



Deforestation in Brazil: motivations, journeys and tendencies

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Over the last three decades, deforestation in Brazil occurred systematically in the area known as the “arc of deforestation”, an extensive geographical area located in the interface of the Cerrado and the Amazon biomes. This work encompasses the reasons, causes and/or motivations of that recent deforestation, focusing on the Central-West and Northern regions. A number of reasons will be presented, seeking to build an approach able to identify the deepest roots of deforestation of those regions. Our actions over the environment are framed by our cultural matrix that stream from a western philosophic attitude. This way, to understand the framework where the deforestation actions are justified requires a multidisciplinary approach to understand the deforestation of the Cerrado and Amazon biomes, since the motivations for forest destruction in Brazil are complex and not entirely understood within the domains of a single disciplinary area.

To search for an isolated cause to understand the recent deforestation can only be plausible if we ignore information on what actually happens. The methodology used in this work is based on a bibliographical revision, analysis of georeferenced information, participative processes implementation and observation of stakeholder behavior, and field research. It departs from a general vision on deforestation that initially occurred at the littoral region, by the Atlantic Rainforest, right after the arrival of the Europeans, and throughout the centuries penetrates towards the interior, hitting the Cerrado and Amazon biomes. In this last case, we focused on the Vale do Alto Guaporé region, near Bolivia, where the intensity of the deforestation was verified from 1970 to 1990. Ultimately, the final result is a mosaic of reasons for deforestation – that has been done by both large and small land owners – that incorporates other views that have been absent in the explanations given by so-called specialized literature of Brazil’s deforestation.