource-based growth confronts conservation
 - the Fundo Amazônia
 - Amazon fires and the soy frontier
- www.convivialconservation.com

CONSERVATION *IN* DEVELOPMENT

- Development's ecological contradiction
- 'Fortress' conservation vs market-based 'New conservation' as the mainstream responses
- PES schemes at the core of neoliberal environmental policy (agri-business and mining do this too!)
 - *The Amazon Fund* (REDD+) the most significant
- Tourism also viewed as central for key remaining sites

QUAL A IMPORTÂNCIA DO PARQUE NACIONAL DO IGUAÇU?

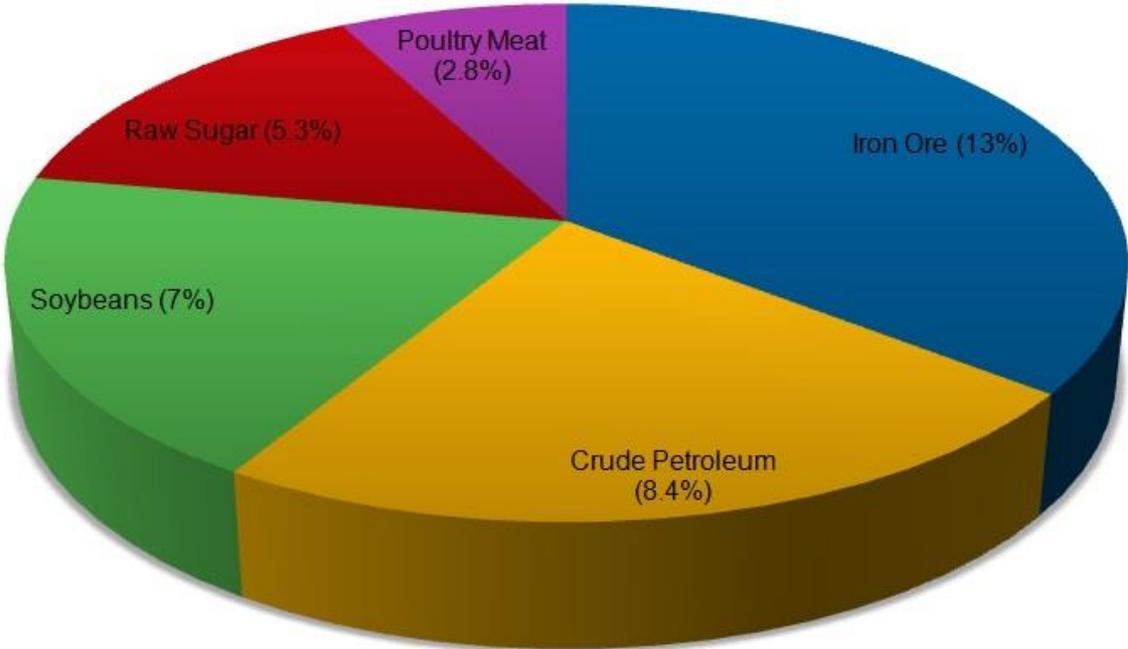
DESMATAMENTO NO ESTADO DO PARANÁ



*Where can expansion
go next?*

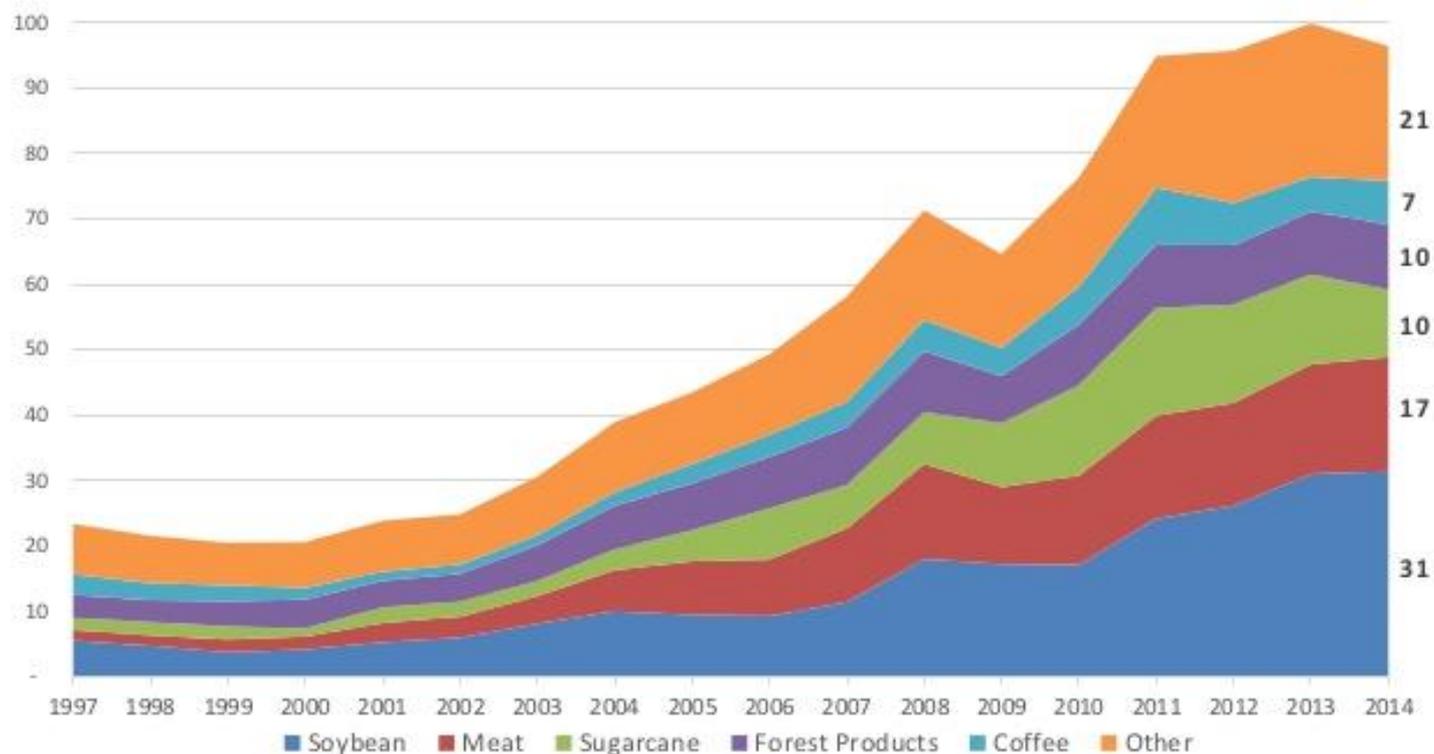


Brazil's Top Exports



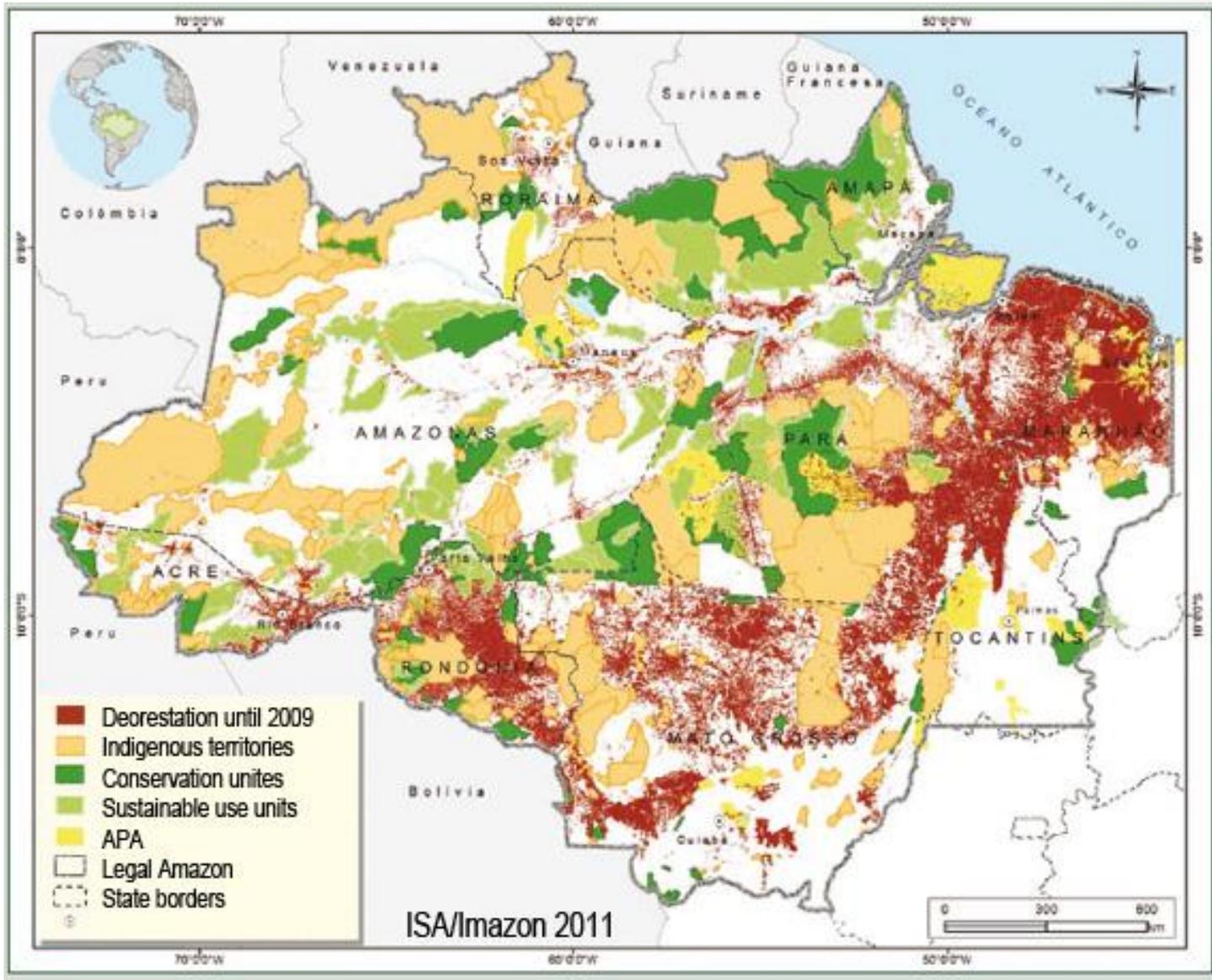
Products of Brazilian agribusiness exports, 1997 – 2014

(in US\$ billion)



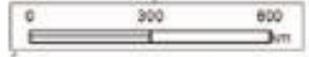
Resource politics in Brazil

- Inability or unwillingness to challenge extractive-based economy during last 20 years (Ioris, 2018; Saad-Filho, 2018)
- Workers' Party (PT) governments under Lula and Dilma Rousseff (2002-2016) dramatically reduced poverty and increased spending, underpinned by high commodity prices
- 5th of the Amazon forest lost between 1970 and 2000
- PT government limited deforestation via indigenous rights, 'fortress' conservation & financial incentives: Amazon Fund, CI, TNC; & by allowing agri-business expansion in the *Cerrado*
- '*Progressive neoliberalism*'? 58 \$ billionaires (Forbes, 2019)

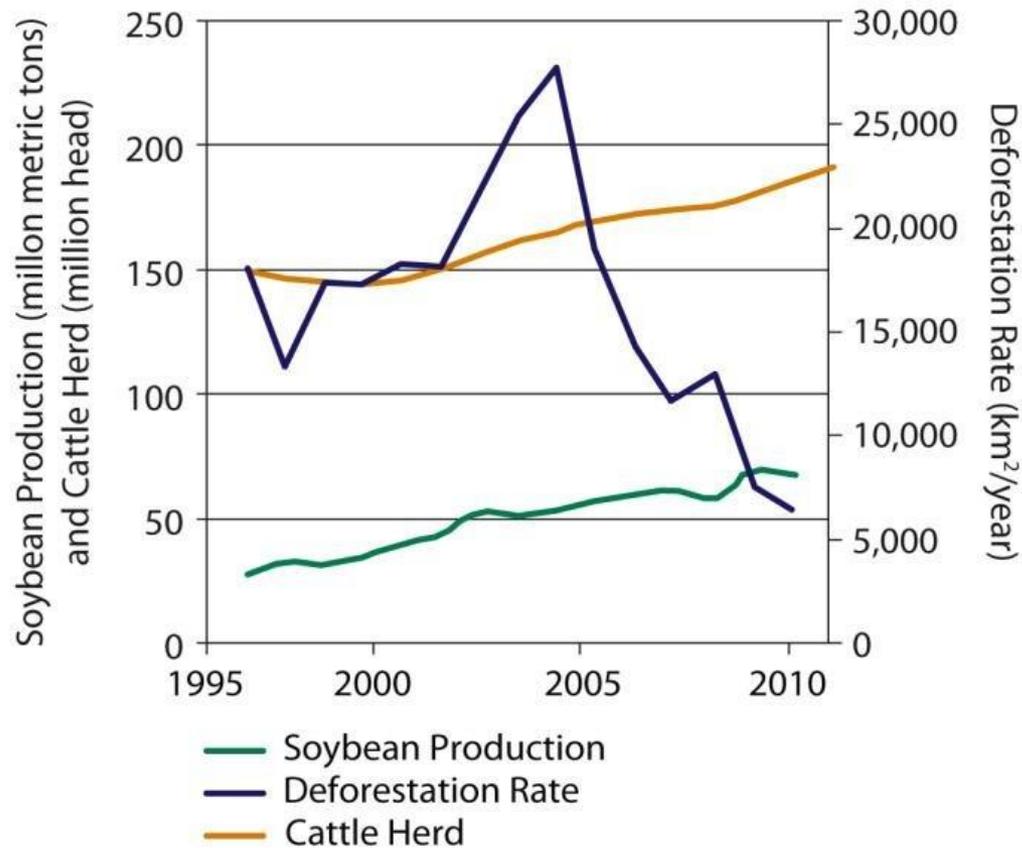


- Deorestation until 2009
- Indigenous territories
- Conservation unites
- Sustainable use units
- APA
- Legal Amazon
- State borders

ISA/Imazon 2011



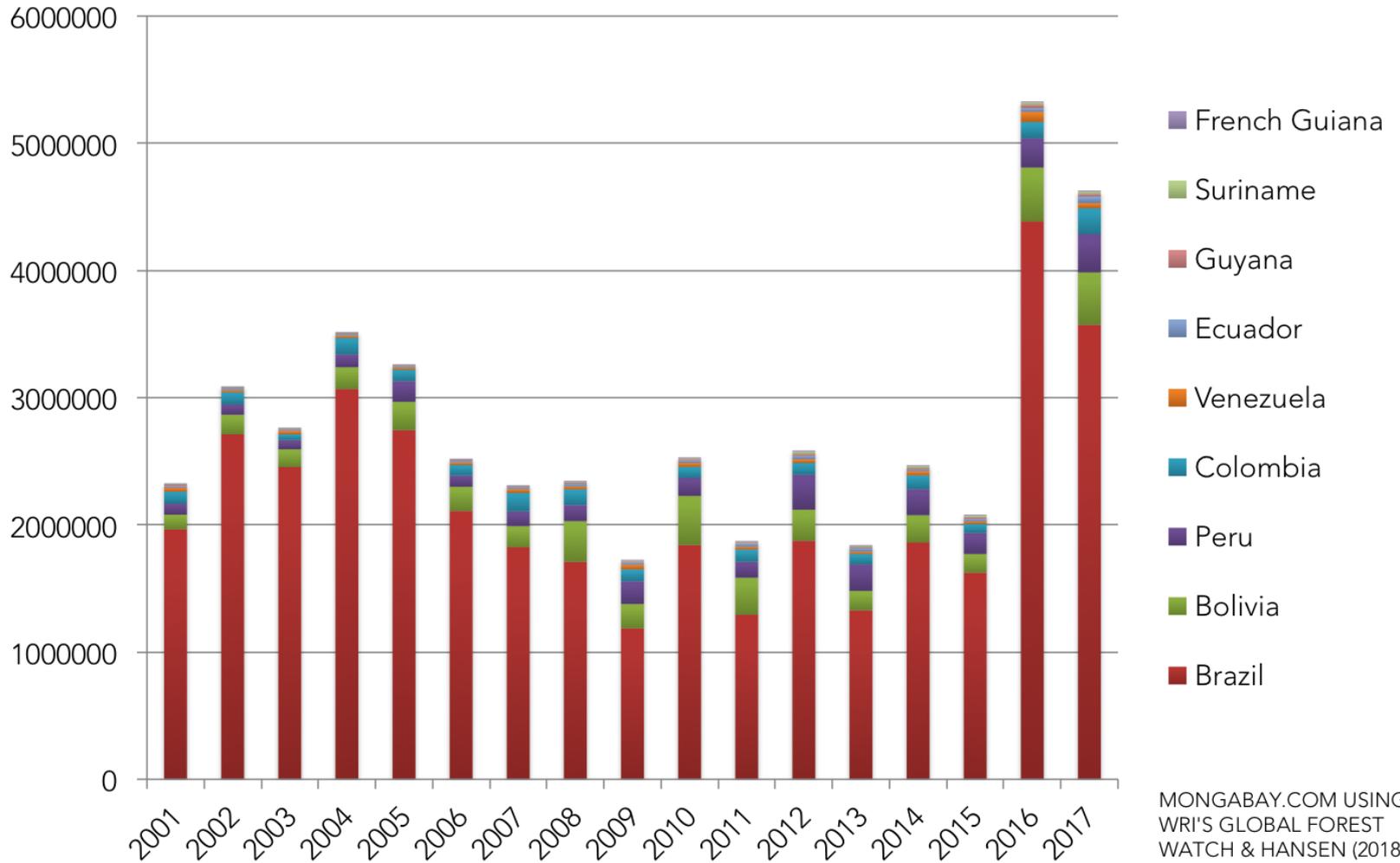
Deforestation and Cattle and Soybean Production in Brazil



Both cattle and soybean production have continued to increase steadily in Brazil in the past several years—even as deforestation rates have dropped to record-low levels.

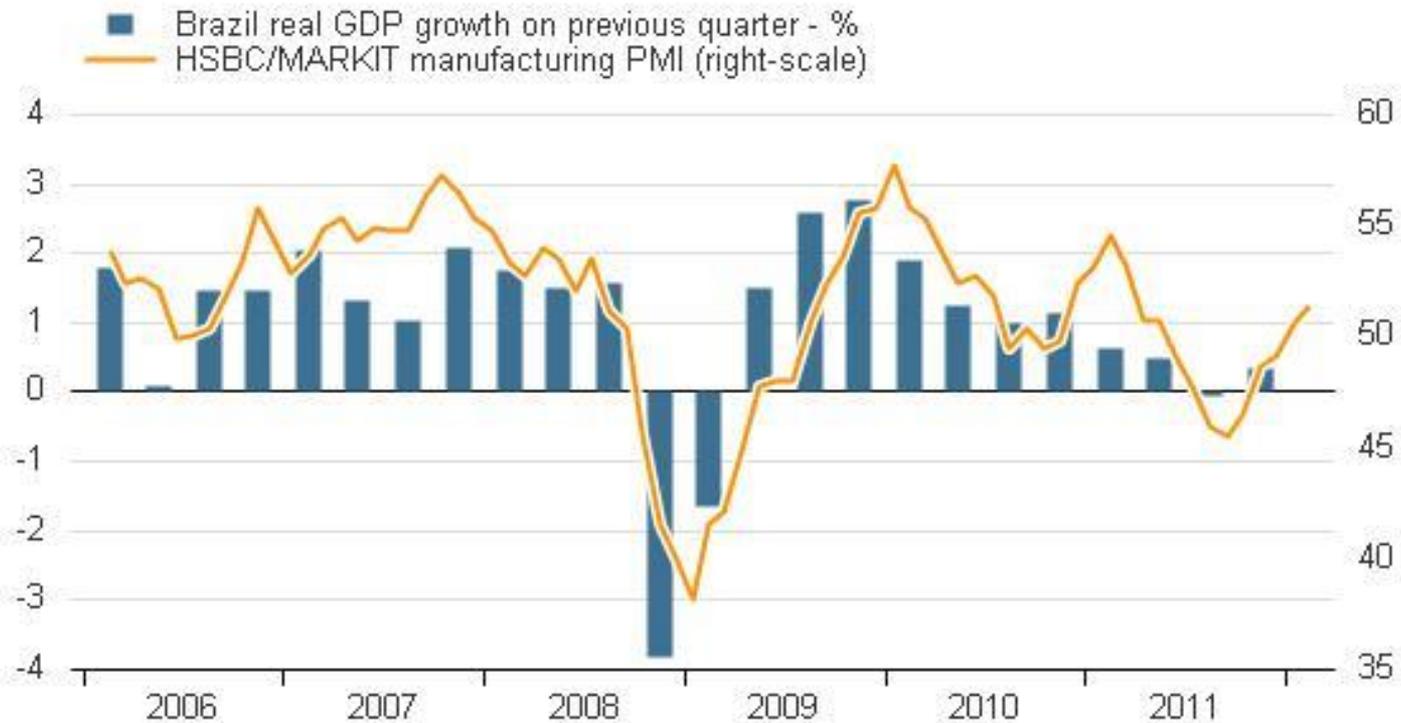
Sources: FAS 2011; INPE 2010b.

Annual forest loss in the Amazon biome, 2001-2017



MONGABAY.COM USING
WRI'S GLOBAL FOREST
WATCH & HANSEN (2018)

Brazil GDP growth



Source: Thomson Reuters Datastream

Reuters graphic/Scott Barber 3/9/2012

Decline of the PT

- The 2008 global financial crash led to an increasingly unstable tension between economic growth & resource conservation
 - Commodity prices remained low into the new decade
- Rousseff won the 2014 election (just!) off the back of the PT's legacy, but was deposed in 2016 in dubious circumstances after three years of economic contraction
- 2016 the point at which political-ecological tension 'burst'

Towards authoritarian neoliberalism

- Bolsonaro won in 2018 with strong support of rightwing agribusiness for a renewed extractive push (Acosta & Gudynas, 2018)
- Allegations of corruption; media manipulation, lies and deceptions: judge Moro that incarcerated Lula is now Bolsonaro's justice minister
- Other key ministers are Paulo Guedes (Chicago economist and former Pinochet advisor) and Ricardo Salles (environment)

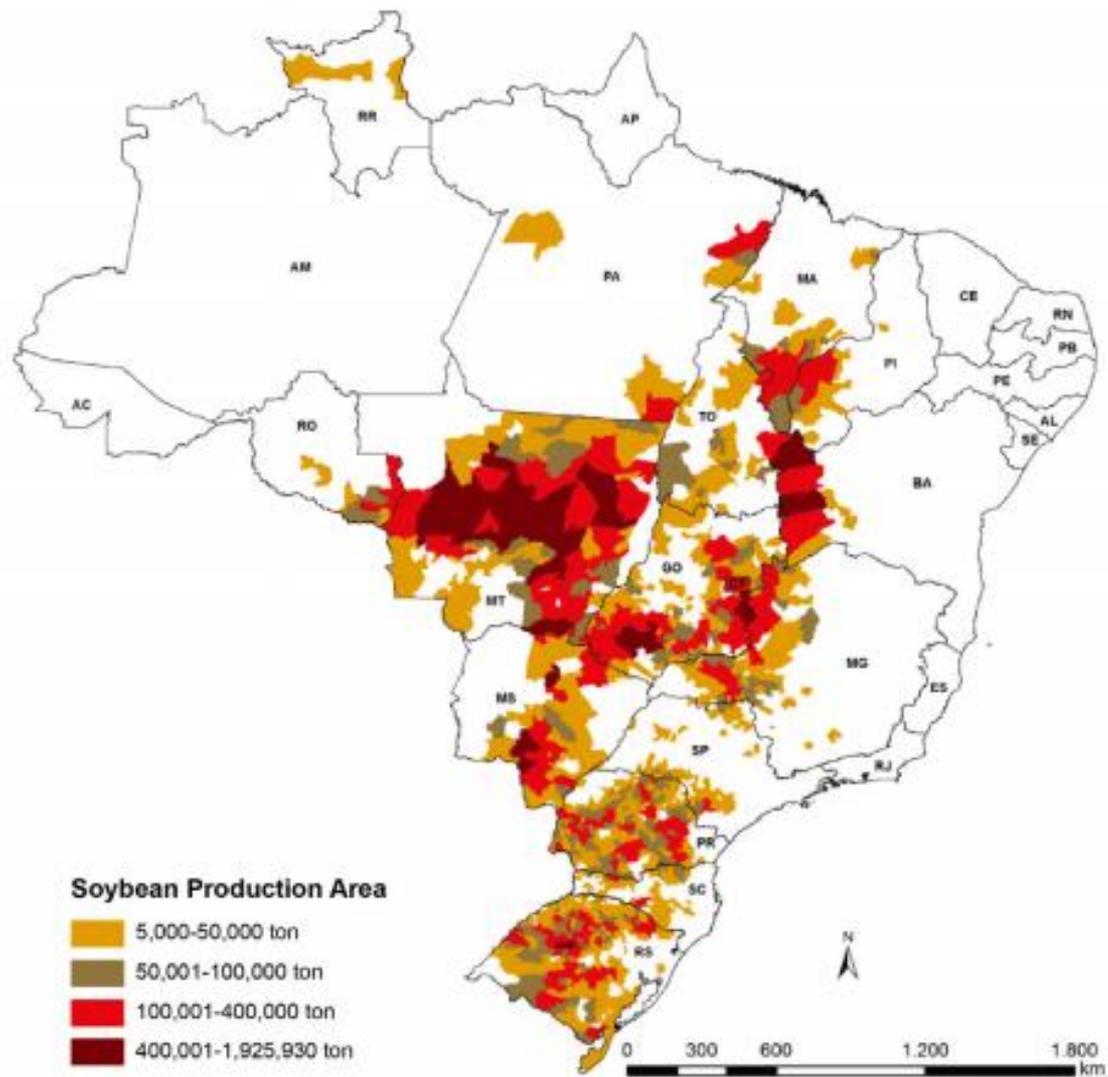
Brazilian Soy Acreage Continues to Rise With Global Demand, Despite Low Prices Currently



Data: USDA PS&D, IGC, Gro Intelligence

www.gro-intelligence.co



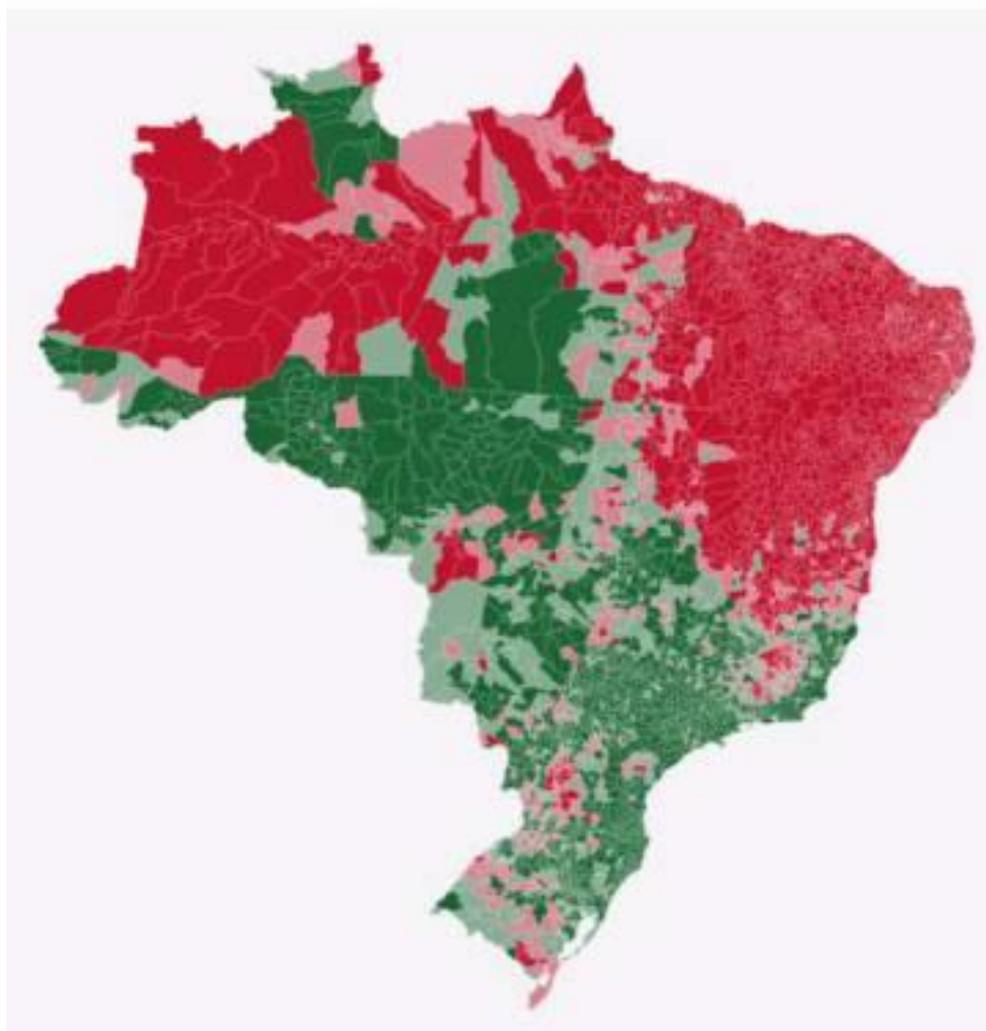




Bolsonaro
2.760
cidades



Haddad
2.810
cidades



POST-TRUTH DEVELOPMENT

New authoritarianism in Brazil

- Defensive rhetoric is ramped up: 'Brazil is under attack'; 'the Amazon is ours'; 'our nature is untouched'!
- These are simultaneously calls to increase resource exploitation and prevent a challenge to resource ownership – and growth
- values certain Brazilians and devalues others: 'Indigenous have 14% of *our* land and do nothing with it' (Bolsonaro headline 28 August).
- 'NGOs set fire to the Amazon in order to discredit Brazil'!

- scapegoating and misinformation are logical under neoliberal development, as the only way to return to growth under resource depletion is to deny *any* internal ecological contradiction
- *Authoritarian* neoliberalism: primarily about reducing state oversight and inculcating confusion over development and degradation



17 - maio - 2019

Improbo Ricardo Salles monta teatro para criminalizar ONGs e aparelhar Fundo Amazônia

Nota da coordenação do Observatório do Clima

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BRASÍLIA/SÃO PAULO, 17/05/2019 – Depois de investir contra o Ibama e o ICMBio, o ministro do Meio Ambiente, Ricardo Salles (Novo-SP), direciona sua panfletagem política a tentar criminalizar as organizações da sociedade civil. Nesta



Últimas Notícias



20 - agosto - 2019

Desmatamento explica recorde de queimadas, diz Ipam

Novos dados do instituto mostram que seca não teve papel preponderante para o aumento de 60% no número de focos de calor em 2019

Strategic effect of post truth environmental governance

- keep opposition forces busy with lies, shocking statements and political incoherence while state institutions undermined
- 1 IBAMA officer for 11,000 sq km in Amazon; removal of IBAMA and ICMBio's communication departments;
- which allows mining and agri enterprises to expand freely without concern for legal compliance or interference
- indigenous, environmental, small farmer movements, etc., and state organs like GCU, MP, always dealing with the dismantling of environmental policy and disputing/revealing (post) truths

The result?

- Harry Frankfurt (2005: 56): ‘the Bullshitter’s eye’:

‘is not on the facts at all, as the eyes of the honest man and of the liar are... He does not care whether the things he says describe reality correctly. He just picks them out, or makes them up, to suit his purpose’.

- through manipulation of information, the factual truth of what actually happens in nature becomes less relevant to what is said about it – e.g. connect it with ‘being a patriot’
- Meanwhile, Salles is busy with climate change deniers and mining and agri interests in the USA and EU



Photog

Politics

Bolsonaro's Words Are the Sparks as Brazil's Farmers Burn Amazonia

Far from authority, they feel freshly empowered to clear the land with fire

By [David Biller](#) and [Bruce Douglas](#)
September 6, 2019, 10:00 AM GMT+2

LISTEN TO ARTICLE

▶ 5:44

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Down a dusty road an hour outside the Brazilian city of Porto Velho, Irany Paradela used a flimsy rake to clear a charred plot. The fire she and her husband set “became a re... had no way to put it out.”

The size may have been...

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NOTÍCIAS COMO PLANTAR COLUNIS

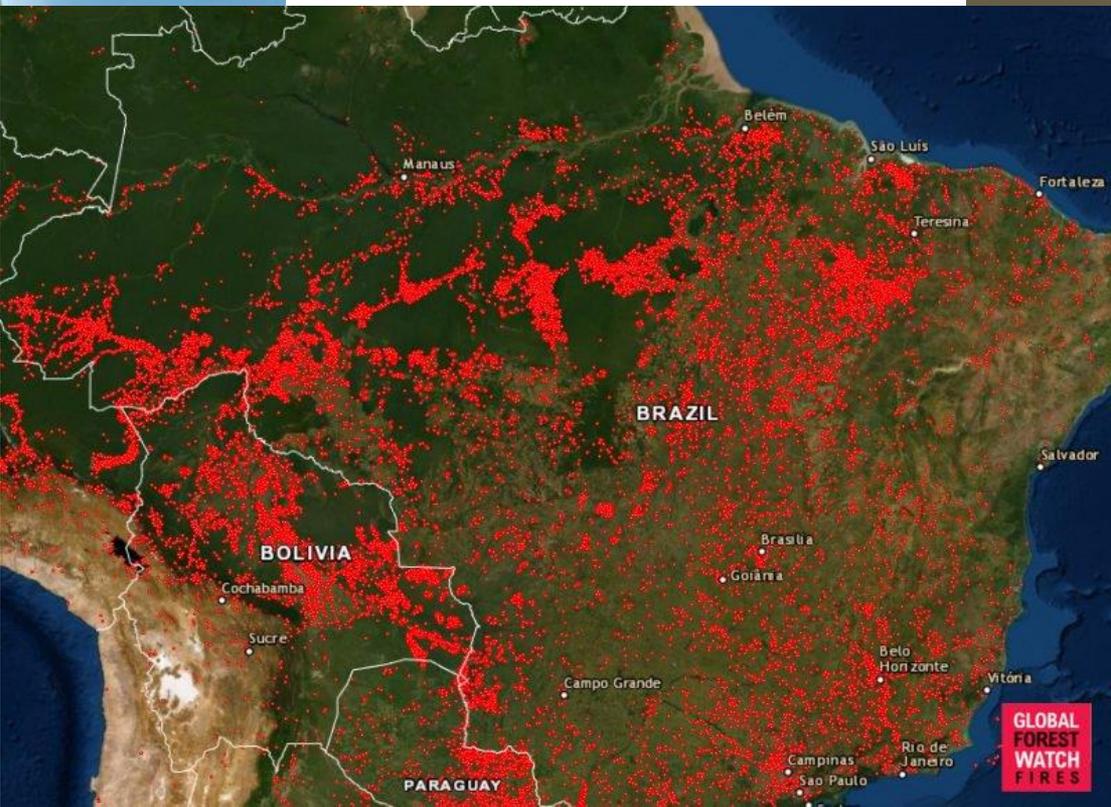
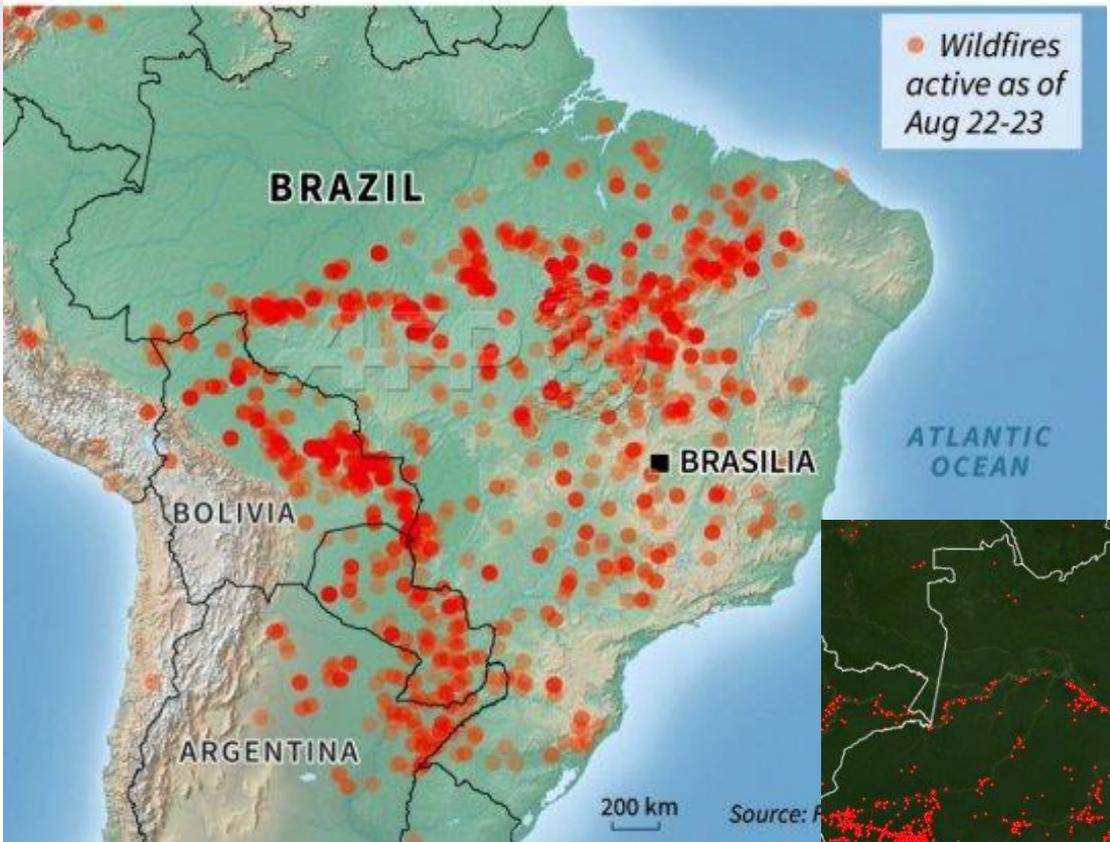
NOTÍCIAS

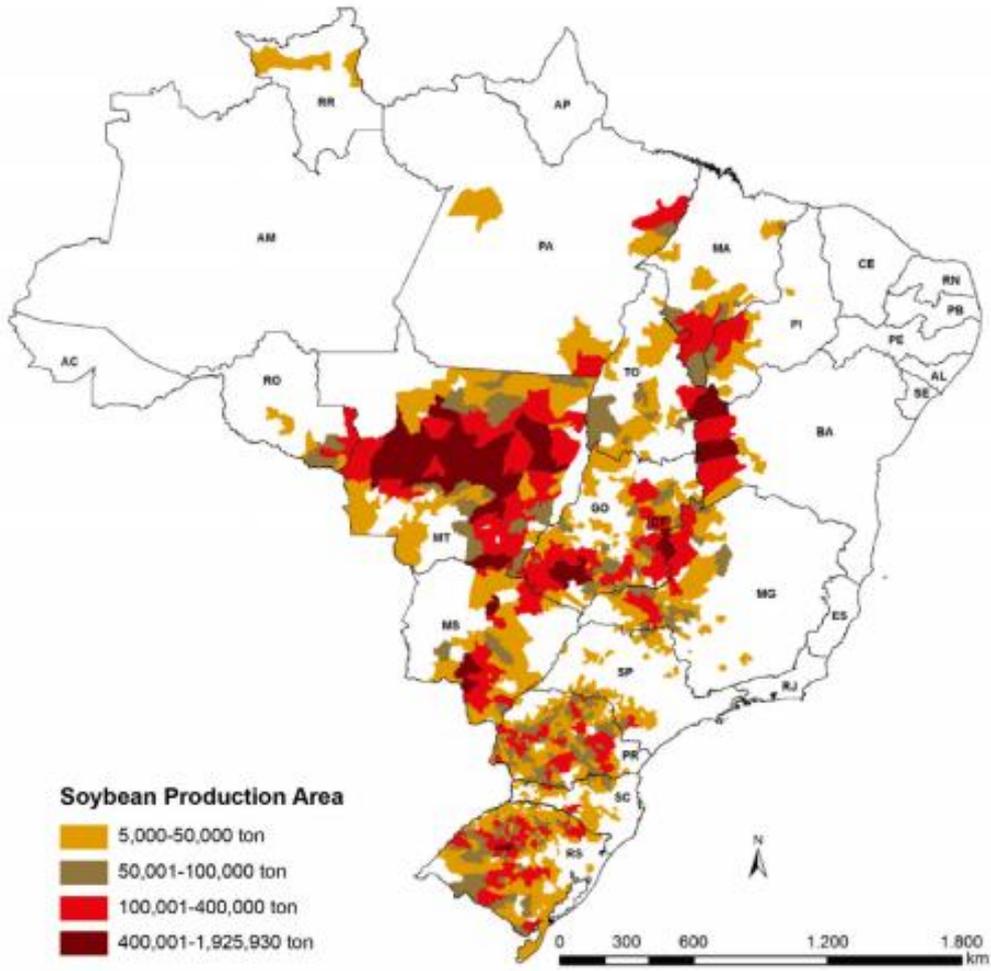
"Quadrilha reúne os maiores desmatadores da Amazônia", diz procurador

Paulo de Tarso Moreira Oliveira, de Santarém (PA), afirma que gente muito perigosa se utiliza do WhatsApp para organizar crimes como o 'dia do fogo'

↻ 5 min de leitura

The Amazon ablaze

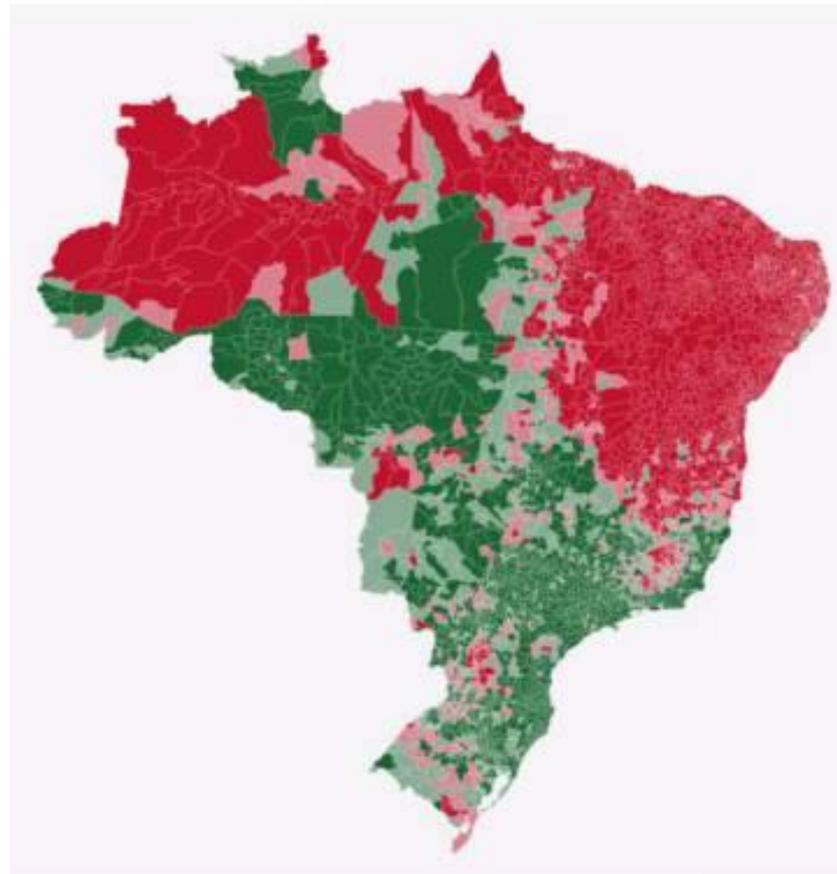




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Conclusions

- the new environmental governance represents the creation of an atmosphere of post-truth authoritarianism that enables the market to assert greater control
- Imminent loss of another 5th of the Amazon forest
- market violence aligns with state political obfuscation: it must hide development's ecological contradiction
- 'Fortress' and 'market' modes of conservation can't account for their own breakdown under post-truth authoritarianism
- a new realistic approach to nature conservation *in* development must be found www.convivialconservation.com