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GLOBAL GOVERNANCE AND THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ACTIONS DIRECTED TOWARD ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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Abstract

Environmental issues, particularly climate change, are now firmly established on the international political agenda. The emergence of new global actors, increasing interdependence and connections on a global scale, the erosion of the traditional division between national and international levels, and the advent of a global governance system have led the discipline of International Relations to increasingly focus on globalization, as relations between sovereign states are insufficient to analyze and understand the current political, economic, and social dynamics of the world. The objective of this article is to understand global governance and the effectiveness of actions directed toward environmental protection. This bibliographic and qualitative study highlights that the effectiveness of global governance is related to the rigor—or lack thereof—with which the nation-state operates changes in its substantive norms, and the capacity of that government to implement the norms established by governance mechanisms. It concludes with the urgency of advocating for the strengthening of the state in a macro context where Brazil's participation has significant weight in global environmental governance due to its potential to contribute to positive global environmental outcomes in central areas of the agenda, such as biodiversity conservation and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change.

Keywords: Global Environmental Governance; Effectiveness; Environment; Environmental Regimes.

INTRODUCTION

The establishment of environmental norms and their international effectiveness has always been a major challenge to improve global governance structures in addressing the environmental crisis. Much of the obstacles to this structuring stemmed from the resistance of major powers to accept stricter environmental preservation rules, which, in theory, could threaten the unbridled growth of capitalism (Stival, 2018).

On another note, the emergence of new rising powers (South Africa, Saudi Arabia, Brazil, China, South Korea, etc.) also hinders the acceptance of criteria and norms for progress, as these are countries with expanding economies that downplay the importance of the environmental issue, although they have a discourse of engagement with this cause. Even emerging countries that are reasonably integrated into the global system and aware of the importance of environmental preservation still do not feel honored by the solutions proposed by a small group of rich countries. Therefore, from any of the prisms analyzed, the creation of norms and their effectiveness in seeking global environmental governance capable of producing satisfactory results in the face of the environmental crisis requires highly complex responses. The present study aims to understand this governance and the effectiveness of actions directed toward environmental protection.

The concept of environment is very broad, encompassing everything around us, and environmental protection is at the heart of human rights, because it makes no sense to fight for freedom, equality, order, and justice if we don't have a livable planet where these rights can actually be enjoyed. It is the duty of every nation-state to fulfill the greater objective of its existence, which is to ensure, through global governance structures, that transnational norms and institutions integrate all new influences and experiences of peoples, allowing nations to fulfill their primary task, which is to provide a sustainable environment as a global public good (Lehmen, 2015).

The first step toward making global environmental governance really work is getting people familiar with international institutions and how they operate. That way, everyone involved—from governments to organizations—can adapt and take action that benefits the whole international community. With that in mind, we'll dive into how international regimes shape up as key parts of global environmental governance.

The methodology used was qualitative bibliographic research, carried out through a review of literature—including books, articles, academic studies, and relevant legislation—focused on the topic under analysis.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS AND INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT

The environmental crisis as we know it today began in the mid-1960s, a period when environmental degradation processes were not yet part of a global negotiation system among countries, where production, consumption, and economic growth were not yet matters of concern for states (Estenssoro Saavedra, 2014). As is widely known, the first global event for discussion on environmental issues was the Stockholm Conference, held in 1972, organized by the United Nations (UN) and attended by 113 countries, including Brazil. One of the main outcomes of this conference was the elaboration of principles to guide the economic and social development of signatory countries, influencing the

internal legal frameworks of various countries, including Brazil's. Other conferences also contributed to this influence, such as Eco-92 and Rio+20 (Rodrigues, 2012).

The first United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1972, brought together political leaders, diplomats, scientists, media representatives, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from 179 countries in a massive effort focused on the impact of economic activities on the environment. At the same time, a "Global Forum" of NGOs was held in Rio de Janeiro, bringing together an unprecedented number of NGO representatives who presented their own vision of the world's future regarding the environment and socioeconomic development (Granziera, 2011).

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the 'Earth Summit,' was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from June 3 to 14, 1992. In 1994, the National Program for Environmental Education – PRONEA was formulated, with the objective of politically instrumenting the environmental education process in Brazil (Gadotti, 2012). It should be noted that this process involved governmental actions, civil society, and companies.

The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants has been in effect since 2004. It aims to protect human health and the environment from Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs). The Convention requires parties to take measures to eliminate or reduce the production, use, import, export, and release of POPs into the environment, and includes provisions on access to information, public awareness, training, and participation in developing implementation plans.

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) took place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from June 20 to 22, 2012. It resulted in a political document containing measures to implement sustainable development (Marques; Campos, 2017). In Rio, Member States decided to launch a process to develop a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which built on the Millennium Development Goals and converged with the post-2015 development agenda.

The Conference adopted innovative guidelines on green economy policies, and governments agreed to strengthen the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Related actions were to be taken during the 67th session of the General Assembly, held on September 18, 2012. In addition, they committed to establishing a high-level political forum for sustainable development. Decisions regarding its specific structure were expected to be made during the next session of the General Assembly, aiming to hold the forum's first session at the beginning of the Assembly's 68th session, in 2013 (Gadotti, 2012).

At the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), governments also requested that the United Nations Statistical Commission, in consultation with relevant United Nations system entities and other organizations, initiate a work program on environmentally sound progress measures to complement gross domestic product, with the goal of better informing policy decisions (Monteiro Neto et al., 2017).

Global environmental policy has an emerging agenda in international relations to determine environmental security challenges, understood as the protection and preservation of natural resources and the environment to ensure the health and well-being

of human communities and the sustainability of ecosystems (Rodrigues JR., 2012). Achieving environmental security has occupied part of the political debate. The resulting discourse is to translate environmental security concerns into national security practices and expand the security agenda (UN, 2015).

Thus, environmental security issues are interconnected with the Sustainable Development Goals (hereinafter SDGs) adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015, which set targets for the Millennium Development Goals (2000-2015) to be achieved. The SDGs represent the UN's main global environmental governance agenda, widely represented in the Paris Agreement, whose main discursive line is the interconnection between environmental preservation and development, establishing a goal of "building resilient infrastructure, promoting sustainable industrialization, and fostering innovation" (UN, 2015).

ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGE FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The planetary environmental crisis is one of the greatest challenges humanity faces. It already undermines the quality of life for many—especially the poorest—and threatens the essential natural systems that support all life on Earth. Green theory approaches these issues by considering political values and agency: what should be valued, who should value it, and how these goals can be achieved. According to Sant'Anna and Moreira (2016), green theory is part of the critical theory tradition because environmental problems inevitably raise questions about our relationships with others within a community and about how collective decisions are made. This, in turn, brings up the issue of defining the boundaries of the political community. When environmental problems cross national borders, the central question becomes the appropriate political level at which solutions should be pursued. For scholars working in this field, the answers lie in rethinking political association based on our ecological interdependence.

It is clear that some issues related to global environmental change concern national populations and governments in particular. Differences in local adaptability, resilience, and environmental impacts mean that conditions are not the same everywhere. As a result, countries develop their own perspectives and responses, and the international community does not always have immediate answers or urgent solutions when environmental problems emerge (Furtado, 2012).

However, environmental concern shared by people around the world has generated some common perspectives; scientific knowledge and information about environmental change pay little attention to national borders (Furtado, 2012). This local–global dimension of environmental change is perhaps the greatest challenge for state-centered International Relations, as the growing dominance of environmental issues on the “international agenda,” including the social agenda, suggests a shift in focus.

Recognition of the environmental challenge in the international arena has led to greater attention to the interdisciplinary field of ecology. Political ecology has allowed ecological perspectives to inform political thinking and has made it possible to better understand our environmental conditions. The current situation results from a particular development path that relies on excessive consumption of natural resources. Political-economic practices of production, distribution, and consumption are oriented toward capital accumulation and consumption desires. These practices are reflected in a global market dependent on economic growth, a

model not designed to achieve environmental sustainability or respect ecological limits (Monteiro Neto et al., 2017). This economy has enabled a form of material development marked by concentrated benefits and unequal distribution of environmental degradation among nations and peoples.

At the regional level, serious environmental problems affect Latin America. Yet the region contains eight of the seventeen countries that hold up to 70% of the planet's biodiversity and are home to numerous unique plant and animal species: Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, Venezuela, Bolivia, and Costa Rica. Nonetheless, these countries also face a global environmental crisis, driven by factors such as industrialization, pollution, and inadequate or excessive use of land and natural resources (Mengo; Tenaglia, 2009). From an ecological standpoint, there has been a broad critique of the urban-industrial development model, including the so-called sustainable governmental practices of the Latin American left (Svampa, 2019). Among the main environmental challenges, energy security, water scarcity, and climate change stand out for their importance and interconnections. The link between climate change and violent conflict is recognized globally (Marques; Campos, 2017).

The lack of environmental security and the emergence of conflicts stem from the excessive use of natural resources, especially in vulnerable environments. The survival of the state remains at risk if it fails to address the roots of insecurity—namely, the expanding and pervasive environmental pressures. At the same time, economically poorer countries suffer the most severe impacts of climate change. The limited capacity of local and national institutions to resolve conflicts triggered by the depletion and degradation of natural resources, combined with the climate effects generated by the global economy, represents a growing problem (Augustin; Cunha, 2014).

Aligned with the targets established by the United Nations in the 2030 Agenda, the concept of Sustainable Development has gained significant importance in the field of International Relations since the beginning of this century. Indeed, the subjects studied and analyzed in international relations are closely connected to the issues addressed in the SDGs.

The concept of Sustainable Development has evolved over time and continues to shape modern international relations and introduce clearer regulation into the global economy. In this sense, the main current framework is the 2030 Agenda, with its emphasis on the SDGs. The 2030 Agenda succeeded the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and is structured around 17 Sustainable Development Goals. In 2015, the SDGs were formally adopted through UN General Assembly Resolution 70/1, establishing the 2030 Agenda as the program for implementing sustainable development. Table 1 provides a comparison between the 2030 Agenda, its SDGs, and the Millennium Goals (MDGs).

Table 1.

Comparison of the 2030 Agenda and the Millennium Goals

Aspect	2030 Agenda – SDGs (2015–2030)	Millennium Development Goals – MDGs (2000–2015)
Number of Goals	17 SDGs	8 MDGs

Number of Targets	169 targets	21 targets
Nature of the Agenda	Comprehensive, integrated (social, environmental, economic, institutional).	Priority focus on poverty, health, education, and gender.
Universality	Applicable to all countries, without distinction.	Primarily aimed at developing countries.
Integration	Indivisibility between SDGs; integrated implementation.	Relatively independent and sectoral targets.
Central Principle	Leave no one behind.	Reduction of extreme poverty.
Social Participation	Broad involvement: governments, private sector, academia, and civil society.	More restricted participation; greater centrality of international organizations.
Environmental Dimension	Central: climate, biodiversity, energy, sustainable consumption.	Limited; appears essentially in one goal.
Monitoring	+230 indicators; voluntary national reviews (VNR).	Simpler monitoring with few indicators.
Means of Implementation	Robust multisectoral partnerships (SDG 17), financing, and technology.	Dependence on international aid and external financing.
Strategic Vision	Structural transformation in production, consumption, and governance.	Focus on basic social targets.

Source: UNITED NATIONS. Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 2015; UNITED NATIONS. Millennium Development Goals Report, 2015.

The 2030 Agenda expands shared responsibility among countries, reinforcing the global nature of environmental protection efforts, especially those related to climate issues. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are at the heart of the Agenda and must be achieved by 2030. Among them, Goal 11—*Sustainable Cities and Communities*—aims to “make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable” (UN, 2015, n.p.). SDG 11 addresses several urbanization-related challenges, such as mobility, solid waste management, and sanitation. Its target 11.6 seeks to “by 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management” (UN, 2015, n.p.). This SDG aligns with the New Urban Agenda, introduced in October 2016 during the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (UN, 2016).

According to this document, by 2050 the world's urban population may double, making urbanization one of the most transformative trends of the 21st century. As a result, populations, economic activities, and environmental and humanitarian impacts are becoming increasingly concentrated in urban centers. This concentration creates major sustainability challenges related to housing, infrastructure, basic services, food security, health, education, decent work, security, and natural resources, among others (UN, 2016).

The New Urban Agenda also outlines key principles and commitments, including ensuring environmental sustainability; promoting clean energy and the sustainable use of land and natural resources; protecting ecosystems and biodiversity; encouraging healthy lifestyles in harmony with nature; advancing sustainable consumption and production patterns; strengthening urban resilience; reducing disaster risks; and enabling mitigation and adaptation to climate change (UN, 2016).

Regarding Brazil's current position, although the country plays a crucial role in global food security, it still faces major challenges. Its agricultural systems must now adopt solutions that integrate environmental, economic, and social dimensions of sustainability. The UN 2030 Agenda and its SDGs highlight the need for policies, scientific research, and capacity-building to conserve Brazil's natural resources—including soils, water, forests, and biodiversity—and to address the effects of global climate change on agricultural production, food security, and the environment.

Advocates of trade liberalization often seek to limit or even eliminate efforts to link trade policies with environmental protection policies. A clear example of the international trade community's resistance to strong environmental commitments is the launch of negotiations for the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), which began with the explicit decision to exclude environmental issues from the agenda (Monteiro Neto et al., 2017). Yet, the need to control transboundary externalities makes the integration of trade and environmental policies indispensable.

From the perspective of natural resources and international politics, governance can be understood as the “management of participation” among diverse actors involved in disputes over environmental goods and services. While governance is sometimes associated with “less state and more social control” in neoliberal discourse, the participation of multiple actors actually requires a strong state presence—supported by community representatives—to mediate interests and seek common ground (Ribeiro, 2012, p. 8).

Seeking stronger social, environmental, and ecological protection, researchers participating in the April 2016 Meeting of the World Commission on Environmental Law (IUCN) in Rio de Janeiro discussed the principles that should guide a desirable environmental model. They concluded that the Ecological Rule of Law should be understood as a set of procedural and substantive rights and duties that incorporates the principles of ecologically sustainable development into the Rule of Law (Martins, 2018).

The meeting resulted in the World Declaration on the Ecological Rule of Law. This declaration is based on the idea that strengthening the Rule of Law is essential to protect environmental, social, and cultural values and to achieve ecologically sustainable development. Without a strong Rule of Law, there can be no true Ecological Law, and actions related to rights, environmental governance, conservation, and protection become arbitrary, subjective, and unpredictable (Marchesan, 2017).

The Declaration also stresses that creating an Ecological Rule of Law and maintaining strong institutions are necessary to address growing environmental pressures that threaten the Earth's ecological integrity, while still respecting fundamental rights and the principles of social, environmental, and ecological justice.

Building on these principles, in 2018 the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation, and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Escazú Agreement) was adopted. The Agreement aims to ensure the:

Full and effective implementation of the rights of access to environmental information, public participation in decision-making processes, access to justice in environmental matters, as well as the creation and strengthening of capacities and cooperation,” helping to protect the right of present and future generations to live in a healthy environment and to sustainable development (CEPAL, 2018, p. 14).

Regarding access to environmental information, the Agreement obliges states to guarantee the public's right to available environmental data, following the principle of maximum disclosure. This includes encouraging the production, collection, and decentralized dissemination of information that is reusable, processable, and accessible to all interested parties (CEPAL, 2018). In this sense, the Ecological Rule of Law must serve as the legal foundation for promoting environmental ethics, ensuring Environmental and Ecological Justice, protecting global ecological integrity, and supporting a sustainable future for present and future generations at all levels—local, national, regional, and international.

The Agreement also clarifies that access to information is not only about making information available; it must also be of good quality and presented in ways that allow everyone, including vulnerable groups, to understand and use it. Thus, information should be provided in different national languages, in accessible alternative formats, and through appropriate communication channels (CEPAL, 2018). These measures ensure public participation in environmental decision-making processes, including those involving activities that may significantly impact the environment or human health (UN, 2015). Public authorities must meaningfully consider contributions from participants and adapt participation processes to their needs and circumstances (CEPAL, 2018).

Although Brazil signed the Escazú Agreement, its implementation is still pending because ratification requires approval from the National Congress. Brazil signed the Agreement in September 2018, but it was only submitted to Congress in May 2023. The Chamber of Deputies approved it on November 5, 2025 (Brazil, 2025), likely in connection with COP30 in Belém, Pará. Moving this agenda forward will require concerted effort from the government, institutions, and civil society. Without such efforts, the country risks moving in the opposite direction.

ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION OF THE IDEA OF GOVERNANCE AND GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

Historically, the term *governance* was closely associated with *government*—its structures, decision-making processes, and the exercise of political power. It was often used simply as a synonym for government itself. The concept of governance, as understood today, only began to take shape in the academic and international arenas in the 1980s, when institutions like the World Bank and the IMF introduced the expression “good governance” to describe the

principles that should guide countries receiving their financial assistance (Bosselman, 2015).

Initially, governance had a strongly liberal orientation. It emphasized economic growth, poverty reduction, and the obligation of governments to respect market rules, protect private property, and ensure investor security. However, from the 1990s onward, this narrow view began to be questioned. Social movements criticized the World Bank's failure to promote sustainable development, pushing the institution to adopt more rigorous environmental policies. These shifts contributed to the gradual evolution of the concept toward *global governance*.

At this stage, governance expanded beyond economic matters. States and their agencies began to play a stronger role in economic and social development by opening space for broader participation in public policymaking and program implementation. With the publication of the 1996 Report of the UN Commission on Global Governance, the concept moved beyond a “set of governmental actions” and came to include non-governmental organizations, social movements, multinational corporations, and global financial markets.

The report defined governance as “the totality of the many ways in which individuals and public and private institutions manage their common problems” (Commission on Global Governance, 1996). In this sense, governance ceased to be merely prescriptive and became a broad framework that incorporates states, organized civil society, NGOs, and the business sector in addressing shared challenges.

Today, global governance mechanisms aim not only to coordinate political and economic relations but also to protect fundamental rights, ensure freedoms, and safeguard collective goods. States are expected to use these mechanisms to address pressing issues such as the management of natural resources, pollution control, climate preservation, and other environmental challenges essential for human and non-human life.

Global Governance

In contemporary international relations, global governance goes far beyond traditional state-to-state interactions. It involves multiple levels of action and a wide range of actors who are increasingly interdependent and must cooperate to address common problems. This dynamic—cooperation combined with interdependence—often generates paradoxes when attempting to implement global governance. International environmental rules, for example, require not only legal validity but also adaptation to economic, historical, social, and cultural contexts (Reale, 1979).

In an interconnected world, global governance seeks to institutionalize collective actions around shared issues. To do so, different international legal and normative spheres must interact. This interaction gives rise to the relationship between governance and international regimes, which are responsible for establishing legally recognized objectives and mechanisms (Lima, 2012).

Because global governance challenges the traditional limits of state authority, it may operate on broader or narrower geographic scales, depending on how it best aligns with globalized human activity (Vèlez, 2013). A key characteristic of this system is that NGOs, international organizations, and multinational corporations often assume roles previously reserved for states in addressing global problems. This phenomenon explains the phrase “governance without government”: states delegate part of their authority to other

actors to achieve broader goals of international cooperation (Bosselman, 2015).

Ultimately, the concept of governance has broadened, shifting from a predominantly local and national orientation to global standards characterized by worldwide interconnection and interdependence. In this context, the existence of a single sovereign State is no longer assumed; instead, two additional levels of authority—transnational and supranational—operate alongside the non-state actors previously mentioned.

It follows, therefore, that global governance plays an unquestionable role in resolving conflicts, promoting cooperation among States, and establishing common and acceptable standards and principles for public behavior. However, it is necessary to build institutions and rules that define and guide these actions. This set of rules or conventions must prescribe behaviors that shape the distribution of power and the reach of authority, essentially establishing the “rules of the game” for both nation-states and other international actors.

One cannot doubt the importance of these rules and norms, as they are essential for giving substance to shared interests and cooperative efforts. From this emerges the conceptual counterpoint. To better understand this concept, governance can be viewed through four key dimensions (Silva & Araújo, 2015):

- a) Instrumental character – governance is a tool for producing solutions to global problems;
- b) Expanded participation – it involves both state and non-state actors in decision-making;
- c) Consensus-based approach – decisions should emerge from cooperation rather than coercion;
- d) Institutional dimension – governance requires structured institutions and clear rules to orient actors (SILVA; ARAÚJO, 2015, p. 90).

Despite its necessity, global governance faces a central challenge: while collective rules are needed, no actor is allowed to impose them unilaterally. Governance is therefore a form of *self-regulation* among states and other participants, designed to achieve shared global objectives.

Effectiveness and Efficacy of Global Governance

To understand the effectiveness and efficacy of global governance, it is essential to address the issue of the Law of International Treaties, emphasizing the legal nature and characteristics of international conferences, as well as their terminology, binding force, and application. With regard to treaty law, Article 2 of the Vienna Convention provides the most accurate definition and makes it clear that the terminology used for such documents does not change their legal framework. The Convention states that a treaty is any “international agreement concluded in written form between States and governed by international law, whether embodied in a single instrument or in two or more related instruments, regardless of its particular designation” (Vienna Convention, 1969, p. 6). It follows, therefore, that the terminology assigned to a normative instrument in an international document is ultimately irrelevant; what matters are the purposes and commitments undertaken by the parties in the agreement.

Regarding the sources of International Environmental Law, it is not considered an autonomous branch of law and therefore draws on the same sources as Public International Law: international treaties, international customs, general principles of law, scholarly doctrine,

international jurisprudence, and decisions and resolutions of international organizations. In this context, special attention should be given to *soft law*, which often imposes obligations on states that are largely moral in nature, even when they relate to the need for states to align their domestic norms with international standards and to establish future global goals (Vèlez, 2013). Having outlined the normative structure of these legal instruments and the ways in which global environmental governance is documented within international regimes, it is necessary to examine the legal effectiveness of these normative instruments.

The effectiveness of an international norm depends on how well it is obeyed and on the mechanisms available to monitor compliance. Efficacy refers to a norm’s capacity to produce effects, while effectiveness refers to the actual realization of those effects in practice.

Because global governance relies on voluntary adherence, negotiation, and the absence of coercion, norms may remain only partially implemented. This gap reveals the difference between *efficacy* (the norm could work) and *effectiveness* (the norm actually works), a recurring problem in global environmental regimes.

CONCLUSION

This article sought to reflect on the importance of global governance as an essential framework for building an effective environmental agenda within the domain of international environmental law. The effectiveness of global environmental governance regimes depends fundamentally on the willingness of States to set aside certain national interests, ensure transparency in monitoring processes, and internalize the mechanisms and commitments undertaken at the international level.

Environmental law and global environmental governance are deeply interconnected, as legal norms constitute one of the primary tools through which global governance seeks to protect the environment. These norms may be implemented at both national and international levels, and global cooperation is indispensable to ensure that they are effectively applied worldwide.

The main objectives of global governance include reducing environmental degradation, mitigating the impacts of climate change, and promoting the sustainability of human activities. Key instruments such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity establish commitments and targets that guide collective environmental protection efforts. In addition, global environmental governance relies on the work of international institutions—such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Health Organization (WHO)—which promote sustainability and support environmental protection across borders.

A crucial component of this governance model is the active participation of civil society, which helps drive change and monitor the implementation of environmental norms and policies. The private sector also plays a central role through the adoption of sustainable practices and environmental policies within its operations.

The effectiveness of global governance depends, therefore, on the extent to which nation-states are willing and able to adapt their substantive legal norms and implement the commitments established by governance mechanisms. In a global scenario increasingly unfavorable to environmental protection—marked by the weakening of actors who defend human, environmental, and

ecological rights, and by the reduced influence of economically less powerful states—there is an urgent need to advocate for the strengthening of the state. This does not refer to any state model, but specifically to a Rule of Law capable of upholding the ideals of Environmental and Ecological Justice.

Brazil's role in global environmental governance is particularly significant, given its potential to contribute to positive outcomes in key areas such as biodiversity conservation and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Although the country has frequently positioned itself as a leader in proposing conservation initiatives, it has also become one of the nations that has expanded its oil production most rapidly—highlighting the difficulty of achieving coherence and effectiveness in transforming its energy matrix.

Despite the limited progress achieved at COP29 regarding coordinated global efforts, recent decades have witnessed notable advances in the development of pro-environment agreements, especially in the climate sphere, with the Paris Agreement as the most prominent example. Nevertheless, the central challenge remains ensuring their effective implementation. A substantial gap persists between international convergence and the capacity of states to translate these commitments into robust and coherent domestic action.

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