

Article

# Environmental Public Governance in Brazil: Perceptions, Challenges and Perspectives for Environmental Protection

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## RESUMO

O estudo examina a percepção da sociedade brasileira sobre conflitos ambientais, seu senso de justiça e a aplicabilidade de decisões estruturais em casos de Estado de Coisas Inconstitucional. Analisando dados de pesquisas de opinião realizadas entre 1995 e 2023 pela Corporación Latinobarómetro, foram encontradas correlações estatísticas significativas entre a confiança em instituições, como o Judiciário, o Parlamento e o Governo, e a proteção ambiental. Os resultados apontam uma correlação positiva entre a proteção ambiental e a confiança no Judiciário e no Parlamento, enquanto a correlação com o Governo apresenta resultados variados, evidenciando lacunas importantes de governança e desafios institucionais. O estudo enfatiza a importância da confiança institucional na formação de atitudes públicas em prol da sustentabilidade, destacando a transparência, a participação pública, o diálogo social inclusivo e as estratégias educativas como pilares essenciais para o fortalecimento da governança ambiental no Brasil, visando também maior equidade social, inclusão cidadã e responsabilidade política.

**Palavras-chave:** confiança pública; opinião pública; políticas públicas; estado de coisas inconstitucional.

## ABSTRACT

The study examines the perception of Brazilian society regarding environmental conflicts, its sense of justice, and the applicability of structural decisions in cases of an Unconstitutional State of Affairs. Analyzing opinion poll data conducted between 1995 and 2023 by the Corporación Latinobarómetro, significant correlations were found between trust in institutions such as the Judiciary, Parliament, and the Government, and environmental protection. The results show a positive statistical correlation between environmental protection and trust in the Judiciary and Parliament, while the correlation with the Government presents mixed results, highlighting significant governance gaps and institutional challenges. The study emphasizes the importance of institutional trust in shaping public attitudes towards sustainability, highlighting transparency, public participation, inclusive social dialogue, and educational strategies as essential pillars for strengthening environmental governance in Brazil, also aiming for greater social equity, citizen inclusion, and political responsibility.

**Keywords:** public trust; public opinion; public policies; unconstitutional state of affairs.



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## Introduction

Environmental public governance is a global concern. In highly biodiverse, or megadiverse, countries such as Brazil (Mittermeier, 1988), which face complex environmental challenges, this issue becomes even more relevant. Ensuring environmental protection is not only the responsibility of the state but also a demand from society. However, the effectiveness of environmental governance goes beyond the mere imposition of legal obligations; it requires public trust in the political and judicial institutions that oversee and enforce environmental laws. The intricate relationship between environmental public policies and the protection of fundamental human rights is an increasingly relevant topic both in Brazil and globally. As global environmental challenges intensify, there is a pressing need to comprehensively analyze the effectiveness of government policies in promoting environmental protection and safeguarding citizens' fundamental rights (Palmerston, 2020).

Public perception of environmental issues and their impact on quality of life has become a key tool for promoting health that transcends sectors and fosters equity in the public sphere (Silva, 2019). This interdisciplinary approach has gained prominence, involving managers and professionals from various sectors — such as health, environment, social assistance, and education — in the search for integrated solutions to socio-environmental challenges (Silva, 2019). In recent decades, the global trend has been to use the perceptions of communities affected by environmental problems as indicators of environmental health, guiding planning and political decisions related to quality of life and health. This approach considers the community's voice as a fundamental element in assessing and managing environmental risks that may impact them directly or indirectly. In this context, community perception emerges as a tool for participatory socio-environmental management, with the potential to guide actions aimed at promoting health and sustainable development (Nascimento & Curi, 2013).

This study seeks to understand Brazilian society's perception of public governance, focusing on the phenomenon of the “State of Unconstitutional Affairs” (SUA). This term, derived from international experiences, describes situations where the State systematically and structurally fails to fulfill its constitutional obligations, resulting in the violation of fundamental rights (Queiroz et al., 2021).

In the contemporary landscape, reflecting on public governance and its relationship with the SUA emerges as a relevant field of study. As nations face a myriad of socio-environmental challenges, public perception regarding the effectiveness of governmental institutions in protecting fundamental rights and preserving the environment plays a central role. In this context, Brazil — with its rich biodiversity and environmental complexity — represents fertile ground for research that addresses the intersection between public governance and societal perception. Understanding the underlying dynamics of trust in governmental institutions and its impact on environmental protection is essential for guiding effective public policies and promoting environmentally sustainable practices.

In terms of society's interaction with environmental issues, Beck (2011) developed the theory of the “Risk Society”, highlighting the growing concerns about environmental issues and global security. The author argues that, “as the risks associated with industrial and technological development become more evident, a new demand arises for effective governance in the environmental sphere.”

Another relevant contribution is Ostrom's (2010) work on the governance of common resources, emphasizing the importance of institutions in the sustainable management of these resources. These studies have direct implications for understanding how governmental institutions can influence environmental protection. In the legal field, the discussion surrounding the SUA has gained prominence, particularly following the Colombian experience. In Brazil, this approach has been applied, as demonstrated in the Supreme Federal



Court's decision in ADPF 760 (Brazil, 2022), which addressed structural issues related to environmental protection.

In this context, it becomes possible to investigate the feasibility of applying a **Structural Action**, under the concept of the SUA, as a tool capable of promoting structural changes and strengthening the protection of human rights in the environmental sphere (Dantas, 2016).

The ecological dimension of human dignity is a fundamental theme (Sarlet & Fensterseifer, 2017). This dimension is supported by a legal framework that recognizes the need for environmental protection as an ethical and constitutional imperative.

The relationship between trust in governmental institutions and environmental protection is multifaceted, involving different branches of government — including the Executive, Legislative, and Judiciary — and is influenced by social, cultural, and political factors that shape public perception of institutions and their actions concerning the environment.

This study aims to empirically explore the relationship between trust in governmental institutions (the Government, the Judiciary, and the National Congress) and environmental protection in Brazil.

## Materials and methods

### *Data collection*

The data used in this study are sourced from the Corporación Latinobarómetro (2023) database, which collected information directly from 1,204 Brazilian respondents through interviews and questionnaires conducted between 1995 and 2023.

The information selected for this study concerns respondents' perceptions of trust in four key Brazilian institutional aspects: the Brazilian government (politics), the judiciary (justice system), the National Congress (parliament), and environmental protection.

Each participant's response regarding these four institutional aspects was organized into a data matrix, where each response (rows) was classified according to a five-point scale (columns) based on the methodology adopted by Corporación Latinobarómetro: (1) "Good Business", (2) "Quite a lot", (3) "Not very much", (4) "None", and (5) "I don't know".

The use of the Corporación Latinobarómetro (2023) dataset provides a comprehensive overview of Brazilian society's perceptions of political institutions and environmental protection, reflecting public opinion regarding the effectiveness of and trust in governmental policies.

### *Analysis of the data collected*

Based on the data matrix, a Pearson correlation analysis was carried out using Past 4.17 *software* (Hammer et al. 2001) to determine the relationship between Brazilian society's trust in politics (explanatory variable X1), the justice system (X2), parliament (X3) and the government (X4) with trust in environmental protection (response variable Y) and to determine statistical significance ( $p < 0.05$ ).

## Results

The statistics of the correlation analysis of the response categories of the explanatory variables (X; trust in politics, the justice system, parliament and the government) with the explained variable (Y; trust in environmental protection) are described in Table 1.



Table 1: Correlation results ( $r$ ) and probability ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the response categories of the interviewees of the explanatory (X) and explained (Y) variables.

Explanatory Variable (X)		Confiança na proteção ambiental (Y)									
		Bom negócio	p	Bastante	p	Não muito	p	Nenhuma	p	Não sei	p
Confiança na política	Bom negócio	0,2	0,799	-0,8	0,151	-0,4	0,600	0,1	0,859	0,7	0,320
	Bastante	-0,7	0,276	-0,1	0,906	0,4	0,618	0,8	0,188	1,0	0,040
	Não muito	-0,5	0,479	0,8	0,197	0,9	0,118	-0,3	0,733	-0,3	0,720
	Nenhuma	0,7	0,313	-0,1	0,859	-0,7	0,323	-0,3	0,692	-0,6	0,360
	Não sei	0,0	0,971	-0,7	0,295	-0,2	0,819	0,2	0,848	0,7	0,279
Confiança no sistema de justiça	Bom negócio	1,0	0,036	-0,8	0,221	-1,0	0,038	-0,5	0,527	-0,3	0,713
	Bastante	-0,8	0,202	0,6	0,393	0,5	0,463	0,8	0,212	0,3	0,700
	Não muito	-0,4	0,625	0,8	0,228	0,8	0,206	-0,4	0,582	-0,4	0,581
	Nenhuma	0,1	0,930	-0,4	0,598	-0,5	0,462	0,7	0,346	0,4	0,616
	Não sei	-0,5	0,540	-0,4	0,611	0,2	0,842	0,6	0,385	1,0	0,035
Confiança no parlamento	Bom negócio	1,0	0,027	-0,5	0,516	-0,7	0,280	-0,8	0,166	-0,6	0,370
	Bastante	0,9	0,130	-0,2	0,836	-0,6	0,383	-0,8	0,239	-0,8	0,151
	Não muito	-0,3	0,703	0,8	0,184	0,7	0,267	-0,5	0,529	-0,6	0,444
	Nenhuma	-0,5	0,548	-0,4	0,638	0,0	0,960	0,9	0,094	0,9	0,057
	Não sei	-0,8	0,209	0,0	0,971	0,4	0,596	0,9	0,076	0,9	0,087
Confiança no governo	Bom negócio	0,8	0,227	0,0	0,995	-0,4	0,627	-0,9	0,067	-0,9	0,082
	Bastante	0,5	0,532	0,4	0,616	-0,2	0,839	-0,6	0,375	-1,0	0,032
	Não muito	-0,5	0,490	0,9	0,094	0,9	0,136	-0,2	0,751	-0,4	0,601
	Nenhuma	-0,3	0,719	-0,6	0,433	-0,2	0,829	0,8	0,245	1,0	0,041
	Não sei	-0,4	0,635	-0,5	0,496	0,0	0,992	0,7	0,325	1,0	0,017

Source: Own elaboration

The results display that, in the perception of Brazilian society, the variables most strongly correlated with trust in environmental protection are X2 (Judiciary), X3 (Parliament) and X4 (Government). A positive correlation, for example, indicates that citizens believe that effective political institutions play a fundamental role in environmental protection. On the other hand, negative correlations reflect distrust in the government or the judicial system, especially when environmental policies are perceived as inadequate.

The analysis highlights that respondents exhibit a "considerable" level of trust in both politics and environmental protection, and that the relationship between these two variables is positive and statistically significant ( $r=1.0$ ;  $p=0.040$ ; Table 1). This finding suggests that, in general, Brazilian citizens tend to associate trust in political institutions with a positive view of the environmental policies in place.

Regarding trust in the justice system, its correlation with trust in environmental protection also reveals a positive relationship, albeit with variations across different response categories. For some respondents, trust in the justice system is regarded as a "good deal," correlating positively with the "good deal" category ( $r=1.0$ ;  $p=0.036$ ) and negatively with the "not very" category ( $r=-1.0$ ;  $p=0.038$ ) concerning trust in environmental protection (Table 1). In the case of the negative correlation, it can be observed that as confidence in the justice system as a "good deal" increases, confidence in environmental protection decreases, being considered "not very". Conversely, the "I don't know" category—regarding both trust in the justice system and environmental protection—shows a positive correlation ( $r=1.0$ ;  $p=0.035$ ; Table 1), suggesting that uncertainty about the effectiveness of both domains is linked to a perception of mutual trust.

With regard to parliament, trust in legislative institutions shows a positive correlation with trust in environmental protection, and is significantly expressed by the "good business" category in both cases ( $r=1.0$ ;  $p=0.027$ ; Table 1). This result shows that trust in parliament is seen as a relevant factor in the perceived effectiveness of environmental policies, reinforcing the crucial role of the legislature in formulating public policies aimed at environmental protection.



Finally, the relationship between trust in government and trust in environmental protection presents a distinct pattern. When respondents express "a lot" of trust in the government, there is a negative correlation with trust in environmental protection ( $r=-1.0$ ;  $p=0.032$ ; Table 1), indicating that as trust in the government increases, trust in environmental protection tends to decrease. This finding suggests a possible perception that higher trust in government corresponds to lower expectations regarding the effectiveness of environmental policies. However, when respondents say they have "no" trust in government, the correlation with trust in environmental protection is positive ( $r=1.0$ ;  $p=0.041$ ; Table 1), suggesting that in contexts of generalized distrust in government, there is an optimistic view that change and improvement in environmental policies are necessary and feasible. Both relationships are statistically significant, underscoring the complexity inherent in this interaction.

These results underscore the importance of social perceptions regarding the effectiveness of political institutions in the formulation and implementation of environmental policies. They also suggest that trust in political institutions is not an isolated variable but interacts in a complex manner with trust in environmental protection.

## Discussion

### *Institutional trust is positively related to environmental protection*

The positive relationship between trust in political institutions — represented by the executive, judicial, legislative, and government branches — and trust in environmental protection reflects the belief that effective political institutions play an essential role in promoting, implementing, and enforcing successful environmental policies. This dynamic suggests that the quality and legitimacy of political institutions are fundamental to the success of environmental policies, as citizens who trust their institutions are more likely to support and collaborate with government environmental protection initiatives. Studies by D'Araújo (2001), Matias-Pereira (2008), and Silva et al. (2012) corroborate this relationship, highlighting that trust in government institutions is closely linked to the success of environmental public policies and is an indicator of the effectiveness of environmental governance strategies. This perspective is corroborated by Fairbrother (2016), who demonstrated that trust in government institutions, especially the government, is directly related to public support for environmental protection, even when other factors are taken into account, such as economic or social aspects.

This finding implies that the greater the public's trust in the institutions responsible for formulating and implementing environmental policies, the greater will be society's support and adherence to environmental protection policies. Trust in institutions is, therefore, a determining factor for social mobilization in favour of sustainability and environmental preservation. In the same vein, the study by Kulin and Sevä (2020) investigates how trust in government institutions, both biased and impartial, influences attitudes towards climate policy. The authors conclude that trust in institutions, regardless of their perceived impartiality or bias, affects climate-related policy preferences, highlighting the importance of trust in government institutions for social attitudes towards environmental protection. The research suggests that the perceived fairness and effectiveness of government institutions is a crucial element in shaping political attitudes and building public commitment to climate action.

Overall, these surveys provide a solid basis for understanding how trust in political institutions is intrinsically linked to support for environmental protection. They suggest that successful public policies in the environmental field depend, to a large extent, on the trust that the population places in the institutions responsible for their implementation.





### ***Complex relationship between trust in environmental protection and the judicial system***

The relationship between trust in the judicial system and trust in environmental protection has proved complex. The results obtained indicate that while some interviewees associate trust in the judicial system with positive results for environmental protection, others show skepticism. This ambiguity reflects how trust in judicial institutions is deeply influenced by personal and contextual factors, and individual perceptions of the effectiveness of the justice system can vary according to different experiences and interpretations of the political and social context in which they find themselves.

Bertoncini (2015) discusses the need for reforms in the Brazilian justice system in the face of the institutional crisis experienced by the country. Although this author does not directly explore the relationship between trust in the judicial system and trust in environmental protection, he provides a relevant analysis of the crisis in the justice system and how the shortcomings of this institution can impact the public's perception of its ability to guarantee the protection of fundamental rights, including the right to a balanced environment. This reflection on the concept of justice and the role of the judiciary in different contexts is essential to understanding the dynamics of trust surrounding Brazilian institutions.

Gavioli's (2017) study on the management of protected areas and the impact of land violations also contributes to this discussion. This author highlights how failures in the management of these areas, often exacerbated by the inefficiency and slowness of the judicial system in dealing with environmental issues, can undermine public confidence in the judiciary's ability to ensure environmental protection. Ineffective enforcement of environmental laws and the absence of adequate punishments for violations of protected areas can generate a sense of impunity, weakening trust in the institutions responsible for protecting the environment.

This complexity in the relationship between trust in the judicial system and trust in environmental protection therefore highlights the need to strengthen the capacity of the justice system. It also highlights the importance of implementing effective public policies that not only improve the performance of the judiciary, but also ensure greater transparency and efficiency in its actions. Only with a more accessible, agile and reliable justice system will it be possible to restore public confidence and ensure that environmental protection policies are effectively enforced.

### ***The role of parliament in environmental protection***

Trust in parliament is, in fact, closely linked to trust in environmental protection. The correlation observed suggests that when respondents show confidence in parliament, they also tend to show greater confidence in the effectiveness of environmental protection policies. This connection highlights the fundamental role of the Brazilian legislature in promoting and implementing policies aimed at preserving the environment. Parliament's role in drafting and approving relevant legislation, as well as exercising oversight and control over the actions of the executive, plays a decisive role in consolidating a robust environmental governance system.

Cunha et al (2017) argues that the legislative branch plays an essential role in formulating public policies and overseeing the actions of the executive branch, especially when it comes to environmental issues. The legislature not only passes environmental laws, but also has the responsibility to monitor the implementation of these laws and ensure that environmental policies are effectively complied with. In this sense, public confidence in parliament can be seen as a reflection of the perception that legislators are fulfilling their role effectively and transparently.

However, as Ribeiro et al. (2021) point out, it is important to note that the correlation between trust in parliament and trust in environmental protection does not necessarily imply a direct causal relationship. Although there is an association between these two variables, other political factors such as the actions of the executive and the influences of interest groups can also affect the way in which environmental policies are



developed and implemented. It is therefore necessary to consider the complexity of the political and social interactions surrounding environmental protection, without attributing a simplistic explanation to the observed relationship.

### ***The complexity of the relationship between trust in government and environmental protection***

The relationship between trust in government and trust in environmental protection is an aspect that deserves special attention. The results show that when respondents show greater trust in the government, trust in environmental protection tends to decrease. On the other hand, when trust in government is lower, there is an increase in trust in environmental protection. This dynamic suggests that the perception of the government, in terms of its effectiveness in environmental policies, directly influences public confidence in actions aimed at preserving the environment.

In the specific case of the negative correlation between trust in government and trust in environmental protection, this phenomenon can be interpreted as a criticism of the government's effectiveness in implementing environmental policies. This scenario may reflect the perception that the government is not adequately fulfilling its role of protecting the environment, which results in a decrease in trust in environmental policies. On the other hand, the positive correlation observed in situations of distrust towards the government indicates a more optimistic view on the part of citizens. In this case, distrust of government suggests that people believe a change in government policies is necessary, believing that environmental protection can be improved through a review or reformulation of existing public policies.

This finding is supported by the study by Almeida-Santos (2018), who investigated the relationship between trust in government and political interests in the Brazilian context. This author points out that the Brazilian public shows considerable interest in political issues and that trust in government institutions, as well as the quality of public governance, play a fundamental role in shaping public confidence in government policies and reinforces the idea that institutional trust is not an isolated factor, but rather a variable that is intertwined with public perception of the effectiveness and legitimacy of government actions.

In summary, the results of this study support the hypothesis that trust in government institutions plays a crucial role in shaping public attitudes and behavior towards environmental protection. Several previous studies have provided evidence that reinforces this relationship, highlighting the importance of trust in political institutions for the success of environmental policies. Understanding the complexity of this interaction is essential for political actors, researchers and decision-makers seeking to develop effective environmental protection strategies, as it allows them to identify critical points where public trust can be strengthened or restored, leading to greater engagement and support for environmental policies.

### ***Contributions from previous studies***

The study "Institutions and Environmental Governance: A Preliminary Discussion of the Costa dos Corais Environmental Protection Area" (Gatto et al., 2019) shares similarities with the present work, since both address public trust in environmental institutions and policies. However, the present study goes further by providing a more detailed analysis of citizens' perceptions of various institutions, such as the Executive, Parliament, the Judiciary and the Government, and how these perceptions relate to trust in environmental protection. This allows for a more in-depth reflection on the Brazilian public's attitudes towards environmental governance, taking into account the particularities of each institution.

The report "Environmental Governance Indicators in Latin America and the Caribbean" (Inter-American Development Bank 2020) examines the different environmental governance performances in the region. While regional studies have criticized the lack of transparency in the decisions of environmental authorities, the



present study stands out by demonstrating high levels of trust in political institutions in Brazil, which suggests greater satisfaction with the environmental policies implemented in the country. This contrast highlights the importance of public perceptions, which, when positive, can contribute significantly to the effectiveness of environmental policies.

The research "Environmental Perceptions of Rural Communities Surrounding the Sete Cidades National Park in Piauí" (Barroso et al. 2022) focuses on the perceptions of rural communities on specific environmental issues, such as hunting and land encroachment. Although this study is more localized in nature, it offers valuable contributions to the understanding of the challenges faced in environmental protection in Brazil, especially with regard to local perceptions. The findings of this study reinforce the importance of considering regional specificities when analyzing public attitudes towards environmental preservation.

In the study "Trust in the Judiciary and the Effectiveness of Fundamental Rights" (Cabrera 2021), trust in the judiciary is analyzed in relation to the protection of fundamental rights. Although there is no direct correlation between the variables, the study emphasizes the connection between trust in the judiciary and the protection of fundamental rights, including environmental rights. This perspective is particularly relevant given that environmental protection is intrinsically linked to the guarantee of fundamental rights, such as the right to an ecologically balanced environment.

Finally, the study "Quality of Democracy and Trust in Political Institutions in Brazil" (Santos and Hoffmann 2019) complements the current research by assessing trust in Brazilian political institutions more broadly. While the current study focuses specifically on the correlation between trust in political institutions and environmental protection, Santos and Hoffman's study addresses general trust in political institutions, broadening the discussion on the impact of institutional trust on governance. Both studies highlight the relevance of public trust in institutions and the impact of this trust on the effectiveness of public policies, including environmental policies.

This comparative analysis with previous research demonstrates the robustness of this study, broadening the understanding of how trust in political institutions directly influences the perceptions and effectiveness of environmental policies in Brazil. The interconnection between these studies reveals the importance of a multifaceted analysis to understand the complex relationships between institutional trust and environmental protection.

### ***Contributions of this study***

The main contributions of this study focus especially on identifying and analyzing the positive relationship between trust in the Brazilian political system and environmental protection. This finding enables an in-depth and targeted approach to the importance of this relationship, allowing detailed reflection on the factors that influence it and the implications for environmental public policies.

Through an analysis of the correlations between trust in political institutions and the perception of environmental protection, it not only identifies the positive correlations, but also the negative correlations that arise in different scenarios. This approach provides a clearer understanding of how trust in Brazilian political institutions, such as the judiciary, the government, parliament and the political system in general, affects public perception of environmental policies. Furthermore, the study reveals how these institutions play a crucial role in shaping citizens' attitudes towards environmental protection.

Considering Brazil's strategic importance in the global environmental context, it is essential to understand the specific dynamics and challenges faced by the country in relation to environmental preservation. Brazil, with its vast biodiversity and complex ecosystems, occupies a central role in international environmental issues. Thus, in-depth analysis of the relationship between trust in political institutions and environmental protection





not only sheds light on the public perception of environmental policies, but also offers insight into how collective attitudes can influence government actions.

Therefore, this study acquires significant relevance for policymakers, researchers and environmental advocates seeking to improve environmental governance in Brazil. Understanding the links between trust in political institutions and the effectiveness of environmental policies is fundamental to developing strategies that promote public trust in government actions, encouraging the implementation of more effective and sustainable environmental policies. Thus, the conclusions of this study should be taken into consideration by those who aim to improve environmental management in Brazil, given the global impact of environmental issues and the country's importance in this scenario.

## Conclusion

The results show that public perception of the effectiveness of environmental policies in Brazil is closely linked to trust in the institutions responsible for their implementation, and that this relationship is modulated by a series of contextual and individual elements. Additionally, the results suggest that one of the determining factors for the positive correlation between public trust and the effectiveness of environmental policies is the increased transparency and accountability of government agencies in relation to their actions and decisions. In particular, transparency in the implementation of environmental policies, coupled with clear accountability for the results achieved, appears to be a central factor in strengthening public trust in the institutions responsible for environmental management.

Despite the progress made in the study, there is still a need for more in-depth research that considers the contextual and personal factors involved in the complex interaction between trust in government institutions and environmental protection.

In this sense, we suggest the development of longitudinal studies that monitor the evolution of this relationship over time, especially in response to political and social events that may alter public perceptions. An approach of this nature could offer valuable *insights* into how trust in government institutions adapts and changes in times of crisis, reform or significant changes in environmental policies. In addition, it is essential to investigate in greater detail the contextual factors that influence society's perceptions of the effectiveness of environmental protection policies, including the analysis of specific environmental policies implemented over time. Understanding how different political, economic and social contexts affect this perception could provide information for improving public policies aimed at protecting the environment.

In addition to further studies, there is a need for practical strategies to strengthen public trust and the effectiveness of environmental policies. The development of public education strategies aimed at increasing knowledge and awareness of environmental issues can play a key role in building a more informed and critical understanding of environmental policies. Environmental education not only strengthens awareness of the environmental challenges facing the country, but also empowers citizens to make more informed decisions, promoting active and engaged participation in environmental governance.

Another essential strategy is to encourage public participation, allowing citizens to become directly involved in the formulation and implementation of environmental policies. This inclusion not only strengthens the democratic process, but also enriches the dialog on environmental governance in Brazil. Incorporating diverse voices and perspectives, especially from the communities affected by environmental policies, tends to increase the effectiveness of public policies and promote more equitable and sustainable solutions.

In conclusion, given the intricate relationship between trust in government institutions and the protection of fundamental human rights, addressing these issues becomes a priority for building a more just, equitable and sustainable society. Effective environmental governance cannot be dissociated from the promotion of human



rights, and it is through the integration of these two elements that it will be possible to move forward in building a more inclusive and environmentally responsible future for generations to come.

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