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# THE INTERNET AS ENVIRONMENTAL MEDIA: STRATEGIES OF BRAZILIAN POLITICAL PARTIES

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ANTONIO TEIXEIRA DE BARROS<sup>1</sup>

## Introduction

The article aims to analyze how the Brazilian political parties use the Internet to communicate with the segments of the electoral public interested in ecological issues, according to the logic of segmented information and tactical media, or alternative ways to conventional vehicles, capable of produce schedules and differentiated frameworks (JURIS, 2005). The purpose is to map how is the use of websites of legends such as environmental media space and what aspects are emphasized. The analytical scope of the assumption that the parties represent the ideological plurality of society (PEIRANO, 2011), working increasingly according to public democracy logic, with intense participation of the media (MANIN, 2013) and informational policy (Castells, 2003), which involves adherence to the public media targeting strategies (WOLTON, 2006).

To achieve its objectives - especially the ongoing pursuit of confidence of voters and hence legitimacy in the political dispute - one of the strategies developed contemporaneously by the letters is the digital communication with the public of the electoral market through its websites in order to strengthen its operations at institutional level, in the electoral arena and in the legislative sphere (RODRIGUES, BARROS, BERNARDES, 2014).

It is worth mentioning that the green agenda projection acquired by intensifying the theme of media coverage, especially since the Earth Summit (Rio 92), resulting in increased visibility (BARROS, 2013). Similarly, the policy has become an equally mediatized phenomenon, which includes the performance of the parties. In addition to conventional media, Urbinati (2013a; 2013b) highlights the role of the Internet in this process media coverage, making it an “unprecedented support for democracy hearing” (2013a, p.10).

Various analyzes emphasize the crisis of political mediation in contemporary societies represented, in large part, by the crisis of the parties themselves, which resulted in the calling party ideologization (Panebianco, 1990). Other authors emphasize the low party institutionalization in Brazil, weak identification with the electorate (Carreirão and KINZO, 2004; VEIGA, 2007) and a general trend in decreasing the importance of

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political parties (Mainwaring, 2001; MAIA, 2006; BAQUERO, 2000; MANIN, 2005). According to Manin (2013), parties are no longer political subjects with defined identities and have become only instruments of voters, employees at each election, depending on political circumstances.

The nature of the association made by the parties is intrinsically related to training that struggle for domination, ie the objective is to ensure an influence and power exercise field, either by obtained financial resources, social influence or by word of power (WEBER, 1999). In this last issue there are the political advertising strategies, understood as a form of advertising subtitle in order to consolidate its discursive and symbolic power (BOURDIEU, 1989). Act as revitalizing the mediation between citizens and party institutions.

The survey was conducted between August and September 2014. Therefore, we considered the information available on the websites of the parties. The methodology for the analysis consisted of two steps. The first was to map the individual strategies of each website, with the notation of the data in its own form. The second was to parameter comparison of strategies and the identification of those that predominate in all the sites of the 32 subtitles.

Four modalities of accession of the parties to this agenda and use the internet as a medium for environmental disclosure were considered. The first is the inclusion of the topic in the body of the party program. The second refers to the supply of specific areas of websites for that matter, as nuclei and environmental departments. The third includes the offer of online courses in environmental education. The fourth consists in the dissemination of news and events on environmental topics. Some parties adhere to just one of these strategies, while others combine more than one or all, as will be detailed in the discussion on the analysis of data.

The choice of cut-centered strategies and content of the websites of the parties is justified by the growing relevance of the use of digital tools by political parties and other political institutions (RÖMMELE, 2003; BLANCHARD, 2006). The Internet thus constitutes a tool to enhance the performance of the parties. After all, in the context of a multi-network society (BAUMAN, 2000), parties (and all other political institutions) are faced with the logic of digital inevitability resulting from the world shrinking process (HARVEY, 1992) and the constitution new ways of doing politics. The internet has renewed the political field, with a new type of co-presence through the online performance of the actors. It is noteworthy in this respect, the ability of the internet user agency, with its multiple activities (spectator, actor and operator). The parties had to join, so the signs policy to create and represent belonging modes citizen (RIBEIRO, 2000).

The Internet, as e-democracy tool, offers possibilities of communication between parties and voters, including through the provision of information unexplored by conventional media, like the detailed content of party programs. Thus, the Internet becomes an alternative in terms of propaganda and partisan image building, expanding the sphere of political visibility. After all, "a policy that is exhibited, it is shown, it is present, it must be the perception of the citizen" (GOMES, 2004, p.403). Digital media used by the legends to publicize their adherence to social and environmental agenda should be analyzed in the light of these observations.

Before analyzing the data, we present some information by way of contextualizing the study in order to place as the environmental agenda was built by political parties.

## Parties, digital communication and environment

With the advancement of media technologies, of which the Internet is part and is the most important breakthrough of the last 20 years, the policy has become a phenomenon of widespread penetration in the various spheres of society, that is, able to reach the citizen just outside the political sphere in the strict sense, because the media contributes to the enhanced integration of political issues in social relations. Its high potential for seduction, based on the logic of symbolic power (BOURDIEU, 1989), contributes significantly (u) for the reconfiguration of flows and information flow in metropolitan societies.

The sphere of public visibility and its consequences in the social dynamics of collective discutibilidade (GOMES, 2011) reinforce the symbolic power of media coverage of politics. In addition, much of the knowledge and experience of the public with regard to issues of social relevance, political, economic and cultural framework necessarily involves the media, which have become the primary source of information. "The media reflect and form the perceptions that people do not experience directly" (SCHMIDT, 2003, p.69).

This approach is consistent with the assumptions of Manin (1995, 2013), by proposing the concept of democracy the public. For the author, with the advancement of media coverage and its interference in the political make-up games, democracy hearing weakened the hegemony of the parties, strengthening personalistic voting, since it opens the possibility of direct communication with the public, and reduce importance of parties as political mediation agents. The media spend are increasingly this role. And "the electorate is presented, first of all, as an audience that reacts to the proposed terms of the political stage" (MANIN, 1995, p. 29).

As a result, the parties, legislative bodies and parliamentarians themselves have to resort to the media mechanisms for both election campaigns as to keep the electoral connection and accountable to voters. As a result, a new player in representative government, the floating voter, and a new forum, the mass media (MANIN, 1995, p. 33). Thus, the media replace the parties in the functions of information dissemination and political socialization. Castells (2000) identifies this movement as a transition from a public sphere hitherto policy anchored in political institutions for a new model that is organized around the symbolic power of the systems and networks articulated by the media.

This movement, according to the latest analysis of Bernard Manin (2013), results in a number of consequences for the analysis of political parties today and its place in the context of public democracy. Briefly, we can summarize these consequences into four factors, from the observations of the author: (a) decline in the self-declared party ties; (b) erosion of party loyalty; (c) reduction of the linked political participation in party activities as opposed to increased engagement by non-institutional ways; (c) increasing weakening of party identification and emergence of "floating voters" that every election vote for a different party.

In the same vein, Urbinati (2013a; 2013b) reiterates that resets and party political system crises arise due to the consolidation of democracy and the public referendum the audience. In addition to conventional media, the author highlights the role of the Internet in the process, becoming an “unprecedented support for democracy hearing” (2013a, p.10). In this new societal configuration, the Internet would be able to overcome the democratic deficit of the traditional media (GOMES, 2008, p.304), especially when it comes to overcoming the limits of time and space for political participation; the extent and quality of the stock of information online; the absence of controls and filters of traditional media; and the possibilities of interactivity and participation.

In the public visibility of Democracy regime, informational politics (CASTELLS, 2003) becomes increasingly imperative. After all, the generation, processing and transmission of information and images have become the fundamental sources of power productivity. Therefore, political parties are increasingly resorting to political seduction strategies on the Internet, whose websites are the focus of the disclosure, a kind of “virtual platform” or outdoor in the virtual sphere, from which depart the other logical acting on other digital platforms such as social networks. This explains also why the parties “invest progressively in promotion strategies of personality and contact democracy”. In addition, “adhere to media resources to capture public attention” (LIPOVETSKY, 2013, p.50-51).

### **As the environmental agenda was built by political parties**

In the first decades of the twentieth century, ecology<sup>i</sup> It was treated episodic and fragmented way, but over time, became a supertema of socio-political and cultural agenda, especially after the 1970s, to break the possible subject logic of the public agenda to become problematic sociopolitical with continuous, complex and recurrent approach (GUIMARÃES, 1986). According to Ribeiro (2000, p.158), this process should be reviewed in the light of an attempted capital reeticização, “to incorporate in their calculations concern for future generations, the concept of intergenerational equity, deeply moral character.”

Thus, according to the analysis by the same author, environmentalism took the form of a political metarrelato, a kind of universal formulation, “that articulates and neutralizes divergent interests in the political field” (p.161). If before your configuration was an outsider question, diffuse penetration of ecological ideas in politics and in other spheres of society, gave him the established dimension of the question, who won center of the political debate, as argued by Ulrich Beck (1994: .268).

Before being incorporated into the party programs, ecological and environmental guidelines have gone through a long and complex history of various types of militancy<sup>ii</sup>. Despite the plurality of strands there is a general political scope that brings together concerning common symbolic leading environmental thinking to become a planetary motion<sup>iii</sup>, with wide media visibility.

It is worth noting that the political connotation was marked with the debate on risk issues (BORRAZ, 2014) and the broad inclusion from the perspective of environmental conflicts in the public controversy arenas (FLEURY, and PREMEBIDA ALMEIDA, 2014). Such controversies greatly contributed to the establishment of a political agenda at the

international level.<sup>iv</sup> Officially, the policy concern of these international actors with the environment, began to be expressed in the first decades of the twentieth century. Even without the participation of the parties, this phase was important because it created the conditions for the future involvement of party politics.

One of the policy frameworks of the constitution of an international arena of public controversy on environment was the UN Conference I on Environment and Development, held in Stockholm (1972). The event aimed to address the ecological problems in a comprehensive manner in order to sensitize governments and nations to the need for international cooperation and collective and consensual initiatives (FIGUEIREDO, 1993). Under this impulse, some governments of the central countries have taken initial steps towards the early environmental policy measures even in the 1970s, following the example of Canada, the Netherlands, Sweden and Denmark, among others. There began a long history of institutionalization of the environmental issue, politically devoted to the creation of official bodies which have worsened their inclusion in the party and parliamentary field. Thus, the environment becomes a political asset, “entering the game institutional democracy governed by the parties” (ALMEIDA, PREMEBIDA, 2014, p.25).

In this context, it is that were the first “green parties” with the formal inclusion of the debate in the electoral arena. Such legends began to emerge soon after the Stockholm Conference, although with little political influence in decision making processes of parliaments. The first initiative originated in Tasmania (Australia) in 1972, due to the decision of a group of environmentalists called United Tasmanian Group. Later, the group was renamed Green Party and established a base in New Zealand. Then, the group expanded its activities to Europe, with the support of Swedish ecologists, Finland, Norway, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Germany and France. Currently, the philosophy guiding political parties in more than 120 countries. In 2010, the Green Party became the fourth largest party in the European Parliament.

In Brazil<sup>v</sup>, the Green Party was founded in 1986 in the city of Rio de Janeiro, a result of the meeting of former political exiles, as ecologists, artists, intellectuals and activists, the anti-nuclear movement. During the Rio Conference, the Brazilian Green Party promoted the first global meeting of the Greens. Considered the biggest diplomatic and political event in the world when it comes to environmental issues (LAFER, 1993), Rio 92 contributed to the environmental agenda was built by political parties of different ideological spectrum, with more emphasis, however, called on parties left. After all, this agenda has become cross with the accession of various social and political actors, surpassing the right x left polarization, with the formation of a green coalition, “despite a wide range of attitudes, perspectives and action recipes” (GIDDENS, 2010, p.74). This is what the author characterizes as “the first political wave of environmentalism”<sup>vi</sup>, consisting “transposition of the issue to the agenda of political issues (p.22).

This process took the green parties the political-party control of the environmental agenda, however, contributed to the capillarity and social integration in the world lived. The other parties, which had not occupied with this agenda were brokered by ecological discourse (BAUMAN, 2000), which shows the strength of discursive effectiveness of the rhetoric of sustainability, as emphasized Ribeiro (2000). On the other hand, Bruno

Latour (1994, p.80) points out that the political parties to adhere to ecological causes, have become mediators and translators, or “actors have the capacity to translate what they carry, the redefinition, unfold it, and also to betray him”.

Castells (1999) emphasizes the logical networks of ecological movements, despite the different militant identities, and adds the potential of these movements as agents and collaborators of the media coverage logic, which increases his powers in terms of capacity to capture and direct the attention of the public. The author emphasizes the symbolic force that the frames selected by the media, from the action of ecological movements, have the training and dissemination of public opinion, with large reflective effects in relations and in the very movements themselves.

### Analysis of the eco-informational strategies of the parties

As pointed out Manin (2013), the parties choose which audience segments available they want to achieve. In other words, each caption builds your “target audience” in search of electoral support. The author states that after assessing the specific interests of each electoral division, party leaders need to choose which would be most suitable, according to tradition, restrictions, history and reputation of the legend (MANIN, 2013, p.120). In a way, Manin points to the partisan reality, something that other researchers have realized the mass production: Public segmentation (WOLTON, 2006). Based on that assumption, it is that the analysis was performed from the monitoring of websites of 32 Brazilian political parties, as stated in **Table 1**.

**Table 1 - political parties registered with the Electoral Justice**

	Initials	Party	Registration Date	Website
1	PMDB	Partido do Movimento Democrático Brasileiro	30.6.1981	<a href="http://pmdb.org.br/">http://pmdb.org.br/</a>
2	PTB	Partido Trabalhista Brasileiro	3.11.1981	<a href="http://www.ptb.org.br/">http://www.ptb.org.br/</a>
	PDT	Partido Democrático Trabalhista	10.11.1981	<a href="http://www.pdt.org.br/">http://www.pdt.org.br/</a>
4	PT	Partido dos Trabalhadores	11.2.1982	<a href="http://www.pt.org.br/">http://www.pt.org.br/</a>
5	DEM	Democratas	11.9.1986	<a href="http://www.dem.org.br/">http://www.dem.org.br/</a>
6	PCdoB	Partido Comunista do Brasil	23.6.1988	<a href="http://www.pcdob.org.br/">http://www.pcdob.org.br/</a>
7	PSB	Partido Socialista Brasileiro	1º.7.1988	<a href="http://www.psb40.org.br/">http://www.psb40.org.br/</a>
8	PSDB	Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira	24.8.1989	<a href="http://www.psdb.org.br/">http://www.psdb.org.br/</a>
9	PTC	Partido Trabalhista Cristão	22.2.1990	<a href="http://www.ptc36nacional.com.br/">http://www.ptc36nacional.com.br/</a>
10	PSC	Partido Social Cristão	29.3.1990	<a href="http://www.psc.org.br/">http://www.psc.org.br/</a>
11	PMN	Partido da Mobilização Nacional	25.10.1990	<a href="http://pmn.org.br/">http://pmn.org.br/</a>
12	PRP	Partido Republicano Progressista	29.10.1991	<a href="http://www.prp.org.br/">http://www.prp.org.br/</a>
13	PPS	Partido Popular Socialista	19.3.1992	<a href="http://portal.pps.org.br/">http://portal.pps.org.br/</a>
14	PV	Partido Verde	30.9.1993	<a href="http://pv.org.br/">http://pv.org.br/</a>



15	PTdoB	Partido Trabalhista do Brasil	11.10.1994	<a href="http://www.ptdob.org.br/home/">http://www.ptdob.org.br/home/</a>
16	PP	Partido Progressista	16.11.1995	<a href="http://www.pp.org.br/">http://www.pp.org.br/</a>
17	PSTU	Partido Socialista dos Trabalhadores Unificado	19.12.1995	<a href="http://www.pstu.org.br/">http://www.pstu.org.br/</a>
18	PCB	Partido Comunista Brasileiro	9.5.1996	<a href="http://pcb.org.br/portal/">http://pcb.org.br/portal/</a>
19	PRTB	Partido Renovador Trabalhista Brasileiro	28.3.1995	<a href="http://prt看.org.br/">http://prt看.org.br/</a>
20	PHS	Partido Humanista da Solidariedade	20.3.1997	<a href="http://phs.org.br/">http://phs.org.br/</a>
21	PSDC	Partido Social Democrata Cristão	5.8.1997	<a href="http://www.psdc.org.br/">http://www.psdc.org.br/</a>
22	PCO	Partido da Causa Operária	30.9.1997	<a href="http://www.pco.org.br/">http://www.pco.org.br/</a>
23	PTN	Partido Trabalhista Nacional	2.10.1997	<a href="http://www.ptn.org.br/2013/">http://www.ptn.org.br/2013/</a>
24	PSL	Partido Social Liberal	2.6.1998	<a href="http://www.psl.org.br/">http://www.psl.org.br/</a>
25	PRB	Partido Republicano Brasileiro	25.8.2005	<a href="http://www.prb10.org.br/">http://www.prb10.org.br/</a>
26	PSOL	Partido Socialismo e Liberdade	15.9.2005	<a href="http://www.psol50.org.br/">http://www.psol50.org.br/</a>
27	PR	Partido da República	19.12.2006	<a href="http://www.partidodarepublica.org.br/">http://www.partidodarepublica.org.br/</a>
28	PSD	Partido Social Democrático	27.9.2011	<a href="http://www.psd.org.br/">http://www.psd.org.br/</a>
29	PPL	Partido Pátria Livre	4.10.2011	<a href="http://partidopatrialivre.org.br/">http://partidopatrialivre.org.br/</a>
30	PEN	Partido Ecológico Nacional	19.6.2012	<a href="http://www.pen51.org.br/">http://www.pen51.org.br/</a>
31	PROS	Partido Republicano da Ordem Social	24.9.2013	<a href="http://http://www.pros.org.br/">http://http://www.pros.org.br/</a>
32	SDD	Partido Solidariedade	24.9.2013	<a href="http://www.solidariedade.org.br/">http://www.solidariedade.org.br/</a>

Source: Superior Electoral Court - <http://www.tse.jus.br/partidos/partidos-politicos>

To achieve its public, the parties adopt the advocacy strategy, which basically consists in particular representation of the demands and interests of certain social groups that build their own identity (AVRITZER, 2007). Importantly, the advocacy is considered a form of political representation. The most plausible explanation for the advocacy via internet is the need of electoral parties mass of directing their messages to specific audiences, instead of addressing to all the citizens. You also can not help noticing that competition between own subtitles can be a stimulating factor to the use of the internet as tactical media, with targeted strategies (RODRIGUES, BARROS, BERNARDES, 2014).

## The environmental issues in party programs

Of the 32 parties, including 20 issues of the environmental agenda into their websites, ie 62.5%. In order to create a ranking and thereby identify the degree of association of the parties to the green agenda, established weights to each item of Table 2, the largest being 1.0 scale. Five items were considered in the calculation: (a) the subtitle program includes environmental issues; (b) how is the party program insertion - by means of a separate section or loose so the text; (c) whether the party intended an office or core to environmental issues on the website; (d) environmental news published on the website; (e) provision of online courses in environmental education.



This procedure allowed stagger the websites analyzed in various degrees of membership, with registered variations from 0.30 to 1.00, the latter being the maximum score. Only the PMDB figure with the highest score. Then appear PT (0.80) and PROS (0.70). Following are PPS, PV, PEN and SDD, with 0.60. Among the latter are placed on ranking the PSD, with 0.30 and eleven legends that were with final index 0.40: PDT, DEM, PCdoB, PSB, PP, PSTU, PCB, CSDP, PCO, PRB and PSOL. It is noteworthy that the adopted rate does not apply to ecological content of the party program content, but only the assessment of the use of the four visibility strategies employed on the websites of the subtitles.

As for the issue of incorporation into the party program, fit-16 parties: PMDB, PCdoB, PTB, PDT, PT, DEM, PSB, PPS, PV, PP, PSTU, PCB, CSDP, PCO, PRB, PSOL and PEN. Regarding that include this requirement in part, by inserting the themes in a matter of piecemeal basis in the text, are: PTB, PSD and PROS. SDD includes the Secretariat of the Black, Indian, Environment and Minorities<sup>vii</sup>, with news on the subject, but does not include explicitly green agenda in their party program.

**Table 2 - environmental issues Entering the websites**

	Party	Occurrence/ Weight		Entering the Program / Weight		Thematic Core/ Secretariat/ Weight		Environmental news / Weight		EAD / Weight		General Statistical Index
		Yes	1,0	Chapter	1,0	Yes	1,0	Yes	1,0	Yes	1,0	
1	PMDB	Yes	1,0	Chapter	1,0	Yes	1,0	Yes	1,0	Yes	1,0	1,00
2	PT	Yes	1,0	Chapter	1,0	Yes	1,0	Yes	1,0	No	0,0	0,80
3	PROS	Yes	1,0	Separate	0,5	1,0	0,0	Yes	1,0	No	0,0	0,70
4	PEN	Yes	1,0	Chapter	1,0	0,0	0,0	No	0,0	Yes	1,0	0,60
5	PPS	Yes	1,0	Chapter	1,0	No	0,0	No	0,0	Yes	1,0	0,60
6	PV	Yes	1,0	Chapter	1,0	No	0,0	No	0,0	Yes	1,0	0,60
7	SDD	Yes	1,0	-	0,0	1,0	0,0	Yes	1,0	No	0,0	0,60
8	PTB	Yes	1,0	Separate	0,5	Yes	1,0	No	0,0	No	0,0	0,50
9	PDT	Yes	1,0	Chapter	1,0	No	0,0	No	0,0	No	0,0	0,40
10	DEM	Yes	1,0	Chapter	1,0	No	0,0	No	0,0	No	0,0	0,40
11	PCdoB	Yes	1,0	Chapter	1,0	No	0,0	No	0,0	No	0,0	0,40
12	PSB	Yes	1,0	Chapter	1,0	No	0,0	No	0,0	No	0,0	0,40
13	PP	Yes	1,0	Chapter	1,0	No	0,0	No	0,0	No	0,0	0,40
14	PSTU	Yes	1,0	Chapter	1,0	No	0,0	No	0,0	No	0,0	0,40
15	PCB	Yes	1,0	Chapter	1,0	No	0,0	No	0,0	No	0,0	0,40
16	PSDC	Yes	1,0	Chapter	1,0	No	0,0	No	0,0	No	0,0	0,40
17	PCO	Yes	1,0	Chapter	1,0	No	0,0	No	0,0	No	0,0	0,40
18	PRB	Yes	1,0	Chapter	1,0	No	0,0	No	0,0	No	0,0	0,40
19	PSOL	Yes	1,0	Chapter	1,0	No	0,0	No	0,0	No	0,0	0,40
20	PSD	Yes	1,0	Separate	0,5	No	0,0	No	0,0	No	0,0	0,30
Total parties that include environmental themes: 20 = 62.5%												

Source: Author's calculations.

The creation of core or environmental secretariat in websites, offering online courses in environmental education and outreach events and environmental news are complementary strategies. The core departments and offer the advantage of a prominent place in the architecture of websites with a prime location. This feature is used by some parties as a way to establish direct contact with some segments of society.

Before proceeding to analyze the data, it is a brief observation on the list of parties that do not yet use the websites as environmental media and therefore does not adopt any of the strategies mentioned above. There are 12 subtitles, as shown in Table 3, almost all small except the PSDB. Certainly are parties, mostly in the consolidation phase of their identity and their flags.

**Table 3 - Parties that do not use the internet as environmental media**

	Parties
1	PHS
2	PMN
3	PPL
4	PR
5	PRP
6	PRTB
7	PSC
8	PSL
9	PSDB
10	PTC
11	PTdoB
12	PTN

Source: Author's elaboration.

In the case of the PSDB, however, it is important to emphasize that the socio-environmental agenda plays a key role in the government program of its candidate for president, Aécio Neves, probably due to electoral competition with Marina Silva. With a chapter entitled "Sustainability", the PSDB presidential plane has mechanisms to adopt proposals to reconcile economic growth and sustainability, giving priority to urban mobility, energy and sanitation.

### **Thematic axes highlighted in the party programs**

The mapping of the central themes of party programs, with regard to environmental issues, revealed four major themes adopted by the parties: (a) preservation and conservation; (b) criticism of the capitalist system and ecological sustainability; (c) development

with economic sustainability; (d) political ecology, urban culture and ecological citizenship. Each thematic area has a set of keywords (Table 4). These themes were defined based on content submitted by party programs, ie, the focus of the party's program is focused on preservation and conservation issues, this was defined as the preferred main theme of the party and so on.

The four adopted themes relate to the dimensions of sustainability, according to Ignacy Sachs classification (1993): economic, social, ecological, spatial / geographic and cultural. According to him, the economic sustainability.<sup>viii</sup> It is focused on the efficiency of the allocation and management of resources extracted from nature, and rationality in investment. This conception comes under the concept of sustainable development, whose headquarters is the liberal developmentalist project. It is, therefore, in the words of Boaventura Sousa Santos (2010, p.275), a "politicization process of production space." These requirements include directly the ideas contained in the programs of the parties defenders of economic growth, as the PMDB, PT, the PRB and PSB.

Social sustainability prioritizes human development policies to promote social justice and reducing inequalities. Ecological sustainability, in turn, has as a pillar preservation of sources of energy and natural resources, based on the premise that the economic use of natural resources should consider the temporal cycles inherent to the specific characteristics of each ecosystem in order to ensure balance of biodiversity. The PCdoB programs, PDT, PSOL, PCO, PSTU and PCB combine proposals that address the three dimensions of sustainability mentioned (Table 4).

The spatial sustainability refers to policies for land use and rural-urban relationship, for example. The cultural sustainability is the respect for tradition, native communities and cultural heritage. The websites analyzed do not stop at proposals for the last two dimensions. It is worth mentioning the profile of the two typically ecological parties (PV and PEN), the only two that include the five dimensions of sustainability. For these environmental issues subtitles are comprehensive and are embedded in all aspects of social life at the local and global level, bringing together the natural heritage and cultural diversity.

The preservationist block, which brings together the PP, CSDP, PSD, PTB and DEM corresponds to the combination of economic, social and ecological. The two parties typically ecological orientation fall under the main theme of systemic political ecology: PV and PEN. Both converge in terms of systemic ecology and are home to the varied dimensions of sustainability, with proposals for integrated and coordinated actions.

**Table 4 - Parties grouped by themes**

Parties	N	Themes	Type of Sustainability	Converged key terms and more cited in party programs
PP PSDC PSD PTB PPS DEM	06	Preservation and development	Economic, social and ecological sustainability	Environmental responsibility, sustainable development, rational use of renewable resources.
PCdoB PDT PSOL PCO PSTU PCB	06	Reviews capitalist system	Ecological sustainability	Depletion of natural resources, soil contamination, quality of life, ecology defense.
PMDB PT PRB PPS	04	Economic development	Economic sustainability	Economic prosperity, sustainable development, environmental responsibility, renewable energy.
PV PEN	02	Political ecology and ecological citizenship	Economic, social, ecological, cultural and spatial	Political ecology, urban ecology, culture of peace, clean technologies, human rights, traditional cultures, cultural heritage, regional development.

**Source:** Author's elaboration.

### **Informational strategies on environmental nuclei of websites of parties**

The map of the specific informational strategies of environmental nuclei of websites, set out in Table 5 shows the predominance of outreach events, contact the parties and news media. They are strategies that use the same logic connection and informational policy. The informative point of view, reproduce information contained in other media and vehicles, in order to attract the attention of the public to issues with which there is notorious affinity of the parties. From the political point of view, the main strategies strengthen the power to control this agenda by parties who seek to broker the different segments of the electorate for some focal points in terms of political information and to engage these stakeholders in environmental events also of interest subtitles. Disclosure of the event schedule works as a call or even a voter call for attendance at such activities.

**Table 5 - Map of informational strategies for the environmental area**

	Parties / Strategies	Party executive	Events	News	Opinion	Political activity	Contact	Total
1	PMDB	1	1	1	1	1	1	5
2	PT	0	1	1	1	1	1	4
3	PRB	0	1	1	1	1	1	4
4	SDD	0	1	1	1	1	1	4
	Total - N	1	4	4	4	4	4	-
	Total - %	25	100	100	100	100	100	-

Source: Author's elaboration.

The PMDB stands out as the party that uses every strategy, including information on the National Executive of the Center Environmental PMDB. The use of opinion refers to interviews and articles written by personalities of the parties, authorities and researchers. It is a way to use the authority of political discourse and environmental discourse to endorse the interpretative framework of subtitles. The topic of political action highlights the achievements supporters and their leaders in the environmental area, as presence at events and debates.

### Environmental education strategies

Another way to integration of environmental issues in the content offered by the parties on their websites is through online courses in environmental education, a strategy that falls in offering courses focusing on training and political education<sup>ix</sup>.

Environmental education is provided by the following parties: PV, PMN, PPS and PMDB. The courses consist of disseminating content to promote citizen environmental awareness. In the case of the first two it is an education strategy linked to partisan profile. Others try to incorporate the theme in the context of political education in broader terms, linking environmental education to the notion of citizenship. The PEN and PV are considered ecologically oriented parties, while the PMDB and the PPS appear to resort to this strategy because of the diversity of its members as well as connecting strategy with environmentalists segments of the electorate.

The environmental education strategies are associated with the strengthening of party identity (VEIGA, 2007), expanding the ranks of militants and sympathizers of the environmental field. The aim seems to be to make people know and recognize the party identity, through the suggestion of an image associated with sustainability, which also has to do with visibility and promotion of party reputation. The PEN stands out with content on local sustainability, focused on the discussion of sustainable cities.

## Conclusions

THE study shows that targeted communication strategies are widely used by the political parties on their websites as a way to reach different segments of the electorate interested in the socio-environmental agenda in the party focus. The observation and monitoring of formats and contents reveals that there is a similar pattern of website adopted by all parties. This is certainly explained by the fact that websites are designed and prepared by specialized companies that adopt similar standards, established by the major parties, confirming previous studies Blanchard (2006).

On the similarities and common patterns in websites, it is appropriate to mention the observations of Manuel Castells (2013). The author analyzes this phenomenon as a consequence of the logic of the network society and "Galaxy Internet." Thus, the widespread use of certain standards and formats is evidence of the importance of the internet and how it imposes its logic to producers of virtual content, and the need to conform to the grammar of digital communication to take advantage of their potential.

An information environment that shares certain codes, operating modes and visual standards facilitates the capture public attention and can promote greater involvement and engagement. All of this fits into the debate on the internet as a result of social production process of a new informational mode of production (LASH, 2005). As the technological systems are socially produced (Figueiredo, 1989), social production is culturally structured (CASTELLS, 2003).

Furthermore, this media line effect and convergence format (SCHMIDT, 2003) can be explained by the competition between the parties, including reproducing a competition which occurs in the media sphere and that also causes the content to be reproduced like. Competition leads to similar patterns, with some identifying marks, as the party profile, such as the emphasis on informative content (RODRIGUES, BARROS, BERNARDES, 2014). Competition drives the parties to adopt focused strategies to articulate connections to the same public the electoral market and the same media resources.

The content in turn relate directly to the party identity. Thus, the parties of socialist orientation, for example, emphasize the criticism of the capitalist system and suggest alternative models to capitalism. This is the case of the following parties: PCdoB, PDT, PSOL, PCO, PSTU and PCB. Already integrated parties of the capitalist system, they preach reconciliation between ecology and economic development, such legends as the PT, PMDB, PSDB and DEM. In this particular case, although it is noticed the existence of related frameworks with the ideological divide between right and left, which does not apply to a greater or lesser adherence to the green agenda by the parties, but only in the case of the relationship between economy and nature protection .

In addition to the relationship with the party identity, ecological ideas put forward by the parties are linked to the three main functions Subtitle his role in the electoral arena, its institutional role and its relationship with governments (KEY, 1964; VEIGA, 2007; AMARAL, 2013). The inclusion of themes of the green agenda in party programs is a pre-accession strategy with the electorate, since ecological issues began to permeate various spheres of society and have become the focus of public concern. Similarly, the

parties try to reassert its institutional identity by incorporating in his speech the sustainability agenda. Subtitles further reinforce its political mediation function by themselves as authorized officials to propose and negotiate public policies for sustainable development.

To stop being a question outsider and become an established issue (Giddens, 2010), the green agenda was gradually introduced to partisan political speech in order to secure space in the electoral arena. It is an attempt to build a political narrative associated with sustainability, in order to conquer segments of the electorate who identify with the subject. An advantage of using the internet as environmental tactical media, in addition to low cost, is the control that subtitles can have on the selection of content, the news frameworks and political angle. Thus, the associations act as environmental information senders and political opinion websites of vehicles in space.

## Notes

- i The initial term used to refer to green thinking was “ecology.” Over time, it started to prefer “environmentalism”. The meaning of the first emphasized the natural environment, while the latter encompassed the culture and society (PADOVA, 1986). It is in this sense that the two concepts are used in this work.
- ii For a more detailed view of this militantism path, by Oliveira (2008).
- iii The ecological discourse was amplified from the peculiar convergence of its various aspects, from the most radical to those who joined the conciliatory rhetoric of “green capitalism” under the heading of sustainable development.
- iv Although the term risk has arisen in the sociological repertoire in 1986 with the publication Beck’s book on risk society (Risikogesellschaft in German), international organizations already emphasized the ecological disasters since the early 1920s.
- v In 1985 it was created the Ecologists core of PT. However, the assessment is that the inclusion of environmentalism in the Brazilian party politics were late by reference to the genesis of militancy, whose historic refers to the “naturalistic elites”, linked to the international agenda (OLIVEIRA, 2008).
- vi The second wave, according to the author, “should engage its introduction in our institutions and everyday concerns of citizens” (GIDDENS, 2010, p.22).
- vii Available in: <http://www.solidariedade77.org.br/secretarias/negro-indio-meio-ambiente-e-minorias/>
- viii This conception comes under the concept of sustainable development, whose headquarters is the liberal developmentalist project. (CARVALHO, 1991 p.11).
- ix Of the 32 parties, 28 offer political education courses. Only the PRP, PSOL, PPL and SDD were not yet engaged. According to the Law on Political Parties (Federal Law 9,096 / 1995) subtitles should apply 20% of the resources of the party fund for political education activities

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# THE INTERNET AS ENVIRONMENTAL MEDIA: STRATEGIES OF BRAZILIAN POLITICAL PARTIES

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**Abstract:** This paper analyzes how Brazilian political parties use the Internet to communicate with the electoral segments interested in the environmental agenda. The survey was conducted in 2014, based on the information available on the websites of the parties. The focus of the research are the communication strategies and the contents disclosed. The data show that, of the 32 parties registered with the Electoral Court, 20 incorporate ecological issues in their websites (62.5%). The party visibility is the main characteristic observed. The strategies and content are used for advertising subtitle in order to strengthen political propaganda directed to this electoral segment. The party adherence to environmental issues shows that the green agenda has become transpartidária, beyond left x right division.

**Keywords:** Parties and the environment; Internet and the environment; Party politics, media and the environment.

**Resumo:** Analisa como os partidos políticos usam a internet para se comunicar com os segmentos eleitorais interessados na agenda ambiental. O levantamento foi realizado em 2014, com base nas informações disponíveis nos websites dos partidos. O foco da pesquisa são as estratégias de comunicação e os conteúdos divulgados. Os dados mostram que, dos 32 partidos registrados na Justiça Eleitoral, 20 incorporam temáticas ecológicas em seus websites (62,5%). A visibilidade partidária é a principal característica observada. As estratégias e conteúdos são utilizados para a publicidade das legendas, a fim de reforçar a propaganda política dirigida a esse segmento eleitoral. A adesão partidária aos temas ambientais mostra que a agenda verde tornou-se transpartidária, além da divisão esquerda x direita.

**Palavras-chave:** Partidos e meio ambiente; Internet e meio ambiente; Política partidária, mídia e meio ambiente.

**Resumen:** El artículo analiza cómo los partidos políticos brasileños utilizan el Internet para comunicarse con los segmentos electorales interesados en la agenda ambiental. La encuesta se realizó en 2014, en base a la información disponible en las páginas web de los partidos. El

foco de la investigación son las estrategias de comunicación y los contenidos divulgados. Los datos muestran que, de los 32 partidos registrados ante el Tribunal Electoral, 20 incorporan las cuestiones ecológicas en sus sitios web (62,5%). La visibilidad del partido es la principal característica observada. Las estrategias y contenido se utilizan para la publicidad con el fin de fortalecer la propaganda política dirigida a este segmento electoral. La adhesión de los partidos a las cuestiones ambientales muestra que la agenda verde se ha convertido en transpartidaria, más allá de la división izquierda y derecha.

**Palabras clave:** Partes y el medio ambiente; Internet y el medio ambiente; La política de partidos, medios de comunicación y el medio ambiente.

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