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When emergent countries reform global governance of climate change: Brazil under Lula

Quando países emergentes reformam a governança global das mudanças climáticas: o Brasil sob Lula

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Introduction

This paper aims at exploring the role Brazil has been playing in the global environmental governance¹ since the end of the 1980's in order to assess whether it is or not an emerging power. To do so, some international regimes in which Brazil significantly participates were analyzed, with special focus on climate change, although this is not an exclusively environmental issue. Therefore, the first part of the article will discuss international environmental regimes in general, except for the regimes related to water because Brazil is not playing a significant role yet. The second part will discuss IR theory on climate change, to show under what circumstances Brazil may be effectively considered an emerging power. In this sense, Ian Rowlands' chapter on IR theory is discussed and some of his general assumptions are challenged. Finally, the article is based primarily on the works of Andrew Hurrell, Jochen Prantl, Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, Ian Rowlands, Eduardo Viola, Mark Lacy, Adil Najam and Mark Duffield.

Usually, most observers consider Brazil an emerging country², along with others like China, Russia and India to mention only a few. And then they discuss how this international status can be transposed to a more specific sector, like nuclear

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1 Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye's (2000, p.12) definition of governance is "the processes and institutions, both formal and informal, that guide and restraint the collective activities of a group". And Mark Duffield (2001, p. 257) claims that governance corresponds to the shift from aid policy towards conflict resolution and societal reconstruction. For him, there is an "emerging system of global liberal governance that is no longer capitalist, because underdevelopment has become dangerous. It is rather "non-state and non-territorial liberal governance".

2 GABAS and LOSCH, "100 New Global Challengers" do Boston Consulting Group (2008); Standard& Poor's Emerging Markets Database; BNP Paribas (2007); and IMF "Reaping the Benefits of Financial Globalization" (2007). Apud: Atelier de cartographie de Sciences Po de Paris (2008): <http://cartographie.sciences-po.fr>. 13/02/2010.

non-proliferation, global markets, peacekeeping or environmental affairs. However, an emerging country is not automatically an emerging power, since a country has to impose itself in the international negotiations to have credibility, legitimacy and voice. Thus, the dynamics of the environmental regimes are different from the economic and political ones. In this sense, Brazil is an environmental emerging power since the end of the 1980's, long before its economic success due to the Real Plan under Cardoso presidency. This period corresponds to the diplomatic and domestic preparation for the 1992 Earth Summit, when Brazil proposed to host the meeting in Rio de Janeiro city. It is based on political criteria, more than economic, since Brazil really aimed at having his democratic transition process acknowledged by the international community and at having a legitimate international role to play in the new 1990's global order; thus, President Lula continued to work for the same purposes.

Nevertheless, the Brazilian environmental profile is a strong condition of its status as an emerging power, since Brazil hosts around 12% of the world freshwater and 15% to 20% of the world's living biodiversity. So, it is a *sui generis* country and its participation in environmental regimes is directly linked to this condition. Being recognized as an emerging power has contributed to strengthen Brazil as a global environmental player, though it cannot be considered a key player in all the environmental regimes, as it will be discussed in part 1.

Furthermore, the global order after 2008 is more open to the participation of emerging countries too, as the financial and economic crisis led the United States and the European Union to serious domestic problems that constrain their capacity of leadership in areas such as the environment. Therefore, emerging countries account for a growing part of the world's economy, the BRIC³ alone for around 22%, and they represent one third of the world population. Secondly, their domestic markets are the most promising ones, but they still depend starkly on the US and European markets. Nonetheless, the BRICs do not have a meaning in environmental negotiations yet, as Russia is frequently distant from the other three, especially in regard to climate change talks.

Finally, emerging powers will probably change the traditional North-South divide as they are among the biggest consumers, industrial powers, the worst polluters and greenhouse gas (GHG) effect emitters. They are also important technology adaptors and innovators⁴, allowing them to enhance the South to South cooperation efforts.

As a consequence, the international community expects them to have more responsibility in the near future, and to help finance the development of

³ Brazil, India, Russia and China.

⁴ In some cases such as biotechnology, biofuels, energy technologies, transition to low carbon economy, aeronautics and others. Brazil, in particular, is very well represented with EMBRAPA, FIOCRUZ, EMBRAER and PETROBRAS.

the other nations. All of these signs are very clear in the climate change regime, to be discussed in the second part. The main shift here is that environmental governance, institutions, international law and rules, were traditionally driven by developed countries. Nowadays, emerging powers, Brazil and India in particular, are struggling to have a prominent role to play in relation to environmental governance, notably considering food and climate security⁵.

Before assessing the role of Brazil in specific regimes, it is important to point a few characteristics of the Brazilian environmental politics. It changed from what Porter and Brown (1996) described as a “veto-state” to a promoting state, since it signed and ratified all the most important multilateral environmental agreements. But Brazil did not manage to create regional environmental governance (Viola, Barros-Plataiu and Leis, 2007), as the Mercosur (1991)⁶, the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO, 2002)⁷, the Regional Strategy on Biological Diversity⁸, and other institutions do not play a role as partners. The main environmental groups and alliances are the G77/China, Megadiverse Like-minded, IBSA⁹ and the BIC. Last but not least, there is a huge dissonance between Brazilian foreign policy and the domestic ones, and this weakens the Brazilian capacity to have a stand in some multilateral negotiations. For instance, Brazil does not have access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing (ABS) law yet, and the policies related to forests were inefficient in the past. Also, its national distribution of wealth, infrastructure and technology is still among the worst in the world.

The Main International Environmental Regimes

The first important question to be tackled is in what regimes does Brazil matter? Only four environmental regimes were selected and discussed below: forests, biodiversity, biosafety and access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing (ABS).

Forests are an interesting issue to start with. Although it is perceived as central to most countries, the governance of this issue is so fragile and fragmented that it may be stated that there is no regime yet. There is only a 1992 non-binding Declaration of Principles on All Types of Forests due to the disagreement of Brazil and others against the developed countries. Brazil wished to have a declaration on

5 BRASIL. “Objetivos de Desenvolvimento do Milênio. Relatório Nacional de Acompanhamento”. Presidência da República, março 2010.

6 South Cone Common Market. The five members are Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay, and Venezuela joined them in July 2006.

7 Former 1978 Amazon Cooperation Treaty (ACT). Members: Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guiana, Peru, and Venezuela.

8 Created by the Andean Pact countries and Brazil did not participate.

9 India, Brazil and South Africa. One must take note that their last meeting was attended by the ministries of environment, not foreign affairs.

all types of forests, not only the rainforest, and to avoid international interference in what was considered a national issue (Lago, 2006).

Brazil is to be considered one of the most important countries in this future regime, because of its ecosystems and the impact of its absence in any multilateral talk. But the country does not intend to be absent from any talk or initiative, on the contrary. In December 2009, the Minister of Environment, Carlos Minc, announced the National Plan to reduce 80% of the deforestation rate by 2020 with the participation of the international community, and that would correspond to a cut in GHG emissions from 36.1% to 38.9%.

In this sense, the forest talks were to a large extent transferred to climate change talks, since deforestation accounts for 18% of GHG emissions (IPCC, 2007) and forests provide environmental services, that is, they consume and produce GHG. Thus, one of the most difficult negotiations is actually on REDD¹⁰.

Secondly, the biodiversity regime is a huge regime, considered to have started with the 1992 United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). It has 193 Parties and its main goal is to assure sustainable development. In fact, it is a giant regime that was a starting point to additional protocols in the future, so it is called an “umbrella agreement”. So, forests, ABS, biosafety, desertification, sustainable development and trade are somehow linked to this Convention.

Brazil was always a key-player, notably because of its perception on the importance of the Earth Summit and its political will to actively participate in the negotiations. However, before 1992 it was considered the emerging power to block, because Brazil had a “veto-state” attitude against Northern countries that intended to make the rules on biodiversity, despite strong points of disagreement with developing countries. The most important one was that the developed countries wanted an environmental agreement whilst the second ones struggled for a social-environmental compromise, that is, poverty eradication and the right to development were their pre-conditions to achieve effective environmental protection. By that time, Brazilian diplomats knew that active participation was the best strategy to protect its national interests and sovereignty (Barros-Platiau and Varella, 2001; Lago, 2006).

Nowadays, Brazil is changing its veto strategy as it has become one of the countries to propose innovative policies and funds, according to its national experience on successful initiatives. Therefore, it is considered as a “model exporter” in this article. The most interesting one was the PPG7, the largest international cooperation program for environmental protection ever settled. But also, under Lula’s administration, there have been several interesting policies, like PROBIO I and II, ARPA, PPP, FUNBIO¹¹, to mention only some of them. As a result, from 2003 to 2008, more than 24 million hectares were transformed in conservation

10 Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation.

11 All the details about these programs can be found in the Ministry of Environment website: www.mma.gov.br.

areas. Furthermore, the *Fundo Amazônia* was created to fight against deforestation with international financing too. There is no other initiative comparable to that elsewhere in the world, so Brazil is to be considered as an example of models that could be transposed to other countries. Therefore, Brazil is not only a very powerful player concerning biodiversity, it is also country that is showing political solutions to the rest and intends to be a kind of “model exporter” to other countries in the South.

Two main issues remain for the future: the creation of the UN organization for the environment, to replace the UN Environment Program (UNEP) and the international obligations of the developed countries. For the first case, Brazil was opposed to the German and French project for the creation of a new UN institution, but now it is strong enough to negotiate it in accordance with its main interests. For the obligations of developed countries, Brazil still demands them to honor their compromises of technology transfers and financing for global development. That is, Brazil is not willing to accept international responsibilities before the developed countries do what they promised to in 1992. This can be described as “the race to be second”, as Benito Mueller put it, for climate talks.

Thirdly, the biosafety regime started well and had a Protocol to the CBD signed in 2000, named the Cartagena Protocol. It deals with the transboundary transportation and trade of living modified organisms (LMOs). But as time went by, the Protocol had no impact on trade, so it is considered an epiphenomenon (Young, 1989; 1994).

Brazil was so hesitant during the multilateral negotiation rounds that it may not be considered an important player, even though it is among the first producers and exporters of several biotechnology commodities, like soya beans. This trouble was due to a lack of national policy and serious disagreement between ministries¹², which still persists. In sum, it can be argued that Brazil had no clear strategy for this regime, but now the main question is whether it will support the strengthening of the international liability under the Protocol. Can hesitant players be considered key? As Brazil does not have a clear position yet, it is difficult to assess its power in the present talks, despite its importance as a LMO producer. If it supports the international liability process, than it will be one of the losers, since it is the only big LMOs exporter which is Part to the Protocol. Therefore, if Brazil plays a key role in the future, it will probably be to block the development of the regime.

Finally, the ABS future regime is also central to the assessment of Brazil as an emerging power. The matter is rather complex, with a strong cleavage between the biodiverse countries and the bioprospection powers (countries and companies). Thus, the negotiations are split in different institutions: FAO, WIPO, UNEP and TRIPS/WTO. In terms of patents, for instance, Brazil, India and Egypt

¹² Roughly, Environment (MMA) and Health (MS) ministries against Science and Technology (MCT) and Development, Industry and Trade (MDIC).

are negotiating together in the WIPO talks, but this is not the case for the other institutions.

It is key to stress that Brazil and others managed to create the Megadiverse Like-Minded Countries Group¹³, corresponding to 70% of the world's living biodiversity and around 45% of the world's population. Brazil is now the President of the Group, and was preceded by India. They are using their biological resources as political stakes in order to try to create a new regime on access to genetic resources since the mid-1990's. But the weak point of Brazil is that the country has neither a national ABS policy nor a catalog of its living biodiversity, as only 200 thousand species are listed, whereas 1.8 million are supposed to exist, according to Brazilian public authorities. As mentioned above, Brazil is favorable to the creation of an international ABS regime, but the difficult talks so far do not allow us to envisage a Protocol by the 2010 Conference of the Parties in Japan. Hence, Brazil is a weak player in this future regime, and not even an "emerging" power yet.

Climate Change and IR Theory

This second part of the article has two main goals. One is to show how Brazil turned from a rather insignificant player to a key player, that is, more than just an emerging power. The other is to stress that we are really in the face of humanity's biggest cooperation challenge and we must find new theoretical tools to work out political, economical and legal solutions for it, assessing the role emerging powers may play. In this sense, the constructivist approach seems to shed more light on the issues emerging countries raise.

In relation to global climate change, the Brazilian perception of the regime has not changed much since 1992. It states that the developed countries of the North have been emitting greenhouse gases since the Industrial Revolution and now humanity is threatened with global climate change. As a consequence, the main emitters are historically responsible for this global environmental problem and they have to accept the burden to solve it, whilst Brazil will be waiting for the North to respect its obligations (legal and moral) and only accept voluntary policies about gas mitigation and national adaptation¹⁴.

If the Brazilian perception about the regime has not changed significantly, the political strategies changed considerably from the beginning of negotiations in the 1990s (Viola, Barros-Platiau and Leis, 2007). During the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio, the issue was known only by a few from a technical elite in these

13 Website: <http://lmmc.nic.in/>. The members are: South Africa, Bolivia, Brazil, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Philippines, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Democratic Republic of Congo and Venezuela. Australia, Papua New Guinea and the United States are also considered megadiverse countries by the UNEP, but they are not part of the political group created in 2002 in Mexico.

14 Adaptation in the sense of preparing the country or at least the most vulnerable areas for climate alterations: drought, heavy rains, floods and so on. It is directly linked to human security.

Southern countries, and it was not really part of their political agenda. Since then, and up to the 1997 Kyoto Protocol early negotiations, some countries started to participate more, Brazil and Argentina¹⁵ for instance. Nowadays, Brazil continues to play an active role, but only in the international level, not in the regional one, as explained by Viola, Barros-Platiau and Leis (2007). Also, the climate global order has changed dramatically in the past years. This means that in the 1990's the biggest emitters were developed countries, and that is why they had the obligation of emissions' cut under the Kyoto Protocol (first compromise period from 2008 to 2012). Nowadays, China is the biggest emitter and Brazil is the sixth¹⁶. As a consequence, emerging countries are already emerging powers in the climate regime, because they are part of the problem and obviously, also part of the solution. One fair illustration of that is the fact that China, India and Brazil together represent 72% of all the Clean Development Mechanisms projects¹⁷.

Concerning Brazil, several reasons lead to the conclusion that it is a key player now. From a political point of view, Brazil is a regime promoter and has been presenting solutions and policies in the international talks. In the 15th Conference of the Parties, in Copenhagen, last December, Brazil announced its National Climate Plan and President Lula stated that Brazil was ready to be part of the solution to the political deadlock in the regime. The country announced voluntary measures of GHG cut, policies to reduce deforestation dramatically and political will to help finance international funds to fight climate change problems. Moreover, Brazil and President Lula took part in all the main talks to try to reach an international agreement in Denmark.

In regard to technology, Brazil has been developing biofuels and dual-fuel engines, but also biotechnological crops and clean energy alternatives. In economic terms, as stated before, Brazil is an emerging power and its domestic market seems to be ready for the transition to a lower carbon economy, because there is still a lot to be built in terms of infrastructure, and Brazil can afford to pay and to adapt the best available technologies.

So, if Brazil is an emerging power, how can it be analyzed through international relations theory? Starting with a critical analysis of Ian Rowlands' work on IR theory and the climate change regime, his main conclusions will be applied to the Brazilian case.

15 The 1998 COP 4 took place in Buenos Aires, and Argentina had a short but prominent role in multilateral negotiations. For more details, see Viola, E. and Leis, H. "Governança Global Pós-Utópica, Meio Ambiente e Mudança Climática". Paper prepared for the conference "De Rio a Johannesburgo – La transición hacia el desarrollo sostenible: la perspectiva de América Latina y Caribe", (PNUMA/INESEMARNAT/ Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, México, 6-8 May 2002, mimeo, 27 p.

16 China is responsible for 23% of the world total (and growing around 5% a year), India and Russia are fourth and fifth respectively. The BRIC countries are all expected to raise their emissions in the near future close to the Chinese rates.

17 The CDM is one of the main mechanisms to promote GHG mitigation and international cooperation between the North and the South. http://www.mct.gov.br/upd_blob/0208/208544.pdf. 13/02/2010.

Rowlands used the four main research agendas in IR theory to test to what extent they could explain the climate regime formation and its outputs. The first one is realism plus neorealism. According to their premises, States are the main actors and it is possible that the powerful ones, the hegemons, change international structures in order to achieve political coordination, benevolently or malevolently. Among the questions that immediately arise, there is one relating to power that is essential. How to define power concerning environmental issues? Rowlands answers that military and economic power may be conceived as important. Military power because it can be used in case of armed conflict over natural resources. And economic power because of the possibility of economic sanctions, for example, in case of non-compliance with international law. In this sense, the United States is a “climate hegemon”, and may be the only one.

The realists and neorealists can therefore explain why the regime was formed as it was, under strong influence from the US (Bodansky, 2001). It was the US that insisted on flexibility mechanisms, market instruments and technology to replace regulated emissions cut obligations, the clean development mechanism¹⁸, and even the list of six greenhouse gases that would be controlled within the regime (instead of only three proposed by the EU). Also, they could explain that the US defection would lead the regime to serious fragility, playing the role of a “veto coalition” as described by Porter and Brown (1996). In fact, it did happen when President Bush disengaged the US from the 1997 Kyoto Protocol.

From this viewpoint, it is easy to understand Viola’s proposal of a commitment of the powerful states to bring a quick solution to the global warming problem, as did the former Canadian Premier, Mr. Martin. We are not living in a world democracy and crucial matters are usually solved by a few powerful countries that impose rules on the others, such as nuclear non-proliferation. That happened as the G8 discussed the issue seriously since the 2005 Gleneagles meeting (Amorim, 2005)¹⁹. In their last meeting, the issue was still on their agenda, and despite the efforts of some like Angela Merkel to build consensus on mandatory policies, the US achieved to postpone obligations from the richest countries in the world, and the Europeans followed it.

Nonetheless, focusing on the hegemon prevents the observer from analyzing the role of groups and informal governance to some extent. Also, these realist approaches do not help to identify emerging powers. Other countries also played important roles at some point, as “lead states”, notably Germany, Denmark, France and the Netherlands. During the negotiations many groups were formed, and serious split happened inside big traditional groups, such as the European Union (Hampson, 1989; Paterson and Grubb, 1992; Young, 1993). The OPEC

18 Starting from the Brazilian proposal of creating an international fund to help developing countries adapt and develop their economies at the same time.

19 In Dodds and Pippard, 2005. Foreword. Brazil, China, India and South Africa took part in the meeting.

countries were united, but not the G77/China, sometimes hijacked by OPEC²⁰. The JUSCANZ was important in COP1 in Berlin and the Umbrella Group of JUSCANZ plus Russia and Norway in COP 4.

So, the regime shows some points the realists cannot or do not focus on. The role played by smaller States, emerging countries and NGOs is one of them. Another one is related to the US having to accept the deal: 7% emissions' cut, no mitigation obligations for developing countries, limited market mechanisms, and little attention to technological solutions. Hence, although the US tried to influence the climate change governance as much as possible, it was not able to do so. Thus, countries that were not economically powerful ended up playing roles, such as the AOSIS²¹ countries and Brazil²² or Argentina²³.

However, we can firstly argue that climate change is not only an environmental issue²⁴. In fact, it never really was. Climate change is also an economic, social and mainly security issue. Buzan *et al.* (1998) explain that there are traditionalists and modernists, and the former are enlarging the concept of security. Among modernists there are influential actors, starting with former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Bill Clinton and others. Annan worked hard to explain to the international community that security matters were no longer only from military origin, and they were intertwined with other matters such as transnational crimes, money laundering, poverty, environmental degradation and so on²⁵. There lies another limit of realism and neorealism, that is, the incapacity of analyzing emerging countries' roles in multilateral negotiations, especially if they are not military powers or big threats to the global order. The second one would be taking climate change as a first order threat (Lacy, 2005)²⁶.

The second theory is historical materialism, although many different schools are put together here. Under their analysis, the North is the rich part of the world that dominates and exploits the poor Southern part, and the "dependency theory" is a good example of that. In other terms, in a capitalist world economy, the analysis of powerful actors better explain the patterns of international cooperation, which will favor the North in the first place. Rowlands states that among the top

20 Discussion group in IIASA, Austria, 22 June 2003. With the participation of Farhana Yamin, Adil Najam, Bradnee Chambers, Jessica Green, Ana Barros-Plataiu, Danah Fisher, Veit Koster and others.

21 Alliance of Small Islands.

22 Brazil could play a much more important role because it has one of the lowest costs for CO2 mitigation at the moment (Viola, 2007).

23 Argentina played a short but important role when it hosted the Conference of the Parties (COP4). It declared that it was prepared to cut emissions, expecting to convince neighbors and developing countries in Asia and Africa to follow the way. What happened was that Brazil criticized profoundly the Argentinean initiative and the issue was avoided in subsequent meetings.

24 Buzan *et al.* takes environmental security issues as if they were only environmental.

25 His two reports on that matter are: "In Larger Freedom" and "A More Secure World".

26 Mark Lacy uses John Mearsheimer's work to criticize realism and determine its limits related to global warming.

five world companies there were two carmakers (General Motors and Ford) and two oil groups (Royal Dutch/Shell Group and Exxon) at the period of the 1997 Kyoto Protocol negotiations. This may explain the creation of the Global Climate Coalition, aiming at denouncing the economic costs and the scientific uncertainties in order to block the legal commitments (Bodansky, 2001).

This priority to economic interests could also explain why there is such a huge dissonance between political discourse and action, that is, why it is so difficult to comply with international obligations in the national level. Also, it may help understand why the regime focused more on the South future profile than in the North present consumption patterns. Those are the main contributions of the historical materialism approach.

According to Rowlands, there are also unambiguous limits to the historical materialism approach. Firstly, there are the prospects of new economic opportunities that it does not consider. Royal Dutch/Shell welcomed the Kyoto Protocol and then they left the Global Climate Coalition, along with BP/Amoco and Ford. Also, the groups and coalitions formed cut across the North/South divide, as it was explained above. Thirdly, emerging countries are not developed countries, but they are getting very far from the underdeveloped ones, so they need a new analytical category of their own. Finally, industrial interests are perhaps not well mobilized or their interests are not considered properly in IR theories yet.

To complement these conclusions, it can be added that companies may be constrained by the market and consumer choices. Sometimes they have to make concessions in the short-term in order not to loose clients in the long-term. This may be one reason why the French carmakers did not sue California against the clean car act with Americans, Japanese and also Volkswagen industries²⁷. Probably, they wanted to keep their image as the carmakers concerned with global climate change, considering that public opinion would not appreciate the lobbying of carmakers.

The third grand theory set is the neoliberal institutionalism and it includes authors from Grotius and Kant to the functionalists and neo-functionalists. It also comprises different theories such as regimes, interdependence, and authors like Ernest Haas, Keohane, Nye, Young, Byers and Krasner. Rowlands uses Young's "contractarian" and "constitutive" definitions (1997a, 276) to guide his reasoning. Contractarians believe actors have different identities and interests, so they are motivated to cooperate in the international level since they may gain from it, similar to Paterson's cooperation under anarchy theory. States are seen as utility maximizers and cooperation is better developed if there are mutual interests, the shadow of the future is long and the number of players is low (Rowlands, 1995b, 21-22). He affirms that climate change does not lead to the tragedy of the commons

²⁷ They formed the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers with other carmakers. See *Central Valley Chrysler-Jeep, Inc. v. Witherspoon* in the US.

(Hardin, 1968) because the impacts, benefits and costs vary in the global scale. Thus, different vulnerabilities to action and inaction lead to different perceptions and strategies. For instance, while the 37 AOSIS countries are struggling for their survival, Russia may benefit from warmer and shorter winters, in the case of global warming.

However, this point does not correspond well to the Brazilian case. First of all, the country does not have a precise perception of its situation yet. Even after the last IPCC report in 2007, Brazilians still believe they are victims of an unfair regime. Using Hurrell's and Woods' (1999) terms, they say they were "rule-takers" and they are struggling to become "rule-makers" now. One proof of that would be the April 17, 2007 debate on climate change in the UN Security Council discussed below and the G8 summits, especially Gleneagles (2005) and Heiligedam (2007). In this sense, Brazilians are unconscious that they are extremely vulnerable to global warming (IPCC, 2007; Viola, Barros-Platiau and Leis, 2007). The Amazon region will be much drier, with savanna-like vegetation; the Northeast part of the continent will also be hotter and more arid; desertification will worsen, and so cropping lands nearby will be lost. Considering Brazil's agricultural potentials, the losses in social and economic terms may be enormous. Since the country is not prepared for adaptation urgency measures, natural catastrophes entail serious impacts on the poorest populations.

In sum, Brazil does not perceive itself as a potential victim of future global warming consequences, but only as a victim of the regime under construction. Its strategy was very far from AOSIS countries because it did not see the environmental and social risks it will face, insisting on its first assumption that the country is not historically responsible for GHG emissions as it is a young and less industrialized nation that has the right to development, since millions of Brazilians still live under the poverty line. So, contrary to Rowlands' idea, it is not the right or scientifically-based perception that shapes the strategy of emerging countries. In fact, perceptions may be wrong and prevent cooperation to be developed. In the Brazilian case, it is the rational choice of getting the most from the regime and of assuring its right to development, with the support of other emerging countries. In fact, that is the main reason that keeps the BIC together. Nevertheless, the BIC is just an ephemeral gathering that meet often because they coordinate most of the G77/China 50 or so specific groups, but they do not have a precise strategy concerning climate talks yet, and maybe they will never do. Thus, Brazilian authorities do not even consider it a formal group.

When Rowlands mentions the shadow of the future, he means that the longer an issue stays on the international agenda, the more countries will be apt to cooperate. This can also be discussed, because some issues may just be forgotten with time, or countries may feel discouraged to work for something when they feel they were already very unsuccessful. If it is true that some time is needed so that actors understand environmental matters and get more used to them, it can

also be argued that issues lasting too long may loose attention in the benefit of other freshly new issues on the agenda.

This was the case with global climate change. Firstly, it took advantage of the ozone regime to get established, under the leadership of the US and then the European Union. But then it was left aside as the Balkans, Afghanistan and Iraq wars were treated. Hence, issues come and go to the negotiating table rather than just staying there for a longtime, and there are at least two different and somewhat autonomous tracks for negotiators (political and technical) and two different pathways to be taken (formal and informal). Thus, what does longtime mean? Does it really lead to more prepared diplomatic delegations? It does not seem to be the case in climate change negotiations, as emerging countries still not have modeling and scenarios to better understand what climate change will bring to them. That is the reason why they are negotiating on principles and non-obligations, and to a lesser extent, it contributes to explaining why they were not able to form a consolidated negotiation group.

To finish with contractarians, they seem to be “cautiously optimistic” with the regime when stating that interests have played an important role, according to Rowlands. It is useful to explain the negotiations leading to the Kyoto Protocol and the different targets negotiated. But it may be underlined that countries were more worried about their economic and technological interests in the short term than their social, environmental and security ones. This approach could also be used to explain why international cooperation results were so disappointing, since negotiating with almost two hundred countries could be no different from a minimum consensus pattern.

Indeed, this approach may be very helpful to explain why Brazil took years to start cooperating seriously. If interests play a key role, and if countries believe their interest is to negotiate as a group, all their initiatives for new institutional arrangements can be understood. But this approach is no longer useful to explain why Brazil talked so much and did so little, especially concerning economic integration and climate change.

Coming back to Rowlands’ analysis, from the constitutive perspective, the main idea is that institutions shape identities and interests, and the best example is the European Union, said to have “formative effects” (Laïdi, 2008). Levy, Keohane and Haas (1993) wrote that international institutions can increase government action and agenda setting; enhance a contractual environment and increase national capacities. Consequently, they provide bargaining forums, reduce transactional costs, create an iterated decision-making process, help monitoring, increase national environmental performances as well as national policies and increase national and international accountability.

However, this does not seem to be the case for climate change, especially because of the fact that international institutions are fragile, notably the UN,

WMO and UNEP²⁸. The second one is considered to be too technical and the third one is politically irrelevant now. Thus, they created the IPCC, which was strongly dominated by governments of the Northern countries (Schleicher, 2006).

As it may already be clear, the role of multilateral institutions is very limited in this regime. Therefore, the constructivists do not help much because institutions are often weakened by the concerns related to national interests of all powerful countries, unexceptionally. The same may be stated for emerging countries now. The works of Abbot and Snidal (2000) are very helpful to develop this idea, especially the part on delegation and precision of multilateral norms. They assert that multilateral organizations are stronger if norms are precise and a high level of delegation is accepted, otherwise, there is no way an institution can work independently. Since precision and delegation are low, can we expect the emerging countries to change this picture? The answer tends to be negative.

The last school is based on cognitive approaches. Rowlands states that they focus on how actors perceive, process, interpret and adapt to new information. So, they observe those actors that produce or control knowledge and how they act in the decision-making process. Their contribution is valuable since climate change issues are so complex and full of uncertainties. It is true that “scientists raised the profile” of climate change several times already since the 1970s, and that is clear each time after the IPCC publishes one of its reports. But do they really have a voice in this regime? Do emerging countries trust the knowledge produced in the North?

Anyway, there are many challenges to this approach. Two of them are their blurred boundaries with historical materialists (Cox, 1977) and that the concept of power links them to realists and neorealists (Patterson, 1996a). As a result, Rowlands concludes that many authors use different research agendas at the same time, so it is difficult to come to conclusions.

Nevertheless, the role of knowledge and information can also be overestimated in IR theory. In emerging countries in general, and Brazil in particular, all the recent information on global climate change has not influenced political actors significantly and even less short-term decisions. This is probably due to the fact that political principles are so consolidated and the diplomatic body is so closed that new information is accessible, but not always used immediately. As Brazil decided to stick to the principle that its development comes first, it will be hard for the country to make international concessions under the Kyoto Protocol new commitments period, starting in 2012. Thus, information on climate change is very complex, so opinion-makers need sometime to understand them and translate them to the public.

28 The climate change issues were taken from UNEP and WMO to New York, so these two institutions were weakened.

Another point, complementing the theoretical discussion above, is that environmental politics is not ruled by hegemonic fixed structures or balance-of-power structures. Different actors have been playing unexpected important roles, from the private sector, like the supermarkets that banned GM food; from carmakers producing more efficient cars; from politicians, scientists, singers, movie stars, religious leaders, indigenous leaders, NGOs and so on.

In this sense, Rowlands summarizes the North-South divide in two debates about threats and vulnerabilities that are rather interesting. The first one is described as the “economic-liberal” with the myth of “techno-fix”. That is how some developed countries see environmental issues, but not all of them agree to that. Nordic countries and Germany, for example, are less convinced that technology is the best alternative to bring effective solutions to climate change, since rich countries and rich families from emerging countries cannot carry on their patterns of consumption and production eternally. In the same way, Robert Jackson and Georg Sorenson mention modernists (who believe in technology solutions) and “ecoradicals” (calling for dramatic changes in lifestyle and population control) according to Lacy (2005). The other is the periphery in opposition the center, very close to the materialism discussed above. This is definitely the discourse of some countries or some important diplomats, as the ECLA used to publish in South America. But again, it does not include all the countries from the South, since it no longer fits the emerging countries profiles, especially Brazil. In sum, the borders of the two approaches seem to be more and more blurred, and the UN system, as the main environmental governance system, contributes to that in a large extent.

Final Remarks

It may be concluded that Brazil is undoubtedly an emerging country in economic terms, but in environmental terms it was considered an emerging power even before President Lula was elected. This is due to three main reasons. The first one is the Brazilian political will to participate in global environmental governance since the end of the 1980's and beginning of the 1990's, and to the fact that this was not only President Collor's decision at that time, but also Presidents Cardoso and Lula. It was totally supported by all successive ministers of Foreign Affairs. In sum, there was a clear institutional continuity that enabled Brazil to actively participate in the global environmental governance for more than two decades now. The second and the third ones are more related to the global order after the 1990's. On the one hand, we are living in an era of multipolarity with no effective multilateralism, since the US and the EU are not able to assure the leadership of all matters in the agenda. Consequently, Brazil has more space to participate as an emerging country in issues like sustainable development and global climate change. On the other hand, emerging countries are trying to dialogue, although

informally, in order to establish common negotiating positions, as far as possible, in the BRIC, BIC, IBSA and so on. Hence, they are becoming more powerful in the G77/China, G20 and the UN pathways. As a consequence, the North-South divide is more and more blurred.

Another important remark is that Brazil is not an emerging power in all the environmental regimes analyzed, despite the statements above. In some regimes, it still has to prepare a strategy of participation, such as water regimes, law of the sea, and biosafety. Therefore, Brazil has the environmental and agricultural resources to be a relevant actor, but this is not yet the case. In the forest talks, on the contrary, Brazil has long been a key player, but its participation was rather in the sense of avoiding the creation of an international regime exclusively for rainforests and contrary to its national interests. Nowadays, as the forest talks are also included in the climate change regime, Brazil may be considered as a key player and a “model exporter”, since its proposals are based on ambitious and rather successful national experiences, such as the Fundo Amazônia. In the giant biodiversity regime, Brazil has been an emerging power since the 1980’s preparation for the 1992 Earth Summit, but it has not been strong enough to promote further progress on the other regimes directly related to it, notably the ABS regime. In the latter, despite all their political efforts and their biological resources, Brazil is not a powerful actor, nor is India.

A third remark is related to the climate change regime, in which Brazil can be considered more than just an emerging power. It is certainly a key player and a “model exporter”, considering energy, forest, biotechnology and agricultural recent policies, especially during President Lula’s rule. Also, Brazil has a dynamic market that allows the country to have voice in the talks about viable solutions to climate change mitigation and adaptation challenges, especially as it comes to financing and technology transfers. The only thing is that Brazil still needs to update its perception as a key player in this regime and accept more responsibilities in the context of the developed countries’ failure to honor their international obligations. In other words, the country seems to start to understand that only demanding and confronting the developed countries will not get the solutions implemented.

A final remark concerns international relations theory. It can be noticed that all of the approaches show serious limits as the question of assessing emerging powers is put. For realists and neorealists, emerging powers are becoming rich countries, but not necessarily powerful yet, and they are extremely dependent on traditional powerful countries, that is, the US and the EU. The same may be argued for historical materialism approaches, since emerging powers have a transitory status and so they blurry most of the analytical categories for research. They do not belong to the North, but they are getting far away from the South too. For the liberal schools, explaining cooperation in environmental governance was always a challenge, and emerging powers make their work even more complicated. Finally,

the constructivists' approaches seem to be more adapted to the emerging powers research agenda, because their perceptions and access to knowledge may be the key to assess their role in global environmental governance.

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Abstract

Due to its recent economic success, Brazil is considered an emerging country, but is it an emerging power concerning global environmental governance? This article argues that although Brazil has a *sui generis* profile, it can only be considered an emerging power in some environmental regimes, such as global climate change. Thus, international relations theory needs more analytical instruments to assess the impact of emerging powers in global environmental governance.

Resumo

Por causa de seu recente sucesso econômico, o Brasil é considerado um país emergente. Isso vale também para a governança ambiental? Este artigo argumenta que, apesar de o Brasil ter um perfil *sui generis*, o País pode ser considerado uma potência emergente em alguns regimes ambientais, como o de mudanças climáticas. Portanto, as teorias de relações internacionais precisam de mais instrumentos analíticos para lidar com o impacto de potências emergentes na governança ambiental global.

Key-words: Brazil; emerging power; environmental governance.

Palavras-chave: Brasil; potências emergentes; governança ambiental.