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## Political mobilization and sustainability: The socio-environmental movement and the struggle for land and territorial rights in Brazil

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# Political mobilization and sustainability: The socio-environmental movement and the struggle for land and territorial rights in Brazil

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**Abstract**

*Since the second half of the 1980s, there has been a growing trend of socio-environmentalism in Brazil as an articulated movement in the social, cultural, economic, political and environmental spheres. Concomitant with the historical process of redemocratization of Brazil, movements of resistance and struggle for land were already unfolding in various regions of Brazil. Rural people and social groups of different historical formations (mainly called traditional communities) also came to represent their collective existence through multiple associative forms. Thus, collective social action were mainly aimed at defending their specific territorialities, as well as local differentiated relations with nature and land. The political growth of the socio-environmental trajectory opened path for structuring new paradigms in Brazil. The object of protection ceased to be exclusively the environment itself, but the multiplicity of forms of relationships between human beings and nature. This understanding encouraged the governmental creation of protected areas based on original experiences developed in Brazil, resulting in the creation of the Sustainable Use Conservation Units. Linked to socio-environmental aspirations, these protected areas aim to reconcile claims for land and territorial rights with needs for the conservation in accessing and using nature by many forms of sustainable extractivism.*

**Keywords**: socioenvironmentalism; protected areas; conservation; Sustainable Use Conservation Units; sustainable extractivism.

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## 1 Introduction

Socioenvironmentalism, as an articulated movement in social, cultural, economic, political and environmental spheres (SILVA, 2008), was born from the trajectory of alliances between social and environmentalist movements in the second half of the 1980s, concomitant with the historical process of redemocratization of Brazil. Its main logic, based on the transversality of public policies and the democratic principles of social participation in environmental management, disseminated concepts of sustainability, social justice and local control of natural resources (SANTILLI, 2005).

The historical moment preceding the rise of socio-environmentalism in Brazil includes the repression of the military regime, when several works of this hegemonic political vision favored mainly entrepreneurs for the strategies of construction of hydroelectric dams, roads, petroleum refineries, and industries. In addition, the 'modernization' of Brazilian agriculture based on Green Revolution, in the same time, was marked by intense mechanization and expansion of agricultural frontiers, increasing land concentration and the significant social and environmental impacts particularly in the Amazon (DELGADO, 2010).

The situation of marginalization and social oppression changed with re-democratization and the advent of the Federal Constitution of 1988. Oriented towards the consolidation of democracy, the Constitution allowed mobilizations and articulations of civil society against the developmentalist perspective. Movements of resistance and struggle for land were already unfolding in various regions of Brazil, such as the creation of the Landless Rural Workers Movement (MST) in the 1980s, which, through collective and direct actions, began to press National Institute for Agrarian Reform (INCRA) for the expropriation of lands.

Rural people and social groups of different historical formations (mainly called traditional communities) also came to represent their collective existence by resisting the socially unequal parameters of development. The main aimed was to defend their specific territorialities, as well as local differentiated relations with nature and land.

This new sociopolitical dynamic has brought about profound changes in the capacity for social mobilization, strengthening popular power and negotiations with governments and the State. Thus, collective social action in search of sustainability, both in environmental and social spheres, constituted the seeds of socio-environmentalism in Brazil.

The political growth of the socio-environmental trajectory opened path for structuring new paradigms in Brazil. The object of protection ceased to be exclusively the environment itself, but the multiplicity of forms of relationships between human beings and nature. This understanding encouraged the governmental creation of protected areas based on original experiences developed in Brazil, resulting in the creation of the Sustainable Use Conservation Units. Linked to socio-environmental aspirations, these protected areas aim to reconcile claims for land and territorial rights with needs for the conservation and sustainability in accessing and using nature.

The social dimension assumed relevance to the common commitment in the maintenance of sustainable landscapes, thus increasing the chances of conservation. Social struggles for land and territorial rights are direct linked to processes of sustainable accesses and uses of nature, having socio-environmental thinking leading to demands for sustainable use of protected areas by local traditional communities.

## 2 New paradigms in environmental Brazilian legislation based on socio-environmentalism

The ideals of the socioenvironmental movement illuminated a new approach to the relationship between people, nature and territory. One of its' pillars is the sustainable use of nature through knowledge and practices of conservationist management of forests and other ecosystems where local populations inhabit (FLEURY and ANJOS, 2007).

With the advent of socio-environmentalism, concepts such as biodiversity, genetic heritage and local knowledge have become the focus of sociopolitical events, focused on collective rights. Social groups of different historical formations came to represent their collective existences through multiple associative forms, with greater visibility in the 1990s. For Scherer-Warren (2014), it is about the constitution of grassroots organizations, constituted according to criteria such as ancestral legacies, political-organizational elements, environmental relations, characteristics of collective identity, among others. Therefore, in the face of the pluricultural reality of the country, various local associations such as chestnut trees, *piaçabeiros*, fishermen, extractivists, *caiçaras*, and innumerable others have appeared throughout the national territory (ALMEIDA, 2008).

Thus, comes up, in the conformation of socio-environmentalism, alliances between the social field movements and environmentalists (SANTILLI, 2005), that converge to work in networks. In Scherer-Warren's (2014, p.23), this was a new strategy of articulation, "from grassroots to networks". The Amazon Working Group (GTA), founded in 1991-1992, with more than 500 entities among extractivists, indigenous peoples, artisans, fishermen and small farmers in the Amazon, represented one of several experiences of collective existence in a network.

The social field movements also incorporated environmental themes. According to Almeida (2014), the Landless Rural Workers Movement (MST), the Small Farmers' Movement (MPA), the Federation of Workers in Family Agriculture, first as the South Region (FETRAF-SUL) and then as FETRAF-Brazil, important segments of the National Confederation of Workers and Agriculture Workers (CONTAG) have incorporated proposals aimed at the construction of sustainable alternatives for rural development.

Contrary to the developmental agricultural model, promoted by the Green Revolution, such organizations articulated on a broader scale, participated in the I National Meeting of Agroecology in 2002, which resulted in the creation of a non-governmental network called National Articulation of Agroecology (ANA) (ALMEIDA, 2014). For the author, "ANAs political action at the national level in defense of a project of transformation of the rural world, whose principles are shared by networked organizations, favors the construction of a common identity between these organizations and movements, in respect of self-attributed identities by local and regional actors" (ALMEIDA, 2014, p.48).

Such an understanding, according to Almeida (2004), implied the recognition of differentiated social relations with the natural resources and the specific territorialities in Brazil, where the physical, spiritual and cultural expressions of diverse human groups are evidenced. In Little's view (2002, p. 3), "human territoriality" is associated with environmental knowledge, social uses, ideologies and collective identities, including also the affective bonds with the territory and its occupation history kept in the collective memory. For this author, "any territory is a historical product of social and political processes" (LITTLE, 2002, p.3).

Socio-environmentalism has pushed for the obligation of environmental public policies to include, value and protect local communities. In the words of Almeida (2004, p.22), [...] 'Native' knowledge about nature acquires political legitimacy [...] ". Innovative laws were being instituted, beginning to predict democratic mechanisms that politicized both routine use and production practices under natural resources.

From then on, recognition of the links between local communities and conservation began to emerge, as well as between Conservation Units and development issues. Issues related to local populations have come to be appreciated by governmental, nongovernmental and scientific research bodies. Approaches to environmental and social issues were discussed in an integrated way in ECO 92, setting up "the synthesis of the socio-environmental paradigm" (RICARDO and MACEDO, 2004, p.7).
Subsequently, in 1997, reinforcing the social and environmental precepts, the conference entitled "Protected Areas in the 21st Century: from Islands to Networks", organized by the World Commission on Protected Areas of the World Conservation Union (IUCN), identified the main challenges in XXI century. Among them, as pointed out by Araújo (2012, p. 48), "changing the focus of UCs from 'islands' to 'networks'; ensure that protected areas are managed by, and not against, local communities".

A good example of the recognition of these rights is the State Law nº. 1277 of 13 January, 1999, known as the "Chico Mendes Law", that provided the concession of economic subsidy under the production of natural rubber extracted by the rubber tappers (ACRE,1999). The formulation and implementation of public policies also incorporated principles of social participation in the management of social and environmental assets, such as, for example, Law 9,985 of 2000, of the National System of Nature Conservation Units (SNUC) (BRASIL, 2000).

Considered as an advance in Brazilian environmental legislation, the Law Nº. 9,985, dated 18 July, 2000, established guidelines and procedures for the creation, implementation and management of Conservation Units at three levels of government (municipal, state, federal) and private areas Conservation (BRASIL, 2000).

The National System of Nature Conservation Units completed 17 years, with an integrated vision of conservation management, through a wide range of typologies of protected areas. Therefore, SNUC standardized the management categories of Conservation Units, according to the different potentialities of use and specificities of each biome (GURGEL et al., 2011).

## 3 The National System of Nature Conservation Units and distinct strategies of integration the territory

Regarding the organizational configuration, the SNUC was structured through a set of federal, state, municipal and private Conservation Units, distributed in twelve management categories. These are arranged in two distinct groups: those of integral protection and those of sustainable use. This organization sought to contemplate distinct strategies of area management.

The Integral Protection Conservation Units, incorporate five management categories: Ecological Station (ESEC), Biological Reserve (REBIO), National Park (PN), Natural Monument (MONA) and Wildlife Refuge (REVIS). This group presents greater restrictions of use, justified by their fragilities and environmental particularities, as well as by the basic objective of nature preservation. On the other hand, the Sustainable Use Conservation Units, linked to the socioenvironmental aspirations, have as basic objective to reconcile the direct use of nature, with the conservation and sustainability of its resources. In this group, seven management categories were established: Environmental Protection Area (APA), Area of Relevant Ecological Interest (ARIE), National Forest (FLONA), Extractive Reserve (RESEX), Fauna Reserve (REFAU), Sustainable Development Reserve (RDS) and Private Reserve of Natural Patrimony (RPPN).

The SNUC regulated the processes of creation, implementation and management of Conservation Units (UC), providing mechanisms to ensure the participation of society in the implementation of these spaces. New trends and guidelines emerged for the management of Conservation Units, aimed

at participatory management of protected areas and inclusion of rights and opinions of local populations. In Brazil, the trends of the new paradigm in the management of protected areas can be recognized from the socio-environmental measures incorporated in the SNUC.

Although the Integral Protection Units were created from preservationist concepts of untouchability - where human presence was generally considered to be detrimental to preservation - Marcio Santilli (2004) states that this strategy, adopted in isolation, is insufficient to conservation of biodiversity in the long term. In the words of this author:

> There is no doubt that the preservation of biodiversity requires the untouchability of certain areas. I believe that if they were consulted about it, Indians, riparians and extractivists, as well as most of the public opinion, would agree with this statement. However, it is also true that the availability of such foreclosed areas will be less and less, and that a SNUC limited to them would, of necessity, be diminished in relation to the demands for conservation. In addition, the idea of untouchability will be less and less feasible, since there is no way to prevent areas from influencing, for example, global climate change (SANTILLI, 2004, p.12).

From reason, it is not a question of disregarding the value of the areas of integral protection, nor of disregarding the benefits of this type of conservation. Appropriate management of all categories is extremely necessary and complementary, within the scope portrayed by a system of protected areas.
However, it is a question of recognizing the management of Integral Protection Units in a broader way and, therefore, inserted in processes of systemic communication with their territories. In this line, the inclusion of a diverse range of local actors, integrated in social development processes, would represent the basis of bioregional planning oriented towards conservation goals. Integral Protection Units should be recognized only as one of several components necessary for an effective regional or national conservation strategy.

Accordind to this perspective, the National Strategic Plan for Protected Areas (PNAP), established by Presidential Decree 5,758 of 2006, outlined strategies to establish a comprehensive system of protected areas, aiming at the integrated management of land and marine areas in a more broad (BRASIL, 2006). The PNAP sought to integrate Conservation Units into Indigenous Lands and Quilombola Lands, as well as legal reserves and permanent preservation areas, identified as integrating elements of the landscape (BRASIL, 2006).

The proposal of PNAP, formulated based on the ecosystem approach, represents a significant contribution to actions related to the integration between Conservation Units and among other protected areas. This corroborates Phillips's (2004) considerations about landscape dynamics, the interrelationships between protected areas, and the notion that ecosystems are open systems.

SNUC (BRASIL, 2000) recognizes and emphasizes in its text the importance of integrating protected areas through ecological corridors and mosaics. According to Ayres et al. (2005), integrated management of ecological corridors aims to facilitate the flow of individuals and genes between populations and subpopulations, increasing the likelihood of their long-term survival and ensuring the maintenance of ecological and evolutionary processes on a large scale. In addition, this management model seeks to encompass the demands and aspirations of the various social actors, recognizing them as fundamental elements for biodiversity conservation and long-term sustainability goals (AYRES et al., 2005, p.23).

Lino and Albuquerque (2007) maintain that mosaic implementation is very positive for conservation processes, since larger parcels of land are being managed to maintain biodiversity. The authors argue that the Mosaics could strengthen ecological corridors as the regions in which biologically priority areas are inserted are managed in an integrated way.

Thus, it could expand the scale of territorial planning and raise awareness of the importance of preserving local biodiversity, encouraging more appropriate management practices, minimizing the negative impacts of anthropic activities on ecological corridors. Thereby reducing edge effects and expanding its limits and increasing the chances of reconnecting the natural áreas interrupted between conservation units and also between mosaics.

The implementation of the mosaic makes possible the dialogue and the joint confrontation of the difficulties by actors of different direct realities. This fact makes more effective the participative management of protected areas, generating a reduction of time and expenses. Santilli (2004, p.12) reinforces that the conservation strategy will increasingly require the integrated management of larger territorial extensions, making no sense for this author "to privilege Protected Areas of Integral Protection in detriment of those of Sustainable Use, or even Conservation Units of any kind to the detriment of Indigenous Lands or others that are occupied by social groups and can be managed in a more adequate way.

Bensusan (2006) defends the idea that areas of integral protection are transformed into central areas of a broader system that integrates the sustainable use of natural resources by local communities and the development of other income generating activities for these populations. Studies on the environment of nine protected areas, distributed in ten Brazilian states, have shown greater efficiency in the management of protected areas when local communities are involved. According to Beensusan (2006, p. 27) "the more participation, organization and information, the less conflictive and efficient the management of the conservation unit is and the greater the income generation alternatives of the local community the greater the success in biodiversity conservation".

However, for integrated protection units extend greater benefits and direct services to local populations, these areas need to be integrated into regional socio-economic planning within the surrounding context. Therefore, the involvement of the local population in decision-making processes on social, economic, political, cultural and environmental conservation issues is fundamental.

It is necessary to point out that the new paradigms and arrangements introduced by the SNUC - strongly influenced by the socio-environmental view - signal the need to reformulate the traditional standard of centralized management. The preservationist logic, preponderant in the areas of integral protection, isolation of natural areas, has been heavily rebounded in this new approach.

The social dimension assumes relevance for the construction of participative agendas directed to the common commitment in the maintenance of sustainable landscapes, increasing, therefore, the chances of conservation. And, still slowly and gradually, this is a trajectory in a frank process of construction via the chain of socio-environmental thinking in the country.

## 4 The recognition of territorial rights in National System of Nature Conservation Units

The establishment of protected areas has been one of the main instruments for the conservation of biodiversity in situ. In addition to composing areas territorially demarcated and maintained under specific norms for the purpose of conservation and/or the preservation of natural resources, these areas also include the traditional systems and means of human population survival.

In Brazil, although the practice of creating these spaces began in a less expressive way in the late 1930s, this situation reverted in the 1980s and 1990s, with a significant advance in the establishment of these areas (MEDEIROS and GARY, 2006). And in the following decade, one of the main instruments of protected area policy was defined, which is the National System of Conservation Units (SNUC).

The group of Conservation Units for Sustainable Use at SNUC opened space for the creation of new categories based on original experiences developed in the country (MEDEIROS, 2006). This was the case of the Extractive Reserve (RESEX), a result of the rubber tappers' struggle for forest survival and of the Sustainable Development Reserve (RDS) as reconnaissance territory of traditional communities. The territories of the traditional people are based on decades, in some cases, centuries of effective occupation. The long duration of these occupations provides a historical motive for their territorial claims. And as discussed above, the socio-environmental movement, in many areas, has brought a notable increase in the visibility and political power of social movements and non-governmental organizations. The traditional people were quickly incorporated in this process, which stregthen their territorial struggles.

The environmentalist dimension of social territories is expressed in the ecological sustainability. For these reason, traditional people were considered by environmentalists as partners with many affinities due to their historical practices and uses of the resouces. The occupation by these people over long periods of time, was based on the little degratation exploitation of their respective ecosystems.

This sustainability was a key element in the establishment of new partnerships between some of these social groups and sectors of the environmental movement, and led to the implementation of forms of territorial co-management, where the government - mainly its environmental organs - and a particular social group in partnership in the protection and use of a specific geographic area designated as a Sustainable Conservation Unit called Extratism Reserves.

These areas are covered by the National System of Nature Conservation Units (Art. 18, Law 9985 of June 18, 2000), which defines them as: "area used by traditional extractive populations, whose subsistence is based on extractivism and, in addition, on subsistence farming and small animal husbandry, and whose basic objectives are to protect the livelihoods and culture of these populations and to ensure sustainable use of the unit's natural resources.

Destined to be areas of self-sustaining exploitation and conservation of natural resources by extractive population, Extractive Reserves have received attention because it is a category that unites environmental concerns with the prerogatives of traditional extractive communities.

The Extractive Reserve was designed as a critical model for the increasing deforestation that occurred in the Amazon, transforming huge areas of biodiversity-rich forests into pasture fields to counteract the predatory development and concentration of wealth model adopted by Brazil since 1970, when the basis was the expansion of extensive livestock farming. The economy generated in a Resex can not be seen as large-scale. It is an economy focused on the sustainability of the traditional resident population, which, work collectively with various possibilities that the forest offers: oils, resins, medicinal, latex, seeds, etc.

The movement that took the political leadership of the extractive groups was the rubber tappers of the Brazilian Amazon. Due to a series of political alliances, particularly with environmental groups and the leadership of Chico Mendes, rubber tappers built a new political space and became new social actors on the national scene. Since the First National Meeting of Rubber Tappers in 1985 in Brasília, its territorial claims resulted in the formulation of territorial public policies, culminating in the creation of the Extractive Reserves (IEA, 1993).

Subsequently, this territorial modality was appropriated by other groups of extractivists who did not exploit rubber, to include chestnut trees, babaçu breakers, fishing communities, and others. This territorial modality provide a formal recognition by the State of the territoriality of the extractivists, constituting a demonstration of the transformation of a reality through a political struggle. In these areas, the control and collective use of resources are legally recognized and regulated by plans of use prepared by the local agro-extractive workers' associations and approved by the responsible federal agencies. As these lands formally belong to the Union.

The extractive reserves are areas of public domain and, as such, depend on a Real Concession of Use of the territory destined to the reserve that is granted to the community and not individually. (SNUC, 2000) The granted community becomes responsible for the management of the territory in conjunction with the governmental environmental agency, which may represent a less bureaucratic, time-consuming and risky alternative for guaranteeing rights and promoting practices that comply with sustainability principles.

It is importante to metion, that although the extractive reserves were initially mostly oriented to forest environments, the viability of extractivism in other ecosystems is possible. So, after a period of accommodation of the parameters of implantation and regulation of areas destined to the sustainable use, in 1992, the first Marine Extractivist Reserve of Pirajubaé, was created in the state of Santa Catarina, outside the limits of the Amazon (CNUC, 2017).

Over the years, it is remarkable the increase in the number of requests for the creation of Marine Extractive Reserves in Brazil, resultind in the creation of many reserves spreaded along the coast of the country. There are many experiences that illustrate the rise at the creation of these areas. One of these, is the reserve created in 2010 at the district of Mandira, an estuarine region in the Ribeira Valley, where tradicional people lives by extractivism in the mangroves of the estuary-lagoon complex of Iguape-Cananéia (CNUC, 2017).

Another example, is the Extractive Reserve of Corumbau, localized in the state of Bahia, where take place the logic of the artisanal production system, with fishing as the main activity in marine community productive spaces. The region concentrates important remainings of the Atlantic Forest that desert political attention, given its' high biodiversity and the drastic reduction that has been suffering mainly since the twentieth century.

There are other experiences of co-management in the SNUC, diferents from the Extractive Reserve modality. It is the case of the such as the Sustainable Development Reserves (RDS). The basic objective of RDS is to preserve nature and at the same time ensure the conditions and means for the reproduction and improvement the quality of life and exploitation of the natural resources of traditional populations. As well as valuing, conserving and improve the knowledge and techniques of environmental management developed by these populations. It is in the public domain, and the particular areas included in its limits must be, when necessary, expropriated, according to what the law provides.

In the southwest of Amapá, on the north of the Amazon River, the RDS Iratapuru River maintains a system for controlling community use of natural resources. The reserve retains its importance in the significant display of fauna and flora that represent the endemic species of the Guiana Shield, besides the fact of allowing the sustainable use of these resources. In the Iratapuru RDS, the residents exploit mainly brazil nuts, but also other species of commercial value, such as andiroba, copaíba and camu-camu; also having potential for fishing.

Another example is the Rio Negro Sustainable Development Reserve (RDS) created through Law 3.355, december 26, 2008. With an approximate area of 103,000 hectares, the reserve aims to preserve nature and ensure the necessary conditions for the reproduction of the traditional communities' way of

life, as well as to valorize, preserve and improve the knowledge and management techniques of the environment developed by these communities/population (BRASIL, 2008).

The Mamirauá Sustainable Development Reserve also has a relevance in socio-environmental terms, as is protected and managed by civil society sectors. This experience in the Mamirauá and Amanã Sustainable Development Reserve in Amazonas, is intrinsically linked to the Mamirauá Project, located in the Amazon Basin of the Middle Valley of Solimões. This Reserve was created to reconcile biodiversity conservation with sustainable development. In this Reserve, fishing resources are considered the main source of animal protein and income for riverine populations. According to Arantes, Garcez and Castello (2006), fishing, carried out in an adaptive and participative way by local fishermen, helped to increase the natural stock of pirarucus (*Arapaima gigas*) in the managed areas.

This type of experience reinforces the need for environmental conservation planning based on practices of social uses of biodiversity that value the knowledge of those involved in the process. Costabeber and Caporal (2002) point out that the knowledge and values of local populations need to be analyzed, understood and used as a starting point in development processes.

## 5 Present achievements and recurring challenges of National System of Conservation Units the in Brazil

Regarding the implementation of the SNUC, currently are implemented 954 federal, 795 state, 230 municipal units (CNUC, 2017). In territorial area, the Brazilian conservation units cover about 1,585,778 km² of the continental and marine national territory. Of the total, 795.995 km² belong to the federal sphere, 762,747 km² to the state and 27,036 km² to the municipal, as shown in the data in table 1, extracted from the National Register of Conservation Units (CNUC).

**Tabela consolidada das Unidades de Conservação**

Fonte: CNUC/MMA - www.mma.gov.br/cadastro_uc

*Atualizada em: 07/02/2017*

| Tipo / Categoria | Esfera | | | | | | TOTAL | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Federal | | Estadual | | Municipal | | | |
| **Proteção Integral** | **Nº** | **Área (Km²)** | **Nº** | **Área (Km²)** | **Nº** | **Área (Km²)** | **Nº** | **Área (Km²)** |
| Estação Ecológica | 32 | 74.731 | 61 | 47.596 | 3 | 10 | 96 | 122.336 |
| Monumento Natural | 3 | 443 | 29 | 906 | 12 | 133 | 44 | 1.481 |
| Parque Nacional / Estadual / Municipal | 72 | 267.208 | 205 | 94.182 | 122 | 404 | 399 | 361.795 |
| Refúgio de Vida Silvestre | 8 | 2.692 | 38 | 1.796 | 3 | 66 | 49 | 4.554 |
| Reserva Biológica | 31 | 42.628 | 23 | 13.447 | 8 | 51 | 62 | 56.126 |
| **Total Proteção Integral** | **146** | **387.702** | **356** | **157.926** | **148** | **664** | **650** | **546.292** |

| Uso Sustentável | Nº | Área (Km²) | Nº | Área (Km²) | Nº | Área (Km²) | Nº | Área (Km²) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Floresta Nacional / Estadual / Municipal | 67 | 170.778 | 39 | 135.856 | 0 | 0 | 106 | 306.634 |
| Reserva Extrativista | 62 | 124.724 | 28 | 19.867 | 0 | 0 | 90 | 144.591 |
| Reserva de Desenvolvimento Sustentável | 2 | 1.026 | 30 | 110.950 | 5 | 171 | 37 | 112.147 |
| Reserva de Fauna | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Área de Proteção Ambiental | 34 | 106.503 | 188 | 336.940 | 83 | 26.064 | 305 | 469.506 |
| Área de Relevante Interesse Ecológico | 16 | 431 | 25 | 451 | 9 | 138 | 50 | 1.020 |
| RPPN | 634 | 4.831 | 198 | 757 | 1 | 0 | 833 | 5.588 |
| **Total Uso Sustentável** | **815** | **408.292** | **508** | **604.821** | **98** | **26.373** | **1421** | **1.039.486** |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Total Geral** | **961** | **795.995** | **864** | **762.747** | **246** | **27.036** | **2071** | **1.585.778** |
| **Área Considerando Sobreposição Mapeada** | **961** | **785.958** | **864** | **756.418** | **246** | **27.004** | **2071** | **1.547.792** |

**Fonte:** CNUC (2017).

A relevant fact to be analyzed is that the Integral Protection Units occupy 546,292 Km², while those of Sustainable Use occupy almost double in territorial extension, with 1,038,486 Km². In terms of numbers, the Integral Protection Units total 650 Units, while the Sustainable Use Units total 1421. It is possible to perceive the preponderance of Sustainable Use PAs, expressing the implementation of a territorial planning model based on the principles of valuing socio-cultural and natural heritage, as well as on the sustainable use of natural resources.

The reconciliation of the preservation and conservationist aspects of the SNUC, reflected in the creation of the Conservation Units of Integral Protection and Sustainable Use groups, broadened the vision of the Brazilian model of management of Conservation Units. In addition, it is important to recognize that the socio-environmental concepts and values incorporated by the SNUC Law (BRASIL, 2000) illuminated the legal consecration of mechanisms directed at the participation of public institutions and civil society in these protected areas.

Although the challenges of the SNUC are not the specific topic of this article, it is important to highlight that despite the normative advances, pressures and threats are still recurrent in the Conservation Units. It is not a matter of undervalue the originality and the primacy of the system, but rather evidencing real conflicts and emphasizing that only the existence of the SNUC does not guarantee its full consolidation and effectiveness.

Ramos (2012) points out that the lack of integration between the parties in the governance structure is one of the obstacles to be overcome. In a coalition system, "where ministries are partialized, and where each tends to capitalize selfs initiatives, interaction between governing bodies ends up happening mostly in situations of conflict, in order words, macro-politics do not interact between them" (RAMOS, 2012, p.54). In the National Congress, for example, they deal with proposals that intend to prevent the creation of new CUs and reduce the limits of units already created. Several Conservation Units have their creation processes paralyzed by opposition within the government itself. The Ministry of Mines and Energy itself is openly opposed to the creation of new areas where possibilities for exploiting the hydroelectric potential are foreseen (RAMOS, 2012).

Another relevant challenge lies in the consolidation of participatory management. If, on the one hand, the SNUC Law (BRASIL, 2000) meets the management perspective in inclusive processes - in alignment with paradigms inspired by socio-environmentalism - on the other hand, it faces the fact that the conditions for participatory management not always occur in practice. Medeiros and Garay (2006) point out that in the 21st century, one of the main difficulties of the management of protected areas in Brazil is related to the lack of understanding of local actors on the meaning of these natural heritage, potentializing conflicts and struggles for the use and possession of these areas associated with them.

All of these adversities are largely due to SNUC's own implementation process, which, despite the progress already made, is still a long way in the search for further progress. One of this, is to integrate the Conservation Units into the broader planning and management scales of the territory. This is to gain greater relevance, both for national development strategies and for the rights and needs of local populations. The route to be pursued is aimed at allying knowledge and human rights to environmental protection strategies, also joining the management of Conservation Units with alternatives for socio-environmental development.

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