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Defending The Amazon

Coalition Strategies Against Environmental Dismantling under

Bolsonaro's mandate

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M.Sc. International Environmental Studies

DEFENDING THE AMAZON

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by

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Declaration

I, Samanta Gomez-Solbrække, declare that this thesis is a result of my research investigations and findings. Sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been appended. This work has not been previously submitted to any other university for award of any type of academic degree.

Signature

Date

Acknowledgements

To my daughters, Lilia and Elena, your smiles and laughter brought light into my busiest days. Your love and smiles have been a source of joy and motivation for me.

Abstract

Recognized for its crucial role in global climate regulation, biodiversity, and the livelihoods of numerous communities, the Amazon rainforest faces unprecedented threats from deforestation driven by human activities such as logging, mining, and agriculture. This thesis examines the strategic responses of the Pro-Amazon Coalition to counteract the dismantling of environmental protections under President Jair Bolsonaro's administration, contrasting with the earlier efforts under President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva to balance economic growth and environmental conservation.

Addressing the question, 'What strategies did the Pro-Amazon Coalition employ to resist the dismantling of environmental protections in the Brazilian Amazon under Bolsonaro's presidency?', this study applies the Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF). The ACF is particularly suited for analyzing environmental policy issues in the Amazon due to its emphasis on diverse actors and external dynamics. The Pro-Amazon Coalition, comprising indigenous and traditional communities, activists, NGOs, and academics constitute the voice of environmental resistance during a period marked by increased environmental deregulation and high conflict levels.

The findings show that under Bolsonaro's mandate, the Pro-Amazon coalition experienced a complete breakdown in communication with the federal government. This loss of dialogue was unprecedented in the new republic period and represented a clear detachment from environmental concerns. In previous administrations, some level of engagement and negotiation was possible, even amid disagreements. The reasons behind this total lack of cross-coalition coordination and engagement are multifaceted, but largely stem from opposing policy core beliefs. This extreme polarization impeded mediation by policy brokers. To resist this dismantlement, the Pro-Amazon Coalition invested in three main strategic approaches categorized as information, political, and engagement strategies. This thesis also indicates that the levels of intra-coalition coordination vary depending on the actors' groups, e.g., research institutes tend to be less engaged in concerted actions with other groups within the coalition.

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1. Introduction

Rainforests hold enormous social, environmental, and economic importance worldwide. They play a key role in regulating the Earth's climate, providing habitats for wildlife, and supporting the livelihoods of countless communities (Young, 2021). They are also valuable sources of economic benefits such as timber and non-timber forest products, ecotourism, and a variety of ecosystem services. Nonetheless, tropical rainforests are under threat (Young, 2021). Deforestation caused by anthropogenic activities such as logging, mining, and agriculture is the primary threat to these ecosystems across the globe. According to studies, an area of rainforest the size of a football field is lost every second, mostly in South America and Southeast Asia (Carrington et al., n.d.).

Located in South America, the Brazilian Amazon is the most extensive tropical rainforest in the world (Corlett & Primack, 2011). Its colossal size makes it a crucial player in maintaining the Earth's climate balance, as it stores significant amounts of carbon dioxide. The Amazon Rainforest is believed to absorb approximately 5% of the world's yearly carbon dioxide emissions, and houses 12% of the world's water resources (Economist, 2022; Levis et al., 2020). With its capacity to absorb and release water into the atmosphere through transpiration, the biome plays a significant role in regulating global water cycles (Corlett & Primack, 2011). Furthermore, the Brazilian Amazon accommodates over 300 ethnic groups and many non-indigenous communities, who inhabit and share the extensive and disputed territory (Levis et al., 2020). However, the region is not immune to human advances, and like other rainforests around the globe it is under great pressure, and approaching its tipping point (Corlett & Primack, 2011).

Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, or more commonly known as Lula, served as the President of Brazil for two terms, from 2003 to 2010. During his tenure, Lula implemented several environmental policies that aimed to balance economic growth with environmental protection. Lula's environmental policies were instrumental in preserving the Amazon rainforest, reducing carbon emissions, and promoting sustainable development in Brazil (de Castro, 2014). During his first term, Lula introduced the renowned Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Deforestation in the Legal Amazon (West & Fearnside, 2021). This plan aimed to reduce deforestation by promoting sustainable land use, establishing protected areas, and improving law enforcement. Lula's administration also increased funding for environmental law enforcement agencies, including the Brazilian Institute of Environment and Renewable Natural Resources (IBAMA). As a result of these policies, deforestation rates in the Amazon declined by 80% between 2004 and 2012 (West & Fearnside, 2021).

According to (Levis et al., 2020) Levis et al. (2020), Brazil's environmental governance experienced drastic transformations after Jair Bolsonaro assumed the presidency in 2019. Bolsonaro drew heavy criticism as he

pushed for policies that prioritized economic development at the cost of dismantling environmental protections (Peres et al., 2023). Bolsonaro reduced protected areas in the Amazon, loosened restrictions on industries such as Amazon (d logging, and weakened several environmental laws and regulations, leading to a sharp surge in deforestation in Brazil, as well as a rise in violence against indigenous communities in the Amazon (Peres et al., 2023) (Peres et al., 2023).

In January 2023, Lula was elected president of Brazil for the third time, with a promise to resume efforts to stop deforestation in the Amazonian region and amplify the voices of forest communities (Peres et al., 2023). However, the social, political, and economic landscape has undergone profound changes since he left the government in 2010. Furthermore, the current state of extreme polarization in Brazilian society and politics presents an additional challenge to the president's stated ambitions of combating illegal deforestation in the Amazon biome (Peres et al., 2023). This thesis seeks to not only delineate the tactical repertoire of the pro-Amazon advocacy coalition but also to contribute to the broader understanding of advocacy coalitions' roles in shaping policy outcomes. It stands as an exploration of strategic resistance in policy processes, demonstrating how coalitions persist in the face of political adversity.

Research Question:

What were the Pro-Amazon Coalition's strategies to resist the dismantling of environmental protections in the Brazilian Amazon under Bolsonaro's mandate?

2. Background Knowledge

This section provides a foundation for understanding the environmental, political, and social dynamics of the Brazilian Amazon region, which is crucial for depicting the advocacy strategies utilized by the Pro-Amazon Coalition during Bolsonaro's mandate (2019-2022).

2.1. The Brazilian Amazon Rainforest

2.1.1. Geography and biography

The Amazon Basin, dominated by the famous Amazon River, is the largest river basin in the world. The river itself runs for over 3,000 kilometers, with its origins in the Andean highlands and its mouth opening into the Atlantic Ocean (Corlett & Primack, 2011). The Amazon rainforest is characterized by a broad flat basin, a low-lying area that experiences seasonal flooding. These floods contribute to the rich alluvial soil deposits, which, despite the overall poor soil fertility of rainforests, support the dense forests (Corlett & Primack, 2011)

The topography of the Brazilian Amazon is surprisingly diverse, consisting not only of the stereotypical flat, impenetrable jungle but also of rolling hills, high plateaus, and even mountainous regions in some parts of the Amazon's periphery (Science Panel for the Amazon, 2021). The region's climate is equatorial, with high temperatures and significant rainfall throughout the year. This climate contributes to the formation of the world's largest tropical rainforest, a title that the Amazon holds proudly (Corlett & Primack, 2011; Young, 2021)

The Amazon's biodiversity is unparalleled. It is estimated to be home to 10% of the world's known species. The forest canopy teems with life, harboring countless species of insects, birds, and mammals. Some of the iconic species include the jaguar, the pink river dolphin, the howler monkey, and the toucan. It's a place where every glance in the dense foliage may reveal a species yet to be documented by science (Science Panel for the Amazon, 2021).

Beyond fauna, the flora of the Amazon is equally impressive. It is estimated that there are over 50,000 plant species, with new ones still being discovered. The forest is known for its large hardwood trees, such as the mahogany and rubber tree, but it also hosts a plethora of medicinal plants, which have been used by indigenous peoples for thousands of years and are still being researched for their pharmaceutical potential. The number of tree species found in merely 10,000 square meters in the Amazon are higher than the variety of tree species found in all Europe (Science Panel for the Amazon, 2021).

Figure 1 The Amazonian biodiversity in numbers



Source: (Science Panel for the Amazon, 2021)

The interdependence between species in the Amazon is a great illustration of symbiotic relationships, which are numerous and intricate. For example, many plant species rely on specific insects or birds for pollination. The agouti, a small rodent, is one of the few creatures capable of opening the tough exterior of Brazil nut pods, playing a key role in the dispersal of these important seeds (Tuck Haugaasen et al., 2012). Deforestation poses a great risk to the survival of these species not only due to habitat destruction, but because the forests lose connectivity, making it much more difficult for animals to move (Science Panel for the Amazon, 2021; Tuck Haugaasen et al., 2012)

2.1.2. Population

The Brazilian Amazon is home to a diverse and complex set of population that has been shaped by a range of historical, economic, social, and political factors. According to the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE), the Brazilian Amazon is home to around 28 million people, a figure that underscores the region's significant urbanization trend (IBGE, 2020). This demographic encompasses a mix of indigenous peoples, traditional communities, rural settlers, and urban inhabitants (Santos et al., 2021; Science Panel for the Amazon, 2021)

The Fundação Nacional do Índio (FUNAI) recognizes over 300 indigenous ethnic groups in the Amazon, with a population that surpasses 900,000 individuals (Santos et al., 2021). These groups, such as the Tikuna, Yanomami, and Kayapo, exhibit a broad spectrum of cultures and languages (ISA, 2021). They predominantly engage in subsistence activities, including hunting, fishing, and small-scale agriculture, which are intimately aligned with their cosmologies and cultural practices (ISPN, n.d.; Santos et al., 2021; Science Panel for the Amazon, 2021)

Traditional communities, comprising riverine, extractivist, and quilombola groups, account for a significant portion of the Amazon's demographic. They practice a variety of subsistence activities, including fishing, small-scale farming, and non-timber forest product (NTFP) (ISPN, n.d.). However, these communities, much like the indigenous ones, also face challenges including land rights insecurity and the encroachment of large-scale agricultural interests (Toohey, 2012)

Rural settlers represent a diverse demographic that includes migrants from Brazil's Northeastern and Southern regions. These settlers were initially encouraged to move to the Amazon during government-sponsored colonization initiatives (Mahar, 1989). The current population of rural settlers engages in various activities, from traditional shifting cultivation to more modern agricultural practices such as cattle ranching and soy farming. The transformation of their livelihoods is often documented as a response to both market pressures and environmental policies (ISPN, n.d.; Santos et al., 2021; Science Panel for the Amazon, 2021).

Urbanization in the Amazon has accelerated, with cities like Manaus and Belém experiencing rapid growth. These urban centers have become hotspots for industrial development, trade, and services. The urban demographic is characterized by a mix of long-term residents and recent migrants seeking economic opportunities. 60% of the population living in the Amazon, falls under the category of ‘urban inhabitants’, which brings challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, housing, and services, as well as environmental degradation (ISPN, n.d.; Santos et al., 2021; Science Panel for the Amazon, 2021).

2.2. Deforestation

2.2.1. The Surge of Deforestation

The unprecedented surge of deforestation within the Brazilian Amazon presents itself as a complex and multifaceted issue with historical underpinnings deeply rooted in the era of Portuguese colonization. Yet, it was the military dictatorship, commencing in the 1960s, that marked the exacerbation of this ecological crisis (Mahar, 1989). According to estimations reported by Fundo Amazônia (2013), by the year 1988, anthropogenic activities had culminated in a staggering diminution of the Amazonian forest cover by approximately 600,000 square kilometers (Fundo Amazonia, 2013). Mahar's (1989) work elucidates that this deforestation predominantly transpired during the 1980s, constituting over 80% of the forest's clearance and coinciding with the militaristic government's developmental policies from 1964 to 1985. The era was characterized by governmental incentives that not only promoted but also rationalized the predatory exploitation and colonization of the Amazonian basin, ostensibly to fulfill the burgeoning aspirations of national development. This period was marred by profound ecological degradation and the concomitant perpetration of violence against indigenous populations and traditional communities (Fundo Amazonia, 2013; Urzedo & Chatterjee, 2021).

The autocratic regime of Brazil fostered a narrative imbued with nationalistic zeal, contending that such forest exploitation was necessary to guard against the potential 'internationalization' of the forest. The strategies employed by the dictatorship were twofold: firstly, it incentivized agrarian families with land offerings to induce settlement and subsequent colonization within the Amazon; secondly, it significantly invested in infrastructure, such as the notorious Transamazônica highway, thereby fortifying the physical integration of the Amazon into the national territory (Urzedo & Chatterjee, 2021).

Such governmental policies precipitated not only a demographic influx into the Amazonian territories but also an exponential increase in deforestation rates (Urzedo & Chatterjee, 2021). This burgeoning crisis galvanized environmental organizations and advocacy groups in the 1980s, who emerged as pivotal actors in environmental discourse, vehemently advocating for the Amazon's conservation (ISPN, n.d.; Toohey, 2012). The existential importance of the Amazon rainforest's biodiversity and its global ecological

significance became central to their campaigns, engendering a broader public consciousness about the criticality of preserving this unique ecosystem (ISPN, n.d.).

The ramifications of such extensive environmental degradation reverberated well beyond Brazil's borders, capturing the attention of the international community. The assassination of Chico Mendes in 1988, a rubber tapper by profession and a venerated environmental activist, signified a watershed moment. Mendes' commitment to the protection of the Amazon and its indigenous people, culminating in his martyrdom, served to accentuate the exigency of reformulating Brazil's environmental conservation policies. His death prompted the escalating conflict between local interests and global environmental concerns, further intensifying external pressures on the Brazilian government to amend its approach towards the Amazon (ISPN, n.d.).

2.2.2. The Drivers of Deforestation

Deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon is an issue of grave concern worldwide, influenced by economic, societal, and governance challenges. The agricultural sector, expanding rapidly with activities like soybean cultivation and cattle ranching, stands as the main driver of deforestation (Beuchle et al., 2021). Additionally, there are several other factors such as commercial logging, infrastructure development, land grabbing, and demographic shifts which weigh heavily in this complex crisis.

Central to the deforestation discourse is the agricultural expansion, motivated by the ever-growing global demand for commodities such as soybeans and beef (Beuchle et al., 2021; Carrington et al., n.d.; Santos et al., 2021). This demand incentivizes the clearing of extensive areas of the Amazon, enabling the proliferation of soybean fields and the establishment of vast pastures for cattle grazing. Such activities have not only positioned Brazil as a leading soybean exporter but have also centred the country in the deforestation dialogue. At the same time, the establishment and expansion of roads and highways, designed to stitch together remote areas with major economic centers, have acted as catalysts for intensified agricultural activities into the forest (Beuchle et al., 2021).

The extraction of timber also significantly drains the Amazon of its natural resources. The exploration of the forest for valuable hardwoods results in the felling of trees, which, coupled with the development of infrastructure, facilitates the opening of untouched territories to deforestation. Although infrastructure such as roads, dams, and hydroelectric plants is fundamentally intended to foster regional economic growth and social inclusion, they halt the ecosystems' connectivity, creating isles of forest, and thus, enabling deeper human encroachment into forest interiors while making it harder for animals to move around the forest (Beuchle et al., 2021; Science Panel for the Amazon, 2021)

Furthermore, the practice of land grabbing in the Amazon, a process exacerbated by fragile land tenure systems, rampant corruption, and lax enforcement of environmental legislation, has been alarmingly prevalent. Land grabbing occurs through illicit occupation of public lands, sale of counterfeit land deeds, and the coercion of indigenous communities (Brito, 2021). As a consequence, this usurpation leads to the displacement of native peoples, the degradation of ecosystems, and a cascade of illegal activities like unregulated mining and logging. Agribusiness expansion, notably for soy and cattle production, is intricately linked with land grabbing, often resorting to illicit deforestation to clear large areas of land for agriculture (Brito, 2021).

Lastly, the demographic trend in the Amazon inserts further pressure on the forest, leading to more deforestation. The influx of settlers, driven by the prospect of owning lands for agriculture and infrastructure development, aggravates the strain on land resources. As the population increases, the demand for housing, farmland, and basic resources also grows, boosting the conversion of forests into urban and agricultural landscapes (Santos et al., 2021).

2.3. Governance

2.3.1. Amazon Biome x Legal Amazon

The Brazilian Amazon is often discussed in terms of two distinct but overlapping concepts: the 'Amazon Biome' and the 'Legal Amazon.' Understanding these terms is crucial for comprehending the region's environmental governance and policy framework.

The Amazon Biome is an ecological entity characterized by its rich biodiversity and complex ecosystems, predominantly consisting of tropical rainforests. In contrast, the Legal Amazon is a legal-administrative construct, significantly larger than the biome itself, encompassing diverse landscapes including urban areas, agricultural lands, and territories of ecological recovery (Beuchle et al., 2021; Science Panel for the Amazon, 2021).

The concept of the Legal Amazon was first introduced in 1953 under Law no. 1,806, which established the Superintendence of the Economic Valorization Plan of the Amazon (SPVEA). This geopolitical construct aimed to apply economic and territorial policies to the Northern Territory of Brazil, ensuring national sovereignty over this vast region. The initial definition included the states of Pará and Amazonas, the federal territories of Acre, Amapá, Guaporé, and Rio Branco, and parts of Mato Grosso, Goiás, and Maranhão (Beuchle et al., 2021; Science Panel for the Amazon, 2021).

In the 1960s, the SPVEA was replaced by the Superintendence for Development of the Amazon (SUDAM), maintaining the established boundaries. Subsequent legislative changes, such as the creation of the state of

Mato Grosso do Sul in 1977 and the enactment of the Federal Constitution in 1988, further refined the limits of the Legal Amazon. Notably, the boundaries were revised in 2001 with the establishment of the Amazon Development Agency (ADA), replacing the SUDAM, and again in 2007 through Complementary Law no. 124 (Beuchle et al., 2021; Science Panel for the Amazon, 2021).

2.3.2. Political Administrative Structure in Brazil

The Federative Republic of Brazil has a democratic regime and a presidential system of government organized into three spheres: federal, state, and municipal. The first is represented by the Union, a term that refers to the federal government, which is constituted by the executive, legislative, and judiciary powers. In addition to the federal government, Brazil has a system of state and municipal governments. The country is divided into 26 states, and one federal district, and each with its own governor and legislative assembly. Finally, there are a total of 5568 municipalities, the smallest unit of government, which are overseen by a mayor and a city council (Enrique, 2021)

The executive branch of government is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the country. At the head of the executive branch is the President, who is both the head of state and the head of government. The President is elected through direct popular vote for a four-year term, with the possibility of one reelection. The President appoints a cabinet, which is made up of ministers responsible for various areas of government, such as environment, indigenous peoples' matters, agriculture, and energy (Enrique, 2021; Toohey, 2012).

The legislative branch of government is responsible for creating laws and overseeing the work of the executive branch. The National Congress is the legislative body in Brazil and is divided into two houses: the Chamber of Deputies and the Federal Senate. The Chamber of Deputies is composed of 513 members, who are elected through a proportional representation system. The Federal Senate is composed of 81 members, with each state electing three senators. Senators are elected for eight-year terms, with the possibility of reelection (Enrique, 2021).

The judiciary branch of government is responsible for interpreting the laws and resolving legal disputes. The highest court in Brazil is the Supreme Federal Court, which is composed of 11 justices appointed by the President and approved by the Senate. This highest court safeguards the constitution, taking up matters of federal law. Additional courts, including the Superior Court of Justice and regional courts, are meant to ensure justice is accessible and equitable at both federal and state levels (Enrique, 2021).

Brazil has a multi-party system, with numerous political parties competing for positions at the national and local levels. The two main political parties in Brazil have historically been the Workers' Party (PT) and the

Brazilian Social Democracy Party (PSDB). Between 2019 and 2023, however, Jair Bolsonaro's party, the Liberal Party (PL), gained traction, and has the majority of the seats in the National congress at present (2023) (Tarouco, 2023)

At the federal level, the Brazilian government is responsible for managing the Amazon's natural resources and protecting its biodiversity and ecosystems. This includes overseeing environmental policies, regulating mining and forestry activities, and promoting sustainable development in the region. The states are responsible for managing their own natural resources and overseeing economic development in the region. This includes regulating land use, promoting agricultural and industrial activities, and protecting the rights of local communities and indigenous peoples (Enrique, 2021; Toohey, 2012).

Local governments, such as municipalities and districts, are responsible for providing basic services and infrastructure to their communities, including education, healthcare, and public transportation. They also have a role in regulating land use and promoting sustainable development in the region (Enrique, 2021).

2.3.3. The Development of Environmental Policies in The Legal Brazilian Amazon

The intensification of deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon was a result of a series of large-scale development projects in the region, launched by the military regime (1964-85) (Mahar, 1989). It was only in the aftermath of this period that the environmental consequences of these development projects became apparent, leading to substantial concern both within Brazil and on a global scale (United Nations, 2012). Consequently, this sub-section will delve into the current underlying causes of deforestation and map the most important federal-level environmental policies aimed at preserving the Amazon Rainforest and its inhabitants that were implemented in Brazil following the conclusion of the aforementioned dictatorship.

The end of the military autocracy in Brazil in 1985 marked a new chapter in the country's role in environmental affairs. Under the dictatorship, the Brazilian government had prioritized economic growth over environmental concerns, leading to widespread deforestation, violence against forest peoples, pollution, and other environmental problems (Moura, 2016). However, with the transition to democracy, there was a growing recognition of the need to address these issues and promote more sustainable forms of development (United Nations, 2012)

By the end of the 1980s, the destruction of the Amazon rainforest and the violence against the indigenous and other traditional communities living in the region had drawn international attention (Urzedo & Chatterjee, 2021). The Brazilian government acknowledged that preserving the Amazon was not only a matter of ecological concern but also of social and economic importance for the country (Acker, 2021).

One of the earliest and most important environmental policies enacted during this period was the creation of the National Institute of Amazonian Research (INPA) in 1985 (Moura, 2016). The INPA was tasked with conducting scientific research on the Amazon rainforest and developing strategies for its conservation and sustainable use. The institute played a key role in raising public awareness about the importance of the Amazon and helped shape the Brazilian government's environmental policies in the region (Moura, 2016).

In 1988, the Brazilian government enacted a new constitution that included several provisions aimed at protecting the environment and the rights of indigenous peoples (Presidência da República & Casa Civil, 1988). Article 225 of the constitution declared that the environment is a public asset that must be protected for present and future generations, while Article 231 recognized the rights of indigenous peoples to their traditional lands and resources (Presidência da República & Casa Civil, 1988). These constitutional provisions formed the basis for many of the environmental policies that would be enacted in the years to come. Important to note is that these articles were included in the constitution as the result of great pressure from social movements fighting for their rights of land, and for the conservation of the forest (ISPN, n.d.).

Project PRODES was launched in 1988, in response to concerns directed at the Amazon Rainforests conservation, as a means of monitoring deforestation in the BLA (INPE, 2022). The Brazilian government recognized the need for a monitoring system that could provide timely and accurate information on deforestation rates, and INPE was tasked with developing such a system. PRODES was designed to provide annual estimates of deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon using satellite imagery (INPE, 2022). The data produced by the project has been largely used to inform and spark new environmental policies.

Created in 1989, the Brazilian Institute of Environment and Renewable Natural Resources (IBAMA) is a government agency responsible for implementing environmental policies and protecting Brazil's natural resources (Governo do Brasil, 2018). Under Lula's government, IBAMA underwent significant changes aimed at strengthening its enforcement capabilities and cracking down on illegal deforestation and other environmental crimes. These changes included hiring more staff, increasing funding, and improving coordination with other government agencies and civil society organizations. As a result, IBAMA was able to significantly increase its enforcement actions and reduce deforestation rates in the Amazon region (May & Millikan, 2010).

Established on May 28, 1992, the Brazilian Ministry for the Environment, known as the Ministério do Meio Ambiente (MMA), has the constitutional obligation of safeguarding and conserving the environment through the formulation of sustainable national environmental policies (Moura, 2016). The MMA oversees two primary agencies, IBAMA and ICMBio, responsible for ensuring compliance with environmental

regulations and enforcing the implementation of these policies. These agencies play a critical role in protecting and preserving the environment (May & Millikan, 2010; Moura, 2016)

During his two presidential terms from 2003 to 2010, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's administration implemented significant changes in Brazil's environmental policy and conservation efforts, with a strong emphasis on sustainable development (West & Fearnside, 2021). One of the most noteworthy achievements was the reduction of deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon, which was accomplished through measures such as increasing the budget for environmental enforcement, using satellite monitoring systems to detect and prevent illegal logging and land clearing, and creating protected areas. These efforts led to a decrease in the deforestation rate by nearly 80% between 2004 and 2012 and contributed to the preservation of the Amazon rainforest's biodiversity and cultural heritage (West & Fearnside, 2021).

The following sections expands on the specifics of the most noteworthy programs enacted by Brazil's president, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva during his two terms. The following programs are expanded on: (I) PPCDAM, (II) ARPA, (III) PAS, (IV) The Amazon Fund, (V) DETER and (VI) the National Program for Sustainable Development of Traditional Peoples and Communities.

- (I) The Plan for Prevention and Control of Deforestation in the Legal Amazon (PPCDAM) was designed to reduce deforestation and promote sustainable development in the Amazon region, while also contributing to Brazil's commitments to climate change mitigation and biodiversity conservation. Launched in 2004, PPCDAM was a multi-sectoral plan bringing together federal, state, and local governments, civil society, and the private sector to coordinate efforts in the combat of deforestation. The plan had three main focus areas: land-use planning, forest monitoring and enforcement, and incentives for sustainable land use practices. Additionally, the plan addressed the underlying social and economic factors driving deforestation, such as land tenure insecurity, poverty, and inadequate infrastructure (Ministério do Meio Ambiente, 2016).
- (II) The Amazon Region Protected Areas Program (ARPA) was established in 2002 to conserve the biodiversity of the Amazon rainforest by creating and supporting protected areas. The program aimed to establish a network of protected areas covering at least 60 million hectares of the Amazon biome, including indigenous lands, state and federal conservation units, as well as sustainable-use areas. ARPA provided financial and technical assistance to protected areas and supported sustainable development activities for local communities. It is considered one of the largest tropical forest conservation programs in the world and has received support from national and international organisations (Ministério do Meio Ambiente e Mudança do Clima, 2013).

- (III) The Sustainable Amazon Plan (PAS) was launched in 2008 with the aim of promoting sustainable development and conservation in the Amazon region. The plan focused on three main pillars: sustainable production, social inclusion, and environmental conservation. PAS aimed to reduce deforestation rates, promote sustainable land use practices, support the development of markets for forest products, and provide economic opportunities for local communities while preserving the region's cultural and environmental diversity. The plan also sought to strengthen governance and institutional capacity for sustainable development in the Amazon, and promote international cooperation for climate change mitigation and biodiversity conservation. PAS has received support from national and international organisations and is considered a key initiative in the efforts to promote sustainable development and conservation in the Amazon region (Ministério do Meio Ambiente, n.d.)
- (IV) The Amazon Fund is a financial mechanism created in 2008 to promote the protection and sustainable use of the Amazon rainforest. The function of the fund is to finance initiatives that promote sustainable land use practices, biodiversity conservation, and the restoration of degraded areas in the Amazon region, providing financial support to various stakeholders such as indigenous communities, NGOs, and local governments. Managed by the Brazilian Development Bank (BNDES), the fund has contributed to significant reductions in deforestation rates in the Amazon region, thus conserving biodiversity, protecting indigenous territories, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and mitigating climate change (Fundo Amazônia, 2013). It makes use of data generated by PRODES to assess the level of deforestation in the Brazilian Legal Amazon (INPE,2022).
- (V) DETER (Detection of Deforestation in Real Time) is a satellite-based system developed in 2004, by the National Institute for Space Research (INPE) in order to comply with demands created by PPCDAM (Diniz et al., 2015). While PRODES is highly accurate, it only provides data on deforestation once a year, which can be a significant delay for government agencies and other organisations that need to respond quickly to deforestation (INPE, 2022). DETER, on the other hand, provides more frequent data on deforestation in near-real time. Once deforestation is detected, DETER sends alerts to government agencies, e.g. IBAMA, and other stakeholders, allowing them to take immediate action to prevent further deforestation (Diniz et al., 2015).
- (VI) The National Program for Sustainable Development of Traditional Peoples and Communities, established in 2007, aimed at promoting the social, economic, and cultural development of traditional communities while preserving their cultural heritage and natural

resources. The program provides technical assistance, financial support, and access to markets to traditional communities such as indigenous peoples, quilombolas, and extractive communities. The program has been instrumental in promoting the rights of traditional communities in Brazil and has helped to reduce poverty and inequality in these populations (Presidência da República Casa Civil, 2007).

2.3.4. Amazon under Bolsonaro

During Jair Bolsonaro's presidency, environmental conservation and related initiatives were altogether absent from the government's agenda. This period has been widely recognized by media, activists, NGOs, and academic scholars as an era of significant environmental regression, often referred to as the "environmental dismantlement" (Abessa et al., 2019). This dismantling involved a systematic weakening of the institutions and organizations dedicated to the conservation and protection of Brazil's diverse ecosystems. The degradation of Brazil's environmental protections encompassed several detrimental actions. Key among these were the modification of environmental norms to favor non-conservation interests, substantial budget cuts for organizations tasked with deforestation control and biodiversity preservation, and a pervasive undermining of the credibility of these organizations (Abessa et al., 2019; Menezes & Barbosa Jr., 2021).

Communication barriers were posed to avoid any dialogue between the then government and the Pro-Amazon Coalition. Civil society's role in environmental governance was halted, access to public environmental information was restricted, and experienced professionals were replaced with less qualified individuals, many from military backgrounds (Abessa et al., 2019; Menezes & Barbosa Jr., 2021). This approach not only destabilized existing environmental management structures but also alienated the scientific community and conservation experts (Fearnside, 2023). Moreover, the Federal Public Ministry highlighted that such actions effectively crippled Brazil's environmental preservation system. By systematically dismantling the institutional and organizational framework that underpinned environmental conservation, the Bolsonaro administration severely impeded efforts to protect and sustainably manage the country's rich natural resources (Araújo, 2020).

This period also saw a marked shift in international relations concerning environmental issues. Brazil's reputation as a global leader in environmental conservation was tarnished, leading to strained relations with international partners and a reduction in foreign investments and aid directed towards conservation projects (Abessa et al., 2019). The approach of the Bolsonaro administration towards environmental policy not only had immediate detrimental impacts but also posed long-term risks to the sustainability of Brazil's ecosystems and global environmental health. The administration's policies represented a stark departure

from the previously progressive environmental stance Brazil had held on the global stage, raising concerns among environmentalists and international observers about the future of the Amazon rainforest and other critical habitats within the country (Ramos, 2021).

Bolsonaro's presidency marked a drastic and concerning shift in Brazil's environmental policy. Bolsonaro, often publicly voicing his disregard for environmental protection, pivoted the government's focus towards prioritizing economic development in the Amazon (Abessa et al., 2019; Fearnside, 2023). His administration's policies and rhetoric represented a departure from the previous commitment to environmental conservation and sustainable development. A key aspect of Bolsonaro's administration was his alignment with the interests of the ruralist bloc — a powerful political group representing agribusiness interests (Araújo, 2020). This alignment is key to understanding the change in environmental policy direction under his government.

Bolsonaro and the ruralists shared a perspective that echoed the approaches of past military regimes, viewing the exploitation of the Amazon for agricultural and mining purposes as essential for Brazil's economic development and national sovereignty (Diele-Viegas et al., 2020). This view significantly influenced the administration's policies, leading to a loosening of environmental regulations and an increase in activities harmful to the Amazon, such as deforestation for agriculture and mining (Diele-Viegas et al., 2020).

Before ascending to the presidency, Jair Bolsonaro was vocal about his intention to significantly reduce the authority of Brazil's environmental regulatory bodies (Araújo, 2020). He frequently criticized the use of fines by these agencies, often illustrating and justifying his dissatisfaction with his personal experience of being fined by ICMBio in 2012 for fishing in a prohibited area. Bolsonaro's rhetoric during his campaign included a commitment to put an end to what he termed the "fining frenzy." He also pledged to halt the designation of new protected areas and indigenous territories, signaling a clear shift from previous environmental conservation policies (Araújo, 2020).

Upon securing the presidency, Bolsonaro's initial proposition to dismantle the Ministry of Environment demonstrated his commitment to these campaign promises (Abessa et al., 2019; Araújo, 2020). This drastic measure involved subsuming environmental responsibilities under the Ministry of Agriculture, a move that would have likely prioritized agricultural expansion over environmental protection. However, following counsel from ruralist groups — who were concerned about the potential adverse impacts on international trade and business reputations — he revised this approach (Abessa et al., 2019; Araújo, 2020). Instead, he appointed Ricardo Salles, a representative aligned with ruralist interests, as the Minister of Environment. This appointment was indicative of Bolsonaro's alignment with the ruralist bloc and his administration's

approach to environmental policy — one that favored agricultural and mining development over conservation of the Brazilian biomes (Ramos, 2021).

During Bolsonaro's administration, significant setbacks were experienced in programs pivotal to environmental conservation in Brazil. The Amazon Fund, a key financial mechanism supporting conservation and sustainable development in the BLA, was early on a victim to Bolsonaro's anti conservation discourse (Ramos, 2021; Araújo, 2020). The fund's effectiveness was hampered by limited funding availability, compounded by political and economic pressures that emerged during this period. In a notable development in 2019, the Norwegian government, one of the fund's principal donors, suspended its contributions. This decision was prompted by growing concerns regarding the Brazilian government's wavering commitment to environmental protection and the management of the fund. The suspension of these Norwegian funds was a significant blow to conservation efforts, given Norway's role as a major contributor to the Amazon Fund (Ramos, 2021).

Throughout his tenure, President Jair Bolsonaro made several declarations regarding indigenous territories (TIs), asserting firmly that no new land would be demarcated for indigenous communities under his administration (Ramos, 2021; Araújo, 2020). This unequivocal stance resonated strongly with various groups, including agribusiness leaders, illegal miners, settlers, and loggers, who perceived it as clear green light to intensify their exploitation of the Amazon rainforest and raid indigenous lands. Bolsonaro's rhetoric was closely aligned with the interests of these groups, especially the agribusiness sector. They interpreted the president's position as permission to expand activities such as cattle ranching, soybean farming, and other large-scale agricultural operations (Abessa et al., 2019; Araújo, 2020).

The promise of relaxed restrictions under Bolsonaro's administration also motivated illegal miners. They ramped up their search for valuable minerals within indigenous territories, often flouting environmental regulations (Abessa et al., 2019; Araújo, 2020). The consequences of such unregulated mining activities were severe, including extensive environmental degradation, pollution, and disruption of the delicate ecological balance of the rainforest. These activities not only destroyed habitats but also exploited and marginalized indigenous communities, exacerbating the challenges they face (Rapozo, 2021).

Settlers and loggers, too, were encouraged by Bolsonaro's policies. Seeing an opportunity in the weakening of environmental protections, they moved to occupy and utilize large areas of land that were previously safeguarded as indigenous territories (Rapozo, 2021; Urzedo & Chatterjee, 2021). The diminished enforcement of environmental laws under this administration facilitated a rapid expansion of their operations, leading to widespread deforestation and significant loss of biodiversity. Overall, Bolsonaro's stance on indigenous territories and environmental protection had far-reaching impacts, contributing to

increased environmental degradation and posing serious threats to the sustainability of the Amazon rainforest and the well-being of its indigenous inhabitants (Abessa et al., 2019; Rapozo, 2021).

3. The Advocacy Coalition Framework

The present study utilizes the Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF), an established theoretical framework widely adopted in policy change analysis as a tool for comprehensively examining the interplay between advocacy coalitions and other policy subsystem components (Kern & Rogge, 2018). Considering the research's objective of analyzing the policy changes and advocacy coalitions' strategies in the environmental arena, more specifically in the Brazilian Amazon biome, during the tenure of the former president, Jair Bolsonaro, the ACF is a valuable resource for organizing and interpreting the research.

3.1. Foundations of the ACF

The field of policy processes studies covers three main areas: policy change, actor learning, and the behavior of actors within the policy process (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018). The first focuses on understanding the catalysts for both significant and incremental policy changes, examining their effects on governmental agencies and procedures, and assessing their influence on public opinion. The second area delves into the extent and mechanisms through which actors assimilate lessons from their experiences and external influences, identifying key drivers of these learning processes. The last one investigates the intricacies of forming alliances, the dynamics of collaboration and network building among actors, and the degree of interaction also among actors with opposing viewpoints (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018).

In the beginning of the 1980s, Paul Sabatier and Hank Jenkins Smith developed the Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF) as a response to a perceived gap in policy process research and to offer a new perspective on policy change, ideological conflict, and scientific information's role in policy debates (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018). The authors' work was greatly influenced by philosophical developments in science at that time, particularly by Imré Lakatos's notion of scientific research "programmes". Lakatos's ideas about the hard core of scientific theories, surrounded by a flexible "protective belt" of hypotheses, paved the way for the ACF's structure of belief systems (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018). Another concept from the philosopher which ACF draws upon is the "progressive problem-shift," where theories adapt not just to counter evidence, but also to extend their explanatory reach. This approach is evident in ACF's history, where its hard core remains constant while its auxiliary elements, like the concepts of coalition opportunity structures and endogenous pathways to policy change, evolve (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018).

Early ACF publications by Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith focused on synthesizing top-down and bottom-up approaches to implementation and understanding regulatory policymaking. Over time, ACF applications

have expanded globally, being utilized in various policy issues and governing systems. The framework has been subject to reviews and special journal issues, confirming its adaptability but also highlighting areas for improvement. The ACF offers a foundational approach for both single case studies and comparative analyses across diverse policy issues and governance systems. Its development over time and the synthesis of its recent advancements shows its relevance and adaptability in the field of policy process research.

3.2. Assumptions

The ACF Framework's fundamental unit of analysis is known as a "Policy Subsystem." It encompasses a policy subject, a geographical area, and stakeholders who somehow impact the decision-making processes within a subsystem (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018). The authors identify five key properties of policy subsystems that are essential for applying the ACF framework. These subsystems have an extensive number of components that, to achieve results in each policy theme, interact with each other in complex ways. For instance, "belief systems and political resources" could be examples of such components. The players engaged in a policy topic are set apart by the policy subsystem they belong to. Policy subsystems are not isolated; rather, they are interconnected with other subsystems, making them semi-independent. Additionally, subsystems serve as a source of authority, even if that authority has not yet been realized. Lastly, they go through phases of 'stasis, incremental change, and major change' (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018).

In traditional policy process studies, the role of influential actors is often restricted to specific and high-profile groups such as government agencies. ACF, however, broadens this perspective to include a diverse range of actors (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018). Under ACF, anyone seeking to influence a policy subsystem is acknowledged as an 'actor'. This categorization encompasses not only government officials but also journalists, researchers, NGOs, and other stakeholders (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018). This inclusive approach is more fitting of the plural reality of policymaking, where influence does not lie solely on traditional power structures but is distributed across a spectrum of actors.

Central to the ACF is the idea of bounded rationality, which plays a crucial role in understanding the decision-making processes of individuals in policy contexts. This concept, by acknowledging the limitations in human cognitive capabilities, suggests that individuals' actions are not driven purely by logic (in Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018). Instead, due to cognitive constraints, individuals rely on their belief systems to process information and stimuli. This reliance on belief systems as interpretive filters simplifies and shapes their understanding of the world. The incorporation of bounded rationality into ACF captures a more realistic portrayal of human decision-making, given that it accounts for the often-irrational nature of human cognition in dealing with policy affairs.

ACF's orientation is further defined by its adoption of a modified version of methodological individualism. This concept, as discussed by Sabatier in 1987 and expanded in Jenkins-Smith et al. (2018), posits that individuals, rather than organizations, are the primary catalysts for change in our world. ACF emphasizes that the actions and behaviors of these individuals are heavily influenced by the contexts in which they operate. This standpoint underscores the significance of individual agency in policymaking and recognizes the contextual variables that shape policy outcomes (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018).

The Advocacy Coalition Framework incorporates the concept that individuals tend to recall losses more vividly than gains. Derived from the prospect theory and articulated by Quattrone and Tversky in 1988, plays a critical role in understanding the behavior of actors within policy subsystems (in Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018). This preference for remembering losses, coupled with the tendency of individuals to filter and assimilate information through their own belief systems, leads to what is known as the **'devil shift'** (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018). This phenomenon refers to the tendency of actors within a policy subsystem to exaggerate the power and malevolence of their opponents. This misperception is not restricted to cognitive bias, it actively shapes the behavior and strategies of actors in policymaking.

The implications of the 'devil shift' have a deep impact on policy dynamics. This phenomenon incentivizes a noncollaborative attitude among actors (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018). There is a greater barrier to engaging in open and constructive dialogue given that each party perceives the other as more powerful and malevolent than they might be. This misperception naturally leads to a growing mistrust among actors (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018). The parties are less likely to trust their opponents' actions or statements since they believe the 'others' have but malicious intent or power. Furthermore, this dynamic contributes to the protraction of conflict (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018). The devil shift worsens conflicts and makes it more challenging to find common ground or compromise, as actors are motivated more by perceived threats than by potential collaborative gains. Lastly, this phenomenon significantly obstructs the development and implementation of effective policy solutions (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018). The 'devil shift' might lead to roadblocks and polarization within policy subsystems, hindering the formulation of policies that could potentially solve the problems at hand.

Central to understanding how policy actors interact within and influence policy subsystems is the aforementioned structure of belief systems. This is a three-tiered structure divided into: deep core beliefs, policy core beliefs, and secondary beliefs (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018).

Deep core beliefs represent the most fundamental layer in this structure. They consist of normative values and ontological axioms, i.e. they constitute worldviews that are not specific to any policy but are applicable across different policy subsystems. These beliefs are close to unchangeable and are deeply ingrained in an

individual's mind (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018). Policy core beliefs are specifically tailored to a particular policy subsystem, and slightly more flexible than deep core beliefs. They have both normative and empirical aspects. The former involves value judgments and priorities within the policy subsystem, establishing what actors believe should be the goals of a policy. The latter is based on actors' understandings of facts, and regards the nature of the policy problem, its causes, and potential solutions (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018). Secondary beliefs are highly specialized and focus on the operational aspects of policy within a particular subsystem. They deal with the practical action of advocating for preferred policies. They are more flexible and subject to change than either deep core or policy core beliefs, often adapting in response to new information or changing circumstances. (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018).

3.3. Application

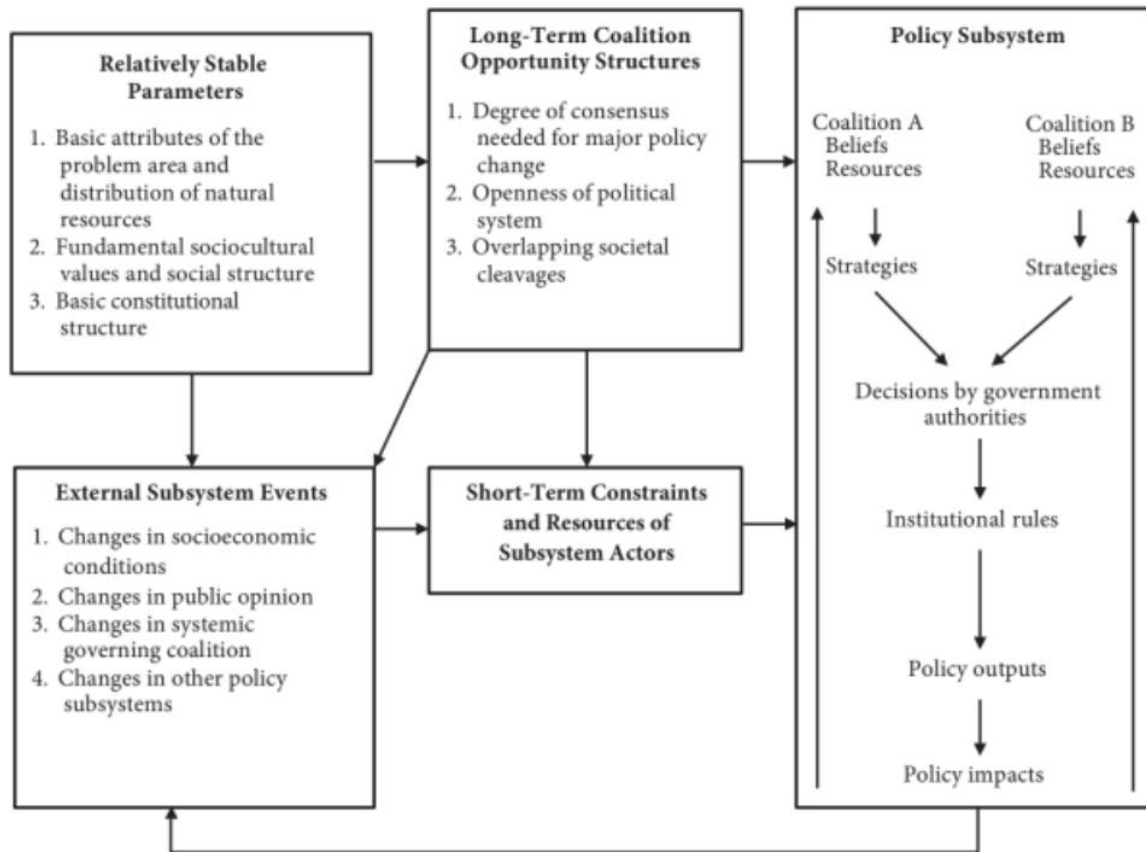
Policy subsystems are often complex with an overwhelming diversity of actors and organizations. ACF simplifies this by grouping these actors into at least one advocacy coalition, based on shared belief systems and coordination strategies among these actors. Once actors are aggregated into coalitions, new analytical dimensions emerge, such as 'cross-coalition interactions', 'intra-coalition cohesiveness', and 'factors leading to coalition defection' (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018). Public policies effectively reflect the underlying beliefs of the coalitions involved. They are not just governmental actions or inactions but are the results of political maneuverings and negotiations happening at the policy subsystem (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018).

Belief systems are, however, more than just reflections of values and priorities. They also incorporate policy actors' perceptions of the empirical world, largely shaped by scientific and technical information (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018). Therefore, comprehending policy processes involves not only recognizing how scientific and technical explanations are assimilated into or rejected by belief systems but also understanding their role in political debates, negotiations, and their integration with other types of knowledge, particularly local knowledge (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018).

Regarding the temporal dimension of policy analysis, it is advisable to adopt a long-term perspective, ideally spanning a decade or more. However, interpreting this as a strict requirement for a decade-long perspective to apply the ACF is an overly literal interpretation and may hinder analysts from utilizing the framework effectively, even when it could be beneficial for their research. It's noteworthy that coalitions, despite their potential longevity, often adopt short-term strategies in response to immediate opportunities and constraints (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018).

3.4. Scope

Figure 2 Flow Diagram of the Advocacy Coalition Framework



Source: (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018)

This diagram flow illustrates the relationships between the different concepts and categories instrumentalized by the ACF to analyze the policy process. Within the rectangle representing the Policy Subsystem there are two opposing coalitions. Each one of them embodying its actors' beliefs and resources, actively competing and strategizing. Their aim is to sway 'decisions by government authorities' that ultimately shape the 'institutional rules', 'policy outputs', and 'policy impacts'. These governmental decisions will feedback into the subsystem and possibly spill over, impacting external affairs. This feedback mechanism infers that the actions of a coalition can alter the subsystem environment and, in turn, be influenced by the changes in that environment.

3.4.1. Influencing Factors in the Policy Subsystem

- (I) Relatively Stable Parameters: The Policy Subsystem is predominantly permeated by stable factors. These include the social, cultural, economic, physical, and institutional structures that provide a

foundational context for policy dynamics. Some of these parameters, like the political system's constitutional structure, exist outside the subsystem's immediate scope. Others, such as specific physical conditions, are intrinsic to it (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018).

(II) **Dynamic External Events:** This category includes elements external to the subsystem that are subject to change. Dynamic external events can range from shifts in socioeconomic conditions and advances in technology relevant to the subsystem, to changes in public opinion and the makeup of governing coalitions. Additionally, there can be spillover effects from other policy subsystems. Crises and disasters are also examples of dynamic external events that can significantly influence the subsystem (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018).

(III) **Long-Term Coalition Opportunity:** These structures are influenced by the stable parameters and determine factors like the level of consensus required for significant policy change, the openness of the political system, and societal cleavages. Essentially, these long-term structures are outcomes of the stable parameters impacting the policy subsystem (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018).

(IV) **Short-Term Constraints and Resources of Subsystem Actors:** Changes in the external environment provide immediate opportunities and challenges for coalitions within the subsystem. These opportunities can be exploited by coalitions to advance their agendas or to adapt to new circumstances (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018).

3.4.2. Types of Policy Subsystems

These stable parameters shape the long-term coalition opportunity structures, which in turn influence major policy changes, the political system's openness, and societal divides. These long-term structures emerge as direct consequences of the stable parameters, shaping the subsystem over extended periods. Subsystem Dynamics and Policy Influence the interplay between these two categories – the dynamic and the stable – defines the policy subsystem's properties. Short-term constraints and resources, stemming from external changes, offer abrupt strategic opportunities for the coalitions. In contrast, the long-term opportunity structures, born out of stable parameters, set the stage for more profound and enduring policy shifts. In conclusion, a comprehensive understanding of a policy subsystem requires an appreciation of both its immediate context and its deeper, more enduring structures. This dual perspective allows for a more nuanced grasp of how policies are formed, influenced, and develop over time, highlighting the complex balance between stability and change within the policy landscape (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018).

Weible (2008) depicts three ideal types of Policy Subsystems: Unitary Subsystems, Collaborative Subsystems, and Adversarial Subsystems. In a policy subsystem where one coalition is predominant, it operates under a unified policy framework that mirrors the closely aligned beliefs of its members, fostering effective coordination. In such scenarios, any opposition is typically fragmented and insufficiently resourced to challenge the dominant group's power (Weible, 2008). The governance structure in this type of subsystem is often centralized, with a few key agencies at its core. These agencies, which are crucial to the coalition, tend to implement policies that disproportionately benefit their members, spreading the costs across the broader society. Alternatively, they might adopt more flexible approaches or encourage voluntary compliance. The primary strategy of this dominant coalition is to maintain existing conditions by concentrating on a limited range of policy domains, opting for incremental changes, and minimizing the impact of internal and external factors that could attract public or higher-level political attention (Weible, 2008).

In contrast, collaborative policy subsystems feature coalitions that, despite inherent differences, are able to engage in mutual negotiations and cooperation (Weible, 2008). Authority and decision-making are distributed more evenly among these groups. The decision-making process in such subsystems is marked by openness and transparency, adhering to rules that encourage consensus (Weible, 2008). Direct interactions between opposing factions are common, often facilitated by policy brokers. These groups typically prefer policy mechanisms that are adaptable or that rely on voluntary adherence (Weible, 2008).

Adversarial policy subsystems, on the other hand, are characterized by competitive coalitions with divergent beliefs and coordination methods (Weible, 2008). In these environments, authority is divided among the opposing coalitions, each backed by either government bodies or influential interest groups with adequate resources to influence policy image framing and access to forums (Weible, 2008). The coalition seeking to change the status quo will attempt to extend the conflict beyond the policy subsystem, engaging supportive actors at the macro-political level or from other subsystems. Conversely, a coalition that wishes to preserve the status quo will focus on keeping decisions within the subsystem and limiting the escalation of conflict (Weible, 2008).

As shown in figure 3, Weible (2008) presents five attributes to policy subsystems:

Figure 3 A Summary of Three Ideal Types of Policy Subsystems

	Unitary Subsystems	Collaborative Subsystems	Adversarial Subsystems
1. Coalitions	Single coalition with high intra-coalition belief compatibility and high intra-coalition coordination	Cooperative coalitions with intermediate inter-coalition belief compatibility and high inter and intra-coalition coordination	Competitive coalitions with low inter-coalition belief compatibility and high intra-coalition and low inter-coalition coordination
2. Policy images	Single	Reconciled	Debated
3. Degree of centralization and interdependence	Authority is centralized and interdependence with other subsystems is ignored	Authority is decentralized, fragmented across policy subsystems, or both. Coalitions share access to authority.	Authority is centralized but fragmented within the policy subsystem, fragmented across policy subsystems, or both. Coalitions compete for access to authority
4. Venues	Coalition influences decisions in one or two amiable venues (legislature, agencies)	Coalitions use a variety of venues, including ones based on consensus-based institutions	Coalitions seek to influence decisions in any amiable venue (courts, legislatures, agencies)
5. Policy designs	Policies distribute benefits to single coalition	Policies are voluntary, win-win, and flexible in means	Policies are coercive, win-lose, and prescriptive in means

Source: (Weible, 2008)

3.5. Theoretical Emphasis

Within The Advocacy Coalitions Framework, three theories have been developed to analyze policy process over time: Policy Change, Advocacy Coalitions, and Policy Learning.

3.5.1. Policy Change

The interest in researching policy change stems from the observation that while some public policies and programs remain stable over long periods, others undergo periods of dramatic change. In alignment with various theoretical frameworks, the Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF) distinguishes between 'major' and 'minor' policy changes within a policy subsystem. Major policy changes represent significant alterations in the overarching objectives or direction of a subsystem. These changes are fundamental, impacting the core attributes of the policy environment. Conversely, minor policy changes pertain to the secondary elements of a policy subsystem. These changes typically involve adjustments to the strategies, instruments, or methods employed to achieve established policy goals, rather than altering the goals themselves. These

modifications are less about shifting the subsystem's primary objectives and more about refining or improving the means of achieving those objectives (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018).

Given the varying levels of changeability across belief system, Sabatier argues that achieving minor policy changes is typically easier compared to major ones (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018). Minor modifications, such as those in administrative regulations, budget distributions, interpretations of statutes, and minor revisions, are more common. These changes don't require extensive evidence, consensus among subsystem actors, or significant resource reallocation. In contrast, major policy changes are less probable, especially when the advocacy coalition responsible for the policy's establishment retains authority. This is because normative (policy core) beliefs are deeply entrenched and tend to filter out conflicting information, making substantial shifts in these areas more challenging Advocacy Coalitions (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018).

The authors present four pathways to achieving policy change:

- (I) The first pathway is originated by external sources to the policy subsystem, such as dynamic external events or stable environmental factors. Significant external disruptions are thought to be essential, though not sufficient, for altering the core attributes of government programs. The core aspect if this pathway lies on the ability of minority coalitions to capitalize on these events, for instance, by creating compelling public narratives and engaging new stakeholders. These external disruptions, beyond the control of the subsystem's participants, can alter socioeconomic conditions, political regimes, or result from crises (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018). Such events might facilitate major policy shifts but necessitate casual mechanisms to enable it, e.g. increased public and political focus, agenda shifts, and redistribution of resources within coalitions, as well as the opening and closing of policy avenues (Sabatier and Weible 2007 in Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018).
- (II) The second pathway has a higher probability of being influenced by the actions of subsystem actors. Originated by events within the policy subsystem's territorial or topical domain, these internal occurrences, such as crises or scandals, can reshape beliefs and intensify focus on government programs. The impact of internal shocks on major policy change hinges on similar enabling mechanisms as those for external shocks. These events, often brought to debate by advocacy coalitions, typically reaffirm minority coalitions' policy core beliefs, while casting doubt on those of the dominant coalition, challenging the effectiveness of their policies (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018).
- (III) The third pathway is policy-oriented learning, which generally occurs incrementally over time and is generally linked to minor policy changes. Policy analysis rarely impacts specific

government decisions but instead gradually influences the perceptions and assumptions of subsystem participants (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018). According to Nohrsted, learning, especially when combined with internal or external shocks, can also precipitate significant policy changes (in Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018).

- (IV) The fourth pathway relies on opposing advocacy coalition negotiating agreement terms, potentially leading to important shifts in government programs. The most crucial trigger for initiating these negotiations is the existence of a ‘hurting stalemate’. This situation arises when opposing groups find the existing conditions untenable and lack other routes to fulfill their goals. Such agreements can take shape in numerous forms, often aided by institutions that promote collaborative negotiation. Apart from the ‘hurting stalemate’ feature, Sabatier and Weible outline other 8 key factors that encourage negotiation: inclusive representation, effective leadership, consensus-based decision-making rules, adequate funding, the commitment of involved parties, the relevance of empirical data, mutual trust, and a lack of alternative solutions (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018).

Furthermore, there are two hypothesis of policy change:

‘Policy Change Hypothesis 1’:

This hypothesis suggests that significant external or internal perturbations to the subsystem, policy-oriented learning, negotiated agreements, or a combination of these factors, are essential but not exclusively determinative factors for altering the policy core attributes of a government program. Key to testing this hypothesis is understanding how a coalition can effectively leverage such opportunities, aiming either to maintain the status quo or to instigate policy change. Consequently, some analysts have concentrated on the resources and strategies of coalitions in response to various external events and trends (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018).

‘Policy Change Hypothesis 2’:

This hypothesis suggests that fundamental changes in the policy core attributes of a governmental program within a specific jurisdiction are unlikely if the advocacy coalition that established the program continues to hold influence in that area unless an authority at a higher jurisdiction enforces the change. This hypothesis has only been sporadically tested. Future research in policy change should concentrate on formulating and implementing standardized methods for recording and analyzing policy shifts, considering the specific contexts (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018).

3.5.2. Advocacy Coalitions

Advocacy coalitions are conceptualized as a form of organizational structure, encompassing interactions and strategies aimed at achieving specific goals (Weible et al., 2020). Unlike parliamentary or governmental coalitions, advocacy coalitions are not formal political entities. However, members of parliament and government officials can be part of an advocacy coalition, even as they often serve as the focus of the coalition's efforts to influence policy through their beliefs, resources, and strategies.

Studies have demonstrated that policy actors often collaborate with those who share similar viewpoints to influence public policy (Weible et al., 2020). However, studies focusing on joint actions, such as coordinated media strategies, have revealed that sharing beliefs does not always translate to collaborative actions (Weible et al., 2020). The extent to which policy actors coordinate their efforts may vary depending on factors like the development stage of the policy subsystem and the significance of the policy issue, suggesting that coalition dynamics can evolve over time. Weible and Heikkila (2016) found that forming and sustaining alliances with like-minded groups was perceived by actors as one of the most crucial political activities for policy actors (Weible et al., 2020).

Weible et al (2020) presented 5 lessons from extracted from analysing the development of Advocacy Coalitions since the framework was created:

- (I) Elaborates on the generally undisputed existence of coalitions within advocacy groups or political frameworks.
- (II) Discusses the confirmation of many traditional hypotheses related to advocacy coalitions, noting that while the foundational ideas are often validated, there are notable exceptions and nuances to these findings.
- (III) Addresses belief homophily, which, although not originally included in the set of hypotheses, pertains to the tendency of policy actors with shared policy core beliefs to coordinate. This lesson points out that belief homophily has been confirmed in many contexts but not universally, indicating that other drivers of coordination exist.
- (IV) Considers the difficulty in verifying the Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF) assumption that coalitions can exist across any political system. It highlights the context-driven variation in their composition, activities/coordination, stability, and resources as complicating

factors in the verification process.

- (V) Suggests that there are various valid methods for measuring coalitions, each with its own strengths and limitations, implying that the assessment of advocacy coalitions is a complex and multifaceted task.
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Figure 4 ACF Hypotheses About Coalitions

- Coalition Hypothesis 1.* On major controversies within a policy subsystem when policy core beliefs are in dispute, the lineup of allies and opponents tends to be rather stable over periods of a decade or so.
- Coalition Hypothesis 2.* Actors within an advocacy coalition will show substantial consensus on issues pertaining to the policy core, although less so on secondary aspects.
- Coalition Hypothesis 3.* Actors (or coalitions) will give up secondary aspects of their belief systems before acknowledging weaknesses in the policy core.
- Coalition Hypothesis 4.* Within a coalition, administrative agencies will usually advocate more moderate positions than their interest group allies.
- Coalition Hypothesis 5.* Actors within purposive groups are more constrained in their expression of beliefs and policy positions than actors from material groups.

Source:(Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018)

The coalition Hypothesis 1, which focuses on coalition stability over time, is the most extensively tested and validated within the Advocacy Coalition Framework (Weible et al., 2020). The predominant evidence for this hypothesis points to the persistence of coalitions, primarily based on shared beliefs rather than coordination activities. Findings related to Hypotheses 2 and 3 are much less validated with rather mixed results. This inconsistency may stem from diverse methods used to conceptualize and measure beliefs, which can lead to diverging interpretations and findings. Alternatively, the way beliefs are conceptualized within the ACF might be flawed (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018). Another challenge is the inconsistency in assigning beliefs to specific levels within the belief system hierarchy. This issue of validity is heightened when the same category of beliefs is classified differently across various policy subsystems. Hypothesis 4 and 5 have been tested but a few times (Weible et al., 2020).

An advocacy coalition is characterized by the presence of five key attributes - policy actors, shared beliefs, coordination, resources, and stability (Weible et al., 2020).The ideal coalition would possess all the

aforementioned attributes. However, the existence of a coalition is not dependent upon the presence of all these attributes, rather, it is the shared policy core beliefs among its members that constitute the necessary condition for a coalition to exist (Weible et al., 2020).

Advocacy Coalitions attributes:

- (I) Policy Actors: These are individuals or groups from inside or outside of government who are influential or seek to influence the policymaking process. Policy actors are not limited to the ‘iron triangle’, i.e., traditional administrative entities, legislative committees, and interest groups. They can be any person actively trying to exert influence on policymaking, ranging from government officials with policy-making authority to students protesting for a cause (Weible et al., 2020).

 - (II) Shared Beliefs: Advocacy coalitions are bound by shared beliefs, particularly policy core beliefs, which are fundamental to the identity of the coalition. These beliefs include the basic strategies for achieving policy goals and normative commitments about the role of government in society (Weible et al., 2020).

 - (III) Coordination: This refers to the extent to which members of a coalition coordinate their actions. Coordination can manifest as formal agreements to share resources or as more implicit, tacit understandings about roles and strategies within a policy subsystem (Weible et al., 2020).

 - (IV) Resources: Added to the original conceptualization of advocacy coalitions in 2007, resources encompass the means that coalitions have at their disposal to exert influence or power. This could include financial resources, access to influential networks, or information and expertise (Weible et al., 2020).

 - (V) Stability: Coalitions and their policy actors experience varying degrees of stability and change over time. Stability is crucial for understanding the persistence of involvement and the potential for long-term influence by coalition members within a policy subsystem (Weible et al., 2020).
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The following additional concepts concerning coalitions are often applied by academics employing ACF to their research:

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- (I) **Dominant and Minority Coalitions:** Coalition dynamics can vary significantly across different policy subsystems. While some are characterized by ongoing conflicts and rivalry, others are dominated by a single coalition that controls policy due to resource superiority. This dominant coalition may face opposition from a minority coalition or operate without any coordinated opposition. Studies have documented the stability of dominant coalitions, but a comprehensive understanding of the attributes of various coalitions, including their beliefs, resources, strategies, and activities, remains underdeveloped (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018).
 - (II)
 - (III) **Overcoming Threats to Collective Action:** It has been proposed that coalitions form and overcome these threats based on three rationales: shared beliefs reducing transaction costs, differing levels of engagement among actors (weak and strong forms of coordination, see figure 3), and the devil shift exaggerating the need for action. These rationales elucidate why actors come together in coalitions despite potential collective action problems (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018).
 - (IV) **Principal and Auxiliary Coalition Actors:** Network analysis has revealed variations in the centrality and involvement of coalition actors. This variation has led to the distinction between principal and auxiliary actors. Principal actors are central and consistent members of a coalition, deeply engaged in its activities. In contrast, auxiliary actors are more peripheral, participating intermittently or for shorter periods, and are less engaged in the coalition's core activities (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018).
 - (V) **Resources, Strategies, and Activities:** Coalitions are defined not only by shared beliefs and coordination patterns but also by their resources. These resources, encompassing legal authority, public opinion, information, supporters, financial resources, and leadership, are crucial for a coalition's capacity to make strategic decisions and influence policy subsystems. The role of resources in coalition dynamics provides theoretical leverage for understanding how coalitions operate and exert influence within policy arenas (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018).
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Figure 5. Belief System and Forms of Coordination

		Definition	Examples
Three-tiered belief system	Deep core beliefs	Fundamental normative orientations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political ideologies Normative values (e.g. religious beliefs) Identities Cultural orientations Basic priorities (e.g. freedom vs security) Views of human nature
	Policy core beliefs	Normative and empirical beliefs concerning policy subsystems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General goals for a policy subsystem Positions on general policy solutions and policy instruments Problem severity and cause Role of government in subsystem affairs (e.g. vs markets)
	Secondary beliefs	Instrumental beliefs or beliefs about a subset of a policy subsystem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instrumental means for achieving policy-core ends (or goals) Relative weight of various causal mechanisms of problems Solutions and problems associated with part of a policy subsystem
Two forms of coordination	Strong coordination	Activities agreed upon and acknowledged by coalition actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formulation and implementation of a common plan Sharing resources
	Weak coordination	Activities that are in sync toward achieving a common goal but are not jointly agreed upon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring the use of resources and deployment of strategies and altering behaviour accordingly Understanding the positions and niches of allies and behaving in a complementary manner

Source: (Weible & Ingold, 2018)

3.5.3. Policy-Oriented Learning

Policy-Oriented Learning, a critical explanatory pathway for policy change, is the third and final theory within the Advocacy Coalition framework. Central to the ACF's analysis, this learning process is fundamental to both change and reinforcement of the belief systems within and, occasionally, across advocacy coalitions (Weible, 2008). This theory addresses key questions concerning the dynamics of belief system changes, the conducive contexts for coalition learning, the diffusion of learning across allies and opponents, and the influence of policy brokers in facilitating learning among opposing groups. Despite its central importance, policy-oriented learning remains a hard concept to grasp among scholars (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018).

According to Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith (1993), policy-oriented learning is defined as *the enduring alterations in thought or behavioral intentions that are borne from experience and are directed at the attainment or revision of the belief system's precepts, whether at the individual or collective level* (in:

Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018). This learning is not merely about understanding the problem and potential solutions, it extends to encompass the political strategies employed to achieve set objectives (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018).

Within the theory of Policy-Oriented Learning, the explanatory factors have been structured in four categories (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018)

- (I) **Attributes of Forums:** Forums, the platforms used by coalitions to interact, play a crucial role in facilitating or hindering learning. It is argued that the forum's institutional arrangement significantly affects learning dynamics. Key attributes of forums include their degree of openness and the extent to which participating actors share common analytical training and norms of conduct. Open forums may encourage a wider range of perspectives, potentially fostering learning, while closed forums could limit this exchange. The shared analytical training and norms also influence how information is processed and debated, impacting the likelihood of learning.
- (II) **Level of Conflict Between Coalitions:** At low conflict levels, learning is minimal as coalitions may not engage deeply with the topic at hand. High levels of conflict also inhibit learning as coalitions completely shut themselves within their policy core beliefs and become defensive of their positions. Cross-coalition learning becomes more probable at intermediate conflict levels - coalitions are sufficiently threatened to engage with the issue while remaining open to new information.
- (III) **Attributes of the Stimuli:** Analytically difficult issues, characterized by uncertainty and low-quality data, lead to high disagreement levels on interpretation, thereby reducing cross-coalition learning. The more complex and uncertain an issue, the lower the expected learning, as coalitions struggle to find common ground or credible information.
- (IV) **Attributes of Actors:** The characteristics of individual actors within coalitions, such as their belief systems, resources, strategies, and network contacts, profoundly influence learning. Actors with extreme beliefs are less likely to learn from opponents than those with more moderate views. Policy brokers might be any actor within the policy subsystem, and they play a vital role in mitigating conflict, reaching agreements, building dialogue, and facilitating learning among opposing groups.

Figure 6 Learning Hypothesis

Learning Hypothesis 1. Policy-oriented learning across belief systems is most likely when there is an intermediate level of informed conflict between the two coalitions. This requires that: (1) each has the technical resources to engage in such a debate, and (2) the conflict is between

secondary aspects of one belief system and core elements of the other or, alternatively, between important secondary aspects of the two belief systems.

Learning Hypothesis 2. Policy-oriented learning across belief systems is most likely when there exists a forum that is: (1) prestigious enough to force professionals from different coalitions to participate and (2) dominated by professional norms.

Learning Hypothesis 3. Problems for which accepted quantitative data and theory exist are more conducive to policy-oriented learning across belief systems than those in which data and theory are generally qualitative, quite subjective, or altogether lacking.

Learning Hypothesis 4. Problems involving natural systems are more conducive to policy-oriented learning across belief systems than those involving purely social or political systems because in the former many of the critical variables are not themselves active strategists and because controlled experimentation is more feasible.

Learning Hypothesis 5. Even when the accumulation of technical information does not change the views of the opposing coalition, it can have important impacts on policy—at least in the short run—by altering the views of policy brokers.

Source: (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2018)

4. Methodology

4.1. Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research design using case study methodology to produce a detailed and holistic description of the case and to identify strategies that help explain or understand how the pro-Amazon advocacy coalition actively resisted the dismantlement of environmental protections in the Amazon under Bolsonaro's administration.

4.2. Data Collection

The data collection for this research was comprehensive, incorporating both primary and secondary sources. **Primary Sources:** In-depth interviews were conducted to gather qualitative insights directly from those involved in or affected by the policy changes. Stakeholders interviewed included key actors from different backgrounds from the Pro-Amazon Coalition, notably international and domestic NGOs, community leaders, and researchers. These primary sources of data were instrumental in understanding the strategies and reactions of these groups. The interviews were carried out using semi-structured interview guides, which allowed for the exploration of pre-determined topics while providing the flexibility for participants to introduce new ideas. This approach facilitated a rich, detailed understanding of the stakeholders' perspectives. Most interviews were audio-recorded with the consent of the participants and subsequently transcribed to ensure accuracy in data analysis. The interviews were conducted online, owing to the geographic dispersion of the stakeholders and the convenience of digital platforms.

Secondary Sources: The study also integrated a wide array of secondary sources, including peer-reviewed academic articles, reports from non-governmental organizations, news articles, and policy documents. These documents provided context and background, helping to frame the primary data within the larger discourse of environmental policy and advocacy in Brazil. Data from secondary sources were systematically collected through extensive searches in online databases such as JSTOR and Google Scholar, as well as through the websites of various academic publishers. This search was not limited to scholarly work; it also extended to media coverage to capture public opinion, identify actors and allies, and events taking place during the time frame covered by the thesis. International media outlets like The Guardian, Mongbay, and BBC, as well as Brazilian news agencies, such as O Globo, and Midia Ninja, were particularly useful in understanding the media portrayal of the Amazon crisis and the global reaction to it. The majority of the data used were extracted from the websites and social media platforms of key organizations and actors active in environmental and human rights advocacy within the Brazilian Amazon. Notable among these were the Rainforest Foundation, ISA, Greenpeace, Observatorio do Clima, Imazon, Apib, Funai, MMA, Amazonia2030, Conserto pela Amazonia, Kaninde, and others. The data collected from these organizations provided deep and detailed insights into advocacy efforts, policy reactions, and grassroots mobilization.

Data Analysis

The data analysis for this study employed a thematic analysis approach to identify and analyze recurring patterns and themes in the data (Bryman, 2016). The analysis process began with the identification of recurrent patterns of meaning within the data, which was then grouped into themes and sub-themes of

strategies. These themes and sub-themes were carefully examined and interpreted in relation to how the Pro-Amazon Coalition employed different strategies to resist the dismantlement of environmental protections in the Amazon region during Bolsonaro's presidency. This detailed analysis will provide insights into the underlying factors contributing to the failure of these coalitions and help to identify potential strategies for future efforts in this area.

4.3. Ethical Considerations

This study followed all ethical guidelines for research involving human subjects, such as obtaining informed consent from participants, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity, and avoiding harm or exploitation (Bryman, 2016).

4.4. Limitations and Challenges

The interviews were held online, which might have influenced the depth and quality of the data obtained due to technical issues and limitations in non-verbal communication. The study focused solely on policy changes within the environmental arena under former President Bolsonaro's administration, thereby restricting its generalizability (Bryman, 2016) to other policy domains or periods. The limited sample size could not capture the full diversity of stakeholders involved in the policy subsystem under analysis, potentially affecting the representativeness of the findings. The limited time and resources also posed significant limitations to the result of the research. Finally, the study is limited by the potential biases and subjectivities of the researcher and the participants. Given that all interviewees were from the same coalition and shared the same policy core beliefs, the diversity of thoughts was limited.

5. Empirical Data

This section is dedicated to presenting the data gathered to address the research question: "What were the pro-Amazon advocacy coalition's strategies to resist the dismantling of environmental protections in the Brazilian Amazon under Bolsonaro's mandate?". The structure of this section is divided into three distinct sub-sections. Firstly, a succinct introduction to the Pro-Amazon Coalition is provided, setting the context for subsequent discussions. The second sub-section delves into the obstacles confronted by the Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF) in this specific context. Lastly, the third sub-section systematically categorizes and examines the diverse strategies implemented by the Pro-Amazon Coalition in response to these challenges.

5.1. Pro-Amazon Coalition

The Pro-Amazon Coalition (PAC) is used in this thesis to represent a broad and diverse group of stakeholders who share a common policy core belief in preserving the Amazon rainforest and advocating

for sustainable development within the region. To research the strategies utilized to resist the dismantlement of environmental protections under Bolsonaro’s mandate, it was first necessary to identify who these actors operationalizing such mechanisms were. To do that, I conducted a comprehensive review of media outlets, policy documents, social media, academic research, and websites looking for different actors advancing pro-Amazon policies, that is, actors sharing the same policy core belief. This process led to the categorization of these actors into distinct groups. The categories are the following:

Table 1 Actors Categories Within the PAC

Actors Categories	Description
NGOs	Independent organizations that operate without direct government control. They engage in advocacy, research, legal action, and others.
Researchers	Scientists and academics’ work provides a scientific basis for understanding the Amazon's ecosystem, the impacts of deforestation, and effective conservation strategies.
Activists	Individuals attempting to raise awareness about deforestation and lobbying for policy changes to protect the rainforest.
Indigenous Groups	Native populations who have historically inhabited the Amazon. They are key stakeholders in conservation efforts, as their livelihoods and cultures are intricately tied to the rainforest.
Traditional Groups	Local communities in the Amazon who, while not indigenous, have developed a unique culture and way of life deeply connected to the rainforest. E.g., ribeirinhos and quilombolas.
Social Movements	Collective efforts aiming to address social, environmental, or political issues related to the rainforest. They often involve collaboration between actors, including indigenous peoples, local communities, and activists.
Public Sector	Government entities at various levels (local, regional, national) responsible for creating and implementing policies, laws, and regulations that affect the Amazon.

It is important to note that in the subsystem of environmental policymaking in the Amazon region, the PAC does not operate alone. There is one main opposing coalition, the Ruralist Coalition (RC). This study will not delve into this second advocacy coalition, but briefly explained it is composed of actors sharing the policy core belief of exploiting the Amazon's resources with little regard for its conservation. These actors are primarily associated with the agribusiness sector. It is important to note that the RC was in power during Bolsonaro's mandate, with the president himself being an actor affiliated with the RC.

5.2. Obstacles to Advocacy

During the Bolsonaro administration, the cross-coalition coordination, especially between environmental advocacy groups and the government, faced significant challenges. Unlike previous governments, which had a more open field for dialogue, even if challenging at times, Bolsonaro's government demonstrated a deliberate effort to cut off participation from civil society. This was evidenced by the "Revogação", Decree 9.759/2019, which led to the extinction of several councils and committees that were essential platforms for civil society's participation.

This lack of dialogue space marked a stark contrast to previous administrations, where there was at least a semblance of openness to engage with different stakeholders, including those advocating for environmental protection and sustainable practices (RI). The Bolsonaro administration's approach reflected a clear unwillingness to engage in conversations with civil society organizations, particularly those opposing its environmental policies. This led to a scenario in which advancing any policy through dialogue with the federal government became nearly impossible. The shift from a government that was at least partially receptive to environmental concerns to one that actively sought to marginalize these voices significantly impacted the strategy and tactics of environmental advocacy groups.

In 2019 Bolsonaro appointed Ricardo Salles, aligned with ruralist interests, as the Minister of Environment. This was indicative of Bolsonaro's alignment with the ruralist bloc, favoring agricultural and mining development over the conservation of Brazilian biomes. Key environmental agencies such as IBAMA and ICMBio faced substantial budget cuts, impairing their ability to effectively manage and conserve Brazil's rich natural resources. These cuts significantly impacted the agencies' capacity for enforcement and control, leading to increased illegal activities like deforestation and mining. Immediately after taking office, various responsibilities of the Ministry of the Environment were transferred to other federal government departments, and staff were dismissed. Agreements with NGOs were suspended, and environmental councils and committees were weakened or abolished.

Furthermore, the 'passar a boiada' episode also occurred under Bolsonaros incumbency. This term, literally translated as "let the cattle through," was used by Ricardo Salles to describe the government's approach to

environmental deregulation. This approach was characterized by a systematic weakening of environmental protections and regulations, aligning with the interests of the Ruralist Coalition (RC), of which Bolsonaro was a key figure. The 'passar a boiada' strategy involved pushing through numerous environmentally detrimental policies, often under the guise of reducing bureaucratic red tape or fostering economic growth. These policies included loosening regulations on deforestation, weakening protections for indigenous lands, and ignoring environmental fines, effectively encouraging practices that led to increased deforestation and environmental degradation.

Bills strongly supported by the Bolsonaro administration and ruralists in Congress aimed to open up Indigenous lands for mining, dams, and agribusiness. These and other anti-environmental legislative initiatives have accelerated, threatening the environment of the Amazon. Despite the administration's efforts, only a few of these proposed environmental rollbacks successfully passed through Congress. Those that did, were largely due to executive measures, rather than legislative approval. This resistance by Congress, especially in the early part of Bolsonaro's term, played a crucial role in curbing the administration's attempts to dismantle environmental protections. To deal with all these obstacles the PAC needed to adapt its strategies to this new political landscape.

5.3. Strategies

Analyzing all the material gathered through the process of writing this thesis, such as interviews conducted by the author, media outlets, actors' webpages, academic articles, and more, it became evident that the loss of dialogue between the federal government and the PAC necessitated strategic behaviors to adapt to the new reality. These strategies are divided into three main categories: Information, Political, and Engagement. Each category has sub-categories. In the sub-categories, there is more detailed information about the strategies, with examples, goals, and actors engaged in such strategies. It is important to note that these strategies are often overlapping and employed in conjunction with one another.

5.3.1. Information

This type of strategy involved the dissemination of accurate, research-backed data and information to the public and key stakeholders. By highlighting the detrimental impacts of the government's policies on the Amazon and its global significance, the coalition aimed to raise awareness, mobilize public opinion, and generate broader support for their cause.

5.3.1.1. Public Awareness

Organizations employed various communication strategies to publicize the situation in the Amazon, including collaborations with national and international media. It showcased the power of strategic

communication in shaping public opinion and political agendas on a global scale. Celebrities and influencers who can bring attention to the cause are often included in campaigns. These public figures often have wide-reaching platforms that can attract national and international attention to the Amazon's issues, drawing in audiences that might not otherwise engage with environmental advocacy, as exemplified by Leonardo Dicaprio several movies and documentaries on the subject. Civil society utilized various communication channels such as scientific publications, local media, blogs, and other creative forms to overcome communication barriers with the government.

During Bolsonaro's mandate, a frequently adopted tactic involved the systematic documentation and dissemination of his administration's misdeeds, a strategy called 'exposure'. Although not unique to his tenure, this strategy witnessed a perceived increase in its application during this period. The driving force for the intensified utilization of this tactic stemmed from the complete lack of communication between the federal government and the Pro-Amazon Coalition. The coalition engaged in international exposure, highlighting the challenges faced by indigenous and environmental communities in Brazil, to increase global pressure on the Brazilian government. This approach included working with international policy makers, engaging with the public internationally, and raising awareness about the situation in Brazil through media collaborations.

NGOs and activists were more likely to adhere to this type of strategy, also given the type of resources they have. These actors tend to have more influence navigating the public space, news outlets, and social media. A remarkable example of is the movie "The Territory", produced by Kanindé, an Amazonian association dedicated to advocating for indigenous rights. NGOs and Social Insitutes such as the Rainforest Foundation, Instituto Socioambiental, and Greenpeace have done several exposé work.

5.3.1.2. Scientific

This category is characterized by strategies focused on conducting and publishing scientific research on the topic, promotion of conferences, seminars, and workshops, as well as monitoring and reporting of deforestation levels and environmental degradation. This is done through collaboration among communities, universities, and research institutes. However, the main group of actors engaging in this type of strategy are Researchers.

By making scientific findings on the state of the Amazon and the impacts of policy changes more accessible, the coalition seeks to foster a more informed public debate. They work closely with researchers and academic institutions to translate complex scientific data into digestible information that can be understood by the general public and policymakers alike.

Notable actors employing this type of strategy are Imazon, Observatorio do Clima, Fase, IPAM, among many others.

5.3.2. Political

These encompassed efforts to engage with political entities, lobby for policy changes, and advocate for the reinstatement or strengthening of environmental protections. This kind of strategy aimed to influence policymakers and leverage legislative and regulatory frameworks to counteract the government's actions.

5.3.2.1. Policy

The coalition engaged in public hearings organized by deputies to gather and disseminate information about deforestation across Brazil, involving various institutions and experts to provide a comprehensive overview of the situation, particularly in remote areas. They also focused on engaging with state and municipal governments, providing them with deforestation data and training local environmental secretariats to take appropriate actions in collaboration with the State Public Ministry

Both State and Federal Public Ministries played a crucial role in combating illegal deforestation and promoting environmental accountability. They relied on precise and reliable information, often provided by civil society, to base their legal and conservation policies.

Members of the coalition may directly engage with politicians and policymakers to advocate for legislation and regulations that protect the Amazon. They present research, petitions, and policy proposals to lawmakers and government officials to influence the legislative agenda.

The coalition may work with like-minded politicians and political parties who share their environmental goals. These politicians can act as brokers for the coalition's causes within the formal political structure. However, given the high level of conflict between coalitions during the period under study, policy brokers were less active.

Some members of the coalition may sit on advisory committees or consultative bodies that work with regulatory agencies on environmental issues. Although not a political party themselves, coalition members can endorse and support candidates who advocate for the protection of the Amazon, influencing elections and policy directions. The coalition's influence on political processes is therefore indirect but potentially powerful, especially when public opinion is strongly in favor of conservation and sustainable development, and when international attention is focused on the Amazon.

5.3.2.2. Legal

This category comprehends strategies focused on legal actions. That would be engaging in strategic litigation and the provision of legal support to local communities and activists. The coalition supported indigenous peoples in developing their territorial management plans and consultation protocols, using the existing legal framework to empower these communities to defend themselves without relying on federal government support.

The Pro-Amazon Coalition exerted pressure on the National Congress, particularly during the first half of Bolsonaro's term when Rodrigo Maia, an opposition leader, headed the Chamber of Deputies. This pressure aimed to prevent the passage of environmentally detrimental laws and was part of a broader strategy to bring international pressure back to Brazil. Attention was directed towards governors in the Amazon region, aiming to bypass the federal government in environmental initiatives. The governors created an inter-state consortium for the Amazon to directly seek international funding, distancing themselves from Bolsonaro's negative image.

In the ongoing struggle for the Brazilian Amazon's future, the pro-Amazon advocacy coalition has devised a multifaceted strategy to influence institutional rules, both within the country and on the international stage. This strategy employs legal challenges and appeals to international norms and bodies as tools to counteract or mitigate policies that facilitate environmental degradation. By leveraging the existing legal frameworks, the coalition aims to uphold environmental protections and safeguard the local and indigenous communities' rights.

At the national level, the coalition has actively engaged in legal battles, challenging policies and actions they perceive as violating environmental laws and the constitutional rights of indigenous peoples. For example, they have filed lawsuits against the Brazilian government for failing to enforce environmental regulations or for rolling back protections in a way that violates the country's constitution.

Beyond domestic courts, the coalition has reached out to international bodies, advocating for the enforcement of global environmental agreements to which Brazil is a party. For instance, On January 22, Cacique Raoni Metuktire, a prominent Brazilian Indigenous leader, in an act of advocacy for the rights of indigenous peoples, filed a lawsuit against Jair Bolsonaro, at the International Criminal Court in The Hague.

These legal challenges often focus on procedural violations, such as the lack of proper environmental impact assessments or the failure to consult with Indigenous communities, as required by Brazilian law. By spotlighting these procedural missteps, the coalition seeks to delay or halt environmentally harmful projects, thus buying time to mobilize public opinion or seek other avenues of resistance.

Various environmental groups, indigenous and traditional organizations have turned to the judiciary to challenge the government's decisions that could harm the Amazon, seeking injunctions and rulings that protect the existing environmental framework. The Federal Public Ministry was an important tool utilized by the pro Amazon coalition to try and stop policies proposed by the government allies meant to favor the ruralist table. Legal action constitutes a critical tool in the coalition's arsenal. They actively engage the judiciary to uphold environmental laws and challenge infractions, often providing legal support to indigenous and local communities. The coalition works to ensure that environmental legislation is not only robust but also effectively enforced, recognizing the rule of law as a cornerstone of conservation efforts. Even when a legal action is not successful, it helps raise public awareness around the topic.

5.3.3. Engagement

Recognizing the power of collective action, the coalition invested in building and strengthening alliances with various groups, including local communities, indigenous peoples, environmental activists, and international organizations. This approach aimed to harness a wider base of support, create a unified front, and amplify the voice of those directly affected by the environmental policy changes.

5.3.3.1. Private Sector Engagement

The coalition employed several strategies in an attempt to engage the private sector in environmental causes in the Amazon. PAC has collaborated with the financial sector, including investment funds and banks, to influence financiers of environmentally impactful industries. They distinguished between companies directly involved in activities causing deforestation, like soy and meat trading, and their investors, employing different advocacy strategies for each. Some businesses are not seen by the coalition as potential collaborators, and for these the most common strategy used is public exposure.

The coalition emphasized improving agricultural and livestock productivity in the Amazon sustainably as an alternative to deforestation, including disseminating studies and strategies to maintain production without causing further environmental damage. Many research institutes members of the PAC have put great effort into this line of study.

There have been efforts to influence the supply chain by persuading corporations to source commodities like soy and beef from areas that are not involved in deforestation. Some advocacy groups have also pushed for boycotts or the adoption of stricter environmental standards in trade agreements.

Some organizations such as the Rainforest Foundation have worked on creating financial disincentives for deforestation by pushing for divestment from companies involved in environmental destruction in the Amazon and seeking to direct investment towards sustainable projects.

5.3.3.2. Community Engagement

This category is represented by all strategies that are community-centered. It comprehends both strategies arising from within the communities, and external initiatives that focus on community engagement. This involves the organizing of local communities and indigenous groups for activities related to governance and activism.

Despite challenges, civil society, including indigenous organizations, NGOs, and local research groups, remained steadfast in their monitoring and transparency efforts. They continued to fight for land demarcation rights and environmental protection. Various organizations formed networks and partnerships, adapting their strategies according to their capacities and focuses, involving private sectors, NGOs, and government agencies at different levels to maximize the impact of their actions.

During the Bolsonaro administration, opportunities for dialogue between pro-Amazon advocates and the Federal Government were notably absent. In response, organizations intensified their collaboration with indigenous groups, recognizing their crucial role as guardians of the Amazon. This collaboration entailed support for indigenous-led conservation initiatives, assistance in documenting and reporting unlawful activities, and bolstering the capacity of indigenous communities to defend their rights. A pertinent example of this proactive stance is illustrated in the aforementioned Brazilian documentary, 'The Territory' which provides an insightful perspective on the active engagement of indigenous communities in surveilling and safeguarding their lands, utilizing technologies such as drones.

It is important to highlight that this increased self-reliance by indigenous groups was necessitated by the weakening of IBAMA, Brazil's environmental enforcement agency. Under Bolsonaro's government, IBAMA faced substantial budget cuts and operational challenges, including the criminalization of their enforcement actions, such as the destruction of equipment used in illegal logging. This situation underscored the vital importance of indigenous and organizational efforts in compensating for the diminished governmental oversight and protection of the Amazon.

5.3.3.3. International engagement

The coalition has sought to engage a range of international actors, including foreign governments, international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and global environmental bodies. By highlighting the transnational implications of the Amazon's destruction, such as its impact on global climate patterns and biodiversity loss, they aim to mobilize a global response to pressure the Brazilian government.

This engagement often takes the form of diplomatic dialogue, advocacy at international forums, and partnerships with organizations that can exert economic or political influence on Brazil. For instance, coalition members may work with foreign lawmakers to discuss potential trade sanctions or conditional aid based on Brazil's environmental policies.

The coalition also takes advantage of existing global environmental agreements, such as the Paris Agreement, to hold Brazil accountable to international commitments. They call for the enforcement of clauses that require member states to take action to protect crucial ecosystems and reduce carbon emissions. Advocates argue that failure to protect the Amazon represents a breach of these commitments. They push for the implementation of mechanisms that enforce compliance, such as monitoring deforestation rates and requiring regular reporting on conservation efforts.

The coalition also leverages the complaints mechanisms of these international agreements, drawing attention to potential non-compliance by the Brazilian government. By doing so, they aim to generate international pressure on Brazil to adhere to its commitments, thereby indirectly influencing domestic policy.

One particularly potent avenue has been the Inter-American system. The coalition has filed petitions and reports to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), citing the impacts of deforestation and environmental mismanagement on indigenous peoples' rights. The strategy here is to frame environmental destruction as not only an ecological disaster but also a human rights violation, thus mobilizing a different set of legal norms and institutional sympathies.

Despite these strategies, the coalition faces significant challenges. Sovereignty concerns can make some domestic actors resistant to what they perceive as foreign interference in Brazilian policies. Moreover, global geopolitics and economic interests can sometimes overshadow environmental concerns, making international actors reluctant to apply pressure.

However, the coalition's international engagement has many times been successful. The threat of economic consequences, such as boycotts of Brazilian products or restrictions in trade deals, has occasionally prompted the Brazilian government to reaffirm its commitment to environmental protection.

6. Analysis

The Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF) is employed as an analytical tool, utilized to unveil the coalition's strategic actions during this period. These strategies are understood as adaptive mechanisms to the changing policy landscape headed by Bolsonaro's presidency. This study advances the notion that the

coalition's strategies are the means to realize their policy core beliefs - dedication to environmental preservation - contoured by the political and legal opportunities and constraints of their context.

Moreover, the ACF's capacity to capture the complexity of the policy environment, where various types of knowledge and power are at play, allows for a nuanced understanding of how the Pro-Amazon Coalition (PAC) navigated the challenging political landscape under Bolsonaro's mandate. It sheds light on the policy instruments and institutional mechanisms operationalized by these advocacy groups to counteract the somewhat abrupt policy shift. These actions create a feedback loop within the policy subsystem that influences its dynamics and can lead to policy changes or reinforce resistance.

One way the coalition's actions feedback into the subsystem is through policy learning. By engaging in the policy process, coalition members can gain insights into the effectiveness of their strategies and adapt accordingly. For example, when legal challenges brought by the coalition lead to new judicial precedents that protect the Amazon, this not only impacts immediate policy outcomes but also influences future legal strategies and legislative priorities.

This research delves into a policy subsystem characterized by the presence of two main coalitions: the Pro-Amazon Coalition and the Ruralist Coalition. These coalitions are anchored in fundamentally conflicting policy core beliefs. The Pro-Amazon Coalition is dedicated to the protection and preservation of the Amazon rainforests, advocating for sustainable practices and conservation measures. In stark contrast, the Ruralist Coalition prioritizes the exploitation of the Amazon's resources, an approach that often leads to environmental degradation and escalated deforestation. Such profound ideological disparities between the two groups result in an extremely low, virtually nonexistent, cross-coalition coordination. This stark divide underscores the challenges in finding common ground or collaborative solutions within this policy arena.

The prevailing dynamic between these coalitions is not one of collaboration but rather a continual struggle to frame policy narratives. This situation is accentuated by the recent change in political power dynamics. The Pro-Amazon Coalition, previously dominant from 2002 to 2015, now finds itself in a less influential position. The policies implemented by the Ruralist Coalition, currently holding power, exemplify a 'win-lose' dynamic, which is not surprising given the context. The absence of dialogue and coordination between the Ruralist Coalition and its counterpart, the Pro-Amazon Coalition, is rooted in their fundamentally divergent policy core beliefs. These opposing belief systems are not just distinct but are diametrically opposed, leading to entirely conflicting policy goals. This stark divergence in objectives and values creates an extreme situation in the policy environment, where the actions of the Ruralist Coalition benefit one set of interests at the expense of the other, reflecting a clear win-lose scenario.

The 'devil shift' effect exacerbates the situation, as actors and coalitions begin to view their counterparts as far more adversarial than they might be. This distorted perception effectively shuts down any potential for communication or dialogue, escalating mistrust to even higher levels. As a result, the conflict between the Pro-Amazon Coalition and the Ruralist Coalition is not just sustained but intensified, leading to what is termed the protraction of conflict. This heightened conflict within the policy system only worsens over time due to the continued and increasing mistrust among the involved parties.

Such a deeply entrenched conflict obstructs the development and implementation of effective policy solutions. In this highly polarized and extreme environment, there is not only a lack of agreement but also an absence of opportunity for policy brokers to mediate. The possibility of mediation in such an intensely polarized policy system becomes virtually non-existent, further entrenching the stalemate and hindering any progress towards resolving the underlying issues.

Given the impasse with the currently dominant coalition, the Pro-Amazon group is compelled to seek alternative means to exert influence in the realm of policymaking. This thesis has categorized the strategies employed by the PAC as information, political, and engagement tactics. The information strategies involve creating public awareness - commonly undertaken by NGOs and activists; and scientific and technical research – commonly undertaken by research institutes and universities. These strategies are aimed at exposing the adverse actions of the Ruralist Coalition, garnering public support for the Pro-Amazon stance, and informing policymakers and stakeholders of scientific data regarding the forest.

The political strategies adopted by the Pro-Amazon Coalition are twofold. On one hand, there is a focus on policy advocacy, which involves actively promoting Pro-Amazon policies and reforms. On the other hand, legal tactics are employed, where the coalition resorts to the judicial system to challenge detrimental policies and actions, including litigations against the federal government in defense of environmental law as well as indigenous and traditional communities' rights.

The engagement strategies of the Pro-Amazon Coalition are diverse and encompass interactions with various sectors. The coalition engages with the private sector, aiming to encourage business entities to support and align with environmental policies. There is also a significant effort towards community engagement, which involves forming alliances among indigenous groups, social movements, and other community actors. These alliances are crucial for collective environmental advocacy and action. Lastly, the coalition has placed a strong emphasis on international engagement. This involves reaching out to the global community and foreign governments to raise awareness about the critical situation in the Amazon. The strategy aims to discourage international support and collaborations with the Brazilian government,

especially under Bolsonaro's administration, which could be perceived as an endorsement of harmful environmental policies.

Within the Pro-Amazon coalition, a notable feature of their strategy revolves around internal engagement, indicating a strong sense of intra-coalition cohesiveness. This cohesion is characterized by active coordination and collaboration among the various actors within the coalition. However, it's important to note that this cohesiveness is not uniformly distributed across all members. Different actors within the coalition collaborate to varying degrees, with some forming closer alliances than others. For instance, many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) within the coalition tend to have a particularly close engagement with indigenous and traditional communities, whereas researchers many times do not. Other actors will engage more with the private sector, and so on.

To elaborate further on the level of intra coalition cohesiveness. My document research confirms that the Pro-Amazon Coalition has been a significant force for several decades, dating back to the 1980s. This long-standing involvement is exemplified by figures like Chico Mendes, one of the earliest and most prominent advocates for environmental conservation in the Amazon. His activism and subsequent assassination brought considerable attention to the cause of Amazon conservation. The longevity of the Pro-Amazon Coalition over such an extended period likely contributes to the high level of intra-coalition cohesiveness perceived today. As detailed in the empirical data, the unifying factor among the various actors within this coalition is a shared policy core belief: the Amazon must be conserved and protected. This belief is not merely an abstract principle; it translates directly into their policy goals.

This scenario aligns with the principles outlined in the Advocacy Coalition Framework, which suggests that public policies are a reflection of the policy core beliefs of the coalitions championing them. In the policy system under study, the Pro-Amazon coalition and the Ruralist coalition possess entirely different policy core beliefs. Consequently, when a coalition like the Ruralists, who hold a set of beliefs fundamentally opposed to those of the Pro-Amazon coalition, is in power, the policies they advance are likely to mirror their underlying beliefs. These beliefs, as previously discussed, stand in direct opposition to those held by the Pro-Amazon coalition. This divergence in core beliefs between the two coalitions is crucial in understanding the nature of the policies they each promote and the resultant hostile policy landscape.

It's intriguing to observe that the policy subsystem we're analyzing experienced a prolonged period of almost two decades characterized by stasis or minimal incremental change. However, this scenario underwent a drastic transformation with the election of former President Jair Bolsonaro, marking a significant shift in the policy landscape.

Under Bolsonaro's tenure, the balance of power within the policy subsystem shifted dramatically. The Ruralist Coalition, which already held substantial influence, gained even more power, although it was not previously in a dominant position. Conversely, the Pro-Amazon Coalition, advocating for environmental conservation in the Amazon, experienced a significant loss of influence. This shift necessitated a strategic reorientation for the Pro-Amazon Coalition. Despite its diminished power, it had to operationalize its resources, which vary across different categories of actors, and devise strategies to impact governmental decisions. These strategies were aimed at influencing the establishment of institutional rules, policy outputs, and eventual policy impacts.

The current dynamics within the policy subsystem differ markedly from those of previous governments since the return of democracy in Brazil in the 1980s. Historically, governments had been more receptive to dialogue with the Pro-Amazon Coalition. In stark contrast, the Bolsonaro administration has shown an absolute closure to such interactions. This lack of a forum for cross-coalition interaction necessitated a change in the Pro-Amazon Coalition's strategies. While it's not that entirely new strategies were developed, there was a notable shift in the emphasis on existing strategies that had previously been less utilized. In the past, the Pro-Amazon Coalition had opportunities for dialogue, including participation in public forums and direct engagements with the government. These interactions allowed for a certain degree of influence in government decisions, a scenario that is conspicuously absent under Bolsonaro's administration.

Consequently, the Pro-Amazon Coalition had to adapt by intensifying strategies such as public awareness campaigns, engaging with foreign governments, and exposing the Bolsonaro administration's misdeeds. They also focused on persuading investment funds and banks, like the Norwegian pension fund, to divest from activities in Brazil. These adjustments reflect the coalition's response to the dramatically altered political landscape and its efforts to continue advocating for environmental conservation in the Amazon despite the challenges posed by the current government.

As a result, this entrenched conflict severely impedes the development and implementation of effective policy solutions. The absence of agreement and the lack of a conducive environment for negotiation or compromise mean that there is no scope for a policy broker or mediator to effectively address and resolve these conflicts. In such an extremely polarized policy system, the possibility of mediation or finding common ground becomes virtually non-existent, leaving little room for progress or resolution.

Despite the low incidence of cross-coalition policy learning in this adversarial policy system, there is evidence suggesting a higher degree of internal learning within the Pro-Amazon coalition. This increase in learning is likely a consequence of the coalition's needs to develop new strategies to navigate the hostile

political landscape they found themselves in. Consequently, these adaptive measures have generated valuable knowledge, contributing to policy learning and evolution within the PAC.

In the context of the adversarial policy subsystem concerning the environmental policy arena in the Amazon, the concept of policy learning provides a nuanced perspective on how the Pro-Amazon Coalition has adapted and evolved its strategies. Despite the challenges posed by the Bolsonaro administration's policies and the high-conflict environment, the Pro-Amazon Coalition's response to the adversarial and hostile political landscape under Bolsonaro's administration demonstrates a high degree of internal policy learning. Faced with limited opportunities for cross-coalition dialogue and a government largely unresponsive to their concerns, the coalition had to rethink and refine its strategies. This process involved learning from past experiences, adapting to new political realities, and innovating in their approach to advocacy and engagement. The shared experience of facing a common adversary in a challenging policy environment has likely strengthened the cohesiveness and collective capacity of the Pro-Amazon Coalition. By working together to adapt to these challenges, coalition members have built stronger relationships, shared knowledge and resources, and developed a more unified approach to advocacy. The learning acquired by the Pro-Amazon Coalition during this period has significant implications for its future policy efforts. The strategies and knowledge developed in response to the Bolsonaro administration's policies have not only equipped the coalition to better navigate the current political landscape but also prepared it for future challenges. As the political environment evolves, this learning will be instrumental in shaping the coalition's responses and ensuring the continued effectiveness of its advocacy for the Amazon.

7. Conclusion

7.1. Main Takeaways

The Advocacy Coalition Framework, particularly the concept of the devil shift, offers critical insights into the dynamics of the Amazon policy subsystem. It reveals how deeply rooted beliefs and perceptions shape the interactions between coalitions, driving the policy direction and limiting the effectiveness of collaborative policymaking efforts. Understanding these dynamics is essential for comprehending the challenges and potential pathways for more integrated and sustainable policy solutions in the Amazon.

The dynamics between the Pro-Amazon and Ruralist Coalitions under the Bolsonaro administration evidenced the need for realignment in Brazil's environmental policy. The Ruralist Coalition's dominance led to a pronounced shift from environmental conservation to development-oriented policies.

The polarized nature of these coalitions' beliefs led to a policy environment characterized by conflict rather than collaboration. The Pro-Amazon Coalition's attempts to advocate for environmental conservation were

continually challenged by the Ruralist Coalition's push for development and exploitation. This adversarial relationship hindered the possibility of finding middle ground, as each coalition sought to advance its agenda.

The adaptation of these strategies reflected the Pro-Amazon Coalition's resilience and resourcefulness. By diversifying and intensifying their approaches, the coalition sought to counterbalance the significant challenges posed by the Ruralist Coalition's dominance and the government's closed stance. These strategies not only aimed to influence policy decisions but also to maintain the visibility of the Amazon issue on a global scale, ensuring that the fight for the Amazon remained a pertinent and pressing international concern.

Despite the challenges posed by a closed forum for dialogue and a high-conflict scenario, the coalition demonstrated a remarkable capacity for learning, adaptation, and strategic innovation. This internal policy learning process has been crucial in enabling the coalition to continue its advocacy for the Amazon's conservation effectively, even under hostile political conditions.

The Advocacy Coalition Framework, particularly the concept of the devil shift, offers critical insights into the dynamics of the Amazon policy subsystem. It reveals how deeply rooted beliefs and perceptions shape the interactions between coalitions, driving the policy direction and limiting the effectiveness of collaborative policymaking efforts. Understanding these dynamics is essential for comprehending the challenges and potential pathways for more integrated and sustainable policy solutions in the Amazon.

7.2. Concluding thoughts

The most compelling and significant revelation from this research lies in the remarkable adaptability and resilience demonstrated by the Pro-Amazon Coalition in the face of President Bolsonaro's administration's efforts, which aggressively sought to transform the Amazon Rainforest – a critical global ecological treasure – in a manner reminiscent of the exploitation seen on the fictional Pandora planet. This adaptability was not just a reaction to immediate threats but a strategic recalibration in response to a rapidly changing political and environmental landscape.

As the political scenario shifts again with President Lula's return to power, it is crucial to recognize that the struggle for the Amazon is far from over. The lessons learned from the Pro-Amazon Coalition's resistance during Bolsonaro's tenure are invaluable. They highlight the need for continued vigilance and proactive advocacy to protect the Amazon and its indigenous and traditional communities. The coalition's journey shows that environmental stewardship is an ongoing effort, one that requires constant attention and adaptation.

The future of the Amazon still hangs in a delicate balance. While the current political climate may offer more favorable conditions for environmental conservation, the challenges that the rainforest faces are deeply entrenched and multifaceted. It is fundamental that the momentum built by the Pro-Amazon Coalition's resistance not only continues but is strengthened. The coalition's strategies, improved through years of advocacy and adaptation, must be leveraged to ensure that the Amazon Rainforest is preserved for future generations.

7.3. Recommendations for Future Studies Utilizing the Advocacy Coalition Framework

In light of the findings from the study of the Pro-Amazon Coalition under the Bolsonaro administration, future research utilizing the Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF) would benefit from a deeper exploration into the effectiveness of the strategies employed by advocacy coalitions. The following recommendations aim to guide and enhance future studies in this area:

Assessing the Impact of Coalition Strategies: Future studies should focus on evaluating the actual impact of various strategies employed by coalitions like the Pro-Amazon Coalition. This involves not only identifying the strategies but also critically analyzing their outcomes, effectiveness, and the extent to which they influence policy changes.

Comparative Analysis Across Different Regimes: Research could benefit from a comparative analysis of coalition strategies under different political regimes. Such studies would offer insights into how coalitions adapt their strategies in response to changes in the political environment and the effectiveness of these adaptations.

Quantitative Measures of Strategy Effectiveness: Developing and utilizing quantitative measures to assess the effectiveness of coalition strategies can provide a more objective and data-driven understanding. This could involve metrics such as policy change frequency, public opinion shifts, or changes in online indicators for times the strategy category showed up on a search engine.

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Annexes:

Annex 1. Interview Guide

- How did you/your organisation/the pro-Amazon coalition engage with the Bolsonaro administration regarding environmental protection and deforestation policies?
- What were the challenges or obstacles that you/your organisation/the pro-Amazon coalition faced while advocating for environmental protections and anti-deforestation policies under Bolsonaro's presidency?
- Can you describe strategies or tactics you/your organisation/the pro-Amazon coalition used during Bolsonaro's presidency to promote robust environmental protections and anti-deforestation policies?
- How did you/your organisation/the pro-Amazon coalition collaborate or coordinate with other actors that share similar goals regarding environmental protection and deforestation policies?

Consent form

I have received and understood information about the project “The Bolsonaro Environmental Crisis: Strategies Employed by Pro-Environmental Coalitions to Protect the Amazon” and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

to participate in an interview.

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end of the project.

(Signed by participant, date)

Annex 3. Participants Overview

Participant Code	Actors Group	Interview Conducted By
AG	Public Sector	Phone
JR	NGOs	Video Conference
FR	NGOs	Video Conference
IK	Social Movements	Phone
RI	Researchers	Video Conference
WI	Indigenous Group	Video Call



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