From Resistance to Cooperation: The Evolution of Brazilian Foreign Policy in the Area of Environment

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Abstract

Brazil has been one of the most active actors in international environmental negotiations and is an up-and-coming developing country with huge reserves of natural resources, biodiversity, and ecosystems that are of interest to the rest of the world, such as the Amazon rainforest. This paper provides an analysis of Brazilian foreign policy in the area of environment. By studying three major, international environmental conferences – Stockholm 1972, Rio 1992, and the COP 15 in Copenhagen, in 2009 – from a liberal-constructivist perspective, the objective is to investigate how Brazil has contributed to, as well as has been affected by, the international environmental regime over time. With the Rio+20 conference around the corner, this paper can provide important insights to what processes are behind Brazil’s action and position in these issues. The paper takes an eclectic approach and analyzes the national and international contexts and the positions Brazil took at the time of each conference, in the light of a framework that emphasizes the reciprocal relationship between domestic and international structure and agent. The conclusion is that there is a clear trend of Brazil going from being defensive and confrontational to being open to cooperation and taking initiatives. The changes in Brazilian attitude at each of the three conferences can be connected to great transformations in national as well as international context. The social and material reality in which Brazil has found itself has affected the way it interprets its capabilities, as well as how it identifies its interests. Furthermore, it is identified that tradition in foreign policy has played an important part in constraining some alternatives and promoting others.

Keywords
Brazil, Foreign Policy, International Negotiations, Constructivism, Environmental Regime
It comes blundering over the
Boulders at night, it stays
Frightened outside the
Range of my campfire
I go to meet it at the
Edge of the light

- How Poetry Comes to Me,
  Gary Snyder, 1993
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### Abbreviations

<table>
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>BRICS</td>
<td>Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa</td>
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<td>COP</td>
<td>Conference of Parties</td>
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<tr>
<td>IBSA</td>
<td>India, Brazil, South Africa</td>
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<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>Itamaraty</td>
<td>The Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>MERCOSUL</td>
<td>(or MERCOSUR) The Southern Common Market</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Nongovernmental organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>TNC</td>
<td>Transnational Company</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>UNFCCC</td>
<td>United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change</td>
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<td>U.S.</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<td>WCED</td>
<td>World Commission on Environment and Development</td>
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1 Introduction

1.1 Environment, International Conferences, and Brazil

Environmental degradation provoked by human activities has followed mankind since we left the hunting and gathering stages of our existence and took the first tumbling steps towards civilization. In fact, many civilizations that have mysteriously vanished, for example the Rapanui on Easter Island or the Mayas in Central America, are thought to have done so, at least partly, due to the unsustainable extraction from their surrounding nature (Santley, Killion & Lycett 1986; Duke 2004:17ff; Hunt 2006). Even, as far back as in ancient Greece, Plato described the consequences of overexploitation of woodlands outside of Athens (Williams 2006:81). With the industrialization of Western economies in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, environmental degradation goes from being an issue of merely local concern to a global phenomenon. However, it is only as the industrial society approaches the modern society of today, that the degradation of our common ecological systems reaches the international agenda. Although increasing pollution levels, acid rains, and loss in biodiversity were discovered early on, little attention was given to the environment and its degradation in times of World Wars and imminent nuclear destruction. It was not until the early nineteen seventies national governments finally brought the effects of development on the environment unto the international agenda. Before that, the environment had almost only been an issue of resources and territory at the international negotiation tables.

When nature finally made its way into the international arena, it did so forcefully. The United Nations Conference on Human Environment, in Stockholm, in 1972, was the starting point; and from there on, one great conference after the other would follow. Several agreements with global reach were made, accords were signed, and protocols were written. In the mid-nineteen nineties, the world started to meet in order to solve the problem of galloping levels of greenhouse gas emissions, under the name of Conference of Parties. Some of these conferences, meetings and summits were more successful than others. Some were given a great symbolic value as a starting point for further discussions. Some never resulted in more than just symbolism. The success or failure of these negotiations have always been riding on the will and interest in its realization of the different nation parties. The international environmental regime has always only been able to move forward through consensus or near-consensus decision-making.
Many countries, at different times and to varying degrees, have played major roles at these conferences, meetings and negotiations. The United States took an early initiative when it came to regulate the use of substances that deplete the Ozone layer (Benedick 1998:4), Sweden and Finland have been driving forces for the regulation of the Baltic Sea (Hassler 2003), and the European Union took a leading role in negotiations concerning biotechnology (Falkner 2007). Another country that from the very beginning has played a crucial role in the outcome of international negotiations is Brazil.

With time, Brazil has taken on the role as a spokesperson for the developing countries of the world, and together with other regional giants, such as China, India and South Africa, Brazil has come to put considerable pressure on international negotiations. Besides being an increasingly important player economically, passing recently the United Kingdom to become the sixth largest economy in the world (Inman 2011) – and refusing to be treated as anything less – Brazil is also home of the world’s richest biological diversity and the largest remaining rainforest – the Amazon (MMA 2002), which it shares with seven other countries, and might be the world’s greatest potential provider of agricultural goods. This has made observers state that Brazil holds both the world’s lung and the world’s breadbasket (Fearnside 1985; Accioli & Monteiro 2011:14). However, Brazil has also, in different periods, seen rapid economic development and industrialization, with the extraction and use of its natural resources as the base. The last decade’s economic growth has put Brazil among the other Newly Industrialized Countries as a future regional and international power. So it goes without saying that any environmental agreement worth its name must also be signed and ratified by a country such as Brazil. This pivotal role has put Brazil in an interesting position.

1.2 Purpose and Research Question

With the above in mind, analyzing how Brazil has contributed to the present, international environmental regime is clearly of great interest. This paper aims to provide such an analysis. By studying three major, international environmental conferences from a constructivist perspective, the purpose is to investigate how Brazil has contributed to, as well as has been affected by, the international environmental regime over time. The study is organized around the following research question:

*How have Brazil’s positions at three major international environmental conferences changed over time, and how are these changes attributable to changes in the domestic and international context at the time of each respective conference?*
Three conferences with approximately twenty years apart have been chosen: Stockholm, 1972, Rio de Janeiro, 1992, and Copenhagen 2009. These conferences take place in different times and focus on different aspects of the environmental issue, which makes it feasible, if any change has occurred at all, that the Brazilian positions will have altered at these occasions. Within these differences between the conferences, nonetheless, also exist certain constants and some of the key disagreements have remained the same.

Approaching the twenty years anniversary of the monumental 1992 conference, in Rio de Janeiro, and the Rio+20 conference, in June 2012, this paper can provide important insights to what processes are behind Brazil’s action and position in these issues. Understanding the elements behind the different countries’ decisions is fundamental to be able to construct a more advanced environmental regime, and this paper aims to contribute to such an understanding.

1.3 Brief Description of the Study

The study uses a theoretical framework where a liberal theory of the importance of domestic institutions is combined with a constructivist approach to international relations. This framework suggests a dual analysis with a discussion on structural factors, as well as a concrete historical analysis. In the following section a theoretical discussion will cover the main points of the former. For the historical analysis, the study approaches the theme by focusing on three important, international conferences on environmental issues, where Brazil has had a clear and important role. Drawing on the main points form the theoretical discussion, the analysis of these conferences is eclectic and includes domestic and international processes at the time, as well as the Brazilian positions and the changes that can be identified in these. The aim is to provide sufficient material in order to, in light of the theoretical framework, explain what processes are behind the formation of Brazilian foreign policy.

1.4 Disposition of the Paper

The paper approaches the issue and the research question in five parts. After this introduction, the second part provides a brief delineation of the theoretical and methodological basis of the study. Some key concepts are introduced and the constructivist perspective is put in relation to traditional theories of international relations. In addition, a theoretical model of understanding the unique aspects of international negotiations is introduced. In the third part, the study then turns to a historic review of the international and national context at the time of each conference. As the theoretical framework suggests, material and social structures jointly influence what constitutes a state’s interests in a certain issue. To make the review more comprehensible, the international and national contexts will be treated in two separate sections. The following
part, describes the Brazilian positions at the conferences. Each conference is treated individually and the most important aspects of the Brazilian positions are reviewed. In the final part, the contexts and positions are analyzed in the light of the theoretical framework introduced in the second part of the paper.
2 State Centricity, Constructivism and International Diplomacy: Theory and Method

2.1 Traditional Theories of International Relations and Constructivism

Traditionally, the most preferred theoretical approach in the discipline of international relations has been neo-realism. This theoretical stance has been used to explain state behavior for most of the after-War period, and is quite simplistic in its nature. Three major characteristics can be discerned. First, in contrast to old realism, represented by, among many others, Thucydides (1998) and Morgenthau (1993), where power is an end in itself and the most basic interest of states, neo-realism claims that states’ most basic interest is survival and power is only but an instrument to assure it (Waltz 1997:913; Waltz 1988:616).

Second, to the neo-realist, the international realm is anarchic (Dunne & Schmidt 2008). That is, since there is no authority higher than the nation-state that can monopolize the use of force to implement rules or sanction diverting behavior, states act with much suspicion towards each other and have to always be cautious about another state breaking a deal or trying to use relative advantages in power. Because of this anarchy and suspicion between actors in the international arena, relative gains are more important than absolute gains. This makes the neo-realists very skeptical about the possibilities of enduring cooperation (Lamy 2001:186f).

Third, for the neo-realist the nation-state is the obvious subject in international relations (Waltz 1979; 1990:29). Wars are fought between states, and it is states that sign agreements and form alliances, and also break them. Besides the state being the evident object of study, there is little interest in the neo-realist camp for other units, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), transnational companies (TNCs), or international institutions, as well as there is little attention given to the domestic affairs of the states (Fearon 1998:293f). The nature of the domestic political institutions, culture, or powerful interest groups are all seen as having little influence in the general behavior of states. For example, the United States and the Soviet Union acted similarly
on many occasions even though they had widely different political systems, which would thus suggest that it was their positions as superpowers in the international system that, first and foremost, determined their behavior.

One adversary for neo-realism is liberalism\(^1\). Liberals contrast with neo-realists on two important points. First, the state might be the most important unit for analysis in international relations, but the domestic affairs of the state are of great importance. Second, survival might be the most basic interest of the state, but general preferences are not fixed. In the words of one prominent scholar:

_Societal ideas, interests, and institutions influence state behavior by shaping state preferences, that is, the fundamental social purposes underlying the strategic calculations of governments. For liberals, the configuration of state preferences matters most in world politics – not, as realists argue, the configuration of capabilities..._ (Moravcsik 1997:513)

In the late nineteen eighties, a newcomer challenged these two traditional theoretical approaches to state behavior: constructivism. Critiquing the fixation of realism with rational behavior of actors and the natural state of anarchy in the international system (Wendt 1992), constructivist scholars borrowed from sociology and claimed that _“structure is both medium and outcome of the reproduction of practices. Structure enters simultaneously into the constitution of the agent and social practices, and ‘exists’ in the generating moments of this constitution”_ (Giddens 1979:5). Moreover, the constructivists brought a new perception of states’ interests: _“the fundamental structures of international politics are social rather than strictly material”_ and _“these structures shape actors identities and interests, rather than just their behavior”_ (Wendt 1995:71f). The similarities with liberalism are many and Adler (1997) describes constructivism as ‘seizing the middle ground’ and Moracsvik (1997) argue that constructivist arguments are often employed so that they will not confront liberal theory.

### 2.2 Combining Liberalism and Constructivism in a Theoretical Framework

Despite the ontological and epistemological differences, there is thus room for merging constructivism and liberalism in international relations. Principally, liberalism can supplement constructivism with the insight of the importance of domestic affairs to the formulation of state preferences. An idea that is not completely absent in the writings of some constructivist scholars: _“The structures that constitute agents are of two kinds: external, or social structure; and_

\(^1\) Liberalism here is used in a non-ideological sense and has nothing inherent to do with its political and idealistic namesake.
internal, or organizational structures” (Wendt 1987:359). However, it is, at times, deprioritized and social structure or external context is claimed to be of primary importance (1987:360). Moravcsik (1997:539) criticizes the constructivist claim and argue that a theoretical approach to the domestic processes that shape preference formation are crucial to the understanding of how, when and what parts of the social structure influence these processes in the first place. Moravcsik write:

Better yet would be a sophisticated synthesis [between constructivism and liberalism], as found in the “liberal constructivist” research program advocated by Thomas Risse-Kappen. This approach – a “constructivist interpretation of liberal theory” – backs away from the notion that values result from interstate socialization and argues instead in a liberal vein that ideas and communication matter when they are most congruent with existing domestic values and institutions. (1997:540)

Risse-Kappen (1995a:6) argue that domestic structure in conjunction with international structure determine the possibilities of transnational activities, which, in turn, may influence preferences. As elaborated on below, Putnam (1988) offers a theoretical approach to how and when domestic and international structures converge to influence outcomes of international negotiations. The way the state is structured, its institutions, rules, legitimacy, culture, and so on is of vital importance to how civil society (in its widest meaning: NGOs, companies, unions, etc) access the formation process of foreign policy, as Krasner describes in relation to TNCs:

There are powerful motivations for transnationals to organize themselves in ways that are compatible with state institutions. Coercive incentives, especially legal regulations, competitive incentives, and normative legitimacy encourage transnationals to become institutionally isomorphic with states. The organizational form of transnationals will vary across countries, because different countries have different legal rules, domestic political structures, and normative values (Krasner 1995:279)

Additionally, four points of a more epistemological character and one point of a more methodological character are of interest to us in the constructivist framework. First, ideas are given structural characteristics and an important role in the understanding of state behavior. As described by Adler, ideas – or collective knowledge institutionalized in practices – define what is cognitively possible or not possible for an actor (Adler 1997:325). Adler then continues

intersubjective meanings are not simply the aggregation of the beliefs of individuals who jointly experience and interpret the world. Rather, they exist as collective knowledge that is shared by all who are competent to engage in or recognize the
appropriate performance of a social practice or range of practices’ (Cohen 1987:287 cited in Adler 1997:327)

Also expressing the importance of ideas is Alexander Wendt who describes the concepts of appropriateness and path dependency. The former suggests that states act according to what is assumed to be normatively correct, not necessarily according to some rational analysis based on costs and benefits (Wendt 2001:1024ff). It follows that rational behavior takes place within the space made available by the perception of what is appropriate. The second concept refers to how designers of international institutions act within frameworks of a central idea, like for example democracy or sovereignty, following a logic that allows the adoption of some norms and inhibits others (2001:1039ff).

Second, Wendt’s critique of the assumption of actors’ rationality continues as he introduces the concepts of uncertainty and what could be called unintentionality. Uncertainty, here, means that actors seldom possess knowledge of all the possible alternative actions that they have, nor can they assign probability to these actions. This promotes a more restricted and constant behavior, rather than, as suggested in for example mainstream economics, a continual updating of strategies (Wendt 2001:1030f). Unintentionality refers to the difficulty that actors have in understanding and foreseeing the results of the institutions they create. Even if people do act intentionally, the limits of human knowledge and our ‘cognitive capacity’ makes it impossible to assume successful results while creating new institutions (2001:1036).

Third, the concept of power is widened. It is still a decisive factor in the creation of social reality. Not only in the material sense, perceived by neo-realists, but also in the gramscian sense of power over the determination of identities, interests, and practices (Adler 1997:336). This opens a window for other non-state actors, such as NGOs or transnational enterprises, which can influence the perception of alternatives for foreign policy formation (Arts 2000:528). NGOs, for example, as argued by Raustiala (1997), play an important role in agenda-setting, providing policy options, and helping states manage the complexity of the regulatory efforts in international environmental politics. Adler writes:

*Kathryn Sikkink skillfully shows ‘the power of ideas to reshape understandings of national interest’ [...] For what is at stake here is actually the construction, by collective beliefs about human rights, of Western countries’ identities, and the explanation of the role of social actors, such as NGOs, in constructing these identities in the first place* (1997:332).

Thus, Adler suggests that social actors and ideas are powerful tools – especially in interaction – and crucial to explaining the behavior of states.
Fourth, the institutional framework within which states act will constitute structural pressure and open and close doors and windows of action. However, it will also be affected by the action of states. Giddens presents the concept of duality of structure (1979:5). This implies that institutions and actions are continuously shaping each other. The institution (or structure) affects the action, which in turn affects the institution. This can be seen as a spiral or a cyclical process where an international regime affects the options, as well as the preferences of a state, but by participating in the regime, the state, through its actions, also participate in the creation of the future regime (Carlsenaes 1992:260f).

Nevertheless, the institutional framework is not just exogenous to the state. Rather, the state itself contains an institutional structure that will affect preferences, as suggested by the liberal approach presented above. This domestic structure will also affect preferences and interests in conjunction with the international structure, as shown by Wendt: “the causal powers and interests of those agents, in their own turn, are constituted and therefore explained by structures. The structures that constitute agents are of two kinds: external, or social structure [international structure]; and internal, or organizational structures [domestic structure]” (1987:359).

Several concepts have been used throughout this theoretical discussion that might deserve some clarification: international/domestic structure, external/internal structure, institutions, and international regime. The definitions of these concepts are under continuous academic debate and it is not useful for the purpose of this paper to linger at this discussion. However, for the first concepts of international/domestic/external/internal structure, suffice to say that they are used interchangeably and refer to social or material ‘realities’ that affect what is conceivable, preferable, and possible. Institution is maybe the most debated concept of the above, as shown by Ostrom (1986). However, throughout this paper, in line with Riker’s (1982 cited in Ostrom 1986:3) definition, institution refers to sets of rules that determine behavior and decision-making. Robert O. Keohane uses a similar definition for international institutions and sees them as “persistent and connected sets of rules that prescribe behavioral roles, constrain activity, and shape expectations” (1988:386). International regime, then, is seen as a type of institution. Oran R. Young write:

*Regimes are social institutions governing the actions of those interested in specifiable activities [...] Like all social institutions, they are recognized patterns of behavior or practice around which expectations converge [...] regimes may be more*

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Finally, for the methodological point made by constructivism, it is suggested that the analysis has to be eclectic in the sense that it should include both structural and historical aspects. The constructivist ontology suggests a duality in the analysis, as explained by Wendt: “[The method] will require abstract structural analysis to theorize and explain the causal powers, practices, and interests of states, and concrete historical analysis to trace the causally significant sequence of choices and interactions” (Wendt 1987:364).

2.3 Understanding International Negotiations, or: how and when does Domestic Politics Matter?

Andrew Moravcsik, in the citation above, describes how liberal theory provides us with an idea of how the domestic affairs of a state influence its behavior. Robert D. Putnam (1988), in turn, delineates a model for how this influence can be conceived in practice at international negotiations. Putnam starts with a metaphor of a two-level game. Diplomats and negotiators sit at two negotiation tables at the same time – the international (Level I) and the domestic (Level II). The most important factor of this framework is the idea that negotiators are always dependent on ratification domestically of any agreements reached internationally. Thus, international agreements that are actually valid can only be achieved if national and international interests in some way converge. Putnam offers an analytical insight that he calls ’win-sets’, which are defined as ”the set of all possible Level I agreements that would ’win’ – that is, gain the necessary majority among the [different domestic] constituents – when simple voted up or down” (1988:437). The win-sets bring with them two details. First, the larger the win-set the easier it is to reach an accord. Second, the size of the win-set affects the distribution of benefits from the agreement. That is, a negotiator that can easily push through any agreement back home is more likely to fold in the negotiations (1988:437, 440; for further details see Moravcsik 1993:27ff).

Putnam identifies three principal factors that affect the size of the win-set: Level II preferences, Level II institutions, and Level I negotiators’ strategies (1988:441-452). The first factor refers to the interests of influential, domestic groups. Putnam writes, “[a]bstracting from the details of Level II politics […] it is possible to sketch certain principles that govern the size of the win-sets” (1988:442). That is, the costs of a no-agreement might differ between groups in the society in question. Evans (1993:403f) highlights that different issues respond differently to systemic

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1 For a more detailed discussion on definitions of international regimes, consult chapter 2 in Hasenclever, Mayer & Rittberger (1997).
(foreign) pressures and constituency (domestic) pressures. He separates security issues from issues driven by economic interests (such as trade negotiations) and argues that the former is more responsive to systemic pressure than the latter, which responds more to constituency pressures. For the purpose of this study the question inevitably rises: how do environmental issues fit into these two categories? Arguably, international environmental issues could be defined as transcending both security and economic issues. On the one hand, the environment is clearly an economic issue, and concepts such as property rights, development, and economic growth are frequently brought up. On the other hand, the environment is also deeply connected to strategic issues of national security, for example, sovereignty, natural disasters, energy supply, and so on. Hence, it would be reasonable to expect systemic and domestic pressures to be even more heavily intertwined in negotiations on the international environment than on strictly security or trade bargaining.

Putnam also introduces this interconnectedness of pressures in what could be called a feedback loop from Level I to Level II: “In some instances, perhaps even unintentionally, international pressures ‘reverberate’ within domestic politics, tipping the domestic balance and thus influencing the international negotiations” (1988:454). Together with Evans and Jacobson, Putnam (1993) describes how diplomacy is ‘double-edged’ and may both reshape and respond to domestic interests. That is, the agenda and general context of interests of the international level can reinforce or downgrade the arguments of the influential groups in domestic negotiations.

The two-level game approach is schematically depicted in Figure 1. The model illustrates how foreign policy is a factor of domestic influence, as well as the present agenda of the international level. Furthermore, the dotted lines represent the feedback loops described above. International pressures and agendas together with the line of foreign policy feed national negotiations.

![Figure 1 – Theoretical Model for Foreign Policy Formulation](developed by author)

Walter Carlsnaes suggests another model (Figure 2) to foreign policy formulation that instead of dividing between international and domestic focuses three dimensions that could, arguably, be found on both levels: *intentional, dispositional,* and *structural.*
As suggested by Carlsnaes (1992:254), this model treats these three dimensions as analytically autonomous, which helps us approach policy formulation in a more simplified manner. However, it fails to show the three-way, reciprocal relationship between foreign policy – international structure – domestic structure. Instead, Carlsnaes writes, somewhat incoherently, that this can be observed in a simple step-by-step manner, which undoubtedly would suggest a sequential relationship rather than a reciprocal one. The intention here, nonetheless, has been to show that, by combining the constructivist framework with Putnam’s theoretical model, an analytically plausible as well as theoretically coherent approach can be reached.

2.4 Methodology, Limits, and Source Criticism

2.4.1 Methodology

As suggested earlier, the methodology ought to approach the theme with two analyses simultaneously: an abstract structural analysis, as well as a more concrete historical analysis. This study rests on ample theoretical discussion, developed above, where the most significant factors for the formation of foreign policy are presented. The historical analysis that follows in the coming two chapters aims to provide the adequate understanding of how, and in what sequence, choices were made and interactions took place. The final chapter is concerned with the structural analysis and tries to apply the theoretical discussion in conjunction with the conclusions from the historical analysis, in order to explain the formation of Brazilian foreign policy.
The study breaks down the ‘unit’ of the state and looks at the internal dynamic and processes that affect the formulation of Brazilian interests. The realist critique, as argued by Kenneth Waltz (1979; 1997) is that if the domestic affairs of states become a central concern, the study will be forced to a mere descriptive level, from which generalizations cannot be drawn. Nonetheless, without a more penetrating analysis, as suggested by the theoretical discussion above, factors central to the understanding of state action are overlooked. To turn Waltz’s own words on their head, ‘foreign policy is not international politics’. It is claimed that important explanatory conclusions can be derived from this descriptive approach and the theoretical underpinnings allow for valid generalizations to be made.

2.4.2 Limits
Two limits to this kind of study are obvious. First, there is little, if any, possibility to reach the inner circles where decisions are made or where strategies are formed. The thoughts and ideas of the negotiators and people in decision-making positions are often unattainable, which makes the study rely on certain assumptions about people’s rationality and response to structural pressures. Second, an attempt to describe historic processes and events in little space risks being overly broad and sweeping. Details that may be of more or less importance are likely to be overlooked and the factors influencing behavior can only be understood in very general terms.

There is also a restriction more specific to this particular paper: the lack of access to, on certain occasions, governmental material, reports, and documentation stating positions and discussion leading up to these positions. Either these documents are still classified and thus unattainable for the general public or they can only be found in printed versions at the headquarters of the Brazilian Foreign Ministry in Brasilia or some other revenue of the Brazilian government, which for time- and finance-related issues make them out of reach for this study.

2.4.3 Source Criticism
The two historical reviews are conducted with a combination of secondary and primary sources. Academic texts together with newspaper articles, speeches and official government statements and reports are used. The limitations described above imply a certain inclination for secondary sources. To the extent it is possible, however, primary material will be used to support arguments from secondary sources.

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4 The title of Waltz’s article being ‘International Politics is not Foreign Policy’ (1996).
Jarrick and Söderberg (2003:141) mention four critical requirements that sources should fulfill: *contemporaneity, independence, freedom of tendency*, and *reality*. The latter is not considered to be a problem for this study as it refers to the relevance of the source in relation to what we assume as ‘real’ in the world (2003:141f). The sources mentioned above can be divided into three categories – academic texts, medial sources, and government sources – each of which relates to the requirements of Jarrick and Söderberg differently. When it comes to government sources, independence and freedom of tendency requirements need to be discussed. The former states that the more a source is based on another source, the less individual value it inherits (2003:142f). However, many of the government sources are primary sources and refer in a lesser degree to other documents.

Conversely, the freedom of tendency requirement cannot be as simply fulfilled. This requirement means that documents sometimes have been designed to give the reader a certain impression (Jarrick & Söderberg 2003:143). Government officials, for obvious reasons, have incentives to try to spin information, conclusions, and statistics to their favor. This also goes for lower-level civil servants that often are not free from ‘ideological baggage’ and frequently try to push their own agenda (Miliband 1969:120). To avoid tendentious material, or to address it adequately, the study tries, to the extent it is possible, to verify the information by using overlapping material from different sources. That is, academic texts and newspaper articles are used to shed light on potential tendentious aspects in the government material, and vice versa.

For the secondary sources the requirement of independence is more present. The secondary sources that will be used are academic material that has been published by well-known editors or peer-reviewed before publishing, to assure their reliability (Booth, Colomb & Williams 2004:83). This, although not completely removing the potential risk of dependence, does serve as some assurance for the text’s academic quality.

Information retrieved from the media might be very useful in an investigation such as this one, not least because of its often high contemporaneity. However, dependence and tendency are pitfalls of which the investigator needs to be aware. Again, the best instrument to avoid these pitfalls is to use different sources that can complement (or contradict) each other (Esaiasson et al. 2007:324).

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1 Esaiasson et al. (2007: 314ff) also mention authenticity as a requirement, but this requirement seems more relevant for primary or secondary sources that because of, for example, their age makes it hard to determine whether they actually are what they claim to be. Since this is not the case here, the requirement of authenticity is considered less problematic.
3 National and International Context at the Time of the Conferences

3.1 Introduction
In this chapter, the international and national contexts at the time of the three conferences will be treated in turn. The purpose is to give a broad idea of the historical/structural factors that, both from outside of Brazil and from within, influenced the formation of a Brazilian foreign policy. The time span is vast, reaching from 1972, when the first conference was held in Stockholm, to 2009 and the Conference of Parties, in Copenhagen. The study will thus follow the international environmental regime from its cradle to present day. Obviously environmental issues had been treated before the Stockholm conference, but in a much more specific, bilateral, or limited multilateral way (Campos & Corrêa 1998:18). Both internationally and nationally, several important structural changes can be observed.

3.2 International Context
When the Stockholm Conference took place in 1972, the international system was, forcefully determined by the bipolarity of the Cold War. This was not least shown by the Soviet Union’s abstention from the conference. The Cold War meant an inclination towards a realist view of international relations, which affected the foreign policy of nations around the world. Nonetheless, the international system was not interpreted, first and foremost, as a division East-West by the militaries in Brazil, but rather as a division North-South (Cervo 1994:92; Gonçalves & Miyamoto 1993:223; Vizentini 1998:137ff). This interpretation of the international system has its foundation in the economic cleavage between the developed and the developing countries, irrespectively of any differences there might be within these groupings. The 1950s and 1960s had sprung a great quantity of Third World-intellectuals that described an antagonizing relationship between the developed and the developing countries. A relationship that was perpetuating
existing, international power relations – be them military, economic, or cultural. The current was exceptionally strong in Latin America with the formulation of the dependency school⁶.

This interpretation of international relations was reinforced by the entering of environmental issues into the international arena. During the late 1960s, a group of Western intellectuals had gathered under the name of the Club of Rome and by 1972 published a text called Limits to growth (Meadows et al. 1972) that was going to set the mood for the discussions in Stockholm. The Club of Rome prophesized a sort of neo-Malthusian view on environmental degradation and saw demography as a major threat to future human well-being. The hypothesis was that poor countries needed to undertake measures to control their population growth because the world’s ecosystems were under strain because of overpopulation in the Third World. The period before the Stockholm Conference also gave birth to other influential texts, such as Silent Spring (Carson 1962) and Blueprint for Survival (Goldsmith & Allen 1972), which were to contribute to the initiative of the conference and the spirit in which it was held. Besides the issue of population control, these texts introduced the idea of a profound change in consumption patterns and ‘no growth’. In the developed world, the influence of these texts on public opinion was considerable and it was these ideas that set the agenda for environmental discussions. With the Stockholm Conference, this agenda was transferred to the international realm. As for the world economy, the world had obviously not yet felt the repercussions of the first oil crisis that was to take place in 1973 and the developed world, as well as the developing world, was filled with the confidence of high, consistent growth rates that defined the golden post-war decades. All of which might have contributed to high impact of the environmentalist ideas of ‘no growth’ on public opinion, which probably were more acceptable in times of strong economic development.

The Stockholm conference was not only the first world conference on environmental issues, but was also groundbreaking as it, for the first time, allowed non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to participate in the negotiations (Willetts 1996). However, NGOs from developing countries were scarce, which might be seen as only natural since democratization or redemocratization processes had not yet taken place in many Third World countries.

Twenty years later, in Rio de Janeiro, the number of NGOs present had increased substantially. Rio meant a consolidation of civil society participation in international negotiations as NGOs started to be seen as, in the words of former Secretary General of the United Nations, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, ‘full participants’ on the international stage (Boutros-Ghali 1996). Some 2400 representatives of NGOs on behalf of different interests and interest groups were present (UN 1992). Nonetheless it has been argued that it was merely a handful of more institutionalized

⁶ For examples of dependency scholars, consult Cardoso & Foletto (1979), Prébisch (1959).
‘state-like’ NGOs that managed to secure any influence at the negotiation table (Albin 1999:374). Even as the influence of the NGOs can be discussed, their increased presence meant, and came from, a substantial change in the way civil society was seen at the great international negotiations.

By 1992, the Cold War had ended and the international system moved towards being a unipolar one headed by U.S hegemony. The crude logic of the bipolarity of world politics faded away and the possibility of a universalist and pluralist approach towards international negotiation and regime started to appear (Lafer 2002).

The 1980s had meant for many developing countries, especially in Latin America, great economic regression. Referred to in many cases as the ‘lost decade’ due to its low or, in some cases, even negative growth rates (Bulmer-Thomas 2003:357; Larrain 2004:27; Luna & Klein 2006:45), the 1980s reinforced the position of the developing world of the right to seek economic growth (Najam 2005). Coming in to the 1992 Earth Summit the world faced the dual problem of poverty and environmental degradation. An attempt to reconcile these two issues was expressed in the report *Our Common Future* (WCED 1987), often referred to as the Brundtland Report, which was laying the groundwork for the Rio Conference. In the report the concept of *sustainable development* was defined and brought into the international agenda. This development of the connection between social issues and environment had led to some clear progress in the way environmental issues were being included in economic theory. The progress was not only within economics however, but came also from the ecologist camp where economy was progressively included into their area of study (Corrêa do Lago 2007:57f).

In a regional perspective, Brazil had recently signed the Treaty of Asuncion engaging in the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUL). As identified by several authors (Oliveira & Onuki 2000; Araujo 2008) and the Brazilian foreign ministry itself, Itamaraty (Itamaraty 2007:65), one of the key objectives of this cooperation was the ability to negotiate more forcefully in international forums. As a group, the countries of the Mercosul could increase their bargaining power: “Entendemos que a integração regional constitui uma opção estratégica para fortalecer a inserção de nossos países no mundo, aumentando a sua capacidade de negociação” (Itamaraty 2007:65).

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1 After the former Norwegian Prime Minister, Gro Harlem Brundtland, who chaired the Commission.
2 The now classic definition of the concept: “Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (WCED 1987: Ch. 2).
3 The marriage between economy and ecology, economic growth and sustainable development is mentioned by Blowes (1997) under the concept of ecological modernization.
4 In English (author’s translation): We understand the regional integration as a strategic option to strengthen the insertion of our countries into the world, increasing our capacity to negotiate.
This instrumental view of the Mercosul as a tool for increasing bargaining power reflects a wider change in the interpretation of world politics. The UN had become an important forum for Brazilian activities on the international arena.\textsuperscript{11} As the bipolarity of the Cold War turned into unipolarity, international institutions were no longer interpreted as merely a tool of the superpowers to freeze existing power relations,\textsuperscript{12} but as a possible instrument for middle range powers to keep in check the only remaining superpower – international institutions, such as the UN General Assembly, being the strings over Gulliver’s body (Hurrell \textit{et al.} 2000:4; Hurrell 2006). This period saw an unprecedented proliferation of international institutions, especially in the creation of an international environmental regime (Meyer \textit{et al.} 1997)

For each of the two conferences different key issues had been chosen as a focal point. In Stockholm the focus of the conference was pollution, in Rio the focus was on deforestation. The conference in Copenhagen was different in the way that it was part of a series of conferences called Conferences of Parties (COP). The first was held in 1995, in Berlin. Parties refer to the countries party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The COPs are dedicated solely to the issue of global climate change. This is an issue that had gained much attention at the turn of the millennium and was, in a way, quite different from the previous two, for one principal reason: it is truly global in its character. The effects and sources of the problem are not necessarily (or even likely) to occur in the same geographical space. Furthermore, the magnitude of the problem has made environmentalists fear for the very survival of human civilization. There are resemblances, however. The issue of who is to blame is still central and the right to development the principal objective of the Third World.

The COP at Copenhagen – number fifteen in the series – was, by many, seen as the meeting where concrete action had to be taken and much hope was put to this meeting that was generally seen afterwards as a failure (Dimitrov 2010; Bodansky 2010). The international context during the 2009 Copenhagen Summit showed two interesting changes. First of all, the evident decline in U.S. hegemony, as the country failed to push its agenda during the negotiations.\textsuperscript{13} This decline can be attributed to three principle factors: the surge of new poles of power in the international system, primarily China; the weak U.S. economy; and what can be described as ‘imperial over-stretch’ with the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Coming into the meeting, the U.S. was burdened by the recent financial crisis and a heavy budget deficit and the room for action for the

\textsuperscript{11} As for example in the case of non-proliferation (Stuenkel 2010).

\textsuperscript{12} For further details concerning the relation between the developing world and international institutions consult, for example, Rajagopal (2000).

\textsuperscript{13} Although there is still a debate on whether U.S. hegemony is diminishing or not, more and more observers contend that the unipolar power of the post-Soviet Union era is turning into multipolar with power centers surging in, principally, Asia (Layne 2009).
American President, Barack Obama, was very limited despite his popularity. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan that further added to the financial strain of the American economy had for some time showed the limits of the Bush administration’s unilateral interpretation of international relations, and the signs of imperial over-stretch were starting to show. At the same time, a handful of emerging developing countries, headed by China, were beginning to occupy and demand more space in the international realm, primarily due to their recent, excellent economic growth.

The second interesting feature of the international system at the time of the Copenhagen Summit was the more or less fragile alliances between these emerging economies. Different informal groupings such as the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) and the IBSA (India, Brazil, and South Africa) were being used as platforms for increasing the potential of these countries in international negotiations. Without going into details about the debate on the importance and legitimacy of these groupings, it suffice to mention that during the Copenhagen Summit the United States found itself with Brazil, China, and India at the other side of the negotiating table.

3.3 National Context

The national Brazilian context sees two clearly defining changes in the period between 1972 and 2009. The first is the transition to democracy and the second is the changes in national economic conditions. At the Stockholm Conference in 1972, Brazil was governed by a military regime headed by the President Emilio Medici. This period was arguably the most repressive of the two decade long military dictatorship (Rollemberg 2006:147). Little or no space was given for civil society inclusion in national affairs, and international relations were an area clearly out of reach of the public. The militaries in Brazil followed a harsh line of developmentalism, which emphasized economic growth at the cost of individual liberties, as well as, in some cases, the environment. In 1972, Brazil – just like the rest of the world economy – was still in a quite positive economic climate. The decade of the 1960s had meant strong economic growth and the ‘Brazilian miracle’ had produced growth rates of ten percent for several consecutive years. It was, thus, not strange that the ranks of the military leadership were filled with confidence and faith in its development model.

Due to the developmentalist model and the poor inclusion of civil society, environmental issues were basically neglected altogether, in what Fausto (1999:294f) called ‘savage capitalism’. The only reason that environment entered the national agenda at all was because of international

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pressure (Hochstetler & Keck 2007) and a need to, on the one hand, proactively respond to international critics of how Brazil took care of what at the time was seen as ‘common goods’, such as the Amazon;\(^{15}\) and on the other, incorporate environment into the national agenda to be able to act as a competent adversary at the negotiating table and defend the national interests of Brazil.

The general foreign policy was defined parting from the principles of sovereignty and autodetermination – traditionally strong elements in Brazilian foreign policy. Vigevani et al. (2003) argues that these principles, during the military rule, materialized in a guideline of autonomy through distance. The Cold War discourse certainly also reached Brazil and the military government was heavily influenced by the realist paradigm (García 1997). The international system was seen as fundamentally hierarchical and international institutions were interpreted as tools for freezing the balance of power, something that would be inherently negative for Brazil as it tried to break with its history as a dependent Third World country.

It is important to notice that the fundamental principles of Brazilian foreign policy – autonomy, sovereignty, and economic development – were used by the military government to secure its legitimacy on the national level, as described by García:

\[\text{para o cumprimento específico da missão estritamente profissional que lhes é destinada, os militares precisam avaliar continuamente as condições prevalecentes no meio internacional e os possíveis cenários estratégicos onde o emprego do poder militar do país possa vir a ser requerido para a defesa nacional}\(^{16}\) (García 1997:21)

In other words, it was fundamental for the militaries to interpret the entering of environmental issues into the international agenda as a threat to national interests, since any other interpretation would have automatically put into question the legitimacy of the military regime.

During the military rule, the Brazilian foreign ministry – Itamaraty – was fundamental in the formulation of the foreign policy. It enjoyed considerable autonomy and was on many accounts the sole designer of the views of the Brazilian state in international occasions. The guidelines

\(^{15}\) One good example of this was the surprise nomination of environmentalist José Lutzenberger during the Collor presidency, which according to Hochstetler and Keck (2007e:571) bought Collor a ‘honeymoon’ from foreign criticism.

\(^{16}\) In English (author’s translation): for the fulfillment of the strictly professional mission that they were destined to have, the militaries needed to evaluate the predominant conditions in the international realm and the possible strategic scenarios where the military power of the country could turn important for the national defense.
for the treatment of environment in foreign policy that developed at this time would be the base for the Brazilian positions for many years to come (Vieira 1992; Corrêa do Lago 2007:120).

Twenty years later, by the time of the Rio Conference, the Brazilian society itself had undergone drastic changes. First of all, a peaceful democratic transition, which resulted in the 1988 constitution had taken place, a constitution that was in many ways progressive, not least in the area of environment. The democratic structures, however, were still recent and fragile, and civil society was still recovering from the long period of repression during the military rule. The second change was the state of the economy. Just like in the rest of Latin America, the 1980s in Brazil had been a decade of deep recession. The confidence of the ‘Brazilian miracle’ had long since been consumed by skyrocketing inflation and budget deficits (Bulmer-Thomas 2003:313-391; Fausto 1999:293ff, 305ff; Luna & Klein 2006:49-77). Brazil was negotiating the terms of debt relief with the IMF to be able to bring itself out of the debt trap provoked by the oil crisis of the 1970s.

Also the Itamaraty had experienced changes. The indisputable autonomy of the foreign ministry had come to an end due to, on the one hand, the redemocratization of Brazilian society, and on the other, the lack of competence within Itamaraty to handle the increasingly complex international issues (such as environment) on its own. By the early 1990s and onwards, the Itamaraty was part of several inter-ministerial commissions and preparatory meetings. However, the transition was not totally liberated from friction and it took several years to ‘overcome’ the autonomy of the foreign ministry (Corrêa do Lago 2007:183).

The adoption of the 1988 constitution meant the inclusion of environmental issues into the national agenda. One chapter is entirely dedicated to the environment and its first article expres- sively describes how everybody are entitled to a sound environment and it is the responsibility of civil society as well as of the State to defend and preserve the environment for future generations. The Constitution includes further articles concerning the environment, which made it one of the most progressive constitutions at the time. This was to a certain extent an answer to the increased importance that environment had reached in public opinion. As repression eased and Brazil slowly started to move towards democracy, social movements began to critique the developmentalist model (Hochstetler & Koch 2007e:514) and environmental issues entered forcefully into the public debate during the late 1980s, not least with some environmental catas-

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17 Ch. VI, Title VIII, art. 225: “Todos têm direito ao meio ambiente ecologicamente equilibrado, bem de uso comum do povo e essencial à sadia qualidade de vida, impondo-se ao Poder Público e à coletividade o dever de defendê-lo e preservá-lo para as presentes e futuras gerações” (Author’s translation: Everybody has the right to an ecologically equilibrated environment, a good for the use of the common people and essential to the quality of life, the duty to defending it and preserving it for future generations rests with the Public Authority and the collective)
phes\textsuperscript{18} (Campos & Corrêa 1998:14), and the general environmental degradation in cities, such as São Paulo, where pollution levels were getting out of control (Jacobi 2006). For the newly elected democratic government this was hard to ignore. Also, one should not forget the international pressure on Brazil that had brought about internal reforms and measures, among others the creation of the federal Environmental Secretariat (Hochstetler & Keck 2007:27f).

The general guidelines for the foreign policy had experienced a certain rupture as identified by Vigevani et al. (2003). Although the basic principles of the international policy – autonomy, right to self determination, non-intervention, and pragmatism – remained the same, they were reinterpreted and resulted in an attitude of \textit{autonomy through integration} or \textit{autonomy through participation}. That is, international institutions were, through these new guidelines, reevaluated and the active participation of Brazil in the creation of a favorable international environment was seen as fundamental to the economic development of the country and the protection of national interests (2003:31f).

The 1990s in Brazil meant the development of a new form of diplomacy, identified by some authors as \textit{presidential diplomacy}. This is a form of diplomacy that, although started before, was reinforced by Fernando Henrique Cardoso, and then continued by Lula da Silva. It emphasized the President as an important actor in international relations (Barnabé 2009:11). Instead of international relations being solely the competence of the foreign ministry, the President interferes directly in the diplomacy. Barnabé identifies this new diplomacy as a response to, on the one hand, the more complex Brazilian international agenda and the new external structures of the 1990s, and on the other, the redemocratization process of the Itamaraty and the necessity of the ministry of working more closely to the President (Barnabé 2009:12f, 14).

With Lula da Silva, once again, the tradition in Brazilian foreign policy was by and large preserved and the principle turn in foreign policy was merely superficial, however not without importance. From 2002 onwards Brazil has tended to align with other emerging economies and developing countries, such as China, India, and South Africa. As described above these alignments has taken place in a changing world system where the period of unipolarity under U.S. hegemony is moving towards a multipolarity with several power centers. Vigevani and Cepaluni (2007) introduce the concept of \textit{autonomy through diversification} to describe this feature of Brazilian foreign policy under Lula. They further argue that this move towards ‘third-worldism’ is to a large part due to the ideological differences between Lula and Henrique Cardoso resulting in different interpretations of the international system. It is a strategy to “\textit{[consolidar] os

\textsuperscript{18} For example the accident at Petrobrás in Cubatão in 1984 where more than 200 people died.
objetivos históricos de desenvolvimento e de um poder internacional menos assimétrico, com maior poder dos países atualmente pobres”\textsuperscript{19} (Vigevani & Cepaluni 2007:325).

Coming into Copenhagen, Brazil was also, relatively many other nations, fairly strong economically. The financial crisis that originated in the U.S. real estate market had had repercussions also in Brazil; however, the country seemed to be able to cope quite well, after a short dip in late 2008 early 2009, the economic growth was once again recovering (IBGE 2009a; IBGE 2009b).

\textsuperscript{19} In English (author’s translation): consolidate the historic objectives of development and of an international power that is less asymmetrical, and with more power among the countries presently poor.
4 Environment in Brazilian Foreign Policy

4.1 Introduction
This chapter aims to provide a description of how Brazil positioned itself in key issues at the three conferences. Although several principles of Brazilian foreign policy have been maintained over the years, certain rearticulations and reinterpretations can be observed. Furthermore, the Brazilian positions saw quite impressive changes, considering the maintenance of these principles. At the first conference in Stockholm, Brazil was defensive and hostile to any agreement whatsoever. By 1992 and the Rio conference, a certain softening can be observed and Brazil was more keen to negotiate on various issues. Finally, at Copenhagen, Brazil was more encouraging and even took initiative to negotiate. A clear trend of Brazil taking more responsibility and occupying a more positive role in the negotiations can be identified.

4.2 The Brazilian Positions at the Conferences
As identified in the previous section, the basic principles of Brazilian foreign policy have not experienced a clear rupture from 1970 to 2010. Rather, the changes have taken place in the interpretation of how to best live up to these principles in the foreign policy. This is also true when it comes to the environment. The view on environment in foreign policy never contrasted with the fundamentals of the foreign policy, such as autonomy, the right to self-determination, non-intervention, and economic development. On the contrary, on many occasions the view on environment was a clear reflection of these principles. However, the way it reflected them changed over time.

In 1972, at the Stockholm Conference the Brazilian position was defined by three principle features. Firstly, environmental issues and the treatment of environmental issues on an international level cannot bring anything positive to Brazil. Principally because, as it was interpreted, it was going to be a new form of protectionism or imperialism on behalf of the developed world (Barros-Platiau 2006:255; Hochstetler & Koch 2007e:450). This protectionism would be present in, on the one hand, developed countries attempts to infringe on Third World countries’ sovereignty, and on the other, in the growth of non-tariff barriers that would restrain international commerce. Secondly, the idea of common responsibility and the sharing of environmental resources
and goods was unthinkable to Brazil (Corrêa do Lago 1997:186f). It was thought that the developed world ought to take full responsibility for the care of the environment since it was these countries that had brought about its devastation and that under no circumstances could it be allowed to give up the right to autonomously decide over the use of domestic, natural resources. And thirdly, economic well-being and development was primary objective and the environment would be treated when these two had been reached, in accordance with the developmentalist model used. That is, the interpretation of history was that developed countries had been allowed to use their natural resources abundantly to create their wealth, and that this was an inevitable step on the development ladder. Once the wealth had been reached, secondary concerns such as environment could be addressed.

Before Rio 92 the principles of foreign policy were reevaluated to a certain extent. It is noticeable, however, how the same principles are still in effect, only interpreted in a different manner. This reevaluation took place in two areas with important effects on the Brazilian positions in international environmental negotiations. First, sovereignty was interpreted differently. Changing from being a principle instrument of assuring legitimacy to the military dictatorship, sovereignty became an issue of protecting the country from threats to its democratic regime. Brazil moved from a position of neglecting any importance at all to the international community what took place within its border, to a position of accepting that certain environmental issues within its territory could be of interest to other countries. Nonetheless, it still maintained that these issues continued to be under the full responsibility of the Brazilian state (Corrêa do Lago 2007:166). This meant that Brazil was more open to dialogue and adopted a more flexible position on some issues. As the Conference took place in Rio de Janeiro, the Brazilian President, Collor, even proclaimed himself leader of the global environmental cause (Corrêa do Lago 2007:158, 160; Roett 1999:211).

Second, the strategic alignments were also interpreted differently. The formulators of Brazilian foreign policy started to reinterpret the importance of aligning the country with other developing countries, what has been called south-south alliance or cooperation. At the Stockholm Conference Brazil’s adversary in one of its biggest issues was not the developed West, but its neighbor Argentina. The issue of concern was the Principle 20 of the Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, which stated that nations needed to provide information about projects that might affect the environment in other countries. Brazil opposed, as the embarkation on an ambitious hydro electrical project in collaboration with Paraguay, Itaipú, was eminent (Corrêa do Lago 2007:47, 118). Argentina favored the Principle because it could hinder the project that was seen as a potential threat to Argentinean national security since the dam could, theoretically, have been used to flood certain populated parts of Argentina. Another
stumbling block for an effective south-south alliance that started already in Stockholm, but continued also into Rio, was the issue of renewable energy and its role in the change in consumption patterns. On the one side, the oil producing countries were unwilling to include any sort of commitment to the development of renewable energy sources, and on the other side, other developing countries headed by Brazil that had the capacity to diversify their energy production if they could put into place the right mechanisms to access technology and finance (2007:175f).

The issue of technology access and transfer and finance for environmentally friendly measures was of primary importance for Brazil from the very beginning; however, even more so with the reevaluation of its positions (Corrêa do Lago 2007:196, 199). From Rio and onwards Brazil has emphasized the importance of equity to fight environmental degradation and the connection between environment, economic development, and international commerce. This concern reflects two positions already held in Stockholm: that developed countries have the prime responsibility for averting environmental degradation, and that environment can be used as a protectionist measure by developed countries. In general, there was a tendency of Brazil to incorporate other issues into the environment debate. In 1992, Brazil was fighting heavy indebtedness and used environment as leverage in debt-relief negotiations (Diehl 1995:60).

At Copenhagen, one of the important issues was whether to continue with a second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol. The Protocol had been negotiated during the second half of the 1990s, in which Brazil participated more actively than before. The Brazilian delegation came with a proposal of a green development fund, which was used as a base for the Clean Development Mechanism that came to constitute an important part of the Protocol. The Mechanism itself shows how Brazil managed to push its agenda; the objective of the Mechanism was to let industrialized countries reach emission reduction goals and at the same time transfer technology and financial resources to developing countries, and thereby promoting sustainable development (UNFCCC 1998). At the same time, the right to decide what constituted sustainability was entirely up to the host country of the project, that is, the developing country (Olhoff et al. 2004:11), thus showing the presence of Brazil’s concern with sovereignty. Viola (2002:38) identifies four dimensions in which Brazil defended its national interests during the Kyoto negotiations: the right to development; a focus on sustainable development; promote a position of Brazilian leadership; and blocking the inclusion of forests as object of international regulation.

In Copenhagen the Brazilian role as a leading nation in international environmental negotiations and spokesperson for the developing world had been consolidated. The focus was on technology transfer, finance, and social equity, but Brazil also had a propositive attitude with positions that articulated a solution. One of the biggest changes from the early positions of Brazil was the view of developing countries’ participation, as shown in a speech of President Lula at the open-
ing of the UN General Assembly some years earlier: “Também os países em desenvolvimento devem participar do combate à mudança do clima. São essenciais estratégias nacionais claras que impliquem responsabilidade dos governos diante de suas próprias populaces. (...) É muito importante o tratamento político integrado de toda a agenda ambiental”\(^{20}\) (Itamaraty 2007:261). Also the commitment to the Kyoto Protocol reflects this position – Brazil was the first country to register a project under the Clean Development Mechanism. A mechanism to which, as already described, Brazil contributed actively. Under the presidency of Lula there was still a strong focus on the need of equity and positive social effects of environmental work: “Os projetos devem dar contribuição significativa para o desenvolvimento sustentável [of developing countries], envolvendo investimentos em áreas como energias renováveis, processos industriais, aterros sanitários e reflorestamento”\(^{21}\) (Itamaraty 2007:266).

At each conference, the negotiations resulted in principles or articles that reflect the Brazilian positions. These achievements then, as suggested by the theoretical framework, constituted an institutional reality for the coming conference. In Stockholm, the Brazilian objectives were reflected in five principles, as described by Corrêa do Lago:

Princípio 9 – ‘[a]s deficiências ambientais geradas pelas condições de subdesenvolvimento [...] originam problemas graves e o melhor modo de corrigi-las é o desenvolvimento acelerado [...]’; Princípio 11 – ‘[a]s políticas ambientais de todos os Estados devem ser orientadas no sentido de reforçar o potencial de desenvolvimento presente e futuro dos países em desenvolvimento, e não afetar adversamente esse potencial [...]’; no Princípio 17 – ‘[d]eve-se confiar a instituições nacionais apropriadas a tarefa de planejar, administrar ou controlar a utilização dos recursos ambientais dos Estados [...]’ no Princípio 23 – ‘[...] será indispensável considerar os sistemas de valores que prevalecem em cada país, bem como a aplicabilidade de padrões que são válidos para

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\(^{20}\) In English (author’s translation): Also the developing countries ought to participate in the fight against climate change. Clear national strategies that imply responsibility for governments towards their own peoples are essential. [...] It is very important with an integrated political action of the entire environmental agenda.

\(^{21}\) In English (author’s translation): The projects ought to contribute significantly to sustainable development [in developing countries], involving investment in areas such as renewable energy, industrial processes, clean landfills and reforestation.
os países mais avançados, mas que podem ser inadequados e de custo social injustifi-

In Rio de Janeiro, in six principles:

‘direito ao desenvolvimento’, no Princípio 3; às ‘responsabilidades comuns, porém di-
ferenciadas’, no Princípio 7; à redução e eliminação dos ‘padrões insustentáveis de
produção e consumo’, no Princípio 8; e às medidas de política comercial para propós-
tos ambientais como ‘barreiras disfarçadas ao comércio internacional’, no Princípio
12 (Corrêa do Lago 2007:201f).

In Copenhagen, the achievements reflect the traditional objectives of Brazilian foreign policy.
First, the position of the right to economic development: developing countries resisted the obli-
gation to define emission targets that would be legally binding. They also managed to resist the
position of developed countries to set a peaking year; that is, a year from which their emission
would be falling. This is especially relevant as some developing countries, such as China, have
high absolute emissions, but relative to their population they are still low in comparison to de-
veloped countries. And second, the position of sovereignty: developing countries also managed
to resist the suggestion of international inspections to control that the targets were being met.
These achievements on behalf of developing countries and the inability of developed countries
to respond to them have contributed to the general idea of the Summit as a failure (Dimitrov
2010; Bodansky 2010).

A principle that has come to be natural part of these declarations is the one of ‘common but
differentiated responsibilities’. It was mentioned in Principle 7 of the Rio Declaration, as de-
scribed above, and in the first paragraph of the Copenhagen Accord: “We emphasize our strong
political will to urgently combat climate change in accordance with the principle of common
but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities” (UNFCCC 2009). The principle
has also been used in other Conferences, for example at the United Nations World Summit on

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22 **In English (author’s translation):** Principle 9 - the environmental deficiencies provoked by the
conditions of underdevelopment […] give rise to serious problems and the best way to come to
terms with them is accelerated development; Principle 11 - the environmental policies of all
States should be oriented towards reinforcing the potential of present and future development in
developing countries; in Principle 17 - it should be trusted in appropriate national institutions to
plan, administrate or control the use of natural resources of the States; in Principle 23 - it will be
indispensable to consider the base of values in each country, as well as the applicability of norms
that are valid in more advanced countries, but might result inadequate or with unjustified social
costs for developing countries. (For the Principles in their entirety consult UNEP (1972))

23 **In English (author’s translation):** the right to development, in Principle 3; the common re-
sponsibilities, however differentiated, in Principle 7; the reduction and elimination of unsustaina-
ble patterns of production and consumption, in Principle 8; and the measures of commercial poli-
cy for the use of environmental propositions as hidden barriers to international commerce, in
Principle 12 (For the Principles in their entirety consult UNEP (1992)).
Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, 2002 (Corrêa do Lago 2007:202). This principle could be seen as the bases of much of the efforts of developing countries to form the international environmental regime.
5 Structure and Agent: The Brazilian Positions from a Constructivist Perspective

5.1 Introduction
This chapter approaches the historical data provided in the two previous chapters using the theoretical framework presented in the beginning of the paper. The constructivist analysis suggests that seven principle areas have been of key importance to the formation of Brazilian foreign policy at these conferences. The different aspects of these areas and their historical foundation are treated in detail. Finally, some concluding remarks are given.

5.2 Discussion
Corrêa do Lago (2008:216) describes the Brazilian positions at the first three meetings as going from confrontational, in Stockholm, to cooperative, in Rio de Janeiro. He further adds that the Brazilian attitude went from being defensive, in the first two meetings, to turning towards pro-positive, by the Earth Summit, in Johannesburg, in 2002. From the previous section we can conclude that this position in Brazilian international environmental policy is present at the Copenhagen COP. That is, Brazil has assumed a protagonist role in environmental negotiations not only by categorically objecting to any attempts at creating an international environmental regime, but as a flexible, propositive actor inclined to find a cooperative model for solving the world’s environmental problems. However, this does not mean that the country has left its role as critical opposition behind. The main principles of Brazilian foreign policy still form the view on environment and the international environmental regime.

In a similar fashion, Barros-Platiau (2006) describes how the Brazilian foreign environmental policy has not experienced any dramatic changes since the consolidation of environmental issues on the international agenda in the 1970s. Rather, Barros-Platiau identifies a change in the diplomatic practice. Going from a closed, repressive society where the Itamarty had almost autonomy over the formulation of foreign policy and where civil society enjoyed little access to the decision-making process, to a open, democratic society with a large, organized and active
civil society that helps form the debate over foreign policy, and a foreign ministry that works in collaboration with other ministries and parts of government.

From the previous sections we can derive seven principle areas (national and international) that have been important for the formulation of Brazilian foreign policy during these three meetings. First, the tradition of Brazilian foreign policy. As described by Wendt (2001), path dependency affects the perceived available options for actors. In the Brazilian case there has been a long tradition of emphasizing autonomy and the right to development, and this tradition was not broken even though the means of how to reach these fundamental goals of foreign policy changed during the four decades. To a great extent, the positions of the Brazilian foreign environmental policy that were laid out during the Stockholm Conference served as the fundamentals for the positions at the coming meetings. This idea of path dependency can be linked to the discussion of Clark and Chan (1995) on political culture. They show that “both political culture and state-society relations are important aspects of domestic structure. They interact in significant ways to facilitate certain policy options and block others” (1995:144), thus, further underscoring the importance of tradition in Brazilian foreign policy.

Second, the idea of a north-south divide that surged at the middle of the century and grew strong in Latin America during the 1960s never ceased to be present in Brazilian foreign policy. Although the country went through deep ideological changes after the redemocratization process, the idea of south-south cooperation was retaken with the ascendance to power of Lula da Silva. As proposed by Adler (1997), ideas have the power to reshape the understandings of national interest. Besides the idea of a north-south divide, the Cold War-discourse existed at the time of the Stockholm Conference. Although, as already mentioned, the militaries did not principally interpret the international system in terms of East-West, the Cold War imposed its forcefully realist world view on the designers of Brazilian foreign policy at the time. Power and hierarchy were the primary concerns and the objective was to move Brazil upwards in the hierarchical latter and avoid any attempt on behalf of the super-powers of freezing the present international order.

Third, during the four decades of strong presence of environmental issues on the international agenda, the institutional framework, both national and international, has grown considerably. Environmental issues were included into national politics in Brazil and agencies and ministries were created. As described, the Itamaraty went through a process of restructuring together with the return to democracy in Brazil, and its work became more interministerial, inviting other ministries to participate in the formation of foreign policy. On the international level, the most important institutional change has been the growth of the United Nations. The institutional framework provided by the UN has generously given space for environmental issues. As shown
by Meyer et al. (1997), the international environmental regime was structured due to three principle factors where the growth of a global institutional regime in the United Nations, and the creation of a formal environmental organization are two. The authors further add the growth of a scientific discourse and the importance of science in defining the political agenda. Each of these factors suggests that the institutional framework in which the Brazilian formulators of foreign policy found themselves in gradually helped form their perception of possibilities and interests.

Connecting with the concepts of unintentionality and uncertainty provided by Wendt (2001), it can be argued that the militaries helped form this institutional reality by participating in its creation without knowing or intending to. Although Brazil participated as a defensive-confrontational actor, at Stockholm, it did not reject the system entirely. For the following meeting in Rio, Brazil went into negotiations more confident because of the magnitude of objectives reached in Stockholm – the UN was the solution and not the problem. A vision not shared by the militaries in 1972, but one to which they certainly had contributed.

Fourth, the inclusion of NGOs and other non-state actors in negotiations and decision-making processes is one of fundamental changes that occurred in the international arena during this period. To what extent this change has been compromising state power and to what extent the new international actors have been efficient in affecting the outcome in these meetings is a debate beyond the scope of this article. However, suffice to mention that, as argued by Risse-Kappen (1995a; 1995b), non-state actors are integral to understanding international relations, and thus, also the formulation of foreign policy. Risse-Kappen (1995a:28; 1995b:283) shows how there exists a certain paradox of domestic structure: a society that has few access points to decision-making process for civil society, often tends to, when interest groups do access, experience a higher degree of susceptibility and the effect of policy change, thus, being more penetrating.

Fifth, the liberal approach suggests that the changes in organization (from dictatorship to democracy) of Brazilian society have affected the way the country interprets its preferences, interests and possibilities. As Risse-Kappen argues the domestic institutions determine how interest groups access the state. Even though it can be identified that civil society has been active in environmental negotiations, this inclusion of civil society has been determined by the state, as Krasner argues: ‘power here is related to the fact that it is states or polities that structure the basic environment within which transnationals must function: the nature of the legal system; the specification of legitimate organizational forms [...] the determination of acceptable modes of political action’ (Krasner 1995:279). Rasutiala (1997) describes how the inclusion of NGOs has not meant an intrusion on state power, but rather a legitimization of the state and state power in international accords. Thus, the growth of civil society together with the change in domestic
structure meant that Brazil could occupy a more active role in environmental negotiations. The state was legitimized, internally, by civil society inclusion, and internationally by the democratic system itself. As Putnam’s model suggests, the domestic affairs affect the formulation of foreign policy, but also the international regime may reverberate in the domestic realm through feedback-loops. With redemocratization, it was no longer prominent in the same way, as during the military regime, to use foreign policy as a legitimizing tool; at least not in the same way.

Sixth, the state of the Brazilian, as well as, the world economy changed drastically between the three events. In Stockholm, Brazil enjoyed a ‘miracle’ economy; in Rio de Janeiro the country was battling heavy indebtedness and long years of economic downturn; in Copenhagen the Brazilian economy was strong, not just in absolute numbers, but also relatively many Western countries as it had proved more resilient towards the U.S. financial crisis and its effects on the global economy. These economic cycles changed Brazil’s material capabilities and its interests. Even though power is, to a great extent, a social concept, it cannot be completely separated from the material reality. The economic situation of Brazil at each of the conferences affected the confidence and the objectives of the formulators of Brazilian foreign policy. In Stockholm, Brazil’s primary concern was to maintain and protect the right to its perceived successful development model – which meant, in effect, keeping environment out of economy. In Rio, on the other hand, environment was partly seen as an instrument in negotiations on other areas, such as debt-relief. During the late 1990s and early 2000s, the growth of new poles of power was starting to become evident, and by Copenhagen, the U.S. was facing a different reality constituted by multipolarity. Also, in the context of international actors other than the states are the material capabilities important, as argued by Krasner, “the outcome of bargaining between states and transnational actors will depend on the balance of interests and capabilities” (1995:268). To refine this argument in Putnam’s terms, the international negotiator would be incapable of agreeing to anything that could not be ratified later domestically. When economic worries overtake the national agenda, there is little leeway to agree on accords, seemingly harmful for trade or economic activity.

Seventh, during this period, and connected with the two previous points, the view on Brazil in the international community altered. With its economic development, the change in domestic structure, its active and leading role in environmental negotiations, and its search for new south-south alliances, Brazil has been recognized as an important player in world politics. As argued by Hurrell, “being a great power has never been solely about the possession of large amounts of crude material power. It has been closely related to notions of legitimacy and authority. A state can claim great power status, but membership of the club of great powers is a social category that depends on recognition by others” (2006:4). Thus, the aspiration for leadership in
global issues, as well as the world’s recognition of this leadership, has changed Brazil’s preferences and attitude. To be able to lead and maintain legitimacy from both the developing and the developed worlds, the country could no longer assume a merely defensive and confrontational attitude, but had to move towards a more cooperative and propositive one.

5.3 Concluding Remarks

This article has analyzed the Brazilian foreign environmental policy at three different environmental conferences using a liberal-constructivist theoretical framework. The framework suggests that the social reality is an important part of the explanation of how foreign policy is formed. The interests of States are socially constructed. Thus, the national and international contexts and the Brazilian positions at the three negotiations were analyzed and the conclusion that can be drawn is that the changes in context— the institutional framework, the material as well as the social reality, the domestic structure – affected how the designers of foreign policy interpreted their capabilities and interests. However, a strong presence of tradition in Brazilian foreign policy was also identified. The designers developed the foreign policy within a framework based on concepts, such as autonomy and the right to development, that long had been the base of foreign policy in Brazil. The conjunction of these factors led to three principal changes in Brazilian environmental policy between the first meeting, in Stockholm in 1972, and the last, in Copenhagen in 2009. Brazilian policy started in the late 1960s early 1970s by decisively rejecting any proposition that could compromise economic development. Twenty years later, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil was more flexible, seeing a potential in its uniqueness as the principal home for a large part of the world’s biodiversity and using this as leverage in negotiations on other issues such as debt-relief. However, the position was still principally defensive. Finally, Brazilian policy changed in the late 1990s, early 2000s and can now be characterized as cooperative-propositive, showing, on the one hand, the will to take more responsibility, and on the other, the newly gained confidence of this emerging economy. Brazil has managed to consolidate its role as leader of the global South in environmental issues and together with other emerging economies it has become an adversary to be reckoned with in environmental negotiations. It can also be added that these changes certainly reflected the changes in foreign policy in general.

One should obviously be careful when trying to say something about the future. Nonetheless, as stated in the beginning, part of the purpose of this paper was to study history in order to understand the present and the processes that will construct the future environmental regime. As these final lines are being written, the world is preparing for the Rio+20 conference, in June. Brazil will, as already shown by hosting the event, continue its more responsible-cooperative path, seeing the international environmental regime as a possibility rather than a threat. However,
there are elements that might indulge this affirmation. First, the new President, Dilma Rousseff, is famous for being a developmentalist, which she has proved by not expressively defending the environmentalist line in the political debate on renewing the Forest Code. Second, Brazil has found considerable offshore oil resources – the so-called Pré-sal, referring to its location underneath a salt layer on the bottom of the ocean. Third, Brazil has shown considerable stubbornness in the case of the hydroelectric plant of Belo Monte, the latest infrastructural mega-project in the Brazilian Amazon. How these three facts might influence the Brazilian position in international negotiations on the environment is hard to assess. On the positive side, the Brazilian Green Party (Partido Verde) made significant progress in the last presidential election, which might be a sign of increased public awareness of environmental issues. It seems, in any case, fair to say that these uncomfotering events will not change the fundamental conclusion of this paper: that Brazil interprets the environmental regime as such and progress in its deepening as being of national interest.
6 Bibliography


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