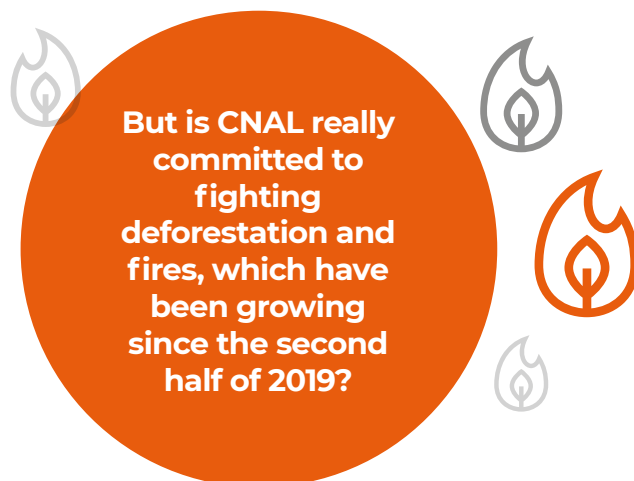


Does the National Council of the Amazon help the fight against deforestation?

November 2020

On February 11th 2020, the Brazilian government re-founded the **National Council for the Legal Amazon (CNAL)**, under the leadership of Vice President General Hamilton Mourão. This measure was sold internationally as proof of the government's commitment to social and environmental protection in the face of enormous distrust, both from the international community and from investors.



1. CNAL emerges as a strategy to reorganize the presence of the federal government in the Amazon. To this end, functions and responsibilities of the **Ministry of the Environment** (MMA, in Portuguese) have been shifted to the **Ministry of Defense**, since CNAL does not have its own budget.

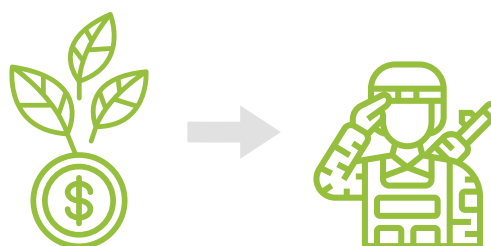


2. Inesc found that, in addition to the federal budget authorized, the Defense Ministry also took a slice of the resources recovered by the anti-corruption **operation known as Carwash** (Lava Jato, in Portuguese). **In 2019, an extra BRL \$1.06 billion was allocated to the Legal Amazon in the form of public policies for the environment. Of this total sum, BRL \$530 million were under the direct administration of the military.**

3. The smallest slice of this money was allocated to budgetary action **Law and Order Guarantee Operations (BRL \$36 million)**, which partially support Operation Green Brazil. Most of these resources, around BRL \$490 million, were allocated to **Protection, Inspection and Combating Illicit Activities in the Legal Amazon program**, which includes the prevention of deforestation and fires, but is not limited to this purpose.

Operation Green Brazil is an ad hoc measure under the coordination of **CNAL** whose objective is to carry out preventive and repressive actions against environmental crimes directed at illegal deforestation and fires in the Amazon.

4. As a result, the decision to shift resources from the MMA to the Ministry of Defense has generated a situation of **a) dismantling** government capacities built over previous governments; **b) strong militarization** of socio-environmental policy, placing traditional and peasant peoples and communities in a situation of constant surveillance; and **c) inefficiency in spending and actions.**





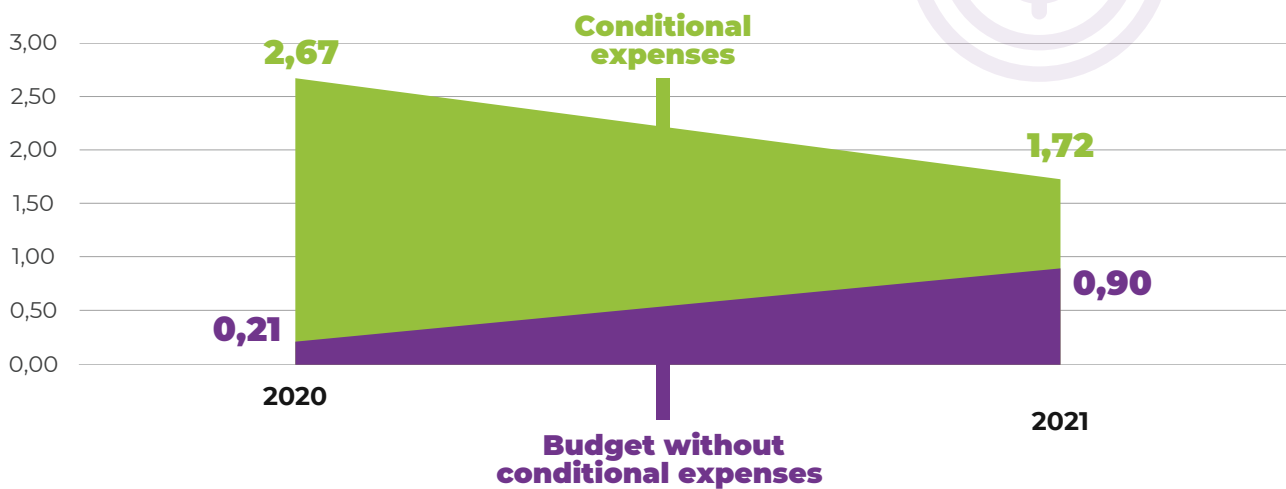
5.

In the **Budgetary Bill (PLOA, in Portuguese) 2021**, the total budget for MMA falls **9% in relation to PLOA 2020** and **15% in relation to the authorized budget for 2020**. In addition, a large portion of the budget submits the execution of expenses to the Congress approval by Provisional Measure.

Budget with and without conditional expenses

PLOA 2020 and 2021

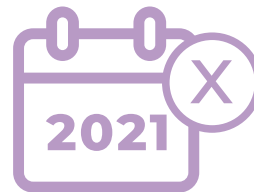
value in billions of current BRL



Source: SIGA-Senado

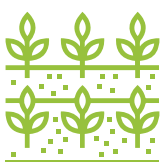
6.

Other data on dismantling: ***The Prevention and Control of Deforestation and Fires in Biomes program***, which has R \$ 179 million in the 2020 budget, disappears in PLOA 2021. Its elimination, confirmed by the minute of the Executive Commission for the Control of Illegal Deforestation and Recovery of Native Vegetation (CONAVEG), is serious and disrespects the multi-annual budget plan, **signaling the government's intention to take no responsibility for the goal of reducing deforestation and fires.**



7.

But it doesn't stop there! The three main budgetary actions to combat deforestation and fires have their resources reduced or were eliminated in PLOA 2021. If the budget bill is approved as it stands, the loss for these actions, in relation to the authorized budget for 2017, will be more than BRL \$40 million. The action ***Monitoring the land cover and the risk of burning fires***, also has significant losses over the years.



8.

In addition to the budgetary asphyxiation of the bodies traditionally involved with environmental policy, the replacement of career officials by military personnel has affected the conditions for articulating rapid responses to urgent problems. In addition, a report prepared by federal civil servants and environmental agencies points to situations of embarrassment and persecution, showing that the Brazilian military institution may not have been rid of practices from its authoritarian past.

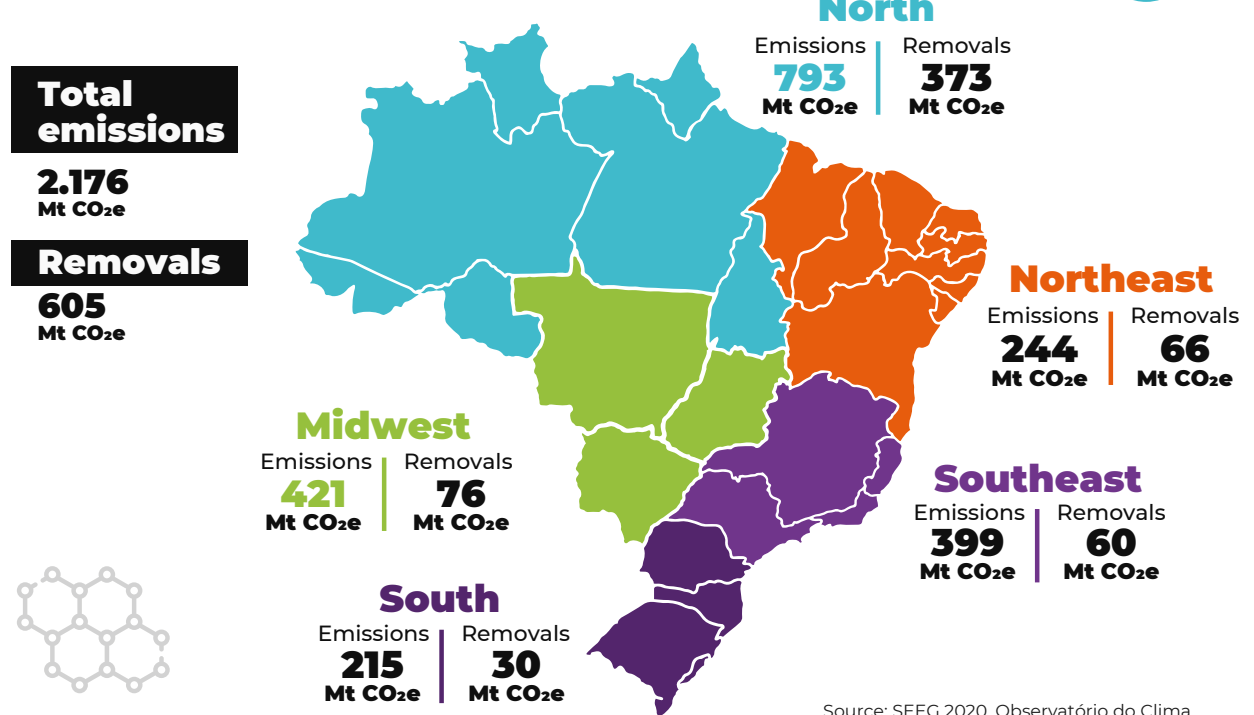
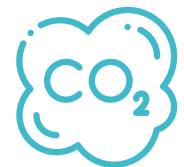
A survey by the Federal Court of Accounts (TCU, in Portuguese) identified 6,157 active and reserve soldiers in civilian positions in the government of President Jair Bolsonaro. The number is more than double that of 2018, under the government of Michel Temer (2,765). Source: TCU

9.

But, while all this goes on, how is the environment actually going? We continue to see forest destruction rates rise. According to the Climate Observatory, 2019 was one of the worst years, in light of recent history, to fight climate change in Brazil. See the Numbers below:

Estimation of greenhouse gas emissions and removals

Brasil, 2019



10.

Conclusion: The Amazon Council is not capable of delivering what was promised; nor militarization helps to solve the problem. To the extent that this branch has served the dismantle Brazilian environmental policy, (i) eliminating internationally recognized programs, (ii) removing and chasing public servants and (iii) draining important resources from the Environment to Defense, it contributes to the devastation of Brazilian biomes.

