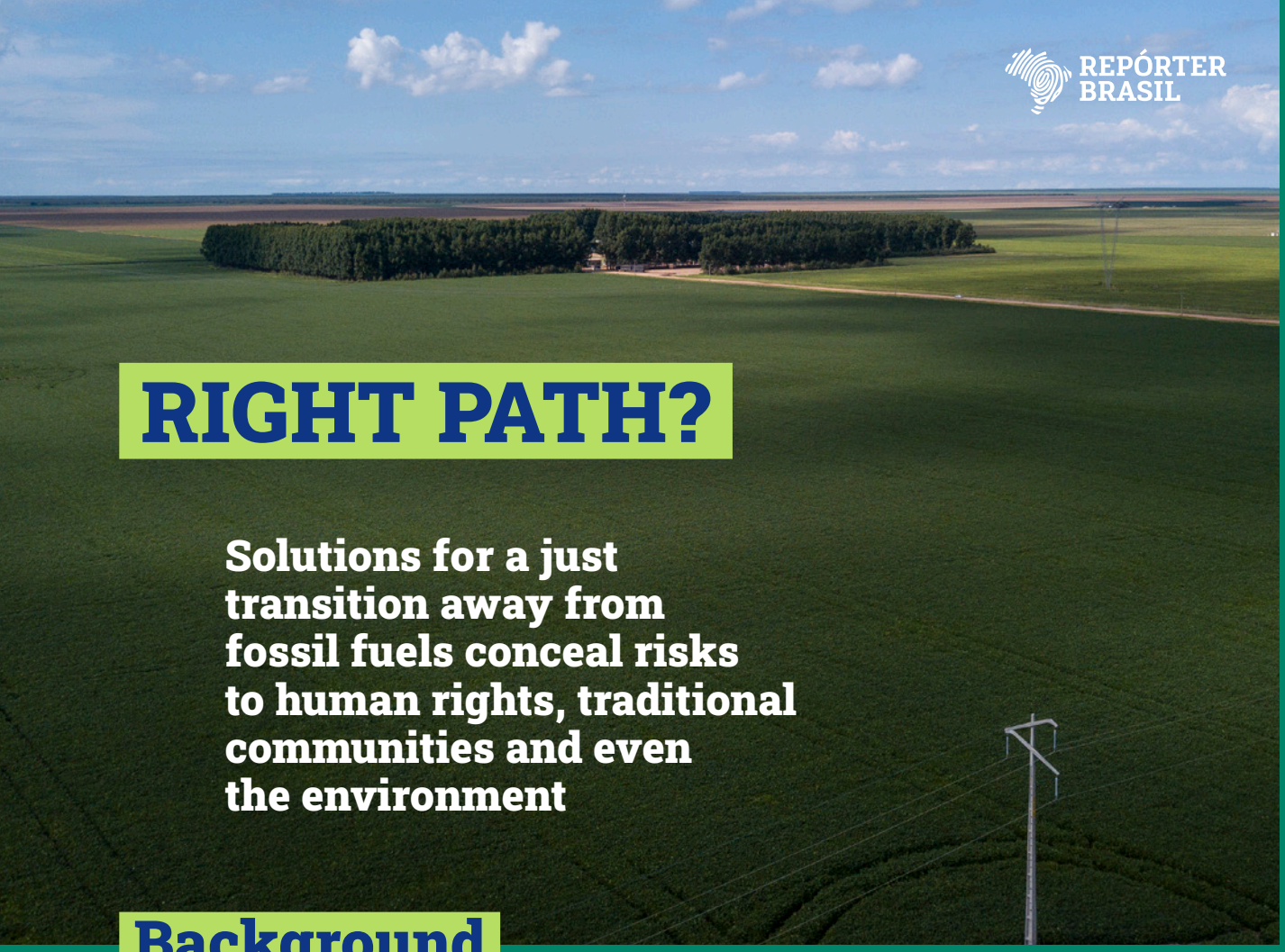


RIGHT PATH?

Solutions for a just transition away from fossil fuels conceal risks to human rights, traditional communities and even the environment

Photo: Fernando Martinho/Repórter Brasil

Background

Scientific evidence continues to mount that the world is heading towards severe adverse impacts as global temperatures rise. Although the burning of fossil fuels is the primary driver of global warming, there is still little consensus among countries on how to phase-out highly polluting energy sources such as oil, coal and natural gas.

On the eve of COP30, held in November 2025 in Belém, in the state of Pará, the Brazilian government took on the responsibility of attempting to change this reality by proposing the development of a **Roadmap for a Just, Orderly and Equitable Transition Away from Fossil Fuels**. In his address at the Leaders' Summit[1], President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva called for global planning with clearly defined steps and investment mechanisms aligned with this objective.

Brazil argues that without such a roadmap, the world will fail to contain the climate crisis. However, many of the solutions promoted by the Brazilian government—several of which are already being implemented domestically—are rooted in a controversial local track record.

In this factsheet, **Repórter Brasil** highlights how measures framed as green and renewable are linked to allegations of human, territorial and environmental rights violations in Brazil, and outlines the safeguards needed to mitigate risks and ensure a genuinely just transition away from fossil fuels.

Difficult Negotiation

COP30 ended without consensus on the adoption of a global roadmap, and without meaningful emphasis on phasing out fossil fuels in the Conference's final declaration. The term "fossil fuels" was not mentioned a single time in the document[2].

The conference presidency, led by Brazilian ambassador André Corrêa do Lago, was tasked with presenting two roadmap proposals ahead of COP31, to be held in Turkey at the end of 2026: one focused on a just and orderly transition away from fossil fuels and another on tackling deforestation[3]. The initiative, however, does not have a formal mandate from the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

In recent editions of the Climate Summit, efforts to address fossil fuel use have faced organised resistance from major oil-producing and importing countries, including Saudi Arabia, China and India. At COP30, the difficulty of reaching common ground on the issue became clear. In the end, 82 countries voiced support for the creation of a roadmap—but together they account for just 7% of global oil production[4].

In parallel, Colombia and the Netherlands will host the First Conference on the Transition Away from Fossil Fuels, scheduled to take place from 24 to 29 April 2026 in Santa Marta, Colombia. While not formally part of the UN system, the event is presented as a complementary space aimed at overcoming economic dependence on oil and reassessing energy matrices, with a strong emphasis on multilateralism[5]. On that occasion, Brazil's COP30 presidency intends to gather contributions to be incorporated into the roadmaps under its responsibility.

Domestically, President Lula has also commissioned his ministers to develop a national roadmap—described as a "Brazilian contribution to a just and managed energy transition"—to be presented in the first half of 2026 to the National Energy Policy Council[6]. Under the motto "without a roadmap, there is no transition", the government aims to establish a timeline with milestones to guide public policy and resource allocation. The global roadmap is expected to follow a similar structure, while respecting the specificities and needs of each country.

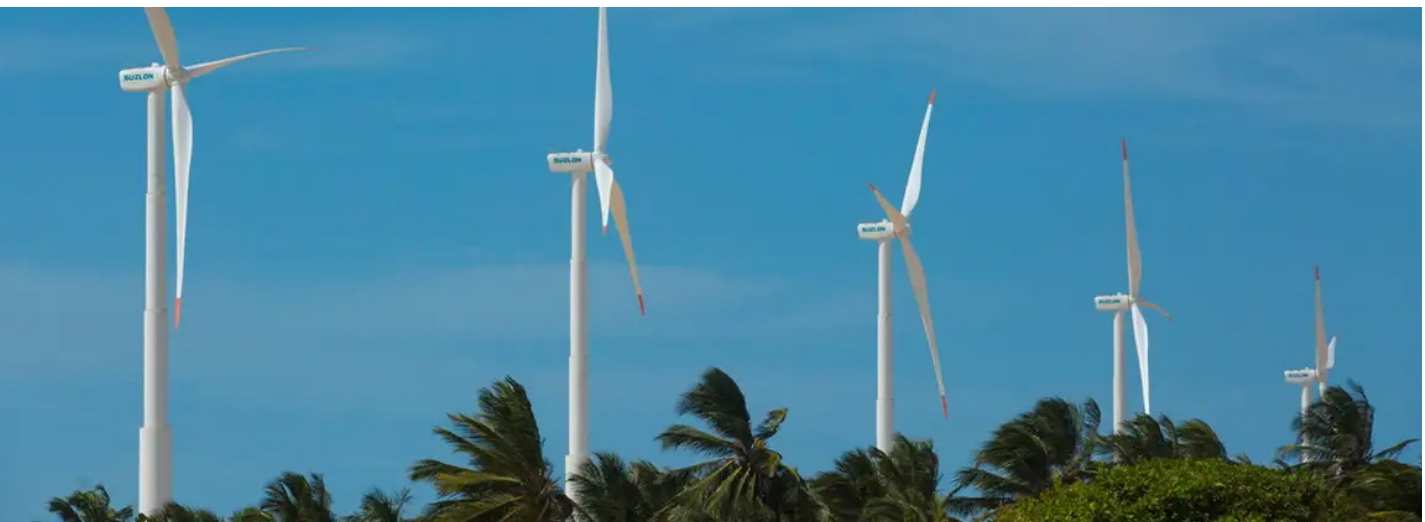


Photo: Divulgacao/Ari Versiani/PAC

Photo: Fernando Martinho/Repórter Brasil

Clean Energy, Electricity and Fuels?

Although no draft of the roadmap being developed by Ambassador André Corrêa do Lago has yet been made public, ongoing debates—as well as existing plans and programmes[7]—indicate that current proposals centre on replacing fossil fuels with energy and fuels derived from renewable sources. In this context, Brazil presents itself as a frontrunner on three fronts, even as it seeks to expand domestic oil extraction[8]:

- **BIOFUELS:**

  expansion of ethanol production (from sugarcane and maize) and biodiesel (from soy, animal fat, palm oil, among others) for the transport sector, including aviation, a major emitter of greenhouse gases.

- **ELECTRIFICATION:**

  increased use of batteries and electric devices, such as cars, alongside the expansion of mining for critical minerals and rare earth elements.

- **RENEWABLE ENERGY:**

  growth in hydropower, wind and solar generation, as well as the construction of new transmission lines.

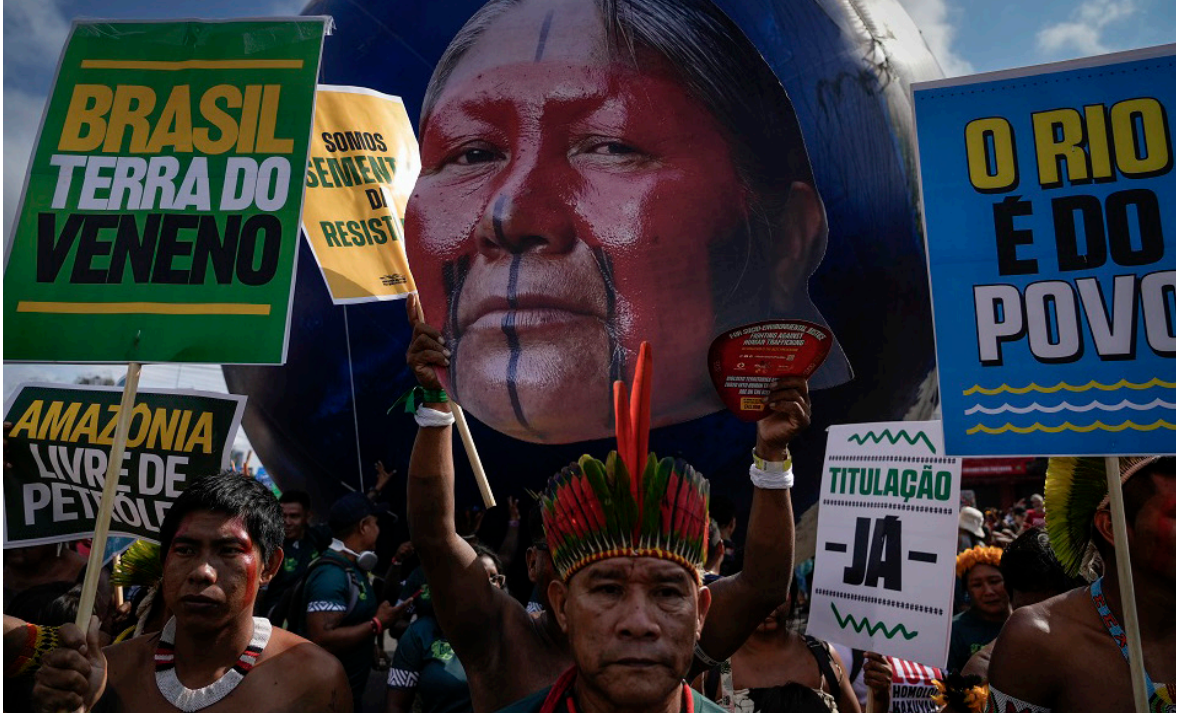


Photo: Fernando Martinho/Repórter Brasil

However, this pathway presents significant challenges. The global discourse around a just transition away from fossil fuels contrasts with the social and environmental impacts generated locally by economic activities tied to this transition. These impacts disproportionately affect Indigenous peoples, traditional communities and smallholder farmers, whose means of life often contribute to maintaining low-impact economies—and are therefore crucial in tackling climate change.

In the context of extractive activities, phrases such as "there is no transition without mining" and "lithium is the new oil" reinforce the perception that the path forward is already defined. Despite attracting billions of dollars in investment, there is a lack of commitments to limit the impacts of mining on forests and communities' territories[9]. Similarly, in the energy sector, wind power has expanded without adequate mechanisms to protect the communities where turbines are installed[10]. In the case of biofuels, deforestation, forced labour and land conflicts linked to agricultural activities continue to affect supply chains[11].

An initiative by **Repórter Brasil**, Inesc and PoEMAS—a research group bringing together scholars from several Brazilian universities—launched in March 2026, the *Observatório da Transição Energética* (Energy Transition Observatory)[12] cross-referenced data on four types of renewable energy projects (wind farms, solar power plants, high-voltage transmission lines and critical minerals extraction processes) with four categories of territories (Indigenous lands, *quilombola* territories, environmental conservation units and agrarian reform settlements).

Of the more than 12,000 territories mapped in Brazil, 4,000 (34%) are already affected by energy transition projects currently in operation, while a total of 7,000 (58%) may be impacted in the future. The Amazon is the region most at risk from these projects[13].

Biofuels:
Impacts of Agricultural Activities

In Brazil, biofuel production has been encouraged through public policies and financing since the 1970s, placing the country at the centre of fuel production based on agricultural commodities such as sugarcane, maize, soybean, palm oil and beef tallow (rendered animal fat).

Eyeing the profits associated with the energy transition, the sector is mobilising to increase production and secure even greater public investment. In 2024, when Brazil produced 9.7 billion litres of biodiesel, Congress approved the *Lei do Combustível do Futuro* (Fuel of the Future Law), aimed at incentivising production and expanding consumption[14]. In 2026, agribusiness caucuses in Congress formed the "Biofuels Coalition", which has already published its own roadmap[15].

BRAZIL'S 2024/2025 HARVEST — KEY FIGURES

sugarcane[16]

8.8
MILLION HECTARES PLANTED

677
MILLION TONS PRODUCED

29.3
BILLION LITERS OF SUGARCANE ETHANOL PRODUCED

maize[17]

47.3
MILLION HECTARES PLANTED

171
MILLION TONS PRODUCED

7.8
BILLION LITERS OF MAIZE ETHANOL PRODUCED[18]

soybean[19]

21.8
MILLION HECTARES PLANTED

139
MILLION TONS PRODUCED

7.1
BILLION LITERS OF SOYBEAN OIL BIODIESEL PRODUCED
(38% of total[20])

On farms where biofuel feedstocks are produced, numerous violations of human rights and of the rights of traditional peoples and communities have been documented, alongside damage to biodiversity and food production systems. Studies also indicate that the expansion of cropland into former pasture areas pushes cattle ranching further into forested regions, driving additional deforestation[21].

CASES OF SLAVE LABOUR IN SUGARCANE ARE RISING AGAIN

Second only to the United States, Brazil is the world's second-largest ethanol producer, accounting for 27% of global output in 2025[22]—a year in which the country produced a record 37.1 billion litres of ethanol from sugarcane and maize.

In 2007, when authorities identified a peak of 3,107 workers enslaved in the sugarcane sector, only around 25% of harvesting was mechanised. Today, 92.4% of harvesting is mechanised[23]. Despite that, cases of slave labour have recently increased again, particularly in manual planting activities, largely carried out by workers hired through outsourcing companies. According to data compiled by the Pastoral Land Commission, 1,648 workers were found in slave labour conditions between 2021 and 2025, across 37 identified cases in sugarcane plantations[24].

SLAVE LABOUR IN SUGARCANE PLANTATIONS

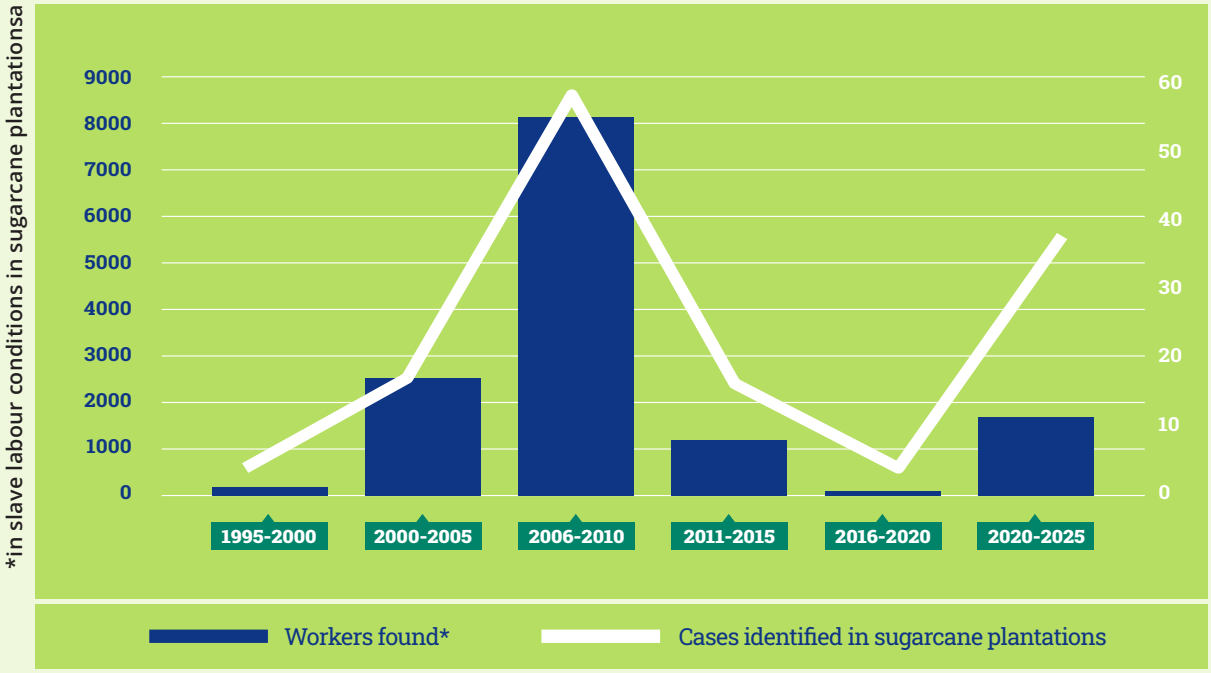
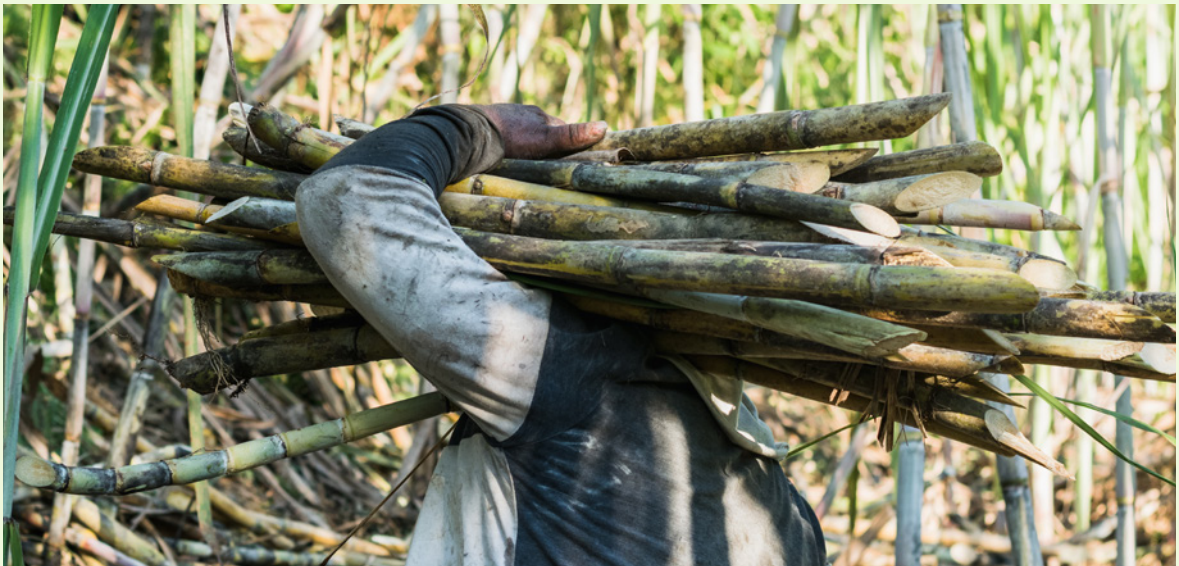


Photo: Freepik



One such case involved 212 workers hired in March 2023 by a subcontractor to plant sugarcane for the Tropical Bioenergia and Itumbiara Bioenergia mills, which at the time belonged to the BP Bunge Bioenergia group—a joint venture between the US-based Bunge and the UK-based BP (British Petroleum)[25]. These workers also provided services to three other suppliers linked to the same mills, across five municipalities in the states of Goiás and Minas Gerais[26].

According to federal government inspectors, workers were subjected to degrading conditions, living in houses converted into substandard accommodations, with inadequate maintenance, water leaks, and dirty, damp, mold-infested walls. Bath water was supplied through pipes or unheated showers. Inspectors also gathered photographic evidence and testimonies indicating that workers had been exposed to pesticides sprayed aerially over the fields, causing itching, vomiting and headaches. The authorities deemed these conditions incompatible with human dignity[27].

Subsequent reporting by **Repórter Brasil** found that BP Bunge Bioenergia counted major international buyers among its ethanol clients, spanning companies in the United States, Japan, South Korea and Europe—as well as operations linked to BP itself[28].

Work Analogous to Slavery

Legal Definition in Brazil

Under Article 149 of the Brazilian Penal Code, contemporary slavery is characterised by one or more of the following elements:

degrading working conditions	**situations incompatible with human dignity, involving violations of fundamental rights and posing risks to workers' health and lives;**
exhausting working hours	**excessive workloads that cause harm to health, pose risks to life and undermine social and family ties;**
forced labour	**situations in which individuals are kept in work through fraud, geographic isolation, document retention, threats or physical and psychological violence;**
debt bondage	**situations in which workers are forced to incur illegal debts related to transport, food, accommodation or equipment, preventing them from leaving employment until the debt is repaid.**

These elements may occur individually or in combination.

Also in 2023, 32 workers were rescued from forced labour by Brazilian authorities while planting sugarcane for Colombo Agroindústria, in the state of São Paulo. They had been hired through a subcontracted company. **Repórter Brasil** reviewed agribusiness credit instruments and bond issuance documents and found that the mill had a track record of supplying ethanol to Raízen (a joint venture between Cosan and Shell). Labour inspectors determined that the workers were subjected to debt bondage.[29].

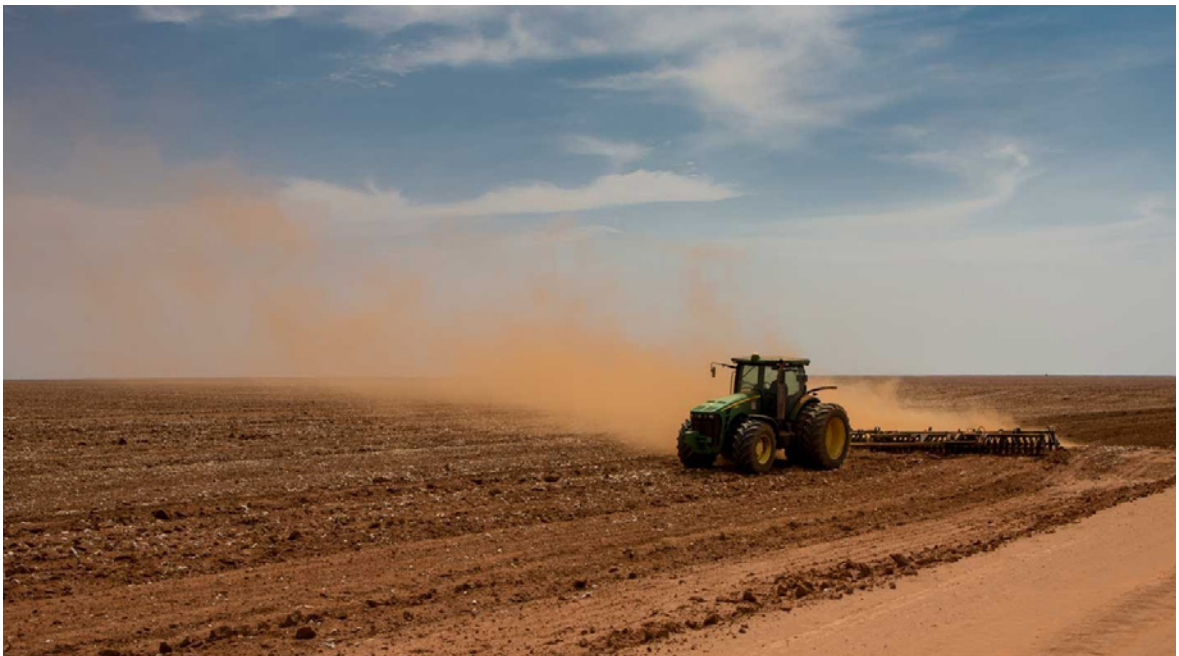
Two months later, a further 11 workers were rescued from an area leased by Colombo Agroindústria, also employed through a subcontractor. According to labour inspectors, they were subjected to degrading working conditions, lacked access to toilets and drinking water, and slept on old mattresses on the ground or on makeshift beds[30].

SOY EXPANSION ADVANCES INTO THE CERRADO AND RURAL COMMUNITIES

When deforestation is taken into account, cattle raising and agriculture are the leading source of greenhouse gas emissions in Brazil[31]. This problem affects not only the Amazon rainforest but also other biomes—such as the Cerrado, whose loss of native vegetation has increasingly contributed to climate change. In recent years, studies show that deforestation in the Cerrado has, in some periods, surpassed that of the Amazon in total area cleared[32].

The Cerrado is a tropical savanna often referred to as Brazil's "water tank", as it is home to the headwaters of eight of the country's 12 major river basins and covers roughly 25% of the national territory. Its deep-rooted vegetation helps sustain three major aquifers—Guarani, Urucuia and Bambuí. It is also the most biodiverse savanna on Earth, hosting around 5% of all species on the planet, approximately 600 Indigenous peoples and more than 6,000 rural and traditional communities[33].

Photo: Fernando Martinho/Repórter Brasil



It is across this biome that soybean cultivation has expanded. Over the past two decades, the area planted with soy in the Cerrado has grown from 11.3 million hectares in 2005 to 19.9 million hectares in 2024[34]. Projections indicate that Brazil could produce 191 million tonnes of soy by 2035[35]— an increase of nearly 40% compared to current levels. According to complaints from local organisations, this expansion has intensified land speculation, land grabbing and the invasion of public and community lands, fuelling land conflicts.

Biodiesel Production in Brazil (2025)[36]

> 10 BILLION LITRES

73.3% from soybean oil

6.7% from beef tallow

0.42% from palm oil

Reporting by **Repórter Brasil** revealed that, in 2023, three soybean farms supplying Bunge—located in Matopiba, an agricultural frontier spanning the states of Maranhão, Piauí, Bahia and Tocantins—cleared a combined total of around 11,000 hectares, including 6,800 hectares in legally protected areas[37].

In the municipality of Formosa do Rio Preto, in western Bahia, a particularly emblematic case is that of Agronegócio Estrondo. This mega-development consists of 22 farms operating as a single complex, covering 305,000 hectares—an area larger than the cities of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro combined[38]. Both Bunge and Cargill, biodiesel producers, operate silos within the complex.

Estrondo has been the subject of multiple allegations, including land grabbing, violence against *geraizeiros* communities (traditional populations of the Cerrado), illegal deforestation and slave labour[39]. In 1999, the area was included in the White Paper on Land Grabbing in Brazil, published by the National Institute for Colonisation and Agrarian Reform (Incra)[40], which provided an institutional assessment of Brazil's land tenure situation at the end of the last century and included concrete cases of land grabbing, among them the lands that later gave rise to the Estrondo complex[41].

In 2020, the Bahia State Court of Justice rejected the company's final appeal in a case confirming the collective land rights of local communities over 43,000 hectares claimed by the company[42]. For years, residents reported intimidation, including home invasions, kidnappings, torture, cattle confiscation, fencing off of communal lands, restrictions on movement and gunfire carried out by private security forces, allegedly with support from local police[43].

BEEF TALLOW AS FUEL MAY CONTRIBUTE TO GLOBAL WARMING

Beef tallow is considered a “green” feedstock for biodiesel production. It is derived from animal by-products and carcasses, has relatively low costs and is classified as a waste product of the meat industry—a classification that distorts assessments of its socio-environmental impact.

Under Brazil’s National Biofuels Policy (*RenovaBio*)[44], established in 2017, slaughterhouses can generate decarbonisation credits by using animal fat for fuel production, without accounting for emissions generated in earlier stages of the supply chain. This means that socio-environmental issues such as land grabbing, deforestation and forest fires linked to cattle ranching are effectively excluded from the calculation[45].

Cattle ranching is the primary driver of deforestation in Brazil and a major contributor to national greenhouse gas emissions[46]. In 2024, the country maintained the largest commercial cattle herd in the world, with more than 238 million head[47]. In 2023, pasturelands occupied an estimated 164.5 million hectares[48]—more than 19% of Brazil’s total area—while native vegetation covered nearly 60% of the territory[49]. The domestic tallow market alone generated revenues of approximately R$3 billion for the meat industry[50].

The leading producers of biodiesel from beef tallow include JBS Biodiesel and Minerva, both of which hold certification enabling them to trade decarbonisation credits. Both companies have also been linked, in reporting by the press, civil society organisations and public authorities, to repeated environmental violations within their supply chains[51].

Photo: Bruno Kelly/Amazônia Real

Electrification:
The Impacts of Mining

In the search for alternatives to reduce dependence on oil, critical minerals and rare earth elements have become central to the energy transition. They are used in products such as electric vehicle batteries, electronic devices, solar panels and wind turbines. However, their extraction is geographically concentrated and technically complex. At the same time, demand is being driven not only by the energy transition but also by the rapid expansion of the technology sector and military industries.

Investigations by **Repórter Brasil** show that, in Brazil, exploration permits, mining applications and extraction activities overlap with Indigenous territories, traditional communities, agrarian reform settlements and protected areas. Deforestation, as well as soil and water contamination, are among the socio-environmental impacts associated with mining in the country[52].

Photo: Marizilda Cruppe/Greenpeace

MINING ENCROACHES ON AMAZONIAN PEOPLES

Lithium alone—a key component in batteries—accounts for 53 mining applications in Brazil's Legal Amazon, 90% of which have been filed since 2022. Of these, 29 overlap with or are located within ten kilometres of 21 protected areas, including five Indigenous territories, eight conservation units and eight agrarian reform settlements, increasing pressure for deforestation and raising the likelihood of conflicts with local communities. Across Brazil, there are approximately 4,400 active lithium mining processes[53].

Near the Waimiri Atroari Indigenous Territory, in the state of Amazonas, operates Mineração Taboca, one of Brazil's largest tin producers. The company is under investigation by the Federal Public Prosecutor's Office for alleged contamination—involving lead and arsenic—of a stream that feeds the main river used by the community. Indigenous residents report fear of using the water and the death of fish and turtles, threatening their livelihoods[54].

Repórter Brasil found, based on customs data, that tin produced in the area has entered the supply chains of companies such as Tesla, in the United States, and Toyota, in Japan. The company is also authorised to supply major technology firms, including Amazon, Apple, Microsoft, Samsung and Nvidia[55].

This is only one example of a broader trend. A survey by **Repórter Brasil** identified 7,718 active mining applications for 16 critical minerals across the Amazon, with more than half already in the exploration phase. Of these, 24% are located within 40 kilometres of 45 Indigenous groups living in voluntary isolation, increasing risks of indirect impacts[56]. These applications have been submitted by 567 different actors, including corporations, mining cooperatives and individuals.

Some of the affected territories are already under pressure from illegal mining and deforestation. Among them are the Yanomami Indigenous Land, in the state of Roraima—home to isolated groups such as the Moxihatëtëa—with 228 mining applications involving tin, niobium and tantalum, and the Uru-Eu-Wau-Wau Indigenous Territory, in Rondônia, home to five isolated peoples and targeted by 224 mining applications.

In Brazil's Legal Amazon, *quilombola* communities are also within the area of influence of mining activities. Mapping by **Repórter Brasil**[57] shows that at least 128 mining applications overlap with or are located within ten kilometres of 31 *quilombola* territories. Of these, 45 are already operational, directly affecting three territories[58].

One of the main companies seeking to expand into new areas is Mineração Rio do Norte (MRN), which has been extracting bauxite in the municipality of Oriximiná, in the state of Pará, since the 1970s. The company has long been associated with conflict involving *quilombola* communities, including documented evidence that, in the 1970s and 1980s, millions of tonnes of mining waste were discharged into the waters of Lake Batata, where local families relied on fishing and bathing[59].

Today, MRN operates a complex of 25 tailings dams within the Saracá-Taquera National Forest. These structures are located less than two kilometres from the Alto Trombetas II *quilombo*[60], home to approximately 1,200 people[61].

Agrarian reform settlers are another group affected. In the Carajás Mineral Province, in the state of Pará—home to the world's largest iron ore mine currently in operation—there are 676 mining applications targeting copper, manganese and nickel, led primarily by Vale. Of these, 43% overlap with 82 agrarian reform settlements[62]. Most of these applications have been submitted in the past five years.

Also in Pará, residents of the Tucumã Settlement Project have reported concern following the discovery of large numbers of dead fish in the Carapanãzinho River. Community members suspect contamination linked to the activities of Ero Brasil (Mineração Caraíba), a subsidiary of the Canadian company Ero Copper. Residents also report constant dust and structural damage to homes caused by explosions associated with mining operations [63].

Renewables: Impacts of Wind Power and Transmission Lines

Brazil stands out globally in the field of renewable energy, with 87% of its energy matrix derived from sources other than fossil fuels. Its electricity system is largely powered by hydropower plants, which have historically been associated with a range of socio-environmental impacts, including the flooding of forest areas, deforestation, changes in fish populations, the spread of diseases such as dengue and malaria, displacement of rural and urban communities, and disruption to the means of life of traditional populations—including fishers, *vazanteiros* (riverbank farmers), *ribeirinhos* (riverine communities) and extractivist groups—as well as Indigenous peoples[64].

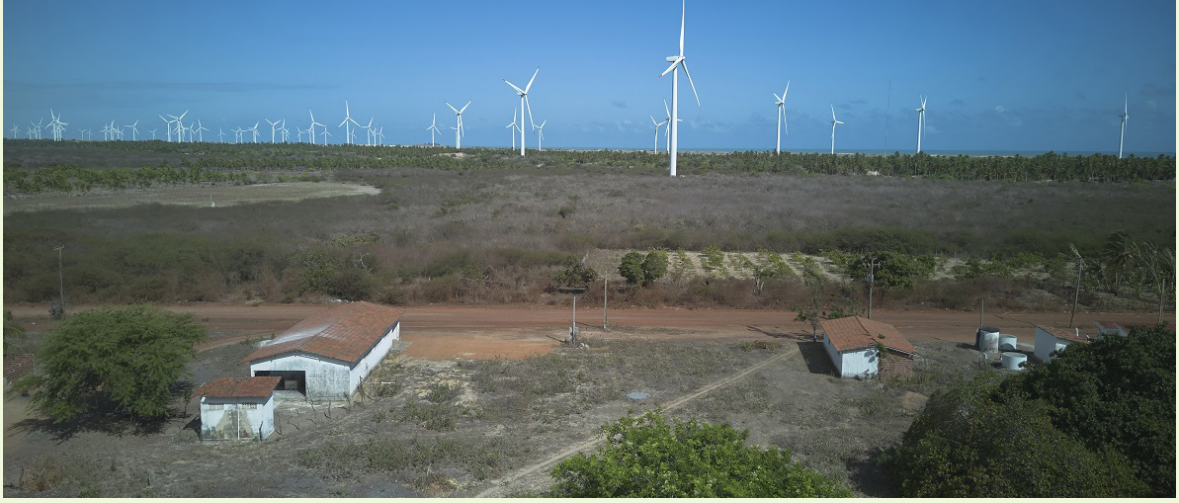


Photo: Mariana Greif/Repórter Brasil

Over the past decade, wind energy has expanded rapidly in Brazil, driven by regulatory frameworks introduced in recent legislation, including laws governing offshore energy potential[65] and the legal framework for low-carbon hydrogen[66], both enacted in 2023. Wind farms have been installed both onshore and offshore, particularly in the Northeast region, with the states of Bahia and Rio Grande do Norte accounting for around 60% of total capacity[67].

In the areas where they are installed, large wind turbines generate constant noise that has been reported to have disruptive effects on the physical and mental health of local communities, many of whom lease their land to energy companies. Researchers, civil society organisations and legal experts point to abusive clauses in land lease agreements, including restrictions on movement, fencing off of farming and grazing areas and communal lands, disproportionately low payments for land use, and contracts lasting for decades—in some cases with automatic renewal provisions[68].

In the state of Bahia, the country's largest wind and solar complex—known as the Manacá Complex, developed by Quinto Energy—received licences and authorisations for installation in the municipalities of Jaguarari and Campo Formoso. The project is located in an area identified as a priority for the conservation of the Caatinga biome, as well as remnants of the Atlantic Forest and Cerrado. In addition to hosting endangered species, the area contains 63 springs feeding key rivers that supply water to around one million people in the *sertão*, the semi-arid hinterland of north-eastern Brazil. Despite plans for 400 wind turbines and 476,000 solar panels, the project received a preliminary licence without requiring a full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA-Rima)[69].

In the case of offshore wind projects, one of the main concerns is the impact on fishing activities, which may be restricted within a 500-metre radius of platforms—potentially affecting the livelihoods of communities that depend on the sea.

Beyond the direct impacts of wind farms, solar plants and hydropower, renewable energy expansion also requires the construction of transmission lines. These large-scale infrastructure projects frequently cut across forests, Indigenous territories, traditional communities and agrarian reform settlements, generating additional socio-environmental pressures[70].

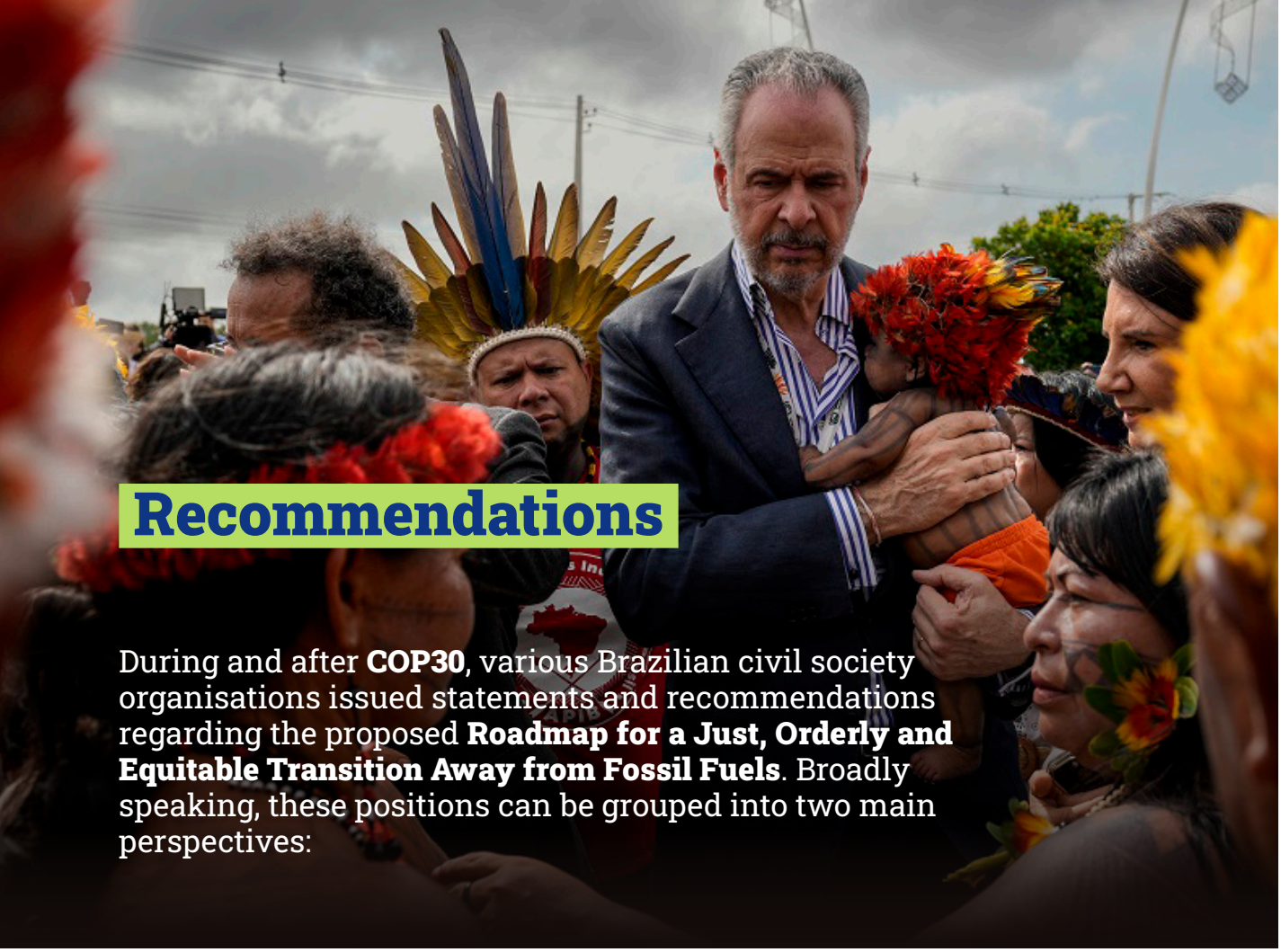


Photo: Fernando Martinho/Repórter Brasil

Recommendations

During and after **COP30**, various Brazilian civil society organisations issued statements and recommendations regarding the proposed **Roadmap for a Just, Orderly and Equitable Transition Away from Fossil Fuels**. Broadly speaking, these positions can be grouped into two main perspectives:

1. **One, more institutional in nature, acknowledges that critical minerals, renewable energy sources and transmission infrastructure are necessary for the energy transition, but stresses the imperative of respecting the rights of affected communities;**

2. **The other, more grassroots-oriented, argues that the current model of energy transition fails to deliver a genuine transformation of the economic system driving climate change. This perspective calls for resisting the encroachment on territories, challenging market-based false solutions and opposing the private appropriation of common goods, including minerals and energy sources.**

Below is a synthesis of key demands and recommendations put forward by Brazilian organisations such as Observatório do Clima, WWF Brasil, the Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil (APIB), the Movement of People Affected by Dams (MAB), trade union representatives and the People's Summit[71]:

Fossil Fuels

END FOSSIL FUEL EXTRACTION
including a total ban on fracking (hydraulic fracturing).

OIL
Establish exclusion zones for oil exploration in ecologically sensitive areas, such as the mouth of the Amazon River; Set a timeline to phase out oil auctions; Define minimum production levels to avoid extraction beyond what is deemed strictly necessary.

COAL
Phase out coal from the energy matrix as quickly as possible through a gradual process: Halt the construction of new coal-fired power plants; End coal use for electricity generation within this decade, while allowing limited industrial use; Fully phase out both electricity and industrial use in the following decades. Restore areas degraded by coal mining.

GAS
Should not be included as part of the transition, either in the electricity sector or in industry.

Energy and Descarbonisation

HYDROPOWER
Optimise existing plants without building new reservoirs.

BIOFUELS
Implement territorial planning and restore degraded areas; Establish productivity efficiency parameters; Promote research; Develop criteria for genuine climate additionality.

TRANSPORT
Reduce dependence on road transport; Prioritise public and collective transport; Strengthen urban planning.

SECTORAL TARGETS
Establish binding, measurable targets for decarbonisation and technological transformation, enabling institutional and sectoral accountability—addressing both production and consumption.

Peoples and Local Communities

LAND

Ensure demarcation and protection of Indigenous territories and formal recognition of traditional lands; Advance agrarian reform and support agroecology; Prohibit mining in Indigenous territories and discourage projects affecting traditional lands.

AFFECTED COMMUNITIES

Guarantee socio-environmental safeguards and compliance with ILO Convention 169; Ensure broad and meaningful participation of civil society, reflecting the realities of those most affected, with leadership from Indigenous peoples and traditional communities.

WORKERS

Integrate fossil fuel sector workers into the energy transition; Promote job creation in safe and sustainable sectors; Provide training and support measures.

Governance and Financing

GOVERNANCE

Strengthen institutional and civil society forums related to energy transition; Ensure transparency, public participation and social oversight mechanisms; Limit or exclude the influence of actors linked to fossil fuel production in the development of the roadmap.

FINANCING

Redirect royalties, public investments and subsidies currently allocated to fossil fuels towards a just energy transition and a low-carbon economy; Create funds and development programmes for regions dependent on oil economies; Ensure fair distribution of costs, benefits and opportunities across countries and communities; Provide direct and accessible financing to Indigenous peoples and traditional communities.

Photo: Reegan Moen/Wikimedia Commons

What Companies Say

BP Bunge Bioenergia

In response to questions submitted by Repórter Brasil in 2024, BP Bunge Bioenergia stated that, upon becoming aware of the forced labour case involving a subcontracted service provider, it "acted swiftly to defend the workers", covering compensation payments for those rescued. The company also said it subsequently changed its planting and crop management processes, "internalising and automating operations for these activities".

https://reporterbrasil.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Monitor_Ethanol_EN.pdf.

Bunge

In 2023, Bunge told Repórter Brasil — without addressing specific cases — that it "maintains strict control over socio-environmental criteria in its operations" and monitors more than 12,000 farms in priority areas in South America using satellite technology. The company also announced that, from 2025, it would block purchases from areas cleared of vegetation, even where legally authorised. Regarding the Estrondo case, Bunge stated in 2019 that "the company's silo is not part of the Agronegócio Condomínio Cachoeira do Estrondo area" and that it does not maintain commercial relations with the condominium's management. It also said that 99% of the soy sourced from the Formosa do Rio Preto region comes from direct purchases.

https://reporterbrasil.org.br/2023/05/integra-das-respostas-da-bunge-grupo-franciosi-agro-ipe-agroindustrial-grupo-insolo-condominio-milla-e-agricola-alvorada/

and https://reporterbrasil.org.br/2019/12/integra-das-respostas-de-bunge-e-cargill-sobre-compras-do-agronegocio-estrondo/

Cargill

Cargill informed Repórter Brasil in 2019 that Agronegócio Estrondo "has never been a supplier of soy to the company". "Cargill operates a grain warehouse in the region known as Estrondo, about 60 km from the conflict area, which is not subject to any legal allegations". It added that any soy purchases in the region come from tenant farmers with legally recognised land-use rights.

https://reporterbrasil.org.br/2019/12/integra-das-respostas-de-bunge-e-cargill-sobre-compras-do-agronegocio-estrondo/

Colombo Agroindústria

In 2024, Colombo Agroindústria told Repórter Brasil that it had been harmed by the "premature disclosure of information that later proved to be unfounded following civil and criminal investigations", which, according to the company, did not confirm the existence of forced labour practices by the service provider involved. In a subsequent exchange, Repórter Brasil noted that the administrative ruling holding the subcontractor responsible for forced labour remained in effect. The company then stated that it no longer maintains a contract with the service provider. It did not comment on a second case involving 11 rescued workers.

https://reporterbrasil.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Monitor_Ethanol_EN.pdf

Ero Brasil

Ero Brasil did not respond to the report published by Repórter Brasil in 2026.

https://reporterbrasil.org.br/2026/02/corrida-por-minerais-criticos-avanca-em-carajas-e-pressiona-areas-de-reforma-agraria/.

Agronegócio Estrondo

In responses provided to Repórter Brasil in 2019, Agronegócio Estrondo denied any illegal practices or acts of violence in relation to the allegations. The company stated that its contracted security personnel operate to protect private property and company assets, without blocking public roads. It also claimed to have been the target of invasions and attacks, arguing that its actions are lawful and compliant with judicial decisions.

https://reporterbrasil.org.br/2019/12/integra-da-resposta-da-agronegocio-estrondo/

and https://especial.reporterbrasil.org.br/estrondo/.

JBS

In 2023, JBS stated that it maintains a "responsible sourcing policy for raw materials among its direct suppliers" and has implemented a programme to ensure socio-environmental compliance among indirect suppliers. The company argued that, without the use of by-products such as tallow for biodiesel, "these residues would be discarded, to the detriment of society".

https://reporterbrasil.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Monitor_SeboBovino_ENGLISH.pdf.

In responses issued between 2023 and 2025, JBS said it operates purchasing control systems designed to ensure socio-environmental compliance, including blocking suppliers found to be in violation — such as those listed on Brazil's "dirty list" of forced labour. It stated that, when irregularities are identified, it adopts measures such as suspending contracts and strengthening monitoring protocols.

https://reporterbrasil.org.br/2025/10/posicionamento-da-abiec/;
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https://reporterbrasil.org.br/2023/10/nota-da-jbs-sobre-5o-ciclo-de-auditorias-tac-da-carne/.

Regarding Operation Carne Fria, JBS told Reuters in 2025 that it does not source beef from the farm identified by Ibama.

https://www.reuters.com/sustainability/climate-energy/brazil-probes-jbs-other-beefpackers-buying-cattle-deforested-land-2025-08-29/

Mineração Rio do Norte (MRN)

In 2026, MRN stated that its operations generate thousands of jobs across the aluminium value chain, significant tax revenues and "essential socio-environmental projects for the development of communities within its area of influence". The company also argued that *quilombola* communities exist within a "context marked by historical invisibility and recurring omissions by the State", and that MRN plays a "central and structuring role in preserving an extensive area of tropical forest in the Legal Amazon", while contributing to the distribution of wealth generated by its activities.

https://reporterbrasil.org.br/2026/03/manifestacoes-enviadas-para-reportagem-sobre-a-exploracao-de-bauxita-em-oriximina-e-os-impactos-em-quilombos/

Mineração Taboca

In a statement to Repórter Brasil in 2026, Mineração Taboca said there is "no evidence establishing a causal link" between its operations and the reported contamination. It also argued that the chemical analysis report "contains methodological gaps and technical inconsistencies", requiring further investigation before definitive conclusions can be drawn.

https://reporterbrasil.org.br/2026/03/integra-da-resposta-da-mineracao-taboca-waimiri-atroari/.

Minerva

In 2023, Minerva stated that it is the "first company in the sector to advance in evaluating indirect supplier chains" and outlined measures adopted to reduce emissions.

https://reporterbrasil.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Monitor_SeboBovino_ENGLISH.pdf.

In subsequent responses (2021–2024), the company said it operates a supplier monitoring system based on geospatial traceability and checks for environmental, labour and land compliance. It stated that it does not purchase cattle from areas linked to illegal deforestation, environmental embargoes, overlap with Indigenous lands or forced labour, and that it blocks suppliers when irregularities are identified. Minerva also highlighted its participation in national and international initiatives focused on sustainability and combating forced labour, including the National Pact for the Eradication of Slave Labour.

https://reporterbrasil.org.br/2024/09/integra-dos-posicionamentos-de-marfrig-minerva-jbs-gpa-sendas-e-carrefour/;
https://reporterbrasil.org.br/2023/10/integra-dos-posicionamentos-da-jbs-e-minerva-foods/;
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https://reporterbrasil.org.br/2022/07/integra-dos-posicionamentos-de-jbs-marfrig-minerva-e-banco-interamericano-de-desenvolvimento/.

Quinto Energy

In 2024, Quinto Energy's press office told Repórter Brasil that it conducted a "careful Medium Environmental Impact Study", as required by the Bahia state government, involving field technicians assessing a range of potential impacts of the project.

https://reporterbrasil.org.br/2024/06/bahia-aprova-megaprojeto-eolicas-sem-estudo-completo-impacto-ambiental/.

Raízen

In 2024, Raízen stated that it continuously monitors and evaluates its partners in line with its supplier code of conduct. The company also said it "repudiates any situations involving non-compliance with labour legislation and occupational health and safety standards", and expects its suppliers and business partners to comply with applicable laws and best practices.

https://reporterbrasil.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Monitor_Ethanol_EN.pdf.

Vale

In 2026, Vale stated that "the granting of a mining right does not necessarily imply the actual implementation of a project", which depends on social, environmental, legal, regulatory, technical and economic feasibility. The company added that agrarian reform settlements are established on lands expropriated or acquired by the State for failing to fulfil their social function, and stated that it complies with Brazilian legislation. Vale did not respond regarding measures to mitigate impacts on these settlements.

https://reporterbrasil.org.br/2026/02/corrida-por-minerais-criticos-avanca-em-carajas-e-pressiona-areas-de-reforma-agraria/.

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RIGHT PATH?

Solutions for a just transition away from fossil fuels conceal risks to human rights, traditional communities and even the environment

APRIL 2026

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