



CONSERVATION
INTERNATIONAL
BRASIL

Contact Information at CI

*José Maria Cardoso da Silva,
Vice President for Science
j.silva@conservation.org.br*

*Heloisa de Oliveira,
Communications and
Corporate Partnership Director
h.oliveira@conservation.org.br*

*Andrea Margit,
Communications Coordinator
a.margit@conservation.org.br*

*Ines Castro,
Brazil Program Manager
i.castro@conservation.org*

Brazil, a megadiverse country

Biodiversity and Beliefs

Brazil is one of the richest countries on Earth in terms of biodiversity, and has within its borders two of the world's 25 threatened hotspots (the Atlantic Forest and the Cerrado) and three wilderness areas (Amazonia, Pantanal, and Caatinga). Covering 8,511,996 km², Brazil has some 170 million inhabitants, with high population densities in the southeast region and northeast low-lying coastal portions of its territory.

The country harbors nearly 12% of the entire wildlife of the planet and has high levels of endemism. Plant diversity is estimated at 55,000 species, of which 22% endemic. Vertebrate diversity is also quite high, with 524 species of mammals, more than 3,000 freshwater fish species, and about 1,677 bird species. Terrestrial invertebrate diversity can be impressive with 10-15 million estimated species of insects.

Every nation has to preserve its natural resources, but megadiverse countries have a greater responsibility for the future of life on Earth. We believe that conservation presents an alternative opportunity for countries to capitalize on vast tracts of forest or other areas of high biodiversity value. By building on knowledge and providing the means to compete directly with extractive industries, local communities can benefit directly from conservation.

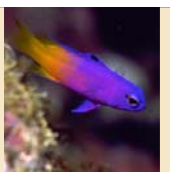
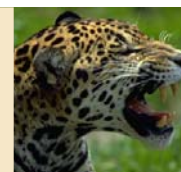
Main Biodiversity Threats

- Agricultural expansion
- Logging
- Charcoal Production
- Hydroelectric Dams
- Oil and gas operations
- Mining
- Cattle Grazing
- Hunting and poaching of wildlife
- Development and urban growth

The following map points out the main CI projects in the country



Photos: (left to right) Haroldo Castro, and Haroldo Paiva Jr.



Main CI Initiatives in Brazil



THE ATLANTIC FOREST

CI is utilizing a far-reaching approach to conserve the remaining 7.2% of primary Atlantic Forest. The biome is home to nearly 70% of all Brazil's threatened animal species. The conservation and recuperation of the Atlantic Forest is a great challenge. Our knowledge of its biodiversity is incomplete and the region is under pressure from a growing population.

Through numerous partnerships, CI has created unique initiatives to conserve biodiversity. The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) is coordinating a US\$ 8 million conservation program based on three issues: the Species Protection Program, the Institutional Support Program, and the Private Natural Heritage Reserve Program. More than 50% of the Atlantic Forest's fragmented conservation areas are in the hands of private owners.

CI's main efforts in the region have been to design and implement three extensive forest corridors: The Serra do Mar Corridor, the Central Corridor, and the Pernambuco Center of Endemism Corridor. Covering only 15% of the total biome, these corridors are estimated to contain 60-70% of the Atlantic Forest's biodiversity.



THE MARINE PROGRAM

In Southern Bahia, CI is working in and around the National Marine Park of Abrolhos and the coral-reef rich area of Corumbau to protect these area's highly endemic reef systems. In partnership with local institutions, CI is working with communities to regulate fishing and increase awareness for this unique ecosystem as well as improve surveillance and enforcement in protected areas and create ecotourism opportunities.



PANTANAL

The world's largest wetland, the Pantanal is a critical freshwater resource. Threatened by development projects in the region's waterways and on land, CI works with governments, ranchers and communities to create conservation management plans that will help preserve the Pantanal's fragile ecology. There has been a major effort to create new privately-protected areas, taking advantage of Brazil's excellent legislation. A total of 13 of these now exist in the Pantanal, and they cover 204,255 hectares.

One of these has been particularly noteworthy: The Fazenda Rio Negro. This 7,700 ha. area, was purchased by CI in April 1999, with a private donation of \$1.5 million dollars from Gordon Moore. This reserve complex is now the site of an ecotourism venture and field research program that currently supports ten projects on endangered species such as the giant otter, the giant anteater, the jaguar, and the hyacinth macaw.



CERRADO

A unique grasslands and savannah ecosystem and a hotspot, the Cerrado is home to a number of large, widespread South American mammal species, and they are far easier to see there than in most other ecosystems. These include the maned wolf (*Chrysocyon brachyurus*), the giant anteater (*Myrmecophaga tridactyla*), the giant armadillo (*Priodontes maximum*), and several cat species, such as the jaguar (*Panthera onca*), and the puma (*Felis concolor*). The same is true of some of the larger birds, notably the rhea (*Rhea americana*) and the seriema (*Cariama cristata*).

Unfortunately, however, the habitat available to these species has been severely reduced even within the vast Cerrado to the point that these animals can now be seen regularly only in the largest and best protected parks and reserves, notably the world-renowned Emas National Park.

CI works with farmers around the Park to develop better agricultural practices. Pesticides on soybeans and corn have long affected birds and other wildlife, and runoff flows into the region's freshwater system. Through erosion reduction and environmental education, CI helps to institute better methods of crop irrigation and cultivation.



AMAZONIA

Amazonia is a region of superlatives. It accounts for 53% of the world's remaining tropical rainforest cover, and for 72% of the tropical rainforest wilderness areas. Besides new protected areas programs, CI is working in the region to establish biological corridors as a major conservation strategy. This concept is consistent with the enormous opportunities that still exist to protect vast areas of Amazonia – something that simply is no longer possible at a comparable scale in other rainforest areas. CI has been serving as a lead non-governmental advisor for protected areas' creation, and will continue to provide financial and technical support in the region.



CAATINGA

The biome is dominated by dry vegetation with high levels of fauna and flora endemism. The Caatinga has not received sufficient attention by conservationists in Brazil and the region is underrepresented in the Brazilian conservation network. CI-Brazil has been working on the region biological inventory and promoting workshops to define conservation priority areas.

