

# *[The Oil and Gas sector in the Brazilian Congress: a look towards the Parliamentary Fronts]*

[Bruna Eloy de Amorim, Institute of Energy and Environment of the University of São Paulo (IEE-USP) and Research Centre for Greenhouse Gas Innovation (RCGI), 55 11 998631003, bruna.amorim@usp.br]

[Karen Louise Mascarenhas, Institute of Energy and Environment of the University of São Paulo (IEE-USP) and Research Centre for Greenhouse Gas Innovation (RCGI), 55 11 92011317, karenmascarenhas@usp.br]

## **Overview**

This study explores how the interests of the oil and gas industry are represented in the Brazilian Congress. Specifically, it examines the performance of parliamentarians associated with groups such as the Parliamentary Front in Support of Oil, Gas, and Energy; the Parliamentary Front for the Sustainable Development of Oil and Renewable Energies; and the Joint Parliamentary Front for Natural Resources and Energy; and the Joint Parliamentary Front in Defence of Oil Exploration in the Equatorial Margin of Brazil. It analyses how their voting patterns compare with those of other members of Congress on key energy and environmental issues. The hypothesis underlying this study is that congressmen belonging to these fronts may have voted more strongly against initiatives aimed at a rapid transition to cleaner energy, even if such efforts were ultimately unsuccessful.

## **Methods**

The data for this study will be collected from various proposals related to the oil and gas industry that have been submitted to Congress. These include bills, provisional measures, and proposals for constitutional amendments. A preliminary search conducted on the websites of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate has identified the following proposals with an impact on the oil and gas agenda:

- Law 13586/2017 (Special regime for oil and gas exploration, known as Repetro).
- Law 13576/2021 (National Biofuels Policy, known as RenovaBio).
- Law 14134/2021 (Promotion of the natural gas industry).
- Bills 528/2020; 412/2022; 3100/2022; 2229/2023 (providing for the establishment of a regulated emissions market in Brazil).

Once other relevant proposals have been identified, the study will proceed to examine the votes, speeches, and statements made by congressmen, particularly those who are part of parliamentary fronts related to the oil and gas sector, when these proposals were introduced.

## **Results**

Based on our preliminary analysis, it appears that there is a relatively weak coalition associated with the oil and gas industry within the Brazilian Congress, especially when compared to more prominent parliamentary fronts such as the Parliamentary Front for Agriculture and Agribusiness and the Parliamentary Front for Biodiesel. There may be several reasons for this. One notable fact is that a number of oil and gas companies have already increased their efforts to include renewable energy in their portfolios; as a result, they may be interested in increased government incentives for the production of cleaner energy, leaving the majority of party and congressional sensitisation to the fossil fuel agenda to representatives from regions heavily dependent on these revenues.

However, the oil and gas sector still opposes several renewable energy measures, such as the increase in biodiesel blended with petrodiesel, which today pits Brazilian agribusiness against the oil and fuel sector. More research is therefore needed to fully understand the internal dynamics of these parliamentary fronts, including their degree of internal cohesion, the effective participation of parliamentarians in them, and the success rate of their proposals.

## **Conclusions**

Our initial conclusion is that most congressmen aligned with the oil and gas agenda, and therefore participating in parliamentary

fronts in support of oil and gas, tend to come from constituencies heavily dependent on revenues from this industry. Therefore, we hypothesize that they work to obstruct initiatives aimed at a rapid transition to cleaner energy by coordinating their actions within these coalitions. However, the degree of participation and cohesion within these fronts, as well as the effectiveness and success of their proposals and actions, is still uncertain and needs to be further investigated.