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MARIANA COSTA SILVEIRA

NAVIGATING CHALLENGING SETTINGS:
BUREAUCRATS' POLICY ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND DIVERGENCE PRACTICES
WITHIN BRAZIL'S ENVIRONMENTAL AND INDIGENOUS AGENCIES

SÃO PAULO

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I dedicate this work to all the people who work to protect and promote the socio-environmental agenda.

Dedico este trabalho a todas as pessoas que trabalham para proteger e promover a agenda socioambiental

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RESUMO

Servidores públicos (burocratas) desempenham um papel crucial na administração pública, pois podem influenciar os processos de desenho, desenvolvimento e resultados das políticas públicas. Nos três artigos que compõem esta tese, analisamos os fatores organizacionais e individuais que influenciam o comportamento dos servidores voltado a influenciar o desenvolvimento das políticas. Exploramos dois conceitos: práticas de '*policy entrepreneurship*' (PE) e de divergência. Conceituamos como práticas de PE as ações dos servidores voltadas a influenciar o desenvolvimento de políticas públicas, produzindo mudanças alinhadas à missão institucional de suas organizações. Já as práticas ou atitudes de divergência são ações dos servidores que se opõem à agenda do alto escalão de suas organizações, embora tais ações se mantenham alinhadas ao cumprimento da missão institucional. Embora ambos os comportamentos - PE e divergência - possam alterar o curso das políticas públicas, a literatura em administração pública pouco explora como fatores organizacionais e individuais influenciam essas atitudes. Para endereçar essa lacuna, buscamos responder à pergunta de pesquisa: *como fatores organizacionais e individuais influenciam atitudes de PE e divergência dos servidores?* Para isso, aplicamos um questionário com desenho experimental (N = 339) e conduzimos entrevistas qualitativas com 82 servidores na área ambiental e indigenista no governo federal brasileiro. No primeiro artigo, examinamos os fatores organizacionais que influenciam o comportamento divergente dos servidores em um contexto marcado por desalinhamento entre a agenda do alto escalão e a missão institucional dos órgãos ambientais e indigenistas. Os resultados indicam que, quando servidores contam com o apoio de pares e associações de servidores, ele(a)s são mais propenso(a)s a se engajar em atitudes de divergência voltadas a cumprir a missão institucional do órgão. O segundo artigo aborda como as associações profissionais (APs), tais como as associações de servidores, podem apoiar os servidores a lidar com esses desafios institucionais e analisa o impacto das APs nas atitudes de divergência. Os resultados mostram que servidores com diferentes características individuais respondem de forma heterogênea ao mesmo tipo de apoio organizacional – no caso, o apoio das APs. O terceiro artigo investiga como servidores adaptam práticas de PE conforme suas percepções sobre as mudanças nos contextos político-organizacionais ao longo do tempo. Os resultados indicam que servidores estrategicamente ajustam suas práticas de PE em resposta às restrições e às oportunidades do contexto institucional. Os achados dos três artigos contribuem para a literatura sobre PE, divergência e comportamento, sobretudo no que se refere

aos fatores organizacionais e individuais que influenciam atitudes de PE e de divergência nas organizações públicas.

Palavras-chave: burocracia; divergência; policy entrepreneurship; fatores organizacionais; fatores individuais; administração pública comportamental

ABSTRACT

Bureaucrats play a crucial role in public administration as they can influence policy processes and potentially change policy design and outcomes. This dissertation consists of three articles that examine the organizational and individual factors that influence bureaucrats' behavior in their efforts to shape policy-making. We explore two concepts: policy entrepreneurship (PE) and dissent attitudes among bureaucrats. We refer to policy entrepreneurship as the mission-oriented attempts of bureaucrats to influence policy-design and bring about policy change. We refer to dissent behavior as the mission-oriented practices of bureaucrats that oppose the wishes of their superiors. Although both forms of behavior - PE and dissent - may significantly alter the course of policies, the existing literature on public administration has overlooked the organizational and individual factors influencing them. To address this gap, we sought to answer the following research question: *how do organizational and individual factors influence bureaucrats' policy entrepreneurship and dissent attitudes?* To answer this question, we conducted a pre-registered survey experiment and 82 in-depth semi-structured interviews with bureaucrats working in the environmental and indigenous sector of the Brazilian federal government. In the first article, we examine the organizational factors that influence bureaucrats' dissent attitudes in a context marked by abusive supervision and politician-bureaucrat misalignment. Our findings indicate that when bureaucrats have the support of their colleagues and professional associations, they are more likely to engage in dissent. The second article provides insights into how professional associations (PAs) can assist bureaucrats in navigating dissent and assesses the impact of PAs on bureaucratic dissent attitudes. The results indicate that bureaucrats with different individual characteristics will engage in different dissent practices, even when presented with the same organizational source of support (i.e., support from PAs). The third article investigates how bureaucrats adapt their PE practices based on their perceptions of changing political and organizational contexts. We find that bureaucrats strategically adjust their PE practices in response to perceived constraints and opportunities within their organizational and political settings. The findings from these three articles contribute new insights to the existing literature on policy entrepreneurship, divergence, and behavioral public administration. We provide novel evidence and theoretical insights, particularly regarding the organizational and individual-level factors influencing bureaucrats' attitudes and practices towards PE and divergence within public administration.

Keywords: bureaucracy; divergence; policy entrepreneurship; organizational factors; individual factors; behavioral public administration

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INTRODUCTION

Bureaucrats are key actors in public administration, as they influence decisions within the various stages of the policy process and can significantly alter policy outcomes (Gofen 2014; Arnold et al., 2017; Cohen & Aviram, 2021; Petridou et al., 2023). Bureaucrats have access to both institutional and relational resources within and outside the state and may shape policy-making by various means (Abers 2020). Bureaucrats may also give priority to certain policy practices instead of others, favoring the alternatives they consider most adequate in fulfilling their agencies' mission – even in situations when such policy practices may counter the will of their political superiors or higher-ups' guidelines (Gofen 2014; Cox 2024; Fleming 2020).

In the process of attempting to influence policy-design, bureaucrats may engage in policy entrepreneurship (PE) practices. By PE, we mean the actions of bureaucrats aimed at influencing the policy-making processes towards policy change (Cohen 2021b; Petridou et al. 2023; Lavee and Cohen 2019). Alternatively, bureaucrats may also engage in dissent behavior (or divergent behavior, both terms are used as synonyms), which we conceive as the practices or attitudes of bureaucrats that oppose the wishes of their superiors (Gofen 2014; O'Leary 2017; Schuster et al. 2022; Cox 2024), while remaining aligned with the fulfillment of their agencies' mission (Wright 2007; Perry et al. 2010; Wright and Pandey 2011).

Both forms of bureaucratic behavior, policy entrepreneurship (PE) and dissent practices, may influence the policy-making processes, as previous scholarship has shown (Gofen 2014; Lavee and Cohen 2019). Despite the importance of better understanding bureaucratic behavior towards PE or divergence, these topics remain overlooked when it comes to analyzing how organizational and individual factors may shape bureaucrats' engagement in PE and dissent attitudes. To address this gap, this dissertation seeks to answer the following research question: *How do organizational and individual factors influence bureaucrats' policy entrepreneurship and dissent attitudes?*

To answer this question, we adopted a mixed-methods research approach. First, we conducted 82 semi-structured in-depth qualitative interviews with bureaucrats working in the environmental and indigenous sector of the Brazilian federal government. These interviews enabled us to design a second phase of data collection, which consisted of a pre-registered survey-experiment with bureaucrats working in the same agencies.

We chose to study the environmental and indigenous¹ agencies in Brazil for two main reasons. First, these agencies have experienced several changes within their organizational settings and policy domains over time, due to the shifting federal government administrations in the last decades (Soares 2017; Abers 2020; Milhorange 2022; Soares 2022; Bersch and Lotta 2024). These changes enable us to assess to what extent the shifts in their contextual settings would relate to bureaucrats' dissent and PE practices. Second, the bureaucrats working in these organizations are known for their high levels of organizational commitment to their agencies' mission (Soares 2017; Abers 2020; Milhorange 2022; Soares 2022; Bersch and Lotta 2024; Story et al. 2023). Their mission-oriented attitudes enable us to study dissent attitudes, as well as mission-oriented PE practices.

For these main reasons, we consider Brazil a relevant case for studying dissent and policy entrepreneurship among bureaucrats. In terms of research generalizability (Braun and Clarke 2013), the findings from the Brazilian case are potentially applicable to other settings that share similar organizational characteristics depicted in this study. Specifically, the results of the experiment could be relevant to other settings if the organizational factors described in the articles are considered, particularly the dynamics of abusive supervision by political superiors and the dissent attitudes that bureaucrats might adopt. Regarding the qualitative analysis, the conclusions can be applied to and assessed in other empirical settings as long as the organizational characteristics described in the findings section are taken into account. The organizational constraints and opportunities presented in the results section, in relation to policy entrepreneurship practices, offer valuable insights that could be further evaluated in contexts with varying degrees of these organizational constraints and opportunities for action.

Overall, our findings suggest that both organizational and individual factors play a crucial role in understanding bureaucrats' policy entrepreneurship and dissent attitudes. Our results show that bureaucrats who rely on the support of their coworkers are more likely to engage in dissent attitudes. Moreover, bureaucrats with higher levels of organizational commitment are more likely to be willing to engage in dissent behavior, if they receive the support of coworkers or professional associations. Specifically, support from coworkers encourages bureaucrats to engage in dissent attitudes through secret and informal means, while support from professional associations encourages them to dissent through both open and formal means, as well as secret and informal means. Furthermore, we show that the impact of

¹ We have chosen to use the term "indigenous" instead of "indigenist" agencies throughout the dissertation, as "indigenous" is more commonly used in English-speaking literature. However, the original and more appropriate term in Portuguese is "indigenist," as it indicates that the agency formulates policies for indigenous people, even though its employees are not necessarily indigenous. This is why the term "indigenist" is preferred over "indigenous" to describe agencies like FUNAI in Portuguese.

professional associations' support differs depending on the individuals' characteristics of bureaucrats. Finally, regarding bureaucrats' practices towards PE, our qualitative findings suggest that the perceived political and organizational factors shape how bureaucrats develop different PE strategies over time. Bureaucrats strategically adjust their PE practices based on the perceived constraints and opportunities in their changing contextual settings. We provide below a brief overview of the scope of each article.

The **first article**, entitled "Do Organizational Factors Matter for Bureaucrats' Dissent Responses to Democratic Backsliding? Evidence from a Survey Experiment," addresses the research question of *which factors influence bureaucrats' dissent attitudes in response to political superiors' threats*. By relying on data collected from a survey experiment, the article assesses whether the support of managers, coworkers, or professional associations impacts bureaucrats' dissent attitudes. The findings suggest that when bureaucrats receive support from their coworkers, they are more likely to engage in dissent attitudes, even when facing threats from their political superiors. Moreover, among bureaucrats with high levels of organizational commitment, the support of coworkers positively impacts their willingness to engage in secret and informal forms of dissent, such as sabotage. On the other hand, if these bureaucrats have the support of professional associations, they are more inclined to engage in both formal and open forms of dissent (such as issuing a formal dissent advice), as well as secret and informal practices.

The **second article**, entitled "Navigating Administrative Divergence: How Bureaucrats' Individual Profiles and Professional Networks Shape Dissent Behavior" addresses the following research question: *Do relational and individual factors shape bureaucrats' dissent behavior?* We rely on a mixed-methods approach by investigating patterns in the survey experiment that were previously suggested by the interviews. The results from the interviews (first phase of the study) indicate that bureaucrats can engage in varying forms of divergence based on three main individual traits or approaches to action: guerrilla-government oriented practices, policy entrepreneurship-oriented practices, and legalist-oriented practices. It also shows that professional associations may support bureaucrats in dealing with divergence in various ways, such as building coalitions and articulating support from external actors; fostering a sense of shared understanding and belonging among coworkers; providing individual assistance (legal, psychological, and financial assistance); organizing collective actions of support and resistance; and advocating for policy solutions. The results from the survey experiment (second phase of the study) suggest that guerrilla-government oriented bureaucrats are more likely to engage in secret dissent attitudes when relying on the support of professional associations. In the same situation, legalist-oriented bureaucrats are more likely to adopt both

secret and formal dissent attitudes, while policy entrepreneurship-oriented bureaucrats are more likely to engage in all three forms of divergence by engaging with secret, formal, and innovative dissent attitudes.

The **third article** is entitled “*Statecraft Innovation: Bureaucrats’ Policy Entrepreneurship Practices in Response to Perceived Governmental and Organizational Dynamics*”. We rely solely on the qualitative data collected (82 interviews with bureaucrats) to answer the research question: How do bureaucrats deploy PE practices based on their perceptions of shifting political and organizational contexts? Our findings show that both constraints and opportunities at the organizational level may hinder or trigger bureaucrats’ varying PE practices. Bureaucrats strategically adapt their PE practices over time, based on their perceptions of opportunities and constraints for action within their shifting organizational and political landscapes. We argue that PE is not solely influenced by bureaucrats’ skills and proactive behavior, but also by the contexts in which bureaucrats operate. In this article, we also emphasize the notion of ‘organizational windows of opportunity’, referring to shifts within the organization influencing one or more streams’ dynamics at the organizational level. Furthermore, the article documents a nuanced understanding in the identification of policy entrepreneurs, by showing how they strategically leverage or downplay their strategies over time, according to perceived circumstances.

Table 1 summarizes the main content of each article, indicating the corresponding research question, themes addressed in the article, methods used, conceptual relations assessed in each study, and the main contribution (theoretical implications) of the findings. Table 1 also indicates that while the quantitative analysis in the first and second articles focuses on bureaucrats’ dissent attitudes (their willingness to engage in dissent behavior), the third paper concentrates on the actual practices of bureaucrats (PE practices), as reported by interviewees.

Beyond this introduction, the following chapters of the dissertation correspond to the three essays presented in the order they appear in Table 1. The last chapter of this dissertation provides the conclusion, addressing the main implications of our findings for the public administration literature.

Table 1 – Main scope of each essay

Aspects in the papers:	Article 1	Article 2	Article 3
Title	Do Organizational Factors Matter for Bureaucrats' Dissent Responses to Democratic Backsliding? Evidence from a Survey Experiment	Navigating Administrative Divergence: How Bureaucrats' Individual Profiles and Professional Networks Shape Dissent Behavior	Statecraft Innovation: Bureaucrats' Policy Entrepreneurship Practices in Response to Perceived Governmental and Organizational Dynamics
Research Question	Which factors influence bureaucrats' dissent attitudes in response to political superiors' threats?	Do relational and individual factors shape bureaucrats' dissent behavior?	How do bureaucrats deploy PE practices based on their perceptions of shifting political and organizational contexts?
Main themes	Divergence, bureaucrats' attitudes, politician-bureaucrat relations, democratic backsliding, organizational factors	Divergence, bureaucrats' practices and attitudes, politician-bureaucrat relations, abusive supervision, organizational, and individual factors	Policy entrepreneurship (PE), bureaucrats' PE practices, bureaucrats' perceptions, and organizational factors
Method	Quantitative (survey experiment N=339)	Mixed-methods (82 interviews and survey experiment N=333)	Qualitative (82 interviews)
Concepts & relationships analyzed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Coworkers' support (*) •Managers' support •Professional associations' support (*) <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Impact</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">→</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Bureaucrats' dissent attitudes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Professional associations' support (*) •Bureaucrats' individual characteristics (*) <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Impact</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">→</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Bureaucrats' dissent attitudes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Bureaucrats' perceptions of shifting political & organizational contexts <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Are related with</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">●—●</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Bureaucrats' PE practices over time
Main theoretical contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational factors facilitate dissent behavior when bureaucrats deal with abusive supervision and situations of misalignment between the politicians' will and the agencies' mission. • We provide novel evidence on the drivers of bureaucratic divergence: the support of coworkers and professional associations positively impacts bureaucrats' dissent attitudes, especially among those with high levels of organizational commitment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional associations' support helps bureaucrats deal with divergence from their higher-ups in several ways, depending on the individual traits of the bureaucrats. • We provide novel evidence on the drivers of bureaucratic divergence: bureaucrats with different individual traits react differently to the same organizational source of support. Not only do meso-level factors matter for understanding bureaucratic dissent attitudes, but also the interplay between meso-level and individual-level factors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bureaucrats strategically adopt varying PE practices over time, based on the perceived opportunities and constraints of the shifting political and organizational settings. • We offer novel insights on PE, by emphasizing a longitudinal approach. Both constraints and 'organizational windows of opportunities' are associated with changing PE strategies over time. We offer a nuanced understanding of policy entrepreneurs by showing how they leverage or downplay their strategies over time.

Source: elaborated by the author

Observation: Concepts marked with (*) indicate statistically significant relationships within the quantitative analysis (articles 1 and 2). As article 3 does not employ any quantitative method, this mark does not apply.

1 DO ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS MATTER FOR BUREAUCRATS' DISSENT RESPONSES TO DEMOCRATIC BACKSLIDING? EVIDENCE FROM A SURVEY EXPERIMENT

Abstract: Public administration worldwide faces the challenges of democratic backsliding governments, encompassing attacks on the rule of law and the dismantling of institutions. It can also involve politicians' attacks on governmental agencies and threats to bureaucrats' work, often due to a misalignment between politicians' will and the institutional mission of public agencies. In such circumstances, bureaucrats can be loyal to politicians or engage in mission-oriented dissent practices aimed at fulfilling their agencies' mission, despite the threats imposed by politicians. Despite the relevance of the organizational factors enabling bureaucrats' mission-oriented dissent practices, there is still limited experimental evidence systematically assessing these factors, particularly when it comes to assessing the organizational settings marked by politicians-bureaucrats' misalignment. To fill this gap, we investigate whether different types of organizational support - support from managers, coworkers, or professional associations (PAs) - impact bureaucrats' willingness to engage in dissent attitudes in response to illiberal politicians' threats. To test these hypotheses, we rely on a pre-registered survey experiment with 340 bureaucrats working in Brazil's federal agencies during the Bolsonaro administration. Our findings suggest that coworker support positively impacts bureaucrats' willingness to engage in dissent responses. Additionally, among bureaucrats with high levels of organizational commitment, we found that the support from coworkers increases bureaucrats' dissent attitudes by informal and secret means, while the support from PAs increases bureaucrats' dissent attitudes by both secret and open, formal and informal means. We contribute to the literature on behavioral public administration, divergence, and democratic backsliding by offering novel evidence showing that bureaucrats' mission-oriented dissent attitudes depend on the type of organizational support and individuals' levels of organizational commitment.

Keywords: behavioral public administration; democratic backsliding; divergence; coworkers; professional associations

Introduction

Although the relationship between bureaucrats and politicians has been addressed by scholarship (Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman 1981; Brehm and Gates 1997; Carpenter 2001; Peters 2001), the rising of democratic backsliding processes (Levitsky and Ziblatt 2018; Peters and Pierre 2019) in several countries has raised new questions on how illiberal politicians seek to control bureaucracies and how bureaucrats react to their political superiors' threats (Yesilkagit 2018; Bauer et al. 2021; Yesilkagit et al. 2024). Some bureaucrats take the risk of fulfilling their agencies' mission, even if political superiors threaten them with governmental lawsuits, personal threats, and other forms of abusive supervision within public agencies (Koga et al. 2023; Lotta et al. 2023; Peci 2021; Story et al. 2023).

In settings of political attacks on the rule of law within public administration, why do bureaucrats take the risks of implementing actions that oppose the politicians' will, fulfilling their agencies' mission? This study aims to identify the determinants of bureaucratic dissent reactions in response to politicians' threats, particularly in contexts characterized by a misalignment between politicians' will and public agencies' mission, as often occurs in democratic backsliding governments. We draw from the following research question: *which factors influence bureaucrats' dissent attitudes in response to political superiors' threats?* By dissent attitudes, we mean bureaucrats' willingness to engage in practices that oppose their superiors' will (Gofen 2014; O'Leary 2017; Cox 2024), while remaining aligned with their agencies' mission (Perry et al. 2010; Wright and Pandey 2011).

To answer this question, we conducted a pre-registered survey experiment with bureaucrats working in the environmental and indigenous policy sector of the Brazilian federal government, during the tenure of former president Jair Bolsonaro. This administration is known for its democratic backsliding (Silva 2022; Bauer, 2023; Milhorance 2022; Koga et al. 2023). In the survey, we presented respondents with hypothetical randomized scenarios that featured various forms of organizational support – whether from coworkers, managers, or professional associations (PAs). We asked them to what extent they would engage in dissent practices when faced with threats from their political superiors under the Bolsonaro government. We tested whether different types of organizational support influence bureaucrats' willingness to adopt dissenting attitudes. We also assessed heterogeneous treatment effects based on the bureaucrats' levels of organizational commitment to their agencies' mission.

Our findings indicate that when bureaucrats rely on support from their coworkers, they are more likely to engage in dissent attitudes. Among bureaucrats with high levels of organizational commitment, we found that coworkers' support positively impacts secret and

informal dissent attitudes, while professional associations' support positively impacts both types of dissent attitudes: secret and informal, as well as open and formal means.

We contribute to the public administration literature by offering novel evidence on the organizational factors driving bureaucrats' willingness to engage in dissent responses to political superiors' threats. Our findings have three main implications for the literature. First, we identify coworkers' support as a significant driver of bureaucratic attitudes, contributing to the scant body of experimental research designs in assessing bureaucratic behavior in democratic backsliding settings (Guedes-Neto and Guy Peters, 2021). Second, we also contribute to this debate by showing the importance of both organizational and individual characteristics in understanding bureaucratic dissent attitudes in response to politicians' threats. We show that the bureaucratic response is not uniform, as often depicted. Instead, it is contingent on the type of organizational support and on bureaucrats' individual levels of commitment to their agencies' mission. By emphasizing this, we articulate insights from social psychology and behavioral public administration (Meyer-Sahling et al, 2019; Hollibaugh et al, 2020), enhancing theoretical understandings of democratic backsliding at both the individual and organizational levels. Third, our findings add novel insights to the ongoing debate on public agencies' resilience in response to the challenges posed by democratic backsliding governments (Bauer et al. 2021; Bauer 2023; Bersch and Lotta 2024; Yesilkagit et al. 2024).

The article is organized as follows: in the next section, we will review the literature on politician-bureaucrat relations in democratic backsliding settings, as well as the individual-level and organizational-level factors influencing bureaucrats' dissent behavior. The third section describes the empirical context and research methods. The last sections present the findings, discussion, and conclusion.

1.1 Theoretical framework

1.1.1 Democratic backsliding and bureaucratic response to illiberal politicians' threats

The classical debates on public administration and political science initially opposed the role of bureaucrats to that of politicians. According to Weber's classical work, bureaucrats should act according to impersonal rules and respond to the administrative functional hierarchy (Weber 2004). In line with the Weberian approach, the role of bureaucrats is seen as a safeguard for the proper functioning of the state and the provision of public services (Du Gay 2020), while considering the impersonal rules that guide the administrative state. Similarly, Wilson's conceptual model (Wilson 1989) states that bureaucracy should be separate from politics. Elected politicians establish policy priorities, and bureaucrats should implement the politicians' agenda (Wilson 1989).

Public administration and political science scholars have nevertheless challenged the classical and normative theoretical model of bureaucracy, stating that bureaucrats' roles, in practice, also involve policy-making (Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman 1981) and bargaining in a process of transactional authority (Carpenter and Krause 2015), where political-administrative relationships “*are not dictated unilaterally by the political principal but mutually defined by politicians and bureaucrats*” (Christensen 2022, p. 2). Additionally, bureaucrats' actions are not neutral: they have different preferences, beliefs, and varying perceptions towards their organizations - which influence their discretionary behavior (Gofen 2014; O’Leary 2017; Hassan 2020; Cohen 2021).

With the rise of democratic backsliding processes, the relationship between politicians and bureaucrats has gained increased attention due to emerging challenges in these relations (e.g., Du Gay 2020; Bauer et al. 2021; Bauer and Becker 2020; Yesilkagit 2018; Schuster et al. 2021; Christensen 2022; Bauer 2023; Lotta et al. 2023). By democratic backsliding we mean the process wherein elected leaders (referred to here as illiberal politicians) exploit their authority to attack and undermine democratic institutions and the rule of law (Bauer and Becker 2020; Bauer et al. 2021; Levitsky and Ziblatt 2018; Peters and Pierre 2019). This process typically involves the concentration of the executive power; the weakening of state institutions and democratic norms, erosion of checks and balances mechanisms; attacks on media, courts, legislatures, and civil liberties, as well as reduced accountability and social participation (Coppedge 2017; Bauer and Becker 2020; Bauer et al. 2021).

Recent studies (e.g. Koga et al. 2023; Lotta et al. 2023; Kucinkas and Zylan 2023; Bersch and Lotta 2024) have investigated how illiberal politicians seek to control the bureaucracy to accomplish their political agendas, as well as how bureaucrats behave in settings where “*they believe some fundamental values of democracy are being threatened*” (Guedes-Neto and Peters 2021, p. 225). However, the organizational factors enabling bureaucrats to deal with politicians’ threats remain underexplored by public administration scholarship (Yesilkagit et al. 2024).

Theory predicts that in settings characterized by a misalignment between politicians and the bureaucracy, bureaucrats can present an array of contrasting attitudes and behaviors. They may demonstrate loyalty to elected officials and work in accordance with political requests (Brehm and Gates 1997; Schuster et al. 2021), or engage in dissent-shirking practices due to their disagreement with policy content (Guedes-Neto and Peters, 2021). They can also resort to sabotage and guerrilla activities (O’Leary 2017; Hollibaugh, Miles, and Newswander 2019) - aiming to “*undermine the policy goals of the principal*” (Brehm and Gates 1997, p. 22) - or

openly express their disagreement with politicians, either individually or collectively, through formal or informal means (Koga et al. 2023; Lotta et al. 2023; Peci 2021).

Drawing from studies on divergence within organizations, we propose a typology of bureaucratic dissent approaches along two main dimensions: open-secret approaches and formal-informal approaches (summarized in Table 2). By ‘open approaches’ of reaction, we refer to practices where bureaucrats express dissent with the awareness of their superiors, such as voicing concerns directly to managers (Hirschman 1972; Vigoda-Gadot and Beerli, 2012; Hassan, 2015). The ‘secret approaches’ encompass practices conducted without the knowledge of bureaucrats’ superiors, such as sabotage acts (O’Leary 2017; Hollibaugh et al 2020). ‘Formal approaches’ involve bureaucrats using formal means to express dissent, like submitting divergent reports via governmental electronic systems (Lotta et al. 2023; Bersch and Lotta 2024). ‘Informal approaches’ utilize informal channels to express dissent, such as mobilizing personal contacts within or outside the agency to support divergent viewpoints (Olsson and Hysing 2012; Abers 2020).

Table 2 – Forms of bureaucrats’ dissent approaches

Forms of divergence	Definition	Examples	References
Open	Bureaucrats' dissent practices conducted with their superiors' awareness	Voicing dissent to superiors or trying to negotiate	(Hirschman 1972; Kassing 2002; Vigoda-Gadot and Beerli, 2012; Adelman, 2012; Hassan, 2015; Bergeron and Thompson, 2020; Cox, 2024)
Secret	Bureaucrats' dissent practices conducted without their superiors' awareness	Engaging in sabotage acts, such as leaking information	(Krone 1992; Brehm and Gates, 1999; Kassing 2002; O’Leary, 2017; Hollibaugh et al., 2020)
Formal	Bureaucrats’ practices using formal means to express dissent.	Issuing dissent advice through governmental systems or filling lawsuits	(Koga et al. 2023; Lotta et al. 2023)
Informal	Bureaucrats’ practices using informal means to express dissent.	Networking (mobilize support) within or outside the organization	(Gofen 2014; Olsson and Hysing 2012; O’Leary 2017; Abers 2020)

Source: Elaborated by the authors, based on the literature

In settings marked by politicians-bureaucrats misalignments, the varying approaches of dissent may have various consequences for public administration, with implications for accountability and transparency (Lotta et al. 2023), administrative learning (Bersch and Lotta 2024; Cox 2024), and bureaucratic autonomy (Yesilkagit 2018). For instance, informal and secret dissent approaches, such as sabotage, might potentially mitigate some of the impact triggered by illiberal politicians’ acts (Koga et al. 2023; Lotta et al. 2023). However, such actions may not be consistent with the principles of public administration accountability and transparency (Du Gay 2020). Conversely, formal and open dissent approaches, like issuing dissent via governmental systems, enable bureaucrats to channel dissent upwards, while relying

on transparency and accountability mechanisms (Lotta et al. 2023). How far bureaucrats can go in order to defend liberal democracy remains a subject of active debate (Yesilkagit 2021; Dahlström and Lapuente 2022; Bauer 2023).

While studies have described the various strategies bureaucrats adopt in response to pressures from illiberal politicians (Koga et al. 2023; Story et al. 2023; Bauer et al. 2021; Peci 2021), the determinants of bureaucratic response to backsliding governments remain underexplored. Existing empirical evidence comes from descriptive studies (Story et al. 2023; Lotta et al. 2023), while scant attention has been paid to assessing the causal relations between the organizational factors shaping individual-level behavior in public organizations, particularly in political settings characterized by politicians-bureaucrats misalignment. Although scholars recognize public bureaucracies as one of the safeguards of democratic institutions (Yesilkagit 2021; Bauer 2023; Železnik and Fink-Hafner 2023), public administration scholarship has underexplored the organizational and individual determinants of bureaucratic divergence in response to backsliding governments. This study aims to fill this gap by investigating whether the support from managers, coworkers, professional associations, and individual values of bureaucrats impact their dissent attitudes in response to political superiors' threats.

1.1.2 The influence of individual values on dissent behavior

Bureaucrats' individual values and perceptions of their organizations influence their attitudes and behavior, including how they engage in dissent. When bureaucrats exhibit a high degree of organizational commitment (Tummers, Steijn, and Bekkers 2012), their values closely align with their agencies' institutional mission and objectives (Cable and DeRue 2002), fostering an emotional connection to the organization, and cultivating a sense of institutional belonging (Mostafa, Gould-Williams, and Bottomley 2015). The level of bureaucrats' organizational commitment predicts bureaucrats' engagement in extra-role behavior to advance their agency's mission (de Geus et al. 2020), including attitudes such as reporting ethical problems to higher-ups in the organization (Meyer-Sahling, Mikkelsen, and Schuster 2019).

Individuals with heightened levels of organizational commitment “*are more likely to want to help the organization achieve its mission and objectives by undertaking, where necessary, extra-role behaviors directed toward (...) the organization*” (Gould-Williams et al. 2015, p. 603). Drawing from the inputs of this literature, we anticipate that in situations of dissent between bureaucrats and political superiors, bureaucrats with a strong organizational commitment will be more inclined to engage in dissent attitudes by prioritizing their agencies'

mission over their political superiors' preferences, especially when those demands conflict with the agency's core objectives (Meyer-Sahling, Mikkelsen, and Schuster 2019).

1.1.3 Managers' influence on dissent behavior

Managers may play a significant role in influencing bureaucrats' behavior and attitudes (Fleming 2020), such as extra-role performance (Vigoda-Gadot and Beeri 2012), public service motivation (Wright, Moynihan, and Pandey 2012), voicing and team learning (Detert and Burris 2007), discretionary work, organizational commitment and meaningful work (Tummers and Knies 2013; Fleming 2020).

In organizational settings marked by divergences between bureaucrats and leaders (Gofen 2014), the supportive influence of managers might empower bureaucrats to carry out their work with a higher degree of discretion, allowing them to channel divergence upwards within the organization (Gofen 2014; Redmond et al. 2016). Bureaucrats who have the backing of their managers are more inclined to take personal initiatives and to undertake career risks in order to fulfill their agency's institutional mission (Graen and Uhl-Bien 1995; Fleming 2020). The presence of supportive managers is also positively associated with an increase in bureaucrats' attitudes towards policy entrepreneurship and decision-making influence (Frisch Aviram, Beeri, and Cohen 2021; Cohen 2021).

Scholarship on public service motivation (PSM) emphasizes the role played by leadership in shaping employees' attitudes and commitment to their organizations' mission. This is achieved by fostering motivation, a sense of purpose, and clarity towards the agency's goals and needs (Wright, Moynihan, and Pandey 2012). On the opposite side, when leaders are perceived as unsupportive outsiders misaligned with their agencies' mission, bureaucrats tend to present attitudes such as disengagement, dissatisfaction, and silencing (Story et al. 2023). Within democratic backsliding settings, politicization and abusive supervision are related to the weakening of bureaucrats' ability to confront the requests of political superiors (Story et al. 2023).

When bureaucrats receive backing from their managers, they might be more inclined to take on greater risks in fulfilling their agencies' mission (Cohen 2021). Supportive managers can shield their teams from higher-ups' pressures (Fleming, 2020), creating space for the adoption of open dissent approaches (Cox 2024). Additionally, managerial support tends to be associated with the adoption of formal means to channel divergence within the organization (Vigoda-Gadot and Beeri 2012; Adelman 2012; Hassan, 2015). Considering the main inputs from the public administration literature, we build on a testable hypothesis regarding the

circumstances under which bureaucrats are more likely to dissent from political superiors' threats, when they rely on managers' support. We hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Bureaucrats are more likely to engage in dissent when they have the support of managers. **H1.a)** Bureaucrats who have high levels of organizational commitment and are supported by managers are more likely to engage in dissent through formal and open means.

1.1.4 Coworkers' influence on dissent behavior

The dynamics among peers can significantly shape coworkers' attitudes and practices (Keiser, 2010; Foldy and Buckley 2010; Gofen 2014). The socialization of bureaucrats within organizational cultures is linked to the dissemination of ideas, shared understandings and knowledge, shared beliefs and attitudes within the organization (Keiser 2010; Fleming 2020). Coworkers' influence can enhance bureaucrats' capacity to adapt their work practices and learning processes (Foldy and Buckley 2010) and increase their prosocial rule-breaking attitudes (Morrison 2006; Fleming 2020).

The influence of coworkers can become the primary reference for bureaucrats' practices, surpassing other instances (Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2000; Gofen 2014), and overcoming managers' influence in some contexts (Brehm and Gates 1997). Even when confronted with perceived sanctions from higher-ups in the organization, individuals with a strong inclination for risk-taking, and who rely on the support of coworkers, are more likely to engage in dissent behavior and prosocial rule-breaking (Morrison 2006).

The dynamics among peers are particularly important in challenging institutional settings, where bureaucrats face threats from political superiors (Yesilkagit 2018). In such situations, bureaucrats tend to craft solutions collectively, relying on shared understandings of the best course of action among peers, aiming to fulfill their agencies' institutional mission (Lotta et al. 2023; Bauer 2023). In democratic backsliding contexts, collective action among bureaucrats has emerged as a crucial strategy for mitigating power imbalances and thwarting threats from political superiors (Bersch and Lotta 2024). When bureaucrats react collectively against higher-ups, it becomes difficult for political superiors to single out and penalize a specific individual when attempting to punish dissent behavior (Lotta et al. 2023). Similarly, a less competitive organizational environment and minimal conflict between coworkers may also lead to greater organizational autonomy and resilience against illiberal politicians' interferences (Yesilkagit 2018).

When bureaucrats can count on the support of their peers, they may not rely exclusively on approval from higher-ups within the organization (Gofen 2014). When bureaucrats find

themselves at the bottom of the organizational hierarchy with no additional support except from their peers, they may resort to secret practices, involving tactics such as sabotage and other guerrilla government practices (O’Leary 2017; Hollibaugh, Miles, and Newswander 2020; Schuster et al. 2022), typically executed through informal channels. Following the existing literature on coworkers’ influence for dissent behavior, we expect that:

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Bureaucrats are more likely to engage in dissent when they have the support of coworkers. **H2.a)** Bureaucrats who have high levels of organizational commitment and are supported by coworkers are more likely to engage in dissent through informal and secret means.

1.1.5 Professional Associations’ influence on dissent behavior

Professional associations (PAs) may influence individuals’ dissent attitudes and behavior, particularly within the same occupation (Anteby, Chan, and DiBenigno 2016). This is attributed to their role in reinforcing professional and occupational norms (Abbott 2010; Anteby, Chan, and DiBenigno 2016), and socializing their members into a set of shared references, cultural norms, practices, and worldviews (Anteby et al. 2016, p. 189). PAs contribute to the development of common understandings, the devising of solutions, and the coordination of collective action, especially when bureaucrats need to deal with divergence from their political superiors (Story et al. 2023; Koga et al. 2023).

Broader professional networks within the same policy domain, including those facilitated by PAs, offer bureaucrats greater access to information, knowledge, and a more extensive support system (Hysing and Olsson 2018; Abers, 2019, 2020). Both information and coalition-building serve as critical resources when bureaucrats strive to uphold their agencies’ institutional mission amid divergence (Hysing and Olsson 2018). Conversely, bureaucrats whose networks are smaller may face greater challenges in resisting perceived illegitimate political superiors (Abers, 2020). Higher levels of professionalism (Brehm and Gates 1997) and multiple connections within a policy community, such as PAs’ membership, may grant bureaucrats conditions for higher levels of organizational autonomy vis-à-vis politicians’ interference (Carpenter 2001; Yesilkagit 2018).

PAs can play a strategic role in enabling bureaucrats’ dissent response to democratic backsliding by upholding the constitutional foundation for public sector work (Koga et al. 2023; Story et al. 2023). PAs may engage in advocacy endeavors such as preempting policy setbacks with legislators, providing legal assistance to bureaucrats facing political persecution, organizing panel discussions on policy issues, reporting instances of institutional harassment,

initiating charges, and collaborating with the media to denounce political harassment of bureaucrats (Lotta et al. 2022; Story et al. 2023).

Due to their external position, PAs exert institutional pressures over organizational leadership (Frumkin and Galaskiewicz 2004; Gazley 2014), becoming key avenues for dissent and institutional resistance to backsliding governments (Araújo 2020). PAs can also employ a wide array of strategies aimed at shielding individual bureaucrats from higher-ups' pressures (Gazley, 2014), including both formal and informal, as well as secret and open means of dissent (Lotta et al. 2023). If leaders aim to retaliate against professional associations, their target is the PA as a collective entity rather than individuals. PAs' protection thus allows bureaucrats to adopt both open and secret approaches of dissent, using both formal or informal means, without exposing themselves individually to abusive supervision (Story et al. 2023). We thus hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Bureaucrats are more likely to engage in dissent when they have the support of professional associations (PAs). **H3. a)** Bureaucrats who have high levels of organizational commitment and are supported by PAs are more likely to engage in dissent through both informal and secret means, as well as formal and open means.

1.2 Context and Methods

1.2.1 Empirical context

This study relies on a pre-registered randomized survey experiment conducted with bureaucrats working in the Brazilian Federal government, during President Bolsonaro's administration. We have chosen the Brazilian case due to its trajectory towards democratic backsliding over the past few years (Boese et al. 2022; Milhorange 2022). The former president, Jair Bolsonaro, along with his political appointees, engendered a contentious relationship with federal bureaucracies across policy sectors (Koga et al. 2023), with sustained efforts to dismantle institutions, public policies and organizations (Milhorange 2022; Peci 2021; Story et al. 2023). The Brazilian case is thus a relevant context for understanding the dynamics between bureaucrats and politicians amidst democratic backsliding.

We focus on the environmental and indigenous policy sectors, as the Bolsonaro government gained notoriety for its violent setbacks in these policy domains (Milhorange 2022; E. J. Pereira et al. 2020; Araújo 2020). This encompasses a range of actions, including governmental lawsuits against bureaucrats; budget reductions; dismantling of organizational structures, instances of participation and social control, and discontinuations of norms and procedures related to the constitutional principles of environmental domain (Lotta et al. 2023; Story et al. 2023).

At the intra-organizational level of environmental and indigenous agencies, high-ranking government officials aligned with President Bolsonaro consistently posed individual and collective threats to bureaucrats (Lotta et al. 2022; Story et al. 2023). These actions include: (a) restricting bureaucrats from their basic roles as civil servants — such as constraining: field work travels, work in indigenous lands, writing technical reports, issuance of environmental fines, among several other types of mission-oriented tasks; (b) preventing participation in work meetings; (c) controlling communication among bureaucrats and with other agencies; (d) prohibiting bureaucrats from contacting journalists and publishing in academic journals; (e) hindering participatory meetings with citizens; (f) resorting to verbal aggression, moral harassment, and, in some cases, physical intimidation (Koga et al. 2023; Lotta et al. 2022; Story et al. 2023; Bersch and Lotta 2024).

1.2.2 Survey experiment

1.2.2.1 Sample and survey participants

The survey experiment involved 609 bureaucrats from environmental and indigenous public agencies in the Brazilian Federal Government, although only 339 provided complete answers concerning the specific variables assessed in this study. The survey experiment was conducted between December 2022 and January 2023. We designed the vignette content and the alternatives for bureaucratic reactions based on findings from previous works on divergence in public agencies, on politicians' threats and bureaucratic reactions in backsliding settings (Bauer et al. 2021; Koga et al. 2023; Bersch and Lotta 2024; Lotta et al. 2023) as well as on survey experiments addressing backsliding in subnational contexts (Guedes-Neto and Guy Peters 2021).

We distributed the survey link to bureaucrats working in Brazilian Federal Government agencies within the environmental and indigenous sector through three main strategies: (i) we sent the link to professional associations of environmental and indigenous federal agencies; (ii) we also shared the link with bureaucrats working in these domains and asked them to share it in working groups, including WhatsApp groups, with hundreds of bureaucrats from all over the country; (iii) additionally, we shared the survey link on our personal social networks, and these posts were subsequently shared by other researchers and actors within the environmental and indigenous domain. As the study addressed sensitive topics such as bureaucrat-politician misalignment, we were unable to establish any partnership with the government to distribute the survey through formal governmental channels. Due to limitations, we could not estimate the number of bureaucrats who received the survey.

We obtained Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval (FGV ID N° 088/2022, on March 31, 2022). Before the survey, participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and anonymous, and their consent was sought. We pre-registered the survey experiment on the EGAP/OSF Platform before conducting the survey experiment (Registration ID 20221211AA from December 12, 2022)². The survey was customized to four distinct organizations in the environmental and indigenous policy sector: the Ministry of Environment (MMA), along with its affiliated agencies - the Instituto Chico Mendes de Conservação da Biodiversidade (ICMBIO) and the Instituto Brasileiro do Meio Ambiente e dos Recursos Naturais Renováveis (IBAMA) - in the environment sector. For the indigenous sector, the Fundação Nacional do Índio (FUNAI) was included. Each organization's unique characteristics prompted specific survey question customization in the vignette design, in order to suit their particular settings.

From the total of 609 responses, 427 participants completed the entire survey. Among the complete responses, 35% were from bureaucrats at IBAMA, 29% from ICMBio, 8% from MMA, and 28% from FUNAI. These proportions align reasonably well with the existing population of active bureaucrats in each organization, which stands at 3,158 in IBAMA (40%), 1,850 in ICMBIO (24%), 680 in MMA (9%), and 2,110 in FUNAI (27%), totaling 7,798 bureaucrats working in the environment and indigenous sector (100%).

1.2.2.2 Vignette Experiment

In our survey experiment, bureaucrats were randomly assigned to only one of four scenarios, or “vignettes”: the control group, and three treatment groups, each receiving one of the following treatments: managers' support, coworkers' support, or professional associations (PAs)' support. After the survey data collection, the number of respondents in each group was as follows: control group (134), managers' support treatment group (137), coworkers' support treatment group (134), PAs' support treatment group (136), and participants whose responses did not reach the experiment section (136).

The survey's vignette portrayed a hypothetical scenario where the agencies' institutional mission clashed with politicians' agendas. This scenario remained consistent across all four surveys conducted for different organizations (IBAMA, ICMBio, MMA, FUNAI). Figure 1 summarizes the vignette experimental design using an example from ICMBio's scenario. Crafted specifically for each organization to mirror their unique contexts and missions, the vignettes were tailored accordingly (detailed content for each organization's vignette and survey

² Pre-registration, along with the corresponding documents, is available on the OSF platform at <https://osf.io/7x5jc>.

questions are provided in Appendix 1.a and 1.b). Despite this customization, all surveys contained common information within the vignettes, providing the respondent with information about: (a) political appointees interfering with bureaucratic autonomy and opposing the agencies' institutional mission; (b) a military official serving as the unit's chief, known for making personal threats and initiating lawsuits against bureaucrats; (c) the survey respondent was assigned a task aligned with the agency's mission but misaligned with politicians' agenda.

After the vignette or hypothetical scenario, the survey presented three³ dissent reactions to the respondents. We asked respondents to imagine themselves as the depicted bureaucrat and rate on a Likert scale - from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) – to what extent they would be willing to engage in such practices:

(i) Dissent through fulfilling the original task: The bureaucrat implements the task (in accordance with the agency's mission), by elaborating on advice using technical terms aligned with the agency's mission and guidelines but misaligned with politicians' will.

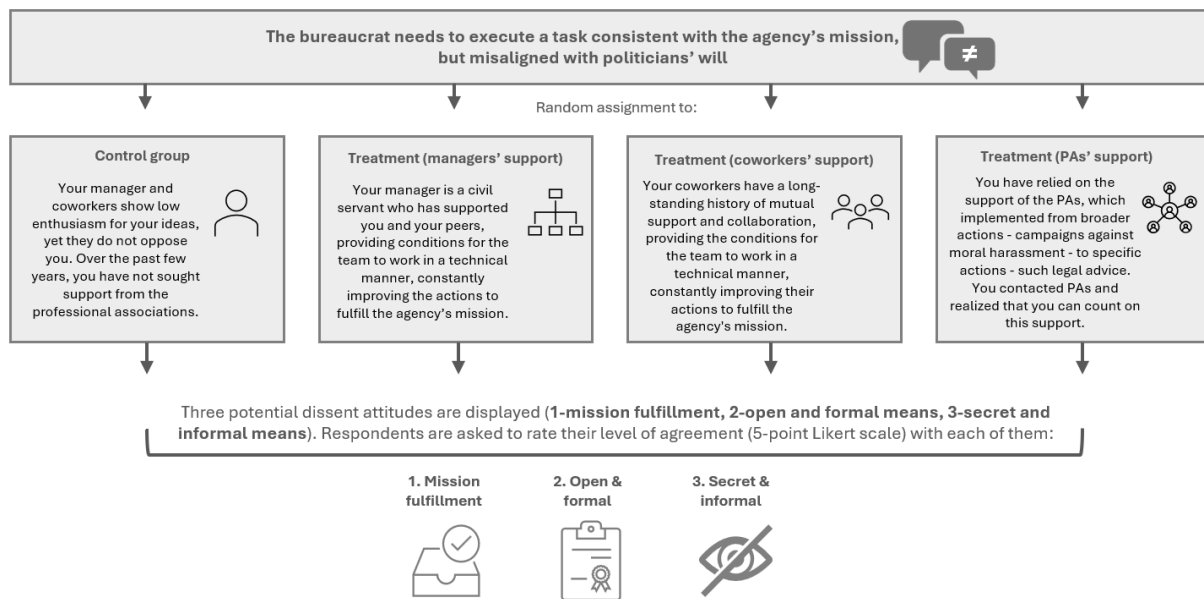
(ii) Dissent through formal and open means: The bureaucrat formally registers in the Electronic Government System (abbreviated as "SEI") the existence of a misalignment between the agency's mission and the will of political superiors.

(iii) Dissent through informal and secret means: The bureaucrat secretly encourages local communities to hold demonstrations against undue political interference (sabotage practices).

A simplified outline of the survey design is presented in Figure 1. To validate the vignettes and survey questions, we pretested them with bureaucrats from the indigenous and environmental domains. We administered the survey and then conducted face-to-face interviews to gather bureaucrats' feedback on question interpretation. This process helped refine the vignettes and survey questions, ensuring focus on the measured constructs. We also sought input from scholars in bureaucracy related to environmental and indigenous policies.

³ Overall, the vignette survey experiment comprised six attitudes. However, in this paper, we focus on three attitudes, considering the scope of this article. The complete survey experiment design, including all dissenting attitudes, is available in Appendix 1.

Figure 1 – Experimental design



Source: elaborated by the author

1.2.2.3 Measures

Outcome measures - bureaucrats' willingness to engage in dissent attitudes: After reading the vignette, respondents were presented with different dissent attitudes and asked to rate on a 5-point Likert scale (from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) to what extent they would engage in these dissent reactions: (1) dissent in mission fulfillment, (2) open and formal dissent, (3) secret and informal dissent. The detailed statements for each of the four organizations (FUNAI, ICMBio, IBAMA, MMA) are provided in Table 3:

Table 3 - Vignette statements for the outcome measures (bureaucrats' willingness to engage in dissent attitudes)

FUNAI (indigenous domain)	ICMBio (environmental domain)	IBAMA (environmental domain)	MMA (environmental domain)
How would you act in a situation like this? Please indicate to what degree you agree with the following sentences. (5 point-Likert scale, from strongly disagree=1 to strongly agree=5)			
Outcome variable - "Dissent in mission fulfillment" - used in the reverse scale to assess dissent:			
"I would develop the plan according to the demands of the indigenous communities. However, I would avoid addressing polemic words, that the Bolsonaro administration would possibly veto".	"I would support the development of the management plan following the ICMBio's guidelines. However, I would avoid addressing polemic words, that the Bolsonaro administration would possibly veto".	"I would prepare the technical report according to the methodology already established in my area. However, I would avoid addressing polemic words, that the Bolsonaro administration would possibly veto".	"I would prepare the technical report according to the methodology already established in my area. However, I would avoid addressing polemic words, that the Bolsonaro administration would possibly veto".
Outcome variable - "Open and formal dissent" :			
"Even in case of disagreement with superiors or the agency's higher echelon (about the contents of the plan), I would formalize my initial technical advice (first version of the management plan) in the Electronic Information System (SEI)".	"Even in case of disagreement with superiors or the agency's higher echelon (about the management plan's topics), I would formally register my initial technical advice (first version of the management plan) in the Electronic Information System (SEI)".	"Even in case of disagreement with superiors or the agency's higher echelon (about the management report topics), I would formally register my initial technical advice (first version of the report) in the Electronic Information System (SEI)".	"Even in the event of a disagreement with superiors or senior staff at the MMA (on the contents of the report), I would formalize my initial technical advice (first version of the report) in the Electronic Information System (SEI)".

FUNAI (indigenous domain)	ICMBio (environmental domain)	IBAMA (environmental domain)	MMA (environmental domain)
Outcome variable – “Secret and informal dissent”:			
“If there is political interference in the regional plan (with government vetoes of the plan's key guidelines), I would informally encourage indigenous communities to protest against the government, without the knowledge of FUNAI's higher echelon”.	“If there is political interference in the management plan (with government vetoes of the plan's key guidelines), I would informally encourage local communities to protest against the government, without the knowledge of ICMBio's higher echelon”.	“If there is political interference in the licensing process (with government vetoes on key issues in the report), I would informally encourage local communities to protest against the government, without the knowledge of IBAMA's higher echelon”.	“If there is political interference in the report (with government vetoes on key issues in the report), I would informally encourage local communities to protest against the government, without the knowledge of MMA's higher echelon”.

Source: elaborated by the author

Control variables and heterogeneous treatment effects:

In the survey, we asked the respondents about their individual characteristics as well as their perceptions of their organizational environment. We considered the following as control variables: the gender, age, level of education, experience (number of years working in the organization), PA membership, managerial experience in the current or past administrations, type of organizational unit (a binary variable indicating whether the working unit is located in Brazil's capital or decentralized locations), whether the bureaucrat's routine is similar to the task proposed in the vignette or not, and the bureaucrat's perception of the misalignment between the president's political agenda (Bolsonaro agenda).

Our analysis accounted for heterogeneous treatment effects based on an index that considered bureaucrats' individual levels of organizational commitment. The index was created using a variable that captured the bureaucrat's identification with the agency's institutional mission in relation to their personal values (Cable and DeRue 2002), the level of the bureaucrat's affective commitment to the organization, and the bureaucrat's continuance commitment using a version of Meyer, Allen, and Smith's scale (1993). The index was formed through principal component analysis (PCA) using the following survey variables (rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree): *"I identify myself with the institutional mission of my agency. It is consistent with my worldview"*; *"My personal values align with the values and organizational culture of my agency"*; *"I feel emotionally connected to the work that I do in the agency"*; *"I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career working at the agency"*.

We estimate the following linear regression by OLS:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Manager_i + \beta_2 Peer_i + \beta_3 PA_i + \beta_4 H_i + \sum \beta_d D_{id} * H_i + X_i' \Phi + \mu_{org} + \varepsilon_i$$

Where “i” is a subscript for bureaucrats and “Y_i” indicates outcome variables - practices of bureaucratic dissent attitudes (mission fulfillment, open and formal dissent, secret and

informal dissent). Manager, Peer and PA are dummy variables that indicate different treatment assignments; X is a vector of individual control variables (bureaucrat's gender, age, education, years of experience in the organization, PA membership, managerial experience, type of organizational unit and routine similar to the task proposed in the vignette). The term ' μ_{org} ' indicates organization fixed effect (dummy variables for IBAMA, ICMBio, MMA or FUNAI). The term "D" corresponds to each dummy of treatment variables (Manager, Peer, PA), each interacted with "H" representing bureaucrats' levels of organizational commitment. We estimate and report standard errors robust to heteroscedasticity.

We present balance tests in Appendix 2. They suggest that the randomization in our survey experiment was successful regarding observable variables. We do not identify significant differences between control and treatment groups regarding age, gender, education, working experience, professional association membership, managerial experience, type of unit and bureaucrat's routine or levels of organizational commitment.

Table 4 provides descriptive statistics for the variables considered in the analysis, based on the complete answers to the survey (n=339). In our sample, the average age of the bureaucrats is 44 years, and 56% of the respondents are men. 77% of the respondents have at least a postgraduate degree. The average working experience in their respective organizations is 14 years, and almost 60% of the respondents have held a managerial position, either in the current or past administrations. Most of them (73%) work in decentralized units, which are located outside Brazil's capital.

Table 4 – Descriptive statistics for the variables

Variable	Mean	Std. dev.	Min	Max
Age of the bureaucrat (in years)	44.5	1.04	21	74
Bureaucrat's gender (1 = man)	.56	.49	0	1
Bureaucrat's education (levels ranging from 1 to 4)	3.25	.87	1	4
Bureaucrat's working experience (years)	14.08	8.87	0	40
Bureaucrat's PA membership (1=is a member)	.65	.47	0	1
Bureaucrat's managerial experience (1= has held a management position in the current or previous administrations)	.59	.49	0	1
Type of unit (1= centralized unit; 0= decentralized unit)	.27	.44	0	1
Similar task regarding the vignette (1= is similar)	.67	.47	0	1
Worldviews alignment with agency mission *	4.76	.62	1	5
Personal values alignment with agency mission *	3.76	1.03	1	5
Organizational affective commitment *	4.34	.86	1	5
Organizational continuance commitment *	3.78	1.21	1	5
Organizational commitment index	.058	1.40	-6.16	1.73

Obs.: Variables indicated with (*) range from 5-point Likert scale, from strongly disagree to strongly agree

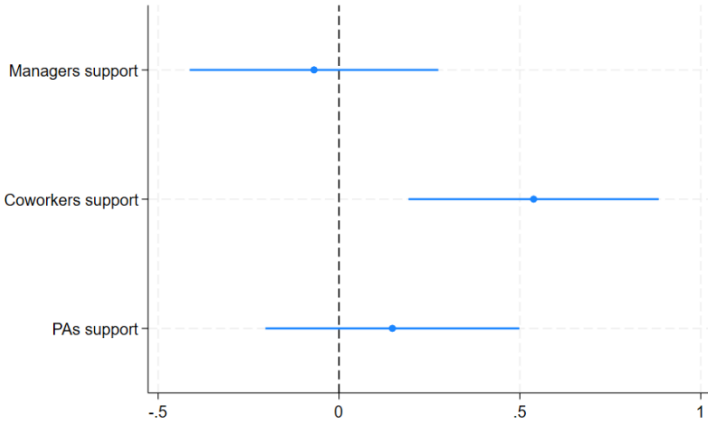
1.3 Results

Figure 2 displays the estimated coefficients for the main regression model, allowing us to examine the treatment effects of organizational support on bureaucrats' willingness to engage

in divergence in response to politicians' threats. These results enable us to assess H1 (influence of managers' support), H2 (coworkers' support), and H3 (Professional Associations' support, indicated as PAs' support). Table 5 displays the estimated coefficients for heterogeneous treatment effects, specifically the interaction between each treatment (managers, coworkers, and PAs' support) and bureaucrats' individual levels of organizational commitment. These results enable us to assess H1.a, H2.a, and H3.a.

We will now evaluate the research hypotheses presented in Figure 2. Hypothesis 1 (H1) posits that bureaucrats are more likely to engage in divergence when they have the support of managers. Our findings do not support H1, as the estimated coefficient is -0.07 and it is not statistically significant. Hypothesis 2 (H2) predicts that bureaucrats, when supported by coworkers, are more likely to engage in divergence. Our findings validate H2, suggesting that bureaucrats relying on coworkers' support are more willing to engage in dissent attitudes, in response to threats from illiberal politicians ($\hat{\beta} = 0.54, p = 0.00$). The estimated coefficient for PAs' support is not statistically significant, although its value is in the expected direction ($\hat{\beta} = 0.15$). Thus, we do not confirm H3. Overall, our findings confirm H2 and reject H1 and H3.

Figure 2 - Estimated effects of organizational support on bureaucrats' willingness to engage in dissent in mission fulfillment



Note: The figure reports OLS coefficient estimates for the main regression model, which assess organizational support from managers (H1), coworkers (H2), and Professional Associations indicated as PAs (H3) on bureaucrats' willingness to engage in divergence in response to politicians' threats. The model specifications include organization fixed-effects and individual controls.

Regarding the results presented in Table 5, hypothesis H1a states that bureaucrats who have high levels of organizational commitment and are supported by managers are more likely to engage in divergence through formal and open means. Although the estimated coefficient is in the expected positive direction ($\hat{\beta} = 0.10$), it is not statistically significant, which leads us to reject H1a. H2a states that bureaucrats who have high levels of organizational commitment and are supported by coworkers are more likely to engage in divergence through informal and

secret means. As the estimated coefficient corresponds to 0.238 (and $p < 0.05$), we validate H2a. Finally, H3a predicts that bureaucrats who have high levels of organizational commitment and are supported by PAs are more likely to engage in divergence through both informal and secret means, as well as formal and open means. Our results confirm H3a, as the estimated coefficients correspond to $\hat{\beta} = 0.18$ for formal and open divergence, and $\hat{\beta} = 0.29$ for secret and informal divergence (and $p < 0.05$). Overall, we reject H1a and validate H2a and H3a.

Table 5 - Heterogeneous treatment effects: organizational support according to bureaucrats' individual levels of organizational commitment

VARIABLES	(1) Divergence through formal and open means	(2) Divergence through informal and secret means
Organizational commitment * Managers' support	0.108 (0.091)	0.136 (0.128)
Organizational commitment * Coworkers' support	0.024 (0.071)	0.238 (0.114)**
Organizational commitment * PAs' support	0.182 (0.090)**	0.291 (0.130)**
Observations	339	339
Organization fixed-effects	Yes	Yes
Individual controls	Yes	Yes

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

PA's: Professional Associations

Note: Table reports OLS coefficient estimates. Heteroskedastic-robust standard errors are presented in parentheses. Each estimation originates from a distinct regression model corresponding to the respective dependent variable indicated above. All model specifications include the interaction terms of the treatments with the variable 'organizational commitment', the individual treatment variables, the interactive term individually, organization fixed-effects and individual controls.

1.4 Discussion

This study aimed to assess the determinants of bureaucrats' dissent attitudes in response to political superiors' threats. Through a survey experiment, we assessed whether the support of managers, coworkers, and professional associations (PAs), as well as bureaucrats' individual levels of organizational commitment, may influence bureaucrats' willingness to engage in dissent attitudes. Our findings suggest that when bureaucrats are supported by coworkers, they are more likely to engage in dissent attitudes, even when facing challenging situations marked by a politician-bureaucrat misalignment and politicians' threats to bureaucrats. Furthermore, our results indicate that bureaucrats with high levels of organizational commitment are more likely to engage in dissent attitudes by secret and informal means when they are supported by coworkers. On the other hand, these same bureaucrats may engage in dissent attitudes through both open and formal, as well as secret and informal means when they are supported by PAs.

These results have three main implications for the literature on divergence, behavioral public administration, and democratic backsliding.

First, we provide novel experimental evidence on the role played by coworkers in driving bureaucrats' dissent attitudes, particularly when they are dealing with threats from political superiors. In this challenging situation, bureaucrats are more willing to fulfil their agencies mission when they are supported by coworkers. This result aligns with prior empirical research on divergence (Gofen 2014) and prosocial rule-breaking (Fleming 2020). Scholarship shows that the support from peers is perceived as a relational asset, enabling bureaucrats to legitimize their dissent attitudes towards their higher-ups (Gofen 2014), and comply with their agencies' mission. In settings marked by uncertainties and restricted access to information from higher-ups, bureaucrats rely on their immediate environment and trust relationships among coworkers to act (Keiser, 2010; Foldy and Buckley 2010; Fleming 2020).

Second, we add novel insights to the literature on behavioral public administration (Meyer-Sahling et al. 2019; Hollibaugh et al, 2020), by emphasizing the interplay between organizational and individual factors shaping bureaucratic dissent attitudes. Based on our findings, we argue that the bureaucratic dissent attitudes toward politicians' threats are not a homogeneous phenomenon as often depicted. Instead, they are rather contingent on the type of organizational support upon which bureaucrats rely and on bureaucrats' individual levels of organizational commitment. Our results enhance the understanding of bureaucrats' dissent attitudes both at the micro-level and meso-level organizational incentives.

Third, our findings provide novel insights into the recent debate on the characteristics of resilient agencies in the face of challenges posed by backsliding governments (Bauer et al. 2021; Yesilkagit et al. 2024). We offer experimental-led evidence suggesting that, with additional organizational support (e.g. additional support from peers and professional associations), bureaucrats may have better conditions to fulfill their agencies' missions and deal with the challenging threats imposed by politicians. We also emphasize the importance of PAs' support in influencing bureaucrats' willingness to adopt transparent and accountable mission-oriented responses to politicians, by adopting formal and open means of dissent.

These results have practical implications for public administration, particularly in organizational design. Since support from peers and PAs positively impacts bureaucrats' willingness to channel dissent upward in alignment with their agencies' missions, our findings suggest that public agencies would benefit from initiatives aimed at strengthening bureaucrats' networks with their coworkers and PAs. Additionally, training programs on managing divergence within public agencies—through accountable and transparent channels—would

provide bureaucrats with clear action guidelines. Lastly, the existence of reliable and institutionalized whistleblowing channels and control bodies, supported by bureaucrats and PAs, would facilitate institutionalized dissent in situations where there is a misalignment between the agencies' mission and political agendas.

1.5 Conclusion

Our study investigated the drivers of bureaucrats' dissent attitudes when confronted with politicians' threats. Employing an experimental research design (survey experiment with Brazilian bureaucrats working in the federal government under the Bolsonaro administration), we examined the degree to which various types of organizational support - support from managers, coworkers, and professional associations (PAs) - could incentivize bureaucrats to engage in dissent attitudes, fulfilling their agencies' mission.

We found evidence that coworkers' support strongly impacts bureaucrats' dissent attitudes, in agreement with our second hypothesis. However, we do not have enough evidence to validate hypotheses 1 and 3, considering the average treatment effects for the whole sample. Regarding heterogeneous treatment effects based on bureaucrats' individual levels of organizational commitment, we show that the support of coworkers and PAs significantly influences bureaucrats' dissent attitudes. This leads us to validate hypotheses 2a and 3a while rejecting hypothesis 1a.

Our study has theoretical implications for the field of public administration, particularly in relation to research on divergence (Gofen 2014; Fleming 2020), bureaucratic responses to democratic backsliding (Lotta et al. 2023; Yesilkagit et al. 2024), and behavioral public administration (Hollibaugh et al 2020; Guedes-Neto and Peters 2021; Schuster et al. 2022). Finally, this study also has practical implications, particularly in offering insights on the organizational-level resources that may help bureaucrats deal with abusive supervision from political appointees within public agencies (Story et al. 2023). Our findings highlight the crucial role of coworkers and PAs, and in particular, the influence PAs have in triggering accountable and transparent administrative responses to backsliding.

2 NAVIGATING ADMINISTRATIVE DIVERGENCE: HOW BUREAUCRATS' INDIVIDUAL PROFILES AND PROFESSIONAL NETWORKS SHAPE DISSENT BEHAVIOR

Abstract: Divergence is expected to occur in public agencies, especially when political agendas deviate from institutional missions. Such situations force bureaucrats to choose between loyalty to political leaders or their agencies' mission. These dilemmas become more pronounced in politicized public agencies, where additional challenges like abusive supervision and personal threats from political appointees emerge. Although scholarship has shown the various strategies bureaucrats employ to navigate organizational divergence, little is understood about the individual and relational factors shaping their choice of dissent practices. To address this gap, we employed an exploratory sequential mixed-methods design, relying on 82 qualitative interviews and a pre-registered survey-experiment (N=333). Our findings show that individual characteristics and relational factors, such as support from professional associations' networks (PAs), influence bureaucrats' dissent attitudes towards their political superiors when faced with disagreements from their higher-ups. When supported by PAs, guerrilla government-oriented bureaucrats are more likely to adopt secret attitudes, while legalist and policy entrepreneurship-oriented bureaucrats are more likely to adopt both formal and secret dissent attitudes. Additionally, policy entrepreneurs are also more inclined towards innovative dissent attitudes, in similar situations. This study contributes novel evidence to the public administration literature by showing the individual and relational drivers of bureaucratic attitudes in navigating divergence within challenging organizational environments.

Keywords: politician-bureaucrat relations; divergence; bureaucracy; behavioral public administration; professional networks

Introduction

Policy divergence between bureaucrats and politicians is expected to occur in public agencies (Gofen 2014; Hollibaugh, Miles, and Newswander 2020; Cox 2024). However, when politicians' agenda strongly diverges from the agencies' mission, bureaucrats face a dilemma. They must decide whether to prioritize loyalty to their political leadership or their agencies' mission (Schuster et al. 2022; Lotta et al. 2023; Yesilkagit et al. 2024). In instances where organizations become politicized – that is, cases where politicians appoint external individuals loyal to them to managerial positions, even if they lack technical expertise pertinent to the agency's work (Ennsler-Jedenastik 2016; Moynihan 2021) - bureaucrats may encounter further challenges and risks, including abusive supervision and personal threats from these politically appointed leaders (Story, Lotta, and Tavares 2023).

Scholars suggest that bureaucrats can respond to these challenges by adopting guerrilla government practices (O'Leary 2017) such as sabotage (Brehm and Gates 1997), where they secretly work against the directives of their superiors within the organization. Other studies highlight that bureaucrats utilize their discretion and organizational autonomy to pursue the agencies' institutional goals and innovate (Carpenter 2001). Conversely, bureaucrats may also demonstrate loyalty to their political superiors and comply with their directives (Brehm and Gates 1997), even if such actions contradict their agencies' mission and guidelines (Peters and Pierre 2019).

In this study, we define bureaucrats' dissent or divergent behavior as the practices or attitudes of bureaucrats that oppose the wishes of their superiors (Gofen 2014; O'Leary 2017; Schuster et al. 2022; Cox 2024), while remaining aligned with the fulfillment of their agencies' mission (Wright 2007; Perry, Hondeghem, and Wise 2010; Wright and Pandey 2011). We use the terms 'divergent' and 'dissent' interchangeably throughout the paper, considering them as synonyms. Although scholarship has assessed bureaucrats' committed behavior towards the fulfillment of their agencies' mission (Perry, Hondeghem, and Wise, 2010; Meyer-Sahling et al. 2019; Fleming 2020; Bashir et al. 2023; Mendez and Avellaneda 2023), few studies have systematically assessed the determinants of bureaucrats' dissent behavior (Hollibaugh, Miles, and Newswander 2020). Particularly, the relational and the individual-level traits that drive bureaucrats towards varying types of dissent strategies remain understudied. This study aims to bridge this gap by addressing the research question: *Do relational and individual factors shape bureaucrats' dissent behavior?*

To investigate this question, our study draws upon an exploratory sequential mixed-methods design (Hanson et al. 2005; Hendren, Luo, and Pandey 2018; Richwine et al. 2022).

We study the case of Brazilian civil servants working at environmental and indigenous federal agencies. During the former president Jair Bolsonaro's government, these agencies were politicized, and bureaucrats suffered abusive supervision from military members occupying leadership positions in these organizations (Story, Lotta, and Tavares 2023; (Barros, Diniz, and Lotta 2023). As a first phase of the research, we conducted 82 semi structured qualitative exploratory interviews to understand how bureaucrats were dealing with the divergence from their higher-ups in contexts characterized by a misalignment between their agencies' mission and their political superiors' will. In a second stage, after having analyzed the interviews and identified patterns, we conducted a pre-registered survey experiment within the same agencies. We tested whether relational support from professional associations would drive bureaucrats' attitudes towards varying types of dissent attitudes. We assess heterogeneous treatment effects of professional associations' support based on three different individual profiles of bureaucrats: (i) guerrilla-government profiles, (ii) policy entrepreneurship profiles, and (iii) legalist profiles.

Our findings suggest that bureaucrats' individual characteristics influence their dissent reactions to the same relational support, such as support from professional associations' (PAs) networks. When receiving support from PAs, guerrilla government-oriented bureaucrats are more likely to adopt only secret dissent attitudes. In contrast, legalist and policy entrepreneurship-oriented bureaucrats are more likely to engage in both formal and secret dissent practices in such situations. Additionally, policy entrepreneurship profiles are also more prone to engage in innovative dissent practices.

This study contributes novel evidence to the public administration literature (Gofen 2014; Hollibaugh, Miles, and Newswander 2020; Yesilkagit et al. 2024) by systematically assessing individual and relational factors that influence the strategies adopted by bureaucrats to navigate divergence, particularly in challenging organizational environments characterized by a misalignment between political leadership and the agencies' mission. We identify the support of professional associations, as well as individuals' characteristics, as important predictors of bureaucrats' behavior in public administration when managing divergence.

The article is organized as follows: the next section reviews the literature on organizational divergence and studies on the influence of professional associations and individuals' characteristics on bureaucrats' attitudes. The following section (section 2) presents the study design and the empirical context. Section 3 describes the research methods and the findings from the exploratory qualitative phase of the research. Section 4 presents the survey experiment methods and its findings, followed by a discussion (fifth section) and conclusion.

2.1 Theoretical framework

2.1.1 Divergence in Public Administration

Bureaucrats can manifest attitudes and practices that deviate from their superiors' wishes in various ways (Gofen 2014; Hollibaugh, Miles, and Newswander 2020; Schuster et al. 2022;). They may shirk responsibilities or resort to sabotage practices (O'Leary 2017; Brehm and Gates 1997); Moreover, bureaucrats can express dissent either explicitly and formally by channeling it upwards (Hirschman 1972; Lotta et al. 2023) or through secret and informal means (Hollibaugh, Miles, and Newswander 2020; Krone 1992; Hysing and Olsson 2018). They may also leverage instances of divergence to advocate for policy solutions and stimulate policy innovation processes (Gofen, Meza, and Moreno-Jaimes 2024; Lavee and Cohen 2019).

The notion of dissent behavior is linked to the concept of 'guerrilla government', where public servants act against the wishes of their superiors, either explicitly or implicitly, aiming to advance what they perceive as beneficial for their organizations (O'Leary 2017). Divergence practices can occur through open (Hirschman 1972; Kassing 2002) or secret means (Krone 1992; O'Leary 2017), each carrying distinct implications for the organization. While bureaucrats' dissent may involve covert actions such as whistleblowing and sabotage practices (O'Leary 2017), it can also manifest openly, such as through employee resistance (Cooper 2018), voicing concerns (Schuster et al. 2022), attempting to persuade or convince political principals (Schuster et al. 2022), or proposing policy alternatives to address gaps (Lavee and Cohen 2019; Gofen, Meza, and Moreno-Jaimes 2024; Cox 2024).

Transparent and collective dissent practices by bureaucrats, driven by pro-social intentions, can instigate processes of policy change (Gofen 2014). Additionally, such practices hold the potential to mitigate the adverse impacts of inadequate policies and ineffective leadership, thereby fostering institutional learning (Cox, 2024). Research focusing on institutional activism and policy entrepreneurship among bureaucrats suggests that networked bureaucrats can influence policy outcomes (Olsson and Hysing 2012; Abers 2019; Vilaça 2020) and lead to policy change processes (Cohen 2021b).

Although bureaucratic dissent behavior is relevant for policy change (Gofen 2014) and institutional learning (Cox 2024), a gap exists in understanding the determinants of bureaucrats' dissent attitudes within organizations, particularly in politicized contexts, where politicians place external individuals aligned with them for managerial positions. The factors systematically driving bureaucrats to adopt specific dissent strategies over others, depending on their relational patterns and individual characteristics, remain underexplored in the literature.

In the following topics (2.1.2 and 2.1.3), we briefly discuss how these two factors may influence bureaucrats' divergence in public organizations.

2.1.2 Individual characteristics' influence on dissent behavior

Individuals' characteristics, such as personality traits (L. Tummers, Steijn, and Bekkers 2012), values and beliefs (Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2000; Meyer-Sahling, Mikkelsen, and Schuster 2019), motivations (Chen, Berman, and Wang 2017), individuals' commitment to the agency's mission and citizens' needs (Mostafa, Gould-Williams, and Bottomley 2015; Molines et al. 2022; Vigoda-Gadot and Beerli 2012; de Geus et al. 2020), and previous experiences (Gassner and Gofen 2018) may influence bureaucrats' behavior.

Recent studies offer insights into how individual characteristics may influence bureaucratic policy practices and behavior. For instance, individuals with higher levels of Public Service Motivation (PSM) tend to demonstrate attitudes such as voicing concerns and engaging in sabotage when they perceive government leaders as illegitimate or lacking commitment to the public interest (Schuster et al. 2022). Additionally, bureaucrats' personality traits play a role in shaping their willingness to implement policies: personality traits associated with 'rule compliance' are positively correlated with bureaucrats' willingness to implement policy, while 'rebelliousness' personality traits suggest a negative relationship (Tummers et al. 2012). Concerning bureaucrats' perceptions of their organizational environment, research on prosocial rule-breaking (PSRB) behavior demonstrates that perceptions of coworkers, policy outcomes for citizens, and organizational culture regarding rule consistency are positively linked to dissent behavior through PSRB practices (Fleming 2020; Potipiroon 2022). However, these studies do not provide causal evidence regarding the individual-level determinants of dissent behavior.

Recent work on bureaucratic dissent behavior provide experimental evidence on how variations in "individual-level behavior can provide microfoundations for behavior-oriented theories of public administration" (Hollibaugh, Miles, and Newswander 2020, p. 2). The authors demonstrate that employees' personal views on policy content and ethical frameworks influence their willingness to disobey their superiors, engaging in guerrilla activities. However, this work does not assess the various strategies of dissent behavior, such as policy entrepreneurship practices as a means to channel dissent and policy feedback (Cox 2024).

Scholarship has also analyzed civil servants' willingness to implement policies under illiberal politicians' governments, and has found that bureaucracies are more likely to shirk or sabotage politicians if they consider policies unacceptable (Guedes-Neto and Guy Peters 2021; Guedes-Neto, 2022). However, individual characteristics such as personality traits are not

assessed in the analysis, despite these factors remaining important drivers of individuals' attitudes (Tummers, Steijn, and Bekkers 2012; Schuster et al. 2022).

2.1.3 Relational factors and professional associations' influence on dissent behavior

Bureaucrats' involvement in networks influences their access to information and resources, shaping their behavior (Teodoro 2010; Berman et al. 2017). These relational factors are crucial for bureaucrats to acquire greater knowledge and opportunities to engage in dissent practices and influence policy arenas (Abers 2019; Hysing and Olsson 2018; Cohen 2021). Bureaucrats' connections with various external actors and diverse stakeholder networks are positively correlated with their willingness to engage in policy entrepreneurship practices (Teodoro 2011; Silveira, Cohen, and Lotta 2024) and exert upward influence (Chen, Berman, and Wang 2017). These connections also positively correlate with bureaucrats' autonomy to influence policy arenas and participate in policy innovation processes (Carpenter 2001).

Among various external connections, membership in professional associations (PAs) plays a significant role in influencing bureaucrats' commitment to public values and behavior (Gazley 2014; Peters 2001). Additionally, it promotes institutional rules and norms of conduct, serving as benchmarks for professional work and establishing behavioral expectations within organizations (DiMaggio and Powell 1983; Gazley 2014). PAs also shape behavior by providing ethical references and molding employees' social values through shared understandings within a given professional community (Bowman 1990; Gazley 2014; Gofen et al. 2021; Anteby, Chan, and DiBenigno 2016).

In politicized environments, research suggests that belonging to professional associations may enable bureaucrats to express dissent views (Story, Lotta, and Tavares 2023; Lotta, et al. 2023). Additionally, professional associations may strengthen networks of epistemic communities, which would protect "bureaucratic expertise from political attacks" (Koga et al. 2023, p. 12). Although such relationships are suggested by these studies, these hypotheses have not been directly investigated and tested. Further research is needed to assess the causal relationship between professional associations' support and bureaucrats' dissent behavior. To our knowledge, no study has yet investigated how bureaucrats with varying individual characteristics handle divergence in organizations once they rely on professional associations' support. This study aims to fill this gap by investigating whether support from professional associations and bureaucrats' individual characteristics drive dissent attitudes, particularly in politicized contexts where the will of political superiors may not align with the institutional mission of public agencies.

2.2 Study design

This study employs an exploratory sequential mixed methods design (Hanson et al. 2005; Hendren, Luo, and Pandey 2018; Richwine et al. 2022). Initially, we conducted exploratory qualitative interviews to identify how professional associations help bureaucrats in navigating politicized organizations and managing divergence. In addition, the interviews facilitated our recognition of the various ways bureaucrats handle divergence. The qualitative phase enabled us to identify preliminary patterns which we subsequently tested in the quantitative phase.

In the second phase of the research, we conducted a pre-registered survey experiment⁴, using scenarios (vignettes) derived from the interviews. In the survey experiment, we assessed bureaucrats' dissent practices in politicized environments upon receiving support from professional associations. The experimental design was pre-registered before distributing the survey. However, the three hypotheses outlined in this article for the quantitative analysis of the survey data were not included in the pre-registration. They were formulated after submitting the pre-analysis plan protocol. This was because we could only identify the hypotheses to be tested after completing the consolidated qualitative analysis of the interviews, which occurred after pre-registering the experiment (as shown in *Figure 3*, with the research steps).

The mixed-method approach facilitated the identification of empirical patterns in the qualitative phase, which was followed by testing these patterns through the randomization of vignettes (scenarios) in the survey experiment, as a second phase. In the methodological sections, we describe how we collected and analyzed the data for each phase of the study: Section 2.3.1 presents the methodological considerations for the qualitative interviews, and Section 2.4.1 addresses the methodological procedures for the survey experiment. Figure 3 below summarizes the research phases and their respective procedures and dates. We describe each procedure in the respective methodological sections.

⁴ Pre-registration ID at Egap/OSF platform 20221211AA.

Figure 3 - Phases of the mixed-methods research design and research timeline

Research phase	Steps and procedures	Dates / period
Qualitative Data Collection	Semi-structured in-depth interviews with bureaucrats working at environmental and indigenous agencies (N = 82)	- From April 2022 to December 2022
	∨	
Qualitative Data Analysis	Thematic analysis: Identification of (macro and micro codes) regarding: - Professional Associations forms of support - bureaucrats' approaches of action when dealing with divergence	- Preliminary qualitative analysis: from June 2022 to October 2022 - Iterative rounds of codification and consolidated analysis: from May 2023 to March 2024
	∨	
Integration of Qualitative and Quantitative approaches	Definition of the variables to be tested in the survey experiment, based on the first qualitative exploratory phase of the study (preliminary analysis)	- November 2022
	∨	
Survey experiment design	Survey-experiment design, survey pretesting and survey pre-registering	- Survey design: November 2022 - Pre-testing and adjustments in the survey design: From December 2, 2022 to December 10, 2022 - OSF acceptance of the survey pre-registration: December 13, 2022
	∨	
Quantitative Data Collection	Survey experiment distribution (N=609, complete answers for this study's analysis: N=333)	- Survey distribution: From December 14, 2022 to January 26, 2023
	∨	
Quantitative Data Analysis	Heterogeneous treatment effect analysis, based on the interaction of: (i) professional associations' support (treatment) and (ii) bureaucrats' profiles	- Preliminary quantitative analysis: From February 2023 to September 2023 - Revision of the analysis and model specification: March 2024
	∨	
Integration	Discussion on the implications of our findings considering the mixed-methods approach	- April 2024

Source: elaborated by the author, based on the study's phases and steps.

2.2.1 Context and case selection

For this study, we conducted interviews and a survey experiment with bureaucrats working at Brazilian federal environmental and indigenous organizations during Jair Bolsonaro's government, as these agencies were among the most politicized during this period (Abraji 2020; Barros, Diniz, and Lotta 2023; Story, Lotta, and Tavares 2023). Bureaucrats working in these agencies suffered from processes of abusive supervision linked to the extremely high levels of politicization (Story, Lotta, and Tavares 2023; Koga et al. 2023). Several bureaucrats suffered from threats by political appointees, such as (undue) administrative lawsuits against bureaucrats, personal threats to bureaucrats' safety and lives, moral harassment, and various other types of abusive supervision (Silva 2022; Story, Lotta, and Tavares 2023; Bersch and Lotta 2024). For these reasons, we consider the environmental and indigenous organizations as an extreme case (Gerring 2008) for understanding bureaucrats' attitudes in politicized contexts.

Environmental and indigenous agencies also underwent processes of dismantling by the president and his political appointees (Silva 2022; Milhorange 2022; Peci 2021; Story et al. 2023). These actions include budget cuts, restructuring of organizations by dismantling their original attributions, undermining participatory institutions, dismantling norms, guidelines, and administrative procedures related to the agencies' legal framework, and policy dismantling (Milhorange 2022; Peci 2021; Lotta et al. 2023). Table 6 summarizes the actions of political leaders aimed at threatening bureaucrats and undermining organizations.

Table 6 – Politicians' attacks on bureaucrats and agencies (environmental and indigenous sector)

Attempts of political leaders to threat bureaucrats	Attempts of political leaders to undermine the organizations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undue administrative proceedings against bureaucrats (PADs) • Abusive supervision: moral harassment, mistreatment, political persecution by political appointees • Personal threats to bureaucrats (their lives and security) • Climate of fear and personal persecution within agencies • Forced removal of bureaucrats from their jobs to: other functions, or other units, or forced dismissal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budgetary restrictions, drastic budget cuts and breakdown of with international partners (historical allies in the socio-environmental agenda) • Dismantling of the organizational structure and reconfiguration of its attributions • Institutional dismantling: withdrawal of environmental regulations, normative guidelines and administrative procedures (weakening of the processes for issuing environmental fines, environmental oversight and deforestation prevention) • Policy dismantling processes • Dismantling of participatory institutions (committees formed by civil servants, organized civil society, and public agencies) • Reduction of organizational capacities to deliver public services (serving indigenous lands and sustainable use units, field work, management or environmental conservation units and indigenous lands)

Source: Information about policy dismantling processes and attacks to bureaucrats on environmental and indigenous domain, during Bolsonaro Government (Ascema Nacional 2020; Observatório do Clima 2021; Imaflora and ISA 2021; Barbosa, Alves, and Grelle 2021; Mantovanelli et al. 2021; Vianna 2021; INA and Inesc 2022; Bonelli 2022; Silva 2022; Milhorange 2022; Barros, Diniz, and Lotta 2023; Koga et al. 2023; Bersch and Lotta 2024; Story, Lotta, and Tavares 2023; Lotta et al. 2023; Queiroz-Stein, Seifert Jr, and Luiz 2023; Pereira et al. 2024)

It is also known from previous studies that professional associations engage in practices aimed at protecting bureaucrats and their organizations by denouncing politicians' attacks on these agencies (Lotta et al. 2023; Bersch and Lotta 2024; Koga et al. 2023). Professional associations are known for organizing collective actions aimed at protesting and providing various forms of support (legal, psychological and financial support) for bureaucrats experiencing harassment within the government (Lotta et al. 2023; Koga et al. 2023). Although such studies do not focus on the role played by professional associations in countering political leaders' attacks, they provide descriptive and initial information on the ways professional associations serve as platforms for bureaucrats' dissent attitudes.

The federal bureaucrats participating in the research work were the following organizations: the Ministry of Environment (MMA), with its agencies - the "Instituto Chico Mendes de Conservação da Biodiversidade" (ICMBIO) and the "Instituto Brasileiro do Meio Ambiente e dos Recursos Naturais Renováveis" (IBAMA) in the environmental sector; the "Fundação Nacional dos Povos Indígenas" (FUNAI) in the indigenous sector. The environmental organizations (MMA, ICMBio, IBAMA) are responsible for developing environmental policies and regulations, ensuring environmental protection and sustainable use of natural resources, surveilling environmental conservation units, and promoting socioenvironmental sustainable development. The indigenist organization (FUNAI) is responsible for protecting and promoting the rights of indigenous peoples. Together, these agencies have 6,717 civil servants and 727 units throughout the Brazilian territory. Each organization (IBAMA, ICMBio, FUNAI) has a central office in Brasilia, as well as regional and local units spread throughout the country.

The professional associations related to these organizations consist of Ascema Nacional and ASIBAMAs in the environmental sector, and INA and Ansef in the indigenous sector. The ASIBAMAs are regional associations created at the state level by environmental bureaucrats, pertaining to regional or local units of ICMBio and IBAMA. Ascema Nacional congregates, at the national level, the regional ASIBAMAs. In the indigenous policy sector, both associations INA and Ansef operate at the national and subnational levels. These professional associations were created with the aim of collectively representing bureaucrats in various policy arenas, as a means to participate not only in discussions and decisions affecting their careers as federal civil servants but also in policy-making processes. Membership in these associations is optional, although their actions may affect both members and non-members, as illustrated by the cases of collective bargaining for improved working conditions across the entire career spectrum, as well as lobbying efforts related to environmental or indigenous policies.

2.3 Qualitative study: semi-structured interviews

2.3.1 Method

Interview procedure

We chose to conduct semi-structured interviews to understand bureaucrats' experiences in navigating divergence and addressing challenges related to fulfilling their agencies' institutional mission. Regarding the sampling strategy for the interviews, first, we sought out professional associations from environmental and indigenous public agencies (such as Ascema, ASIBAMAs, INA, and Ansef). We asked them for references about bureaucrats who could participate in the research as interviewees. Given that our research focuses on bureaucrats' dissent behavior aimed at fulfilling their agencies' institutional mission, we sought indications of bureaucrats who were strongly committed to their agencies' institutional missions. We also aimed to interview bureaucrats working in different units across Brazil's five regions (North, Northeast, Southeast, South, and Central-West) to explore varying organizational contexts. After gaining access to the initial bureaucrats recommended by the professional associations, we continued to request more referrals using the snowball sampling method, given the sensitivity of the topics addressed in this research (Patton 2015).

The interviews were conducted via Zoom meetings between April 2022 and December 2023, during the Bolsonaro government. Prior to the interviews, the participants were informed about the ethics committee approval of the study (Approval No. 088/2022 dated March 31, 2022), confidentiality, their anonymous participation in the research, and their consent to participate in the study.

We have interviewed 82 bureaucrats. Of these, 39 (or 48% of our interview sample) work at FUNAI in the indigenous domain and 43 (52%) in the environmental domain: 17 (21%) at IBAMA, 22 (27%) at ICMBIO, 4 (5%) at the Ministry of the Environment). The interviewees have, on average, 15 years of working experience in environmental/indigenous organizations (the least experienced has 6 years of work and the most experienced has 41), and are 42 years old (the minimum age being 31 and the maximum 65). Of the 82 interviewees, 48% are women, 54% work in local or regional decentralized units in the different regions of Brazil.

The interview guide consisted of the following groups of questions: (1) Bureaucrats' trajectory before and after entering the organization, including their social values, worldviews, and perceptions toward the agency's institutional mission; (2) Bureaucrats' embeddedness within the organizational context, their policy practices, challenges, and possibilities for working and dealing with organizational divergence in the current political context (under Bolsonaro's administration), as well as their perceptions of "failure" and "success" in their work

practices; (3) Bureaucrats' policy practices over time, considering previous government administrations, as well as other governments' influence on bureaucrats' ability to fulfill their agencies' institutional mission; (4) Bureaucrats' connections with professional associations and external actors, as well as their perceptions of the agency's connections and partnerships with external stakeholders (other governmental agencies, social movements, non-governmental organizations, citizens, the Legislative and Judiciary branches, control bodies, and international organizations). In Appendix 3 we provide the interview guide. The interviews lasted between two and five hours (most of the conversations lasted between 2h30 and 3 hours) and were conducted by the author, who transcribed the data.

Interview analysis

For data analysis, we employed thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006, 2022) to generate hypotheses. Initially, we familiarized ourselves with the data by reading all interview transcripts. Subsequently, we developed initial codes concerning the support from professional associations and bureaucrats' approaches of action when faced with divergence from political leadership. Within these macro-codes, we iteratively created codes for the various bureaucrats' dissent practices and the support mechanisms provided by professional associations. Finally, we identified patterns within our data and organized our findings into the main analytical categories established in this final step, as presented in the following section.

Particularly, regarding the identification of bureaucrats' approaches of actions, we grouped together bureaucrats' dissent practices that shared similar aspects within the same code. These aspects characterized whether the practices were by secret or open means, if they were aimed at influencing policy content (policy change or policy maintenance), and if they relied on formal and technical knowledge or informal resources. Once we obtained a picture of the various dissent practices and their respective characteristics, we merged these practices into broader categories of bureaucrats' approaches of action.. Appendix 4 presents the codes generated during each round of the coding process.

2.3.2 Results from the interviews

2.3.2.1 Professional Associations as platforms for channeling dissent attitudes

The interviewees stated that the support offered by professional associations (PAs) was crucial in helping them navigate disagreements with their superiors. This support encompasses a range of approaches, from individual assistance to collective action aimed at influencing policymaking in various arenas. Based on the various responses, we have identified five main ways in which professional associations assist bureaucrats in handling divergence from their higher-ups: (i) building coalitions and articulating support from external actors; (ii) fostering a

sense of shared understanding and belonging among peers; (iii) providing individual support; (iv) organizing collective actions of support and resistance; (v) advocating for policy solutions. Below, we detail each of them, with examples from the interviews.

(i) Building coalitions and articulating support from external actors: PAs served as platforms enabling bureaucrats to connect with various state and social actors across different policy arenas. These connections encompassed networks within the legislative and executive branches at various levels of government, the judiciary, the Public Prosecutor's Office, the media, social movements, NGOs, international organizations, and other public agencies. PAs facilitated bureaucrats in navigating disagreements with their superiors by supporting whistleblowing actions or fostering collective actions organized by a broad coalition. In some instances, bureaucrats, with the support of PAs, strategically leaked information to the Public Prosecutor's Office, prompting higher echelons of the government to address issues raised by bureaucrats through PAs. In other cases, PAs successfully built broad coalitions among NGOs, social movements, and parliamentary bodies to prevent setbacks in environmental or indigenous policy agendas.

Ascema Nacional has been engaging in strong articulation in Congress, in international organizations. (...) For example, the agenda of the Pampa biome. It's a biome that is highly threatened (...) We know that the political appointees at IBAMA aren't interested and are allied with soy producers. We have built a coalition together with several other organizations, to build a guideline for protecting this biome, and we are delivering it to all the executive and legislative candidates [in the 2023 elections]. (...) We have 21 organizations in this coalition. And we have a very plural universe: traditional peoples of the Pampa, people from environmental and socio-environmental protection NGOs with a 51-year history of struggle, researchers and state and private universities. It became a broad coalition, including cross-cutting themes that have to do with the biome. (...) It was the great asset we achieved. The network is working well, we have regular meetings. (ID 57 IBAMA)

INA's relationship with the indigenous movement (APIB) is very symbiotic. (...) At INA we have this relationship with the indigenous [social] movement and NGO work. (ID 4 FUNAI)

(ii) Fostering a sense of shared understanding and belonging among members: PAs promote meetings, workshops, online discussions, training processes, and various types of collective activities that enable bureaucrats to better know each other, discuss and exchange ideas and practices related to both challenges and alternatives regarding their work. These activities also help them build and enact shared understandings of their agencies' mission as well as their professional roles. Such meetings also foster a sense of belonging to the organizations and trust among colleagues, with a focus on accomplishing their agencies' institutional mission. As bureaucrats are dispersed among units throughout the Brazilian territory, PAs serve as platforms providing bureaucrats with a professional network they can trust and rely on, as well as shared professional references and strategies to navigate challenges posed by political leaders and situations of abusive supervision.

“INA is a safeguard for you to do your work, (...) and to be able to deepen the debate on public policy, (...) it enriches the debate a lot. (...) I like it a lot, I learn a lot from my colleagues” (ID 74 - FUNAI).

I'm an INA member. (...) I think INA's assistance is fundamental, it strengthens us a lot. It gives us a sense of collective belonging, of resistance, of cohesion and of organizing our demands. This is fundamental. It's something that FUNAI, on its own, because of its capillary nature and decentralized characteristic [in the Brazilian territory], leaves its employees isolated [territorially]. INA is an important space for dialogue and exchange. And the creation of a context of trust. (ID 28 - FUNAI)

(iii) Providing individual support to their members: Interviewees also emphasized that PAs provide legal advice, psychological, and financial support to bureaucrats who have suffered abusive supervision from political leadership. Over time, PAs have developed expertise in protecting bureaucrats from personal threats and harassment by political appointees, political persecution, or undue administrative proceedings against bureaucrats. The legal, psychological, and financial assistance provided by the PAs provided bureaucrats with more conditions to accomplish their agencies mission, even when facing divergence and threats from their superiors:

For those who suffered institutional harassment, the association was a place of welcome and protection. We had colleagues who were fired, cases where not even a warning was warranted (...), colleagues who were moved from one place to another against their will. The association provided legal and even financial assistance. It was a place of welcome and protection.” (ID 48 - ICMBIO)

In this government [Bolsonaro], we've had a much higher rate of harassment, of PADs [disciplinary administrative proceedings]. There are a lot of cases of harassment (...) At the association, I've received civil servants who sometimes want to talk, get things off their chest, and people just want to be heard and talk, have psychological support. (...) Then there are guys who want to be heard in a more structured way and need legal support, for example, civil servants who have already been fired. And then the guy is going to spend 7 months in this fight. And the guy has to survive in this situation with his psychological condition shattered. They had our legal support and financial support too. (...) (ID 20 - IBAMA)

(iv) Organizing collective actions of support and resistance: When the level of divergence escalates and refers to broader collective processes, PAs often take the lead and serve as platforms for collectively and openly voicing dissent. This process frequently occurs when political leadership attempts to undermine policies and the organizational capacities that enable bureaucrats to fulfill their agencies' institutional mission. To address such situations, PAs engage in actions such as collectively instructing bureaucrats on dealing with workplace harassment, drafting public reports denouncing policy setbacks and threats from political leadership, whistleblowing information to the media and other external partners, organizing protests, strategically seeking support, and appealing to the justice system as well as allies in the Legislative. According to interviewees, PAs have a greater capacity to assume risks in

voicing dissent and shielding bureaucrats, as politicians cannot retaliate in the same manner as they would against individuals.

The association has taken on this role, telling us “don't expose yourselves”. We [the PA] will take over. They shielded us.” (ID 68 ICMBio)

“We had the campaign ‘FUNAI as a whole, not half’ [FUNAI Inteira e Não Pela Metade]; we articulated and attended the Legislature. For me, it was totally new to walk in the Congress and access parliamentarians. It was a new thing in that campaign. In FUNAI today, the INA is a space of resistance: it's about speaking out about what we can't say individually. (...) Acting in INA is the space of resistance. (ID 2 FUNAI)

ASIBAMA held a debate on moral harassment within IBAMA, and they talked about what harassment is, how to defend against it, and how to avoid it.” (ID 20 – IBAMA)

(v) Advocating for policy alternatives: PAs also assumed the role of facilitating and channeling discussions in the environmental or indigenous policy domain, involving both bureaucrats and external actors such as social movements, NGOs, and parliamentary representatives. During the Bolsonaro government, most participatory instances were discontinued, preventing bureaucrats from engaging in dialogue with social actors. Despite the formal participatory channels being blocked by politicians' actions, PAs remained as safe spaces for continuous dialogue between bureaucrats and social movements, NGOs, subnational governments, and various stakeholders in the environmental and indigenous policy sectors. By maintaining these connections, PAs served as platforms for bureaucrats to draw attention to policy issues and discuss policy alternatives.

“The environmental policy as a whole is always challenging. Through the association, we try to discuss policy agendas that are under attack, for example, solid waste policy: what we can publish, send a letter to the Ministry of the Environment, send a letter to society. We hold a meeting through the PA, identify the problems, and then we draft a letter to the agency's heads, or the minister himself, to the secretariats, (...) in an attempt to sensitize them, request a meeting, and attention.” (ID 36 MMA)

“You can deepen the debates with the indigenous social movement through INA. Everything revolves around the rights of indigenous peoples and the conservation of natural resources. Being able (...) to talk to the indigenous social movement greatly enriches the debate.” (ID 74 FUNAI)

2.3.2.2 Bureaucrats' approaches of action when dealing with divergence

We organized the interviewees' accounts of their dissent practices into three main types of approaches, based on bureaucrats' varying strategies for channeling dissent attitudes upwards in a politicized context. These groups encompass the following approaches of action: (i) policy entrepreneurship approach; (ii) guerrilla government approach; and (iii) legalist approach. In what follows, we describe the main characteristics of each one:

(i) Policy Entrepreneurship approach: this group involves practices aimed at influencing the policy-making processes, whether towards policy change, policy maintenance,

or even blocking politicians' decisions considered misaligned with the agency's institutional mission and harmful to society. We identified three salient aspects within the policy entrepreneurship practices: (a) bureaucrats have identified policy gaps, issues or necessities within the organizational contexts they were embedded in – which enabled them to navigate divergence from higher ups by offering suggestions to fill these gaps. In such organizational contexts, these bureaucrats were also able to (b) rely on certain opportunities, such as additional support from other governmental agencies or the existence of previous policy decisions adopted in past governments. Once engaged in policy-design practices, bureaucrats (c) articulate and mobilize support from peers and external actors to carry out their work. Such relational support was crucial for both executing their practices and shielding them from political superiors' threats. Considering all these aspects altogether, bureaucrats engaged in policy entrepreneurship practices managed to engage in dissent actions by filling policy gaps and networking support both inside and outside their agencies. 50% of the interviewees reported having engaged in some type of policy entrepreneurship-oriented approaches, aimed at influencing policy change, such as engaging in pilot projects, during the Bolsonaro administration.

According to Maria (fictitious name), one of the interviewed bureaucrats, "*crises always open up opportunities*" (ID 48), even when bureaucrats are dealing with political leaders who oppose their agencies' mission. Maria and her colleagues collectively managed to create a new fund with resources redirected from environmental compensation taxes, marking a significant innovation within the environmental sector. As the new government appointed outsiders lacking policy knowledge to leadership positions, Maria's group successfully garnered support at the Ministry level to implement this change while also avoiding conflicts with the government's upper echelon.

Historically, resources raised from environmental compensation taxes were exclusively allocated to a specific type of environmental conservation unit - the "Full Protection Environmental units," which have more restrictive environmental conservation rules. With the new institutional arrangement advocated and created by Maria's group, resources were allocated to a broader range of environmental conservation units, including the "Sustainable Use Environmental Units". This change benefited local communities engaged in sustainable management of natural resources, particularly those living close to these areas. Additionally, this innovative change enabled the allocation of resources across various regions of Brazil, contributing to a more equitable distribution of resources throughout the territory.

"I currently have no alignment with the upper echelon. I found it very difficult to accept the "fight" [the managerial position] in 2019, but I ended up accepting it. (...) In the first

moments, when no one [political appointees] understood anything, there was a movement in which I managed to influence the process of allocating resources. The categories of Conservation Unit (UC) that receive resources have always been the Full Protection UCs. And the Resex, which are geared towards traditional populations, (...) the compensation resources were never earmarked for these areas. (...) We managed to get resources earmarked for the Resex as well. After this achievement, there was a very good evaluation in the agency. (...) It was the work of several colleagues. It was an issue that we managed to put on the agenda and get approved by the Environmental Compensation Committee (...) This change implied a (...) democratization of the distribution of resources [across the Brazilian regions]. Because other UCs were demanding resources, especially the sustainable use UCs” (ID 48 - ICMBIO).

In another example of a policy entrepreneurship approach, bureaucrats from FUNAI designed guidelines for a new regulation. This was done in partnership with the National Council of Justice (Resolution No. 287, dated June 25th, 2019⁵), aiming to ensure the rights of the indigenous population in the criminal sphere of the Judiciary. Although the political leadership in FUNAI was explicitly opposed to the promotion of indigenous rights, a group of bureaucrats found an opportunity to advocate for and create this new regulation due to the favorable composition of ministers in the National Council of Justice. The bureaucrats approached the National Council of Justice (CNJ), whose ministers provided a platform for dialogue and deemed the Resolution a necessary solution for addressing this gap. In this new policy arena at the CNJ, bureaucrats were shielded from the influence and misaligned orientation of FUNAI's political leaders:

“We went out knocking on the doors of the justice system. Imagine an indigenous person who could barely speak Portuguese and didn't even have the right to a defense when he was indicted. We went to the CNJ and talked to see who could change this reality. The CNJ accepted our demand and asked us for a draft. The CNJ set up a working commission and in 6 months it was ready.” (ID 34 - FUNAI)

“Administrative cases were coming in on this subject. And we saw that nobody knew what to do: the judiciary, the police, civil servants who didn't know what to do. The Brazilian state didn't know what to do. The indigenous lacked the safeguards of due process and a full defense. We saw the problems and started to do things. And as we went along, ideas came up: we went to the DEPEN [National Penitentiary Department] and they suggested we go to the CNJ [National Justice Council]”. (ID 43 - FUNAI)

(ii) Guerrilla Government approach: This group involves bureaucrats' practices conducted without the knowledge of their political superiors (O'Leary 2017). These actions are aimed at fulfilling the institutional mission of their agencies, often in opposition to the will of political leadership. By adopting guerrilla government approaches, bureaucrats assume risks and engage in secret practices aligned with their agencies' mission but misaligned with their political superiors' will. Among these practices, we identified actions such as leaking strategic information to external allies (such as NGOs, the Public Prosecutor's Office, congress members, and the media), participating in lawsuits against political leadership, elaborating reports and

⁵ The Resolution N° 287 from June 25th, 2019 is available at <https://atos.cnj.jus.br/atos/detalhar/2959>

complaints of irregularities, encouraging local communities to protest against the government, holding clandestine meetings, and secretly establishing partnerships with external allies. 79% of the interviewees reported having engaged in some type of guerrilla government approach during the Bolsonaro administration, encompassing a varying range of practices conducted without the knowledge of their political superiors.

Small-scale actions, such as secretly drafting reports and technical notes, or adding "forbidden" activities to the organization's planning and budgeting, occurred at both collective and individual levels. According to one interviewee: "*there are documents that I've released here that I have omitted my name from*" (ID 56). Political leaders could informally target various subjects as forbidden or inadequate. Among these forbidden topics are subjects such as 'partnerships with non-governmental organizations,' 'participatory processes,' 'fieldwork travels to environmental conservation units or indigenous lands,' or 'evidence-based decision-making.' In the face of these prohibitions from political appointees, bureaucrats started to secretly do what they understood was aligned with their agencies' mission, although misaligned with their political superiors' will. To escape politicians' retaliations, bureaucrats avoided identifying themselves in the documents they produced, whenever possible. For these reasons, secret actions became one of the main strategies adopted by guerrilla government bureaucrats, willing to fulfill their agencies' goals:

"They suspended the payment of financial aid [to indigenous people]. And I found myself in a situation where the indigenous people wanted to manage the [name of a local species]. (...) If I talked to the indigenous environmental agents, they would even do the work without pay. But the work done by indigenous people on an unpaid basis is absurd, because it is work that promotes ecosystem services. (...) I wrote a technical justification (...) talking about the full daily rate, justifying the payment of the indigenous environmental daily rate. And I didn't sign my name on the technical information, I just put it on the document block for the military regional coordinator to sign."

Broader guerrilla government approaches of practices also occurred through collective processes, often facilitated and organized with the support of professional associations (PAs). In some cases, such practices began through secret means and eventually became public. In other instances, they remained secret throughout the entire process (at least to the political leaders of that government). An example of a broader dissent action that became public was the campaign by INA, the PA for the indigenous policy sector, titled "*FUNAI inteira e não pela metade*," meaning "FUNAI as a whole, not half." Organized by INA, bureaucrats advocated in various policy arenas against the Executive Order (Medida Provisória⁶ N° 870 from January 1st, 2019). The Executive Order aimed to divide and dismantle FUNAI's responsibilities among

⁶ The Executive Order (Medida Provisória) N° 870 from January 1st, 2019 is available at https://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/_ato2019-2022/2019/mpv/mpv870.htm

different Ministries. Recognizing the potential harm this would cause to the agency's capacity to implement its policies, bureaucrats through INA contacted and mobilized members in the Legislative, Judiciary, the media, NGOs, social movements, academia, and various stakeholders, advocating for the organization to remain in its original structure. Due to this broad coalition mobilization led by INA bureaucrats, this aspect of the Executive Order was reversed, safeguarding FUNAI's original responsibilities.

When the Executive Order 970 was passed, there was a huge dispersal of FUNAI's organizational attributions. On that January 1st, when it came through, I got involved in the INA. And I was very intensely involved in the campaign “FUNAI as a whole, and not half”. It was a tremendous victory. [The political leaders] managed to paralyze the entire indigenous land demarcation sector, but at least they didn't dismantle FUNAI (ID 2 - FUNAI).

Figure 4 – INA's campaign countering the Executive Order undermining FUNAI's attributions



Source: Colletion from “Combate – Racismo Ambiental” and “Mídia Ninja”⁷

Other examples of collective guerrilla government practices include secret lobbying in Congress aimed at countering bills that could undermine environmental policies or influence budgetary laws related to the allocation of resources for the next four years. Bureaucrats and PAs had personal connections with parliamentary advisors, enabling them to secretly advocate for changes in the budgetary law. This action mitigated the impact of the Executive on the dismantling of the agency's attributions, including budgetary limitations. The PAs also contracted consulting firms, which continuously monitored congressional proceedings, allowing bureaucrats to map and identify parliamentarians favorable to the environmental and indigenous cause.

Particularly in the environmental domain, the interviewees emphasized the importance of their secret partnership with the Public Prosecutor's Office, which made it possible to minimize setbacks in environmental policy or ensure compliance, even against the wishes of political leaders. Several bureaucrats were prevented by politicians from conducting fieldwork

⁷ Available at: <https://racismoambiental.net.br/2019/05/11/aprovada-em-comissao-volta-de-funai-e-demarcacoes-ao-mj-ainda-passara-por-duas-votacoes/> and <https://twitter.com/MidiaNINJA/status/1121485756772564995> accessed on April 4, 2024

for environmental monitoring. Additionally, politicians adopted procedural constraints that made it difficult for bureaucrats to issue environmental fines. To circumvent political oppression, bureaucrats gathered evidence of environmental crimes, such as geolocation data, photos, and technical descriptions, and secretly sent this material to the Public Prosecutor's Office. They formed secret partnerships with well-known and trusted Public Prosecutors, who then accessed this information and exerted pressure on the Executive to ensure alignment with the missions of environmental and indigenous agencies. This type of secret practice was very common in bureaucrats' daily lives, as it involved less risk of retaliation from politicians against bureaucrats, while allowing them to implement the agency's policies and guidelines:

"We have sought partnerships (...) in anonymity. The Federal Public Prosecutor's Office (MPF) is the main 'environmental body' at the moment (...) There is a relationship of trust with many prosecutors, who follow up and open investigations. There are prosecutors who have even tried to criminalize Salles [the Environment Minister]. He is a preferred actor: we often strategically release information [to the Public Prosecutor's Office]. (...) The MPF is our main interlocutor"

(iii) Legalist approach: In this approach, bureaucrats anchor their dissent practices on their technical expertise and their knowledge of the legal framework within the policy domain (Lotta et al. 2023). This can occur through various means, such as writing technical reports, providing advice on administrative processes, using legal content to justify policy advice in discussions with political superiors, and contributing to institutional memory in public administration through the dissemination of information. 90% of the interviewees reported having engaged in some type of approach relying on technical or legal knowledge, during the Bolsonaro administration.

We have identified three ways in which bureaucrats rely on technical expertise and normative knowledge. First, bureaucrats rely on technical and normative knowledge both to counteract policy setbacks pushed by politicians and to justify policy practices that do not align with their political superiors' will. Several interviewees reported that, in their departments within their agencies, they managed to block or downplay politicians' attempts to dismantle policies due to the legal and normative framework affecting organizational practices and procedures. In such cases, bureaucrats were able to strategically use this legal expertise as a way to counter their political superiors' will.

"My sector [at FUNAI] was able to resist because it had (...) this structure that ensured much greater survival than other units that fell very quickly. (...) The more organized areas at FUNAI resisted much more. We set ourselves up as good public servants, and not as activists. We read the regulations. We're doing our job. We're not deviating. When [political leaders] tried to exclude non-homologated indigenous lands [from FUNAI's right to service], there was an 'ant's job on our part to say: "Wait a minute, technically, this can't be sustained". From the impression that colleagues give me, our sector still manages to "have a few voices". But that's

because we always do things based on norms and policies. And our decisions are very much backed up by high court rulings". (ID 073 - FUNAI)

Similarly, bureaucrats highlighted the importance of legally justifying their practices and policy recommendations. By grounding their policy actions in normative guidelines, they safeguarded not only their careers as civil servants, fulfilling their institutional obligations, but also the institutional mission of their agencies. Interviewees noted that, during the Bolsonaro administration, bureaucrats felt an increased need to bolster their normative knowledge to ensure they had a stronger foundation of legitimacy for their dissent practices:

"One very important thing (...) especially in the Bolsonaro government was to be careful with words. Working in front of groups, meetings are recorded. (...) To talk about social participation, you have to be careful. I found myself needing to legally substantiate what I say. Or if I want to forward things: a project to be implemented in a particular unit. If it's something that's going to be dealt with at various levels: we find ourselves having to be careful with the words: "we're not going to use the term social justice anymore". (...) There is one thing that is very present, which is the question of legality. We point out to our colleagues that [social] participation is not an option. It is legal. The civil servant doesn't have the option of participating or not. It's their obligation. We need to have this legal basis. This is a great strategy. At a time when we are tempted to back down because of the fear generated by the Bolsonaro government, we must always remember that what we are doing is not wrong" (ID 10 - ICMBIO).

Second, bureaucrats also relied on their technical and legal expertise to ensure transparency and accountability in public administration. This approach helped them protect the institutional memory of their agencies by formally registering both the illegitimate demands of politicians and the administrative responses provided by bureaucrats to these demands:

"The political appointees don't formalize the demand through the SEI [electronic information system] and come up with absurd deadlines. It arrives on a Friday morning: they need the number of people and families from traditional populations living inside Conservation Units. (...) And all outside the SEI process. (...) If nobody complains, the guys continue to do this kind of thing. There is a formality in public service and things have a procedural rite to follow. (...) My boss practically forced me to use WhatsApp. I told him I didn't want WhatsApp, I wanted email, process. If I miss the deadline for a case, how am I going to justify it? (...) It was really bad. He was super aggressive. (...) We have our process system, SEI, which is a great institutional memory." (24 - ICMBIO)

According to another interviewee, informal agreements, sometimes present in public agencies and work meetings, leave room for illegitimate decisions. Therefore, the adoption of administrative procedures grounded in formal instruments, such as the governmental electronic system of information (SEI), has been an important strategy to ensure accountability and transparent administrative resistance:

"The [informal] 'gentleman's agreement' is the way organizations have always been managed. (...) The gentleman's agreement can work and is a mechanism that you activate in certain circumstances. But it's a short-term mechanism that can't survive in situations like the one we're experiencing now in the Bolsonaro government. One thing we talk about a lot: (...) There's a recent passage that is a transformation for public affairs, which is the issue of SEI, of digitalization. You don't tear up paper anymore. It's the transparency device." (ID - 73 FUNAI)

Third, technical and legal knowledge were also utilized as legitimate sources for bureaucrats to manage divergence. Since political superiors wield more power than bureaucracy, bureaucrats employed legal and technical expertise as a strategy to reduce power asymmetries in decision-making, particularly in politicized environments. Bureaucrats also reported using the legal framework in conversations with their superiors. In these contexts, normative and legal guidelines served as sources for dialogue and negotiation with political superiors:

As far as my performance is concerned, that [dissent voicing] depends a lot on each individual's profile. I try to keep a more technical approach and talk to whoever the hell is there, and maintain my technical position. (...) But there are people who close themselves off, and there are people who are thrown into another sector in absentia. (...) As I have a facility for making myself understood, for explaining, when a problem arises, I draw up an opinion and give it to the person. (ID 7 - FUNAI)

Interviewees stated that they assess the risks involved in using certain words and providing policy advice. Based on this risk assessment, considering potential retaliations from politicians towards bureaucrats, and considering the legal framework underlying policies, bureaucrats sought to convince or make their superiors aware of the policy issues they were dealing with. As these attempts were very risky for bureaucrats, in terms of politicians' potential retaliations to their dissent behavior, they strongly relied on laws and technical judgment to minimize the risks of politicians' reprisal:

"It's a climate of constant fear of being removed. I have colleagues who have been directly threatened, who have been threatened with being moved [from Brasilia] to the Javari Valley [a remote region in the Amazon, on the triple border between Brazil, Colombia and Peru]. Any technical note, we think about calmly, check with colleagues, assess the risks. You go to the boss and see what he thinks. Before writing anything, you think a thousand times. I only write what is in the legislation, what is backed up by public policy continuity. Nothing comes out of my imagination. I make a risk assessment and write it down. Sometimes the boss questions it, and you try to counter it. (...) It's censorship all the time". (ID 41 - FUNAI)

Table 7 provides a summary of the findings from this qualitative phase of the research, concerning the influence of professional associations (PAs) support and bureaucrats' approaches of dissent practices, when dealing with divergence from their higher-ups:

Table 7 – Summary of qualitative findings

Professional Associations (PAs) as platforms for channeling dissent attitudes:		
<i>Types of PAs' support:</i>	<i>Main characteristics:</i>	<i>Examples:</i>
(i) Building coalitions and articulating support from external actors	PAs enabled bureaucrats to network a coalition support in the defense of their agencies' institutional mission	PAs coalition building with: - congress members - subnational governments - justice system - media - social movements & NGOs - international organizations - bureaucrats and PAs from other agencies
(ii) Fostering a sense of shared understanding and belonging	PAs facilitated trust and connections among peers, enabling opportunities to meet, discuss about common challenges, shared understandings on policy practices and dissent behavior	PAs realization of: - meetings and workshops - online discussions - professional training processes
(iii) Providing individual support	PAs offered individual support to bureaucrats who were facing politicians' threats and oppressions	PAs promotion of support, such as: - legal assistance - psychological assistance - financial aid (in some cases)
(iv) Organizing collective actions of support and resistance	PAs organized collective actions to both voice dissent and work to protect bureaucrats	PAs resistance actions: - elaboration of public reports on politicians' harassment - leaking information to media and allies - organizing collective protests - voicing complaints to political leaders - engaging in collective lawsuits and mobilizing the system of justice
(v) Advocating for policy solutions	PAs served as an alternative platform to discuss about policy issues and advocate for policy alternatives (as bureaucrats were constrained by political appointees at their organizational environments)	PAs actions: - meetings about policy issues - meetings between bureaucrats from PAs, citizens, NGOs and social movements to discuss policy needs - advocacy and attempts to influence the policy-design in various policy venues
Bureaucrats' approaches of action when dealing with divergence:		
<i>Approaches of action:</i>	<i>Main characteristics:</i>	<i>Examples:</i>
(i) Policy Entrepreneurship approach: divergence channeled through practices of <i>influence in the policy-design</i> .	- Mainly collective practices - Identification of policy gaps or needs - Organizational opportunities - Articulation of internal & external support	- Creation of a new institutional arrangement that changed the budgetary allocation of funds from environmental fines - Creation of a new regulation (strengthening indigenous' rights in the criminal sphere) in partnership with the Judiciary (Resolution N° 287 in 2019)
(ii) Guerrilla government approach: divergence channeled through <i>secret</i> practices.	- Individual and collective practices - Adjustments on the levels of disclosure over time (ranging from secret to 'secret & public') - Articulation of internal & external support	- Secretly whistleblowing to the Public Prosecutors' Office & system of Justice - Engage in PAs campaigns
(iii) Legalist approach: divergence channeled through practices relying on <i>technical and legal knowledge</i> .	- Mainly individual practices - Normative & technical expertise as resources: (a) to channel divergence, (b) to keep divergence accountable, (c) to enable negotiations - Articulation of internal support	- Initiative to reverse politicians' prohibitions on FUNAI's work on (non-homologated) indigenous lands - Safeguarding (some of the) participatory processes and maintenance of certain participatory councils in environmental conservation units

Source: the author, based on the interviews (exploratory qualitative phase of the research)

2.4 Quantitative study: survey experiment

2.4.1 Method

The second phase of this research consists of the quantitative analysis, through a survey-vignette experiment, in which we randomized vignettes (Hainmueller, Hangartner, and Yamamoto 2015). After conducting the interviews and identifying the prevalent themes from the qualitative analysis - regarding the way bureaucrats deal with divergence and the various types of professional associations' support - we designed a vignette survey experiment for a broader sample (N = 609 / N for complete answers = 333) aiming to test the factors influencing bureaucratic attitudes towards dissent behavior.

Considering Mele and Belardinelli (2019) recommendations on mixed-methods research, as well as examples provided by previous studies (Story, Lotta, and Tavares 2023; Lotta, Tavares, and Story 2023) we provide in Table 8 the connections between the qualitative (first) phase of the study and the quantitative (second) phase of our work. By doing this correspondence between the emergent patterns from the interviews and the survey questions or vignette prompts used in the survey and derived from the interviews, we seek to ensure a clear connection between each study's phase. Regarding professional association support, to avoid cognitive burden on respondents with too much vignette information, we opted to narrow down the vignette experiment and focus only on PAs' individual and collective support, excluding the other two remaining types of PAs' support (i.e., 'shared understanding and belonging' and 'building coalitions').

Table 8 – Codes originating from the interviews analysis (qualitative phase) and corresponding items for the survey (quantitative phase)

(1) Qualitative phase		(2) Quantitative phase	
Code	Code definition / main characteristics	Variable(s) designed in survey to measure this concept	Survey experiment item
Professional Associations (PA) individual and collective support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PAs support to bureaucrats who were facing politicians' threats (legal, psychological, and financial assistance) • PAs support in facilitating collective voicing of dissent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PAs support aimed at protecting bureaucrats individually and collectively (vignette situation) 	<p>"You have relied on the support of the agency's professional associations, which have implemented actions ranging from broader ones - such as campaigns against moral harassment - to more specific ones offering legal advice to civil servants seeking support. You recently contacted one of the associations and realized that you can count on this support in your daily work if needed". (vignette design is presented in Figure 3)</p>
Policy entrepreneurship approach	Bureaucrats' behavior aiming at channeling divergence through practices of influence in the policy-design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual's previous engagement in innovative practices (policy pilot projects) 	<p>Consider your formal or informal practices at agency under Bolsonaro's government aimed at defending the agency's mission. How much do you agree with the sentences below? (from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree)</p> <p><i>"I have developed pilot projects or experimental initiatives".</i></p>
Guerrilla government approach	Bureaucrats' behavior aiming at channeling divergence through secret practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual's previous engagement in secret practices (sabotage) 	<p>Consider your formal or informal practices at agency under Bolsonaro's government aimed at defending the agency's mission. How much do you agree with the sentences below? (from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree)</p> <p><i>"I carried out actions "off the radar" (without the knowledge) of political superiors"</i></p>
Legalist approach	Bureaucrats' behavior aiming at channeling divergence through practices relying on technical and legal knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual's previous engagement in legal / formal practices (relying on technical and normative expertise) 	<p>Consider your formal or informal practices at agency under Bolsonaro's government aimed at defending the agency's mission. How much do you agree with the sentences below? (from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree)</p> <p><i>"I used my technical knowledge (about processes, technical notes, reports, laws, etc.)"</i></p>

We drew upon both the qualitative findings and existing literature on bureaucratic politics, politician-bureaucrat relations, and administrative divergence to formulate hypotheses for the second phase of our research. We expect that bureaucrats who previously leaned towards a specific approach of dissent action in their daily real-world practices will continue to prioritize the same approach when they receive further support from professional associations in the vignette scenario.

When confronted with dissent from their superiors, bureaucrats inclined towards guerrilla governance approaches (O'Leary 2017; Hollibaugh, Miles, and Newswander 2020; Schuster et al. 2022) will be more likely to adopt secret dissent attitudes when backed by professional associations (PAs). Conversely, bureaucrats aligned with the legalist approach - relying on normative and technical expertise (Koga et al. 2023; Lotta et al. 2023) - will be more inclined to adopt formal dissent attitudes when supported by PAs in similar situations. Furthermore, bureaucrats aligned with policy entrepreneurship approaches (Mintrom and Luetjens 2017; Cohen 2021; Petridou et al. 2023) will be more likely to engage in innovative dissent attitudes when receiving support from PAs. Thus, we expect that bureaucrats with

varying orientations toward approaches of actions will exhibit distinct responses to the same organizational support (PAs support), randomly assigned through the survey experiment:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): With the support of PAs, ‘**policy entrepreneurship-oriented**’ bureaucrats will be more likely to adopt **innovative** dissent attitudes to deal with organizational divergence.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): With the support of PAs, ‘**legalist-oriented**’ bureaucrats will be more likely to adopt **formal** dissent attitudes to deal with organizational divergence.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): With the support of PAs, ‘**guerrilla government-oriented**’ bureaucrats will be more likely to adopt **informal** dissent attitudes to deal with organizational divergence.

2.4.1.1 Sample and procedure

We distributed the survey link between December 2022 and January 2023 to environmental and indigenous bureaucrats working in Brazilian Federal Government agencies through the following three strategies: (i) We asked the participants from the first phase of the research (82 bureaucrats) to share the survey link within their working groups. These groups included WhatsApp groups with hundreds of bureaucrats from all over the country, as well as internal mailing lists with working group; (ii) we also shared the survey link through the professional association formal channels of communication with its members (social media and WhatsApp groups); (iii) additionally, we shared the survey link on our own personal social networks, and these posts were subsequently shared by other researchers in the field and by environmental and indigenous bureaucrats interested in supporting the research. As the survey addressed sensitive topics, we could not establish any formal partnership with the government to access formal channels of survey distribution. Due to these survey distribution strategies, we are unable to estimate the number of bureaucrats who received the survey link.

The survey respondents were informed prior to their participation would be voluntary, confidential, anonymous, and free of risks. We also provided them with the contacts of the researcher and the ethics committee, along with the ethics committee approval number. Out of the 609 surveys returned, only 333 fully completed the questions we use in this article. The survey experiment relies on a sample that reflects the characteristics and attributes of bureaucrats working at environmental agencies in Brazil in terms of average age, gender, and occupation (Story, Lotta, and Tavares 2023), as addressed in Table 10.

2.4.1.2 Vignette experiment design

The survey experiment was pre-registered on the EGAP/OSF Platform before conducting it. The pre-registered hypotheses are presented in another study (Chapter 1 of this

thesis), while this paper draws from the inductive qualitative analysis mentioned in the previous section, as outlined in Figure 5.

The survey was tailored for each of the four organizations within the environmental and indigenous policy domain: the Ministry of Environment (MMA), along with its associated agencies - the Instituto Chico Mendes de Conservação da Biodiversidade (ICMBIO) and the Instituto Brasileiro do Meio Ambiente e dos Recursos Naturais Renováveis (IBAMA) - within the environmental sector. For the indigenous sector, the Fundação Nacional do Índio (FUNAI) was included. The hypothetical scenario presented in the vignette considered each organization's attributions, and their respective contexts. Although each vignette depicted a specific scenario, the situations, challenges, contexts, and alternative responses shared common elements to ensure comprehensive data analysis (see Appendix 1 for the complete and detailed vignette content). All of the vignettes contained this common information: (a) a misalignment between the agency's institutional mission and the will of its political superiors, (b) a political superior known for making personal threats and initiating lawsuits against bureaucrats, and (c) a bureaucrat charged with a task coherent with the organization's institutional mission but conflicting with politicians' agendas.

Also in the vignette experiment, bureaucrats were randomly assigned to only one of four "vignettes": the control group (N=134), the group receiving the support from their manager (N=137), their colleagues (N=134), or their professional associations (N=136). In this paper, we will focus only on the control group and the group receiving the support of PAs as a protection to help the bureaucrat to deal with divergence. The complete survey design - with all treatments from peers and managers' support - is presented in Appendix 1.

After presenting the hypothetical scenario, survey respondents were given three dissenting reactions⁸. They were then prompted to envision themselves in the shoes of the depicted bureaucrat and rate their agreement with each dissenting attitude on a Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5):

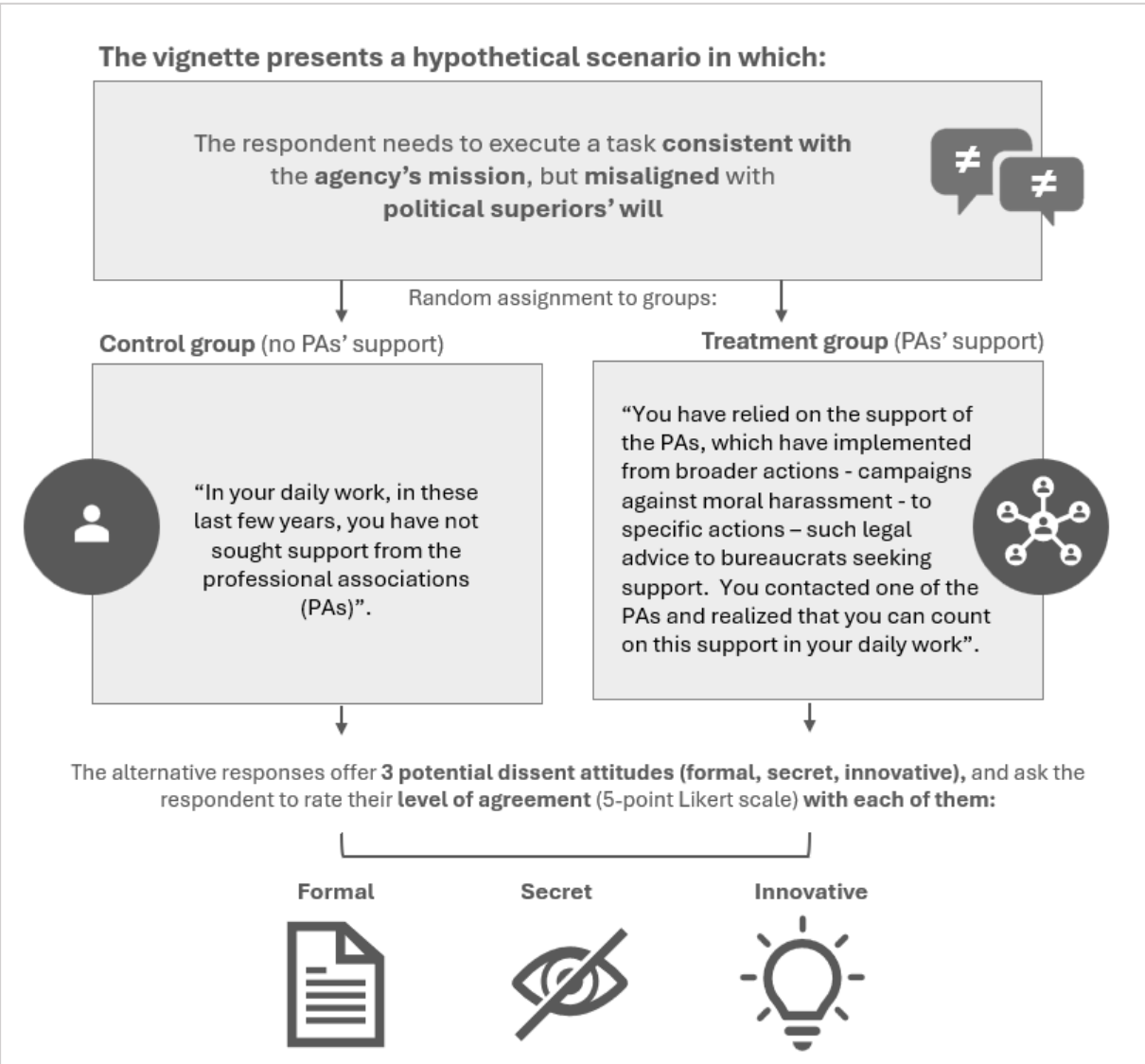
(i) Formal dissent attitude: The bureaucrat formally registers in the Electronic Governmental System (whose acronym is "SEP") the existence of a misalignment between the agency's mission and the political superiors' will.

(ii) Secret dissent attitude: The bureaucrat secretly encourages local communities to protest against undue governmental interference.

⁸ The vignette experiment comprises six dissent attitudes. However, in this paper, we will only focus on three attitudes, as we base the quantitative analysis on the qualitative (first) phase of this article. The complete survey experiment design, including all dissenting attitudes, is available in Appendix 3.

(iii) Innovative dissent attitude: The bureaucrat suggests innovative policy practices by proposing a project that allows for policy improvement and feedback based on suggestions and will of the local communities.

Figure 5 – Simplified outline of the vignette survey experiment (focus on professional associations – PAs)



Source: elaborated by the authors

To ensure the validity of the vignettes and survey questions, we conducted pretests with bureaucrats from the four government organizations involved in indigenous and environmental affairs. These bureaucrats had previously participated in the first phase of the research, which involved qualitative interviews. We then conducted additional face-to-face Zoom interviews to gather feedback on question interpretation from these bureaucrats. This iterative process allowed us to refine the vignettes and survey questions based on the feedback received, ensuring that they accurately measured the intended constructs. Additionally, we sought feedback from

scholars with expertise in bureaucracy studies, as well as environmental and indigenous policies.

2.4.1.3 Survey measures

Outcome measures, bureaucrats' dissent attitudes: As mentioned before, after the depicted scenario in the vignette, respondents were presented with three dissent reactions and asked to answer (from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree) to what extent they would adopt each one of the following reactions: (i) formal dissent attitude, (ii) secret dissent attitude, (iii), innovative dissent attitude.

Control variables and heterogeneous treatment effects: In the survey, we collected respondents' individual characteristics and their perceptions of their organizational context. We considered as control variables: bureaucrat's gender, age, level of education, experience (number of years working in the organization), professional association membership, managerial experience in the current or past administrations, type of organizational unit (binary variable indicating whether the working unit is located in Brazil's capital or decentralized locations), whether the bureaucrat's routine is similar to the task proposed in the vignette or not, as well as the bureaucrat's perception on the misalignment between the president's political agenda (Bolsonaro agenda) in relation to the agency's institutional mission.

Our analysis account for heterogeneous treatment effect, based on bureaucrats' profiles. We have created bureaucrats' profiles by principal component analysis (PCA), previously informed by our qualitative findings (first phase of the study). We have created the “**policy entrepreneur profile**” by PCA considering the following two variables: (a) bureaucrat's engagement in innovative practices (policy pilot projects) during Bolsonaro government - consider your formal or informal practices at agency under Bolsonaro's government aimed at defending the agency's mission. How much do you agree with the sentence “I have developed pilot projects or experimental initiatives” -; (b) bureaucrat's identification with the agency's institutional mission (“I identify with the agency's institutional mission. It's consistent with my worldview”).

We have created the “**guerrilla government profile**” by PCA considering the following three variables: (a) bureaucrat's engagement in secret practices during Bolsonaro government – “consider your formal or informal practices at agency under Bolsonaro's government aimed at defending the agency's mission. How much do you agree with the sentence ‘I carried out actions "off the radar" (without the knowledge) of political superiors’” -; (b) bureaucrat's identification with the agency's institutional mission (“I identify with the agency's institutional mission. It's consistent with my worldview”); (c) bureaucrat's disagreement with Bolsonaro

environmental / indigenous policy agenda (“I identify myself with the environmental/ indigenous policy agenda of the Bolsonaro government”).

We have created the “**legalist profile**” by PCA considering the following two variables: (a) bureaucrat’s engagement in practices relying on technical and normative expertise during Bolsonaro government as a way to channel dissent – “consider your formal or informal practices at agency under Bolsonaro’s government aimed at defending the agency’s mission. How much do you agree with the sentence ‘I used my technical knowledge (about processes, technical notes, reports, laws, etc.)’”; (b) bureaucrat’s identification with the agency’s institutional mission (“I identify with the agency's institutional mission. It's consistent with my worldview”); (c) bureaucrat’s perception on the misalignment between the president’s political agenda (Bolsonaro agenda) in relation to the agency’s institutional mission.

We estimate the following linear regression by OLS:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Manager_i + \beta_2 Peer_i + \beta_3 PAs_i + \beta_4 P_i + \sum \beta_d D_{id} * P_i + X_i' \Phi + \mu_{org} + \varepsilon_i$$

Where i is subscript for bureaucrats and Y_i indicates outcome variables – dissent attitudes (i.e., formal, secret, and innovative dissent reactions). $Manager$, $Peer$, PAs are dummy variables indicating the treatment assignment⁹; X is a vector of individual controls (gender, age, education, years of experience in the organization, PAs membership, managerial experience, type of organizational unit, routine similar to the task proposed in the vignette, individual’s perception of political superiors’ will misalignment with the agency mission). ‘ μ_{org} ’ indicates organization fixed effect (dummy variables for IBAMA, ICMBio, MMA or FUNAI). The term D corresponds a dummy of treatment variable interacted with P representing bureaucrats’ profiles, enabling us to assess heterogeneous treatment effects. We estimate and report standard errors robust to heteroscedasticity. Table 9 summarizes the survey variables (their meaning and respective values) used in the analysis.

⁹ Although we do not assess the treatment effects of peers and managers’ support, we control for these variables.

Table 9 - Description of variables

Variable	Description of the measure in the survey and values
Independent variable (treatment)	
Professional Associations' (PAs) support	Scenario portrayed in the vignette (randomized scenario) – “You have relied on the support of the PAs, which have implemented broader actions - such as campaigns against moral harassment - and specific actions, such as legal advice for bureaucrats seeking support. You contacted one of the PAs and realized that you can count on this support in your daily work.” (1=treatment group, 0=control group)
Variables interacted with the treatment	
Policy entrepreneur profile	Index created by principal component analysis (PCA), with the variables: - bureaucrat’s engagement in innovative practices (policy pilot projects) during Bolsonaro government: “I have developed pilot projects or experimental initiatives” (*) - bureaucrat’s identification with the agency’s mission: “I identify myself with the institutional mission of my agency. It is consistent with my worldview” (*)
Guerrilla government profile	Index created by principal component analysis (PCA), with the variables: - bureaucrat’s engagement in practices relying on technical and normative expertise during Bolsonaro government: “I have carried out actions "off the radar" (without the knowledge) of political superiors” (*) - bureaucrat’s identification with the agency’s mission: “I identify myself with the institutional mission of my agency. It is consistent with my worldview” (*) - Bureaucrat’s disagreement with Bolsonaro environmental / indigenous policy agenda: “I identify myself with the environmental/ indigenous policy agenda of the Bolsonaro government” (1=strongly agree to 5=strongly disagree)
Legalist profile	Index created by principal component analysis (PCA), with the variables: - bureaucrat’s engagement in secret practices during Bolsonaro government: “I have used my technical knowledge (processes, technical notes, reports, laws)” (*) - bureaucrat’s identification with the agency’s mission: “I identify myself with the institutional mission of my agency. It is consistent with my worldview” (*)
Dependent variables	
Formal dissent attitude (*)	Formally register in the Electronic Governmental System (SEI) the existence of a misalignment between the agency’s mission and the political superiors’ will.
Secret dissent attitude (*)	Secretly encourage local communities to protest against undue governmental interference.
Innovative dissent attitude (*)	Suggest innovative policy practices by proposing a project that allows for policy improvement and feedback based on suggestions and the will of the local communities.
Control variables	
Age	Bureaucrat’s age (number of years)
Gender	Bureaucrat’s gender (man = 1, woman = 0)
Education	Bureaucrat’s education. Last degree achieved: 1 = High school level, 2 = Undergraduate Degree, 3 = Postgraduate specialization, 4 = Postgraduate Master's or Doctorate)
Working experience	Bureaucrat’s working experience (number of years)
Professional association membership	Bureaucrat’s Professional association membership (1=member, 0= non-member)
Managerial experience	Bureaucrat’s managerial experience (1= has held a management position in the current or previous administrations, 0 = did not hold a management position in any administration)
Organizational unit	Type of organizational unit (1= central unit; 0= decentralized unit: local or regional unit)
Similar task	Similar task regarding the vignette proposed in the randomized scenarios (1= bureaucrat’s routine is similar to the task in the vignette, 0= bureaucrat’s routine is not similar)
Career status	Bureaucrat’s career status dummy (1=active civil servant, 0=other status)

Obs.: Variables indicated with (*) range from 5-point Likert scale, from strongly disagree to strongly agree

Balance tests are provided in Appendix 5, indicating the successful randomization in our survey experiment concerning observable variables. We find no significant differences between control and treatment groups regarding age, gender, education, work experience, PA membership, managerial experience, unit type, bureaucrat’s routine, bureaucrats’ profile and perception of political superiors’ will misalignment with the agency mission.

Table 10 presents descriptive statistics based on the complete survey responses for this study's analysis (N=333). The average age of the bureaucrats who responded to the survey is 44 years, with males comprising 55% of the sample. 77% of respondents hold at least a postgraduate qualification. On average, they have 13.5 years of work experience in their agencies, with 59% having held managerial roles at some point in their careers, either currently or in previous administrations. 71.5% work in local or regional units (decentralized units), located outside Brazil's capital.

Most respondents have high levels of alignment between the agency's institutional mission and respondents' personal values and worldviews: 97% of the sample answered "strongly agree" or "agree" with the statement "*I identify myself with the institutional mission of my agency. It is consistent with my worldviews*". Also, the majority disagree with the political agenda of the Executive's chief: 96% of the respondents disagree with Bolsonaro's indigenous or environmental policy agenda. Concerning bureaucrats' practices during the Bolsonaro government, 55% have engaged in guerrilla government-oriented practices ("*I have carried out actions "off the radar", without the knowledge of political superiors, to champion the indigenous /environmental agenda*"), 47% in policy entrepreneurship-oriented practices ("*I have developed pilot projects or experimental initiatives to champion the indigenous / environmental agenda*"), and 88% in legalist-oriented practices ("*I have relied on my technical expertise on administrative processes, technical advice, reports, and laws/legal framework to champion the indigenous / environmental agenda*").

Table 10 – Descriptive statistics for the variables

Variable	Mean	Std. dev.	Min	Max
Bureaucrat's age (years)	44	9.93	21	74
Bureaucrat's gender (man = 1)	0.55	0.49	0	1
Bureaucrat's education (levels ranging from 1 to 4)	3.26	0.85	1	4
Bureaucrat's working experience (years)	13.55	8.58	0	40
Bureaucrat's PA membership (1=member of a PA)	0.67	0.46	0	1
Bureaucrat's managerial experience (1= has held a management position in the current or previous administrations)	0.59	.49	0	1
Type of organizational unit (1= central; 0= local or regional)	0.28	.45	0	1
Similar task regarding the vignette (1= bureaucrat's routine is similar to the task proposed in the vignette)	0.65	.47	0	1
Bureaucrat's career status dummy (1=active)	0.93	.25	0	1
Bureaucrat's disagreement with Bolsonaro political agenda (1=strongly agree; 5=strongly disagree)	4.78	.62	1	5
Bureaucrat's practice*: "I have developed pilot projects or experimental initiatives"	3.14	1.23	1	5
Bureaucrat's practice*: "I have carried out actions "off the radar" (without the knowledge) of political superiors"	3.42	1.24	1	5
Bureaucrat's practice*: "I have used my technical knowledge (processes, technical notes, reports, laws)"	4.23	.92	1	5
Bureaucrat's worldviews alignment with the agency mission: "I identify myself with the institutional mission of my agency. It is consistent with my worldview"	4.77	.58	1	5

Variable	Mean	Std. dev.	Min	Max
Bureaucrats' scores for profiles:				
Guerrilla government profile	0.01	1.15	-6.40	1.12
Legalist profile	0.00	1.11	-5.92	0.87
Policy entrepreneur profile	0.02	1.05	-4.55	1.35

Obs.: Variables indicated with *: Likert scale, from strongly disagree (=1) to strongly agree (=5)

2.4.2 Survey-experiment results

Table 11 displays the regression models for the bureaucrats' attitudes towards (1) formal divergence, (2) secret divergence, and (3) innovative divergence, considering heterogeneous treatment effects based on bureaucrats' profiles (entrepreneur, guerrilla government, and legalist profiles). All model specifications include individual control variables as well as organization fixed effects, as mentioned in the methods section.

Hypothesis 1 (H1) states that, with the support of professional associations, 'policy entrepreneur bureaucrats' will be more likely to adopt innovative attitudes to deal with divergence. In line with our H1, our findings indicate that bureaucrats with higher scores on 'policy entrepreneur profile' are more likely to engage in innovative divergence ($\hat{\beta} = 0.33$, $p < 0.05$) when supported by professional associations. As unexpected findings, the regression models involving the other dependent variables - formal divergence and secret divergence - also present statistically significant estimated coefficients ($\hat{\beta} = 0.31$, $p < 0.05$ for formal divergence and $\hat{\beta} = 0.47$, $p < 0.05$ for secret divergence).

The second hypothesis (H2) posits that 'guerrilla bureaucrats' will be more likely to adopt secret divergence attitudes, if they receive the support of professional associations. Our results are consistent with H2, as bureaucrats with higher scores for this profile are more prone to engage in secret divergence ($\hat{\beta} = 0.38$, $p < 0.01$) when they receive the support of PAs. The estimated coefficients for the models considering formal and innovative divergence are not statistically significant, also in line with our expectations.

Finally, Hypothesis 3 (H3) indicates that 'legalist bureaucrats' will be more likely to adopt formal divergence attitudes, if they receive the support of professional associations. The estimated coefficient for the regression model on 'formal divergence' aligns with H3. Bureaucrats with higher scores for the 'legalist profile' are more prone to engage in formal divergence ($\hat{\beta} = 0.33$, $p < 0.01$), when they are backed up by PAs. The estimated coefficient for the regression model considering innovative divergence is not statistically significant, also in line with our expectations. However, the estimate for the regression model concerning 'secret divergence' presents an unexpected result: bureaucrats with higher scores for the 'legalist

profile' are also more likely to engage in secret divergence ($\hat{\beta} = 0.42, p < 0.01$) if they receive PAs support.

Table 11 - Heterogeneous treatment effects (bureaucrats' profiles)

Variables	(1) Formal divergence	(2) Secret divergence	(3) Innovative divergence
<i>Entrepreneur Profile * PAs' support</i>	0.313 (0.149)**	0.473 (0.198)**	0.333 (0.149)**
<i>Guerrilla Profile * PAs' support</i>	0.122 (0.128)	0.386 (0.136)***	-0.038 (0.122)
<i>Legalist Profile * PAs' support</i>	0.331 (0.106)***	0.424 (0.160)***	0.242 (0.148)
Observations	333	333	333
Organization fixed-effects	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual controls	Yes	Yes	Yes

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

PAs' Support = Professional Associations' support

2.5 Discussion

This research analyzed the influence of professional associations (relational factors) and individuals' characteristics (individual factors) on bureaucrats' dissent attitudes. First, we identified, through an exploratory qualitative analysis, that bureaucrats have various dissent approaches to manage divergence in politicized contexts. Such variety of approaches encompass guerrilla government-oriented practices, legalist-oriented practices, or policy entrepreneurship practices. Additionally, our findings from this exploratory analysis suggest that professional associations help bureaucrats navigate divergence through several ways, such as building coalitions and articulating external support, fostering a sense of belonging, providing individual and collective support, and advocating for policy solutions.

Second, in the quantitative analysis (second phase of the study), our findings provide evidence that professional associations' support matters for bureaucrats' capacities to deal with divergence and abusive supervision from their higher-ups. We demonstrate that bureaucrats' individual characteristics impact the way they benefit from professional associations' support – leading bureaucrats to engage in varying types of dissent attitudes, depending on their individual profiles. When bureaucrats rely on professional associations' support, they are more likely to face the risk of engaging in dissent attitudes, aimed at fulfilling their agencies'

institutional mission, and countering political superiors' will – particularly through secret means. Bureaucrats' dissent attitudes will be influenced jointly by individual and relational factors: when supported by professional associations, policy entrepreneurship-oriented bureaucrats will be more likely to engage in all ranges of types of dissent behavior: innovative, secret, and formal dissent practices. Guerrilla government-oriented bureaucrats will be more likely to engage only in secret dissent practices, while legalist-oriented bureaucrats will be more prone to engage both in formal and secret dissent practices.

Our findings have two main theoretical implications: one regarding the influence of (i) individual factors and (ii) relational factors on bureaucratic behavior. First, by linking dissent practices to bureaucrats' varying individual characteristics, we add a new dimension of analysis on how individual traits influence behavior. We align with previous scholarship that connects bureaucrats' public service motivation (PSM) to a higher propensity for engaging in dissent practices, such as whistleblowing and other guerrilla government actions (Caillier 2017; Hollibaugh, Miles, and Newswander 2020; Schuster et al. 2022). Our findings go beyond this conclusion by showing that mission-oriented bureaucrats are not only more likely to engage in dissent actions but also that their attitudes toward dissent vary based on their individual characteristics. Thus, PSM is not a homogeneous predictor of dissent behavior, as often depicted (Caillier 2017; Schuster et al. 2022). We argue that PSM, coupled with other individual characteristics - such as bureaucrats' previous approaches to practices at work - provides a further understanding of the nuances of dissent behavior at the micro-level.

Moreover, we contribute to bridging a gap in the policy entrepreneurship literature (Petridou and Mintrom 2021) by providing a nuanced analysis of the profile of individuals engaging in policy entrepreneurship practices, and their attributes. As “nuance is needed in the identification of the policy entrepreneur” (Petridou and Mintrom 2021, p. 955), we rely on mixed-methods to measure individuals' attributes and the various strategies bureaucrats deploy aiming to influence the policy-design process. We avoid a binary approach to understanding policy entrepreneurs by adopting measures that capture individuals' attitudes towards policy entrepreneurship practices. We show that these individuals engage in a broader range of strategies, exploring the 'variation within this class of actor' (Petridou and Mintrom 2021, p. 956). Our study provides novel evidence on how bureaucrats assume different levels of risk by employing secret or open practices and relying on formal or informal means aimed at influencing policy-making. Although policy entrepreneurship practices encompass risk-taking (Cohen 2021; Frisch Aviram, Cohen, and Beerli 2020), our findings show that individuals calibrate the levels of risk by deploying a varying range of strategies aimed at influencing policy practices.

Second, we offer new insights into the influence of relational factors on bureaucratic behavior. These findings align with previous research showing that the coercive power of leadership does not significantly deter employees from engaging in guerrilla government actions (Hollibaugh, Miles, and Newswander 2020). However, in the long run, individuals may refrain from dissent practices due to abusive supervision in politicized organizations (Story, Lotta, and Tavares 2023). Our study adds a new element to this debate by testing if relational factors significantly alter bureaucratic behavior in such circumstances; something that has not been assessed yet by previous studies. Our findings show that relational factors - the support from professional associations' networks - positively impact bureaucratic dissent behavior, even in contexts characterized by abusive supervision and politicized organizations. Professional Associations' networks served as buffers against the negative effects of politicization. It also served as a formal platform enabling greater organizational or bureaucratic resilience against democratic backsliding interference (Story, Lotta, and Tavares 2023; Yesilkagit et al. 2024).

Regarding bureaucrats' attitudes towards policy entrepreneurship and relational' factors influence (Petridou and Mintrom 2021), our research offers new insights into the causal impact of PAs networks on bureaucrats' tendencies for policy entrepreneurship. We distinguish between bureaucrats who are more likely to engage in innovative practices and those who do not, revealing the significance of networks for innovative behavior. By grounding our analysis in similar administrative contexts and testing the influence of professional networks on innovative behavior, we provide evidence of how networks significantly mitigate risks for bureaucrats' innovative practices and how such networks protect them from external shocks (Petridou and Mintrom 2021).

Conclusion

This study explored the individual and relational factors influencing bureaucrats' dissent attitudes when facing divergence from political superiors. Utilizing an exploratory sequential mixed methods approach (82 qualitative semi-structured interviews followed by a survey experiment involving 333 Brazilian bureaucrats employed in the federal government), we examined the extent to which bureaucrats' individual characteristics and support from professional associations influence their dissent attitudes toward higher-ups.

We found evidence that bureaucrats with various individual profiles react differently to the same influence – in other words, support from professional associations. When facing disagreement from their political superiors, bureaucrats identified with guerrilla government profiles are more likely to adopt only secret dissent attitudes if they have the backing of

professional associations. In the same scenario, those from the legalist and policy entrepreneur profiles tend to express their divergence through both formal and secret dissent attitudes. Policy entrepreneurs, in particular, are inclined to employ a wide range of strategies, by using secret, formal, and innovative dissent attitudes.

While our hypotheses (H1, H2, H3) were confirmed by the quantitative analysis, we also encountered unexpected results beyond the patterns initially suggested by the qualitative research and our hypotheses. This opens an avenue for future research to qualitatively explore how bureaucrats with similar profiles, whether of a legalistic, guerrilla government or policy entrepreneurship orientation, employ a combination of strategies - formal, secret, and innovative dissent - to navigate challenging governments and organizational environments characterized by divergence from their superiors and politicization. Further understanding on the processes underlying bureaucrats' choices and motivations to engage in dissent practices in complex organizational environments could add to the literature both on policy entrepreneurship and bureaucratic politics. Comparative studies – both across different contexts as well as longitudinal approaches – could also provide more insights on these topics.

Our study contributes to the literature on divergence (Gofen 2014; Cox 2024), bureaucratic politics (Peters 2001; Dahlström and Lapuente 2022), and policy entrepreneurship (Mintrom and Luetjens 2017; Cohen 2021; Petridou and Mintrom 2021), by providing novel experimental evidence on the individual-level and relational factors that drive bureaucratic behavior. We also add to this literature by showing how relational factors (Christopoulos 2006; Abers 2019; Petridou and Mintrom 2021), such as professional associations' networks (Gazley 2014), influence the ways bureaucrats creatively navigate divergence within public organizations, manage abusive supervision and power asymmetries in politician-bureaucrat relationships, especially within politicized public agencies (Story, Lotta, and Tavares 2023). We addressed the various types of bureaucrats' dissent attitudes, ranging from guerrilla government-oriented practices (O'Leary 2017; Hollibaugh, Miles, and Newswander 2020), to legal-oriented practices (Lotta et al. 2023), and policy entrepreneurship practices (Cohen 2021; Petridou and Mintrom 2021). This study's findings add to this body of literatures by showing the impact of bureaucrats' individual characteristics and professional associations in bureaucrats' behavior.

We also add to the literature on democratic backsliding (Peters and Pierre 2019), particularly focusing on the role of bureaucracy in counterweighting illiberalism and safeguarding democratic values (Guedes-Neto and Guy Peters 2021, Lotta et al. 2023; Yesilkagit et al. 2024). We address the gap on organizational resilience against illiberal

politicians' threats to the rule of law (Bauer 2023; Yesilkagit et al. 2024) by highlighting the influence of professional associations in mobilizing networks, fostering a sense of shared understandings, and protecting civil servants. We provide significant evidence on how professional associations can be one of the various relational factors contributing to organizational resilience aimed at safeguarding democratic institutions (Yesilkagit et al. 2024).

3 STATECRAFT INNOVATION: BUREAUCRATS' POLICY ENTREPRENEURSHIP PRACTICES IN RESPONSE TO PERCEIVED GOVERNMENTAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL DYNAMICS

Abstract: Policy entrepreneurship (PE) among bureaucrats – i.e., when bureaucrats actively seek to influence the policy-making processes towards policy change – is present in public agencies worldwide and may significantly shape policy outcomes. Although research on PE among bureaucrats has developed in recent decades, little is known about how bureaucrats strategically navigate shifting organizational and political contexts and how these perceptions influence how they craft varying PE strategies. Our study addresses this gap by investigating how bureaucrats deploy PE practices based on their perceptions of shifting political and organizational contexts. We base our analysis on a qualitative approach (in-depth semi-structured interviews) with 82 bureaucrats working in Brazilian federal agencies in environmental and indigenous policy domains. We found that bureaucrats strategically adapt their PE practices according to perceived opportunities and constraints within the shifting political and organizational contexts they operate in. Furthermore, we identified various contextual factors enabling or constraining PE practices. Our research contributes to the existing literature on PE by providing new insights into how bureaucrats navigate shifting environments and by showing that PE is context-dependent. We also add a new layer to the conceptual understanding of PE among bureaucrats by highlighting the notion of ‘organizational windows of opportunity’.

Keywords: policy entrepreneurship; bureaucracy; bureaucrats’ perceptions; organizational factors; organizational windows of opportunity.

Introduction

Bureaucrats may assume key roles within the policy process, influencing decisions, processes, and policy outcomes. They can act as brokers within the state, mediating resources, information, and networks throughout policy-making processes, as shown by scholarship on policy entrepreneurship (PE) among bureaucrats (Arnold et al., 2017; Cohen & Aviram, 2021; Gofen et al., 2021; Petridou et al., 2023).

Although the literature on PE among bureaucrats has developed in recent decades (Cohen et al. 2023; Edri-Peer et al. 2023), it remains unclear how bureaucrats' perceptions of their shifting organizational and political contexts may influence their PE practices (Wihlborg & Iacobaeus, 2023; Petridou & Mintrom, 2021; Cohen et al., 2023). The links between the meso-level (perceived organizational and political settings) and the micro-level dynamics (bureaucrats' PE practices) are still understudied in the PE literature, despite the relevance of these dimensions for understanding the factors influencing PE (Petridou and Mintrom 2021b). To bridge this gap, this study seeks to answer the research question: *How do bureaucrats deploy PE practices based on their perceptions of shifting political and organizational contexts?*

Our study aims to provide a further understanding of the perceived political and organizational settings, including constraints and opportunities for action that may influence variations in bureaucrats' PE practices. To do so, we rely on a qualitative interpretative approach (Braun and Clarke 2013), drawing from semi-structured in depth interviews with 82 civil servants working at Brazilian federal indigenous and environmental agencies. We analyze the ways bureaucrats interpret their organizational and political settings for action, and how these perceptions are related to varying PE practices over time.

We contribute to the existing literature on PE by providing new insights into how bureaucrats strategically adapt to changing circumstances, showing that PE is context-dependent and not solely driven by highly skilled actors. Furthermore, we enhance the conceptual understanding of PE among bureaucrats by relying on the notion of 'organizational windows of opportunity' and demonstrating that a longitudinal perspective is crucial for the analysis of PE.

This article is organized as follows: the next section reviews the literature on PE among bureaucrats and the perceived organizational and political settings that potentially influence PE behavior. Section 3.2 describes the empirical context and research methods, followed by the results section. The final section presents the discussion and conclusion.

3.1 Theoretical framework

3.1.1 Policy entrepreneurship among bureaucrats

Policy entrepreneurs are innovative individuals or groups who actively invest their own resources such as time, energy, and reputation, aiming to promote their policy goals (Kingdon 2014; Cohen 2021; Cohen et al. 2023; Petridou and Mintrom 2021). Scholarship describes them as “energetic actors who work with others in and around policymaking venues to promote significant policy change” (Mintrom and Luetjens 2017, p. 2).

These actors use their knowledge and strategically exploit windows of opportunity to influence the policy process and advocate for policy solutions (Kingdon 2014). They creatively combine political and organizational resources “into new products and courses of action for government” (Oliver and Paul-Shaheen 1997, p. 744). Elected officials, civil servants, interest groups, academics, specialists, as well as other state and non-state actors within a given policy community can engage in PE practices (Kingdon 2014; Frisch Aviram, Cohen, and Beerli 2020).

In the recent decades, studies have begun to examine the policy entrepreneurship (PE) practices among bureaucrats, recognizing that they may play a significant role in shaping the policymaking process (Cohen 2021; Arnold 2013; Gofen et al. 2021). In their daily work, bureaucrats have access to information, administrative processes, state and non-state networks, as well as greater knowledge about policy gaps and citizens’ needs. This enables them to act as brokers, mediating relational and institutional resources in various policy arenas (Arnold, Nguyen Long, and Gottlieb 2017; Cohen and Horev 2017; Lavee and Cohen 2019). This privileged position enables bureaucrats to influence the policy process through various means (Frisch-Aviram et al. 2020; Petridou and Mintrom 2021; Gofen et al. 2024).

Lavee and Cohen (2019), for instance, analyzed PE among street-level bureaucrats, showing that bureaucrats went beyond their expected roles as policy implementers by actively seeking to influence policy design. Likewise, Masood and Nisar (2022) illustrate how bureaucrats deal with policy gaps and scarcity of resources by creatively pioneering policy implementation innovations. Arnold shows how bureaucrats promoted the development of an innovative policy tool within wetland management (Arnold 2015, 2021). In crisis or emergency-related situations, bureaucrats also proactively responded to perceived external pressures or citizens’ needs by advancing new policy solutions (Petridou et al. 2023; Gofen et al. 2021). Several other research works show how PE occurs in various policy domains and bureaucratic levels – from high-level echelons to middle-level and street-level bureaucrats (Arnold et al. 2017; Silveira et al. 2024; Gofen et al. 2021; Petridou et al. 2023).

Scholarship addresses PE among bureaucrats at different stages of the policy process. Some works highlight the role played by policy entrepreneurs bureaucrats aimed at influencing policy outcomes towards policy change (Lavee and Cohen, 2019; Petridou and Mintrom 2021; Cohen and Aviram 2021; Cohen 2021). Others emphasize bureaucrats' PE innovative strategies within policy implementation, irrespective of their direct consequences towards change in the policy design afterwards (Arnold 2021; Masood and Nisar 2022). Different examples within this growing and recent research show that PE practices among bureaucrats may occur throughout the various stages of the policy process (Frisch-Aviram et al. 2020; Gofen et al. 2021; Masood and Nisar 2022; Cohen, Arnold, and Petridou 2023; Edri-Peer et al. 2023).

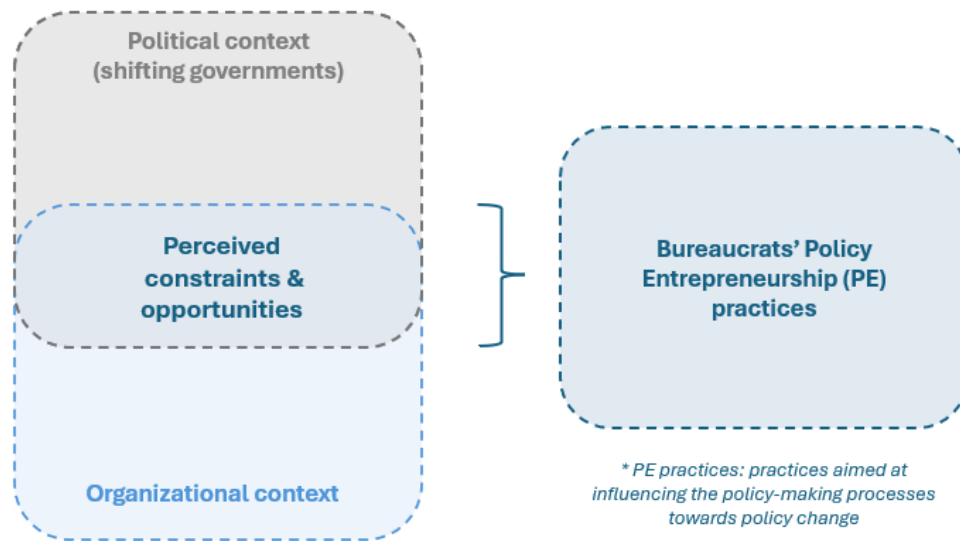
Although scholars may emphasize different aspects of PE among bureaucrats, we rely on the existing literature on PE (Lavee and Cohen 2019; Cohen 2021; Gofen et al. 2021; Petridou and Mintrom 2021; Frisch Aviram et al. 2021; Petridou et al. 2023) to conceptualize policy entrepreneurship among bureaucrats as the process by which bureaucrats, individually or collectively, actively seek to influence the policy-making processes towards policy change. As bureaucrats frequently do not have the necessary resources to influence the policy-making process alone, they tend to engage collectively in PE practices: *“policy entrepreneurs are individuals who exploit opportunities to influence policy outcomes so as to promote their own goals, without having the resources necessary to achieve this alone”* (Cohen 2021, p. 12). The field of PE among bureaucrats has advanced in recent decades. However, there are still certain topics that have not been thoroughly explored in the literature, such as the contextual and political factors associated with PE strategies, as indicated by scholars (Petridou and Mintrom 2021; Cohen, Arnold, and Petridou 2023).

In this paper, we aim to analyze two dimensions that have received limited attention in the existing literature: the perceived organizational and political settings in which bureaucrats operate and engage in PE practices. Although understudied, scholars suggest that bureaucrats may deploy PE practices based on the perceived constraints and opportunities within their organizational and political contexts (Wihlborg and Iacobaeus 2023; Cohen et al. 2023). Since these factors can either impede or stimulate PE practices, authors call for further research on these topics (Petridou and Mintrom 2021; Cohen et al. 2023, p. 348).

In the next subsections (3.1.1.1 and 3.1.1.2), we draw insights from the existing literature to provide an initial overview of how bureaucrats' perceptions of shifting political and organizational contexts may be associated with their PE practices. By relying on these studies, we propose an analytical framework that associates the bureaucrats' perceptions of constraints and opportunities of shifting organizational and political settings with bureaucrats'

PE practices. Figure 6 illustrates this initial conceptual framework, which will be further addressed in this paper.

Figure 6 - Research analytical framework



Source: elaborated by the author, based on the literature on policy entrepreneurship (Lavee and Cohen 2019; Cohen 2021; Gofen et al. 2021; Petridou and Mintrom 2021; Frisch Aviram et al. 2021; Petridou et al. 2023)

3.1.1.1 Perceived organizational contexts and bureaucrats' PE practices

The way bureaucrats perceive their organizational contexts, with their constraints, opportunities or incentives for action, may affect bureaucrats' attitudes and practices in their work routines (Brodkin 2011; Brodkin 2012; Cohen and Golan-Nadir 2020; Amis, Mair, and Munir 2020; Lotta et al. 2023). Perceived organizational factors provide references for action, set behavioral expectations and shape bureaucrats' practices (Vigoda 2000; Fleming 2020; Cohen 2021). Different organizational factors may influence bureaucrats' behavior, such as: the organizational culture (Hallett and Ventresca 2006), expectations and orientation from superiors (Vigoda 2000; S. Hassan and Hatmaker 2015); coworkers behavior (Keiser 2010; Foldy and Buckley 2010; Fleming 2020), organizations' mission and guidelines for action (Meyer-Sahling et al. 2019; Hassan and Hatmaker 2015); organizations' systems of incentives (Brodkin 2011); organizational structure framing the way bureaucrats-citizens' encounters will occur (Wihlborg and Iacobaeus 2023), among several others.

Bureaucrats' perceptions of their organizational environment may also influence PE practices (Frisch-Aviram, Beeri, and Cohen 2020; Goyal and Howlett 2024). When bureaucrats believe their organization fosters innovation, they are more inclined to exhibit innovative behavior (DiLiello and Houghton 2006; Frisch Aviram, Beeri, and Cohen 2021). The perceived support from both leadership and coworkers, for instance, has been positively associated with

bureaucrats' attitudes towards PE (Arnold 2013; Cohen and Golan-Nadir 2020; Frisch Aviram et al, 2021). The behavior and incentives from superiors and coworkers can influence the way bureaucrats exercise their discretion, share common understandings, and respond to expectations for action in their organization (Redmond et al, Binder 2016; Berman et al. 2017; Chen et al. 2017; Arnold et al, 2017; Cohen, 2021). Superiors and coworkers may also inspire engagement in PE practices by leading through example or by encouraging teams to partake in collective PE efforts (Cohen 2021).

Additionally, when bureaucrats perceive that their ideas will be heard by others in the organization's hierarchy, they may feel more confident about engaging in processes of policy design (Cohen 2021; Gofen, Meza, and Moreno-Jaimes 2024). The flow of hierarchy within an agency may influence the way communication unfolds between coworkers and leadership positions, potentially shaping bureaucrats' attitudes towards PE. Flatter organizational structures may encourage PE practices instead of vertical structures (Cohen 2021). Scholarship also highlights the importance of connectedness in networks for bureaucrats' PE attitudes (Arnold 2013; Arnold et al., 2017). If bureaucrats are connected to broader and diverse networks within and outside their organizations, they are more able to access new information and strategically mobilize actors within policy arenas. Perceptions of the available relational resources are related to bureaucrats' willingness to engage in PE (Silveira et al, 2024).

Although scholarship shows how organizational factors may shape bureaucrats' attitudes towards PE, there is scant evidence on bureaucrats' perceptions of their shifting organizational contexts over time and how these perceptions relate to their PE practices. How bureaucrats interpret the shifting dynamics in their organizations and how they adapt PE practices accordingly remains understudied. This, however, is important for a further understanding of bureaucrats varying PE strategies and the factors underlying them (Petridou and Mintrom 2021b).

Another factor underlying bureaucrats' contextual perceptions is the political scenario. As the shifting political landscapes affect the dynamics within public agencies (Moynihan 2021; Story et al. 2023), we must consider this dimension when exploring bureaucrats' perceptions of their contextual settings and their influence on PE practices. We address this factor in the following subsection (3.1.1.2).

3.1.1.2 Perceived political contexts and bureaucrats' PE practices

The way bureaucrats perceive the political influence of different governments on their organizations may shape bureaucrats' PE practices (Cohen et al. 2023; Petridou and Mintrom 2021). Bureaucrats engaging in PE tend to assess the risks considering the political landscape

that influences the organizational dynamics (Cohen 2021). Existing studies suggest that bureaucrats creatively craft their practices aimed at influencing the policy-making process based on the available institutional and relational resources within a specific governmental administration, with its constraints and opportunities for innovative action (Carpenter 2001; Abers 2019).

The political influence of governments on the organizational dynamics may occur by various means, such as governmental resource allocation to the agency (Moynihan 2021), nomination of political appointees for agencies' top echelon (Carpenter and Krause 2015; Enns-Jedenastik 2016), politicians' interference in agencies' autonomy (Carpenter 2001; Yesilkagit 2004), and varying degrees of (mis)alignment between the Executive agenda and the agencies' mission (Story et al. 2023). Bureaucrats perceive such political influences affecting the organization in different ways and may adapt their behavior according to the shifting constraints and opportunities perceived by them (Teodoro 2011).

When political appointees assume leadership roles within an organization and are perceived as illegitimate "outsiders" whose intentions diverge from the agency's mission, they foster an atmosphere of "apprehension, disengagement, and detachment from work" (Story et al. 2023, p. 11). Consequently, bureaucrats may refrain from expressing their views, silencing themselves (Story et al. 2023). Likewise, organizations characterized by heightened politicization – where politicians appoint external individuals loyal to them, lacking the needed technical expertise for the agency's mission (Enns-Jedenastik 2016; Moynihan 2021) – are associated with reduced levels of policy innovation (Lapiente and Suzuki 2020). Nonetheless, it remains unclear whether and how bureaucrats' perceptions of the changing political superiors in their agencies, according to varying governments, will influence the adoption of various PE strategies over time.

How bureaucrats perceive political appointees' openness to their ideas and suggestions within the policy-making process may also influence bureaucrats' PE practices. When politicization is part of the democratic process (Lima 2018; Batista and Lopez 2021), the way bureaucrats view how political appointees interact with them may influence bureaucrats' innovative attitudes and behavior (Lapiente and Suzuki 2020). On one side, political appointees may trust and cooperate with bureaucrats based on the legitimacy of their expertise (Carpenter and Krause 2015). On the opposite side, political appointees can establish conflicting relationships, threatening bureaucrats' expertise and organizational autonomy (Koga et al. 2023), even undermining the very mission of their agency (Schuster et al. 2022; Story et al. 2023; Bersch and Lotta 2024).

Governmental influence can also affect the structures of agencies through organizational reforms (Bauer 2008). It may also interfere in agencies' communication channels with external stakeholders (Abers 2019), such as subnational governments, citizens, organized civil society, or other public agencies. Previous research suggests that perceived external connections are positively correlated with bureaucrats' likelihood to engage in PE practices (Silveira et al. 2024). However, we lack evidence on how perceived changes in governments may impact the connections of organizations over time and how bureaucrats' interpretations of these dynamics are related to their PE practices.

Aiming to fill this gap in the existing literature, we sought to investigate the environmental and indigenous agencies in the Brazilian federal government, which enable us to assess the extent to which shifting contextual factors are related to bureaucrats' PE strategies over time. We will provide more details on the empirical setting and the methods in the next section.

3.2 Context and method

We present below the reasons that led us to choose the environmental and indigenous federal agencies in Brazil for this study (section 3.2.1). We characterize the studied agencies within both policy domains: ICMBio, IBAMA, and FUNAI. Then, we present a brief overview of the environmental and indigenous policy domains during each governmental administration (under Lula, Dilma, Temer, and Bolsonaro governments) to provide basic contextual information on this matter. Then, subsection 3.2.2 presents the method adopted in this study.

3.2.1 Case selection and context

To explore how bureaucrats deploy PE practices based on their perceptions of shifting political and organizational contexts, we selected Brazilian federal organizations within the environmental and indigenous domains, primarily for three main reasons: First, the various administrations in Brazil's Executive government have led to varying priority levels of environmental and indigenous policies over time (Abers 2020; Soares 2017). As these priorities changed over time, these agencies became an ideal setting to study bureaucrats' perceptions of shifting contextual dynamics. Second, under the Bolsonaro government, environmental and indigenous agencies faced an extremely adverse period, with the Executive leadership explicitly working against the institutional mission of agencies (Bersch and Lotta 2024; Lotta et al. 2023). This scenario allows us to investigate how bureaucrats navigate perceived complex and challenging settings. Third, the bureaucrats working in Brazil's environmental and indigenous federal agencies are known for their strong commitment to their agencies' missions and their ongoing efforts to influence the policy-making process over time (Abers 2019, 2020; Soares

2022). This makes these agencies ideal for studying PE practices among bureaucrats, as their strong organizational commitment and mission-oriented behavior led them to engage in several PE practices over time.

3.2.1.1 *Environmental and indigenous agencies*

Within the environmental sector at the federal level in Brazil, there are two agencies: "Instituto Chico Mendes de Conservação da Biodiversidade" (ICMBio) and "Instituto Brasileiro do Meio Ambiente e dos Recursos Naturais Renováveis" (IBAMA). Both agencies are linked to the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change (MMA). Collectively, the MMA, ICMBio, and IBAMA are responsible for formulating environmental policies and regulations, safeguarding the environment, ensuring the sustainable use of natural resources, executing environmental oversight, and fostering socioenvironmental sustainable development. Within the indigenous sector, FUNAI is the agency responsible for the promotion and protection of indigenous peoples' rights. During the timeframe covered by this study (January 2003 to December 2022), FUNAI was linked to the Ministry of Justice. However, after the fieldwork for this study, it was moved to a new Ministry called the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples, which was created in January 2023.

While the Ministries are located in Brasilia (Brazil's capital), the environmental and indigenous agencies have multiple units throughout the Brazilian territory. Each agency (IBAMA, ICMBio, FUNAI) maintains a central headquarter in Brasilia, along with regional and local branches dispersed across the country, as summarized in Table 12. The table also indicates the number of tenured civil servants working in these agencies, totaling 6,717. These tenured civil servants are selected through public exams.

Table 12 – Number of branches and tenured civil servants by agency

Agency	Nº of local branches	Nº of regional branches	Nº of central branches (Brasilia)	Nº of tenured civil servants working in the agency
ICMBio	348	5	1	1,989
IBAMA	-	27	1	3,506
FUNAI	304	39	1	1,222
Total	652	71	3	6,717

Source: Elaborated by the author, using data from Portal da Transparência (April 2024).

The bureaucrats allocated in the local branches of the agencies tend to interact more with citizens than those working in regional or central branches. Those working on the frontlines of local units interact with citizens on a regular basis - ranging from five days a week to once or twice a week, depending on the task being conducted. Such citizen-state encounters are diverse. They may include different profiles of citizens or stakeholders within the policy domain, such as indigenous communities, NGOs, social movements, local communities

(riverine, and extractive communities, among several other traditional peoples), as well as farmers, landowners, and citizens engaging in environmental crimes (illegal miners, loggers, among others). These encounters may also involve diverse types of activities conducted by bureaucrats, such as participatory meetings and the formation of participatory councils, joint planning meetings for environmental units or indigenous lands, territorial management, environmental oversight activities, the issuance of environmental fines, meetings to address environmental licensing, and even protests and claims presented by local communities.

These broad range of tasks assigned to bureaucrats encompass a variety of situations in which they are embedded. They may range from strongly contentious situations – illustrated by IBAMA's bureaucrats' duty of burning illegal deforestation equipment used by offending citizens – to cooperative situations, such as participatory meetings held by the management councils of conservation units or participatory instances within the indigenous field. Figure 7 illustrates a few of the various situations in which environmental and indigenous bureaucrats may work.

Figure 7 - Examples of the variety of situations faced by bureaucrats in fulfilling their agencies' mission



IBAMA's bureaucrats tackling illegal mining on Yanomami indigenous land (Jan/2024)



ICMBio's bureaucrats and local community in a joint territorial planning meeting - Fernando de Noronha ICMBio unit (Apr/2023)



FUNAI's bureaucrats working on territorial oversight within indigenous peoples' lands (Aug/2022)



FUNAI's bureaucrats and indigenous community in a work meeting in the Krahô (Mehi) indigenous people's land (Sept/2023)

Source: Agencies' official website, ICMBio-Fernando de Noronha and FUNAI oficial social media

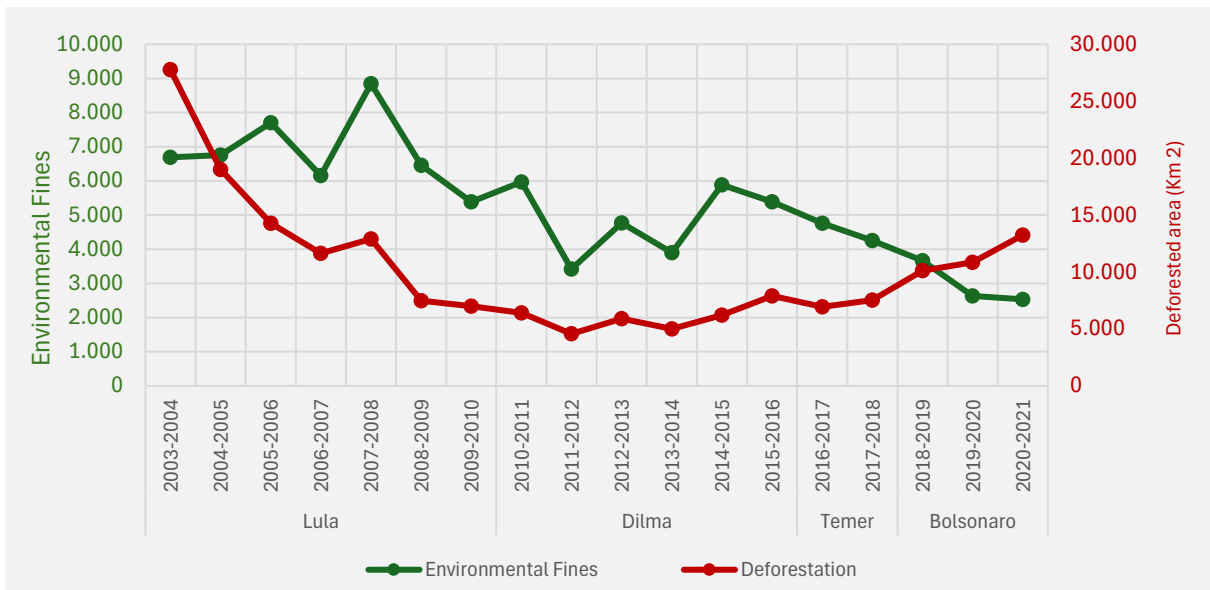
Due to the mixed profile regarding the assigned tasks, the types of branches within agencies' structure, and the varying levels of frequency of citizen-state interactions throughout the units, our study includes both profiles of bureaucrats: bureaucrats who work from their offices for most of their time and do not interact with civil society actors very often (middle-level bureaucrats); and bureaucrats who work on the frontlines, regularly interacting with citizens as part of their routines (street-level bureaucrats and street-level managers).

3.2.1.2 Environmental and indigenous policy domain in Brazil over time

Brazil's environmental and indigenous policies have varied significantly across the administrations of Lula da Silva, Dilma Rousseff, Michel Temer, and Jair Bolsonaro. Lula's term (2003-2011) is known for important policies to curb deforestation through enhanced environmental oversight (Abers 2019). His administration also made important efforts in creating indigenous lands (Soares 2017; Stibich 2019). Dilma Rousseff's administration (2011-2016) maintained some of these efforts but faced backlash for promoting large infrastructure projects like the Belo Monte Dam, which had detrimental effects on both the environment and indigenous domains (Vilaça 2020; Abers 2020).

Michel Temer's administration (2016-2018) is characterized by coexisting logics within the environmental domain, encompassing both policy dismantling (Milhorance 2022) and policy improvements (Abers 2020). Within the indigenous sector, Temer's term is marked by several setbacks, with a decrease in the creation of indigenous lands driven largely by agribusiness interests (Silva 2017). This trend of policy dismantling was exacerbated under Jair Bolsonaro's term (2019-2022), whose government pursued aggressive actions aimed at undermining environmental and indigenous policies. Under Bolsonaro's administration there is a significant increase in deforestation rates and the dismantling of environmental and indigenous policies (Milhorance 2022). The following graphs show these trends over time. Figure 8 displays a decrease in deforestation under Lula and (part of the) Dilma's administration, followed by a rising trend since Temer's government. This trend relates to the decreasing working conditions of environmental civil servants in the field - represented by a sharp decrease in environmental fines since Dilma's term.

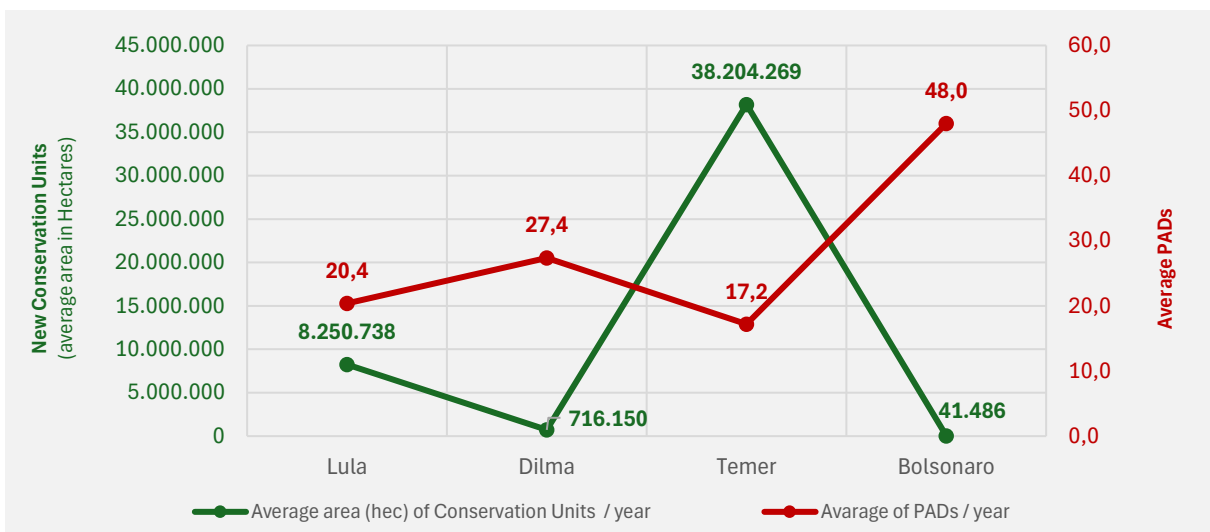
Figure 8 – Deforestation area (Km²) and N° of IBAMAs' fines in the Amazon - by government



Source: Reproduced from Observatório do Clima's report (2022, p. 12)

Figure 9 portrays the average area (by government) of the environmental conservation units created in Brazil. The administrations of Lula and Temer created the largest environmentally protected units in terms of area. This overall trend is inversely related to the average of disciplinary administrative proceedings (PADs) over time. PADs are administrative proceedings filed by the government against bureaucrats. As it will be addressed in the results section, interviewees report that, in several circumstances, the PADs were used as coercive instruments towards bureaucrats. Although the number of PADs per year does not automatically represents governments' managerial approaches, this data can serve as a proxy to simply illustrate the shifting political influence on the organizational settings in which bureaucrats were operating.

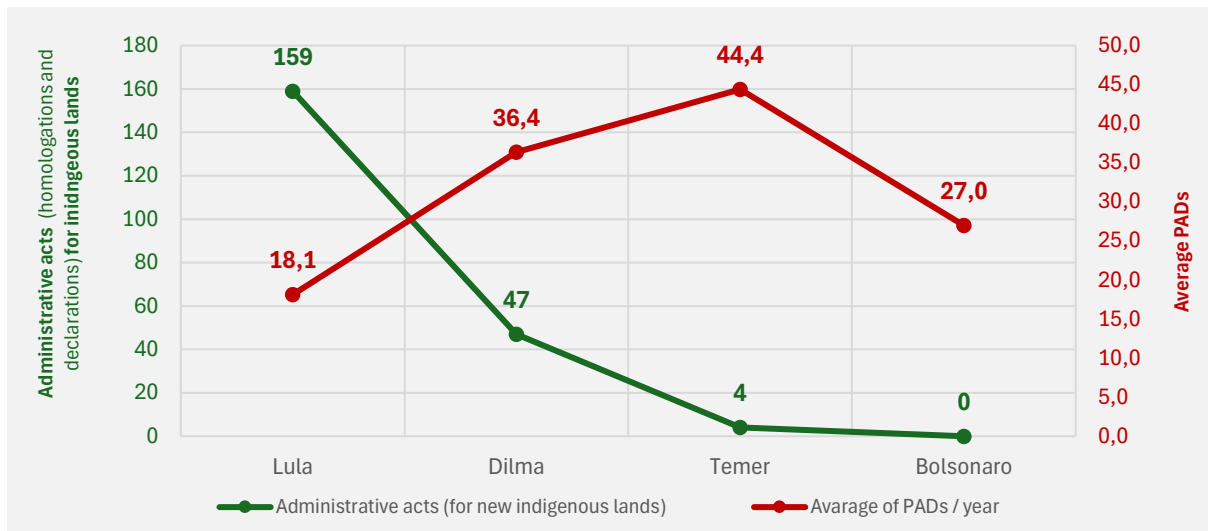
Figure 9 – Average area of Conservation Units and PADs against environmental civil servants - by government



Source: elaborated by the author, based on data from ICMBio (about conservation units) and Controladoria Geral da União (about disciplinary proceedings). Obs.: PADs are equivalent to government lawsuits against civil servants.

Within the indigenous policy domain, Figure 10 shows a sharp decrease in the average number of administrative acts carried out by the Executive government aimed at protecting indigenous peoples' lands (homologation and declarations of indigenous lands) after Lula's administration. This trend is inversely associated with an increase in PADs against indigenous federal bureaucrats over time.

Figure 10 – Average of administrative acts protecting indigenous lands and PADs against indigenist civil servants - by government



Source: elaborated by the author, based on data from ISA Instituto Socioambiental - Indigenous Lands Monitoring Panel (about the administrative acts) and Controladoria Geral da União (about disciplinary proceedings). Obs.: PADs are equivalent to government lawsuits against civil servants.

3.2.2 Method

We conducted semi-structured interviews to understand bureaucrats' interpretations of their organizational settings and the influence of shifting governments on their agencies and daily routines. We also sought to identify whether they have engaged in PE practices over time, and to understand how bureaucrats' perceptions of their environments were related to the varying PE practices deployed by them throughout time.

For the interview sampling strategy, our initial step was to connect with professional associations linked to environmental and indigenous public agencies (Ascema, ASIBAMAs, INA, and Ansef). We asked these associations to recommend bureaucrats who could participate as interviewees. Since our study investigates bureaucrats' PE practices, we sought recommendations for bureaucrats with a strong commitment to their agencies' missions and those known for having participated in PE efforts. We aimed to interview bureaucrats from various units across Brazil's five regions (North, Northeast, Southeast, South, and Central-West) to capture diverse organizational contexts. After contacting the recommended bureaucrats, we used the snowball sampling method to obtain further referrals, considering the sensitive nature of the topics discussed in this research (Patton 2015). Additionally, other

bureaucrats discovered our research through social media and volunteered to participate in the interviews. After conducting interviews with them, we asked for further recommendations. This approach gave us diverse access to the field and a range of perspectives from the interviewees.

We conducted the interviews remotely (via Zoom meetings) from April 2022 to December 2023, during the Bolsonaro administration. Before the interviews, participants were informed about the study's ethics committee approval (Approval No. 088/2022 dated March 31, 2022), the confidentiality of their responses, their anonymous participation, and their consent to be part of the research. As we conducted the interviews only during the Bolsonaro government, we had to ask bureaucrats retrospectively about their past PE practices during the Lula, Dilma, and Temer administrations. It was not a problem for bureaucrats to recall and report their PE efforts from those previous administrations. However, in most cases, bureaucrats used the majority of their interview time to discuss their current challenges at work during the Bolsonaro government. We sought to respect their focus and, whenever possible, asked them about past PE practices. Consequently, the closer the administration to the current time, the more detailed the reports on PE practices.

The interviews were conducted with a total of 82 bureaucrats. Among them, 39 (or 48% of our interview sample) are employed within the indigenous sector at FUNAI, while 43 (52%) work in the environmental sector: 17 (21%) at IBAMA, 22 (27%) at ICMBIO, and 4 (5%) at the Ministry of the Environment. On average, the interviewees possess 15 years of experience working in their agencies, with the least experienced having 6 years and the most experienced having 41 years. Their average age is 42 years old, with the youngest being 31 and the oldest being 65. Among them, 52% are men, and 54% are employed in local or regional decentralized units across various regions of Brazil.

The interview guide consisted involved the questions: (1) Bureaucrats' trajectory prior to and after joining the organization, including their social values, worldviews, perceptions, and attitudes toward the agency's mission; (2) Bureaucrats' embeddedness within the organizational setting, their PE practices, perceived organizational challenges and opportunities to work under the Bolsonaro government; (3) Bureaucrats' PE practices over time, considering previous government administrations (Lula, Dilma, and Temer administrations), as well as other governments' influence on the organizational setting enabling or constraining their work; (4) Bureaucrats' affiliations with professional associations and external stakeholders, in addition to their perceptions of the agency's affiliations and collaborations with external entities (such as other governmental bodies, social movements, non-governmental organizations, citizens, legislative and judicial branches, oversight entities, and international organizations).

In Appendix 3 we provide the interview guide. Interviews ranged from two to five hours in duration (with most conversations lasting between 2 hours and 30 minutes to 3 hours) and were conducted by the author, who subsequently transcribed the data.

Since the interviews focused on bureaucrats' interpretations and sense-making of their environment and practices, it was not uncommon for the interview script to be deviated from as a structured conversation. Bureaucrats frequently shared their feelings, motivations, frustrations, and achievements throughout their careers. Throughout the analysis process, we aimed to understand each interviewee's perspectives and to consider the various accounts they presented about the topics being studied (to the extent possible, considering the space limitations of this article).

Interview analysis: For the data analysis, we conducted a thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006, 2022). Initially, we familiarized ourselves with the data by thoroughly reading all interview transcripts. Following this, we developed initial codes pertaining to interviewees' PE practices and their perceptions regarding the contextual setting. This involved discerning organizational constraints and opportunities across different government administrations (Lula, Dilma, Temer, Bolsonaro), as well as identifying 'core organizational' contexts, which represent characteristics perceived as significant within their agencies over time, regardless of the government in power. Within these overarching macro-codes, we then iteratively created specific codes for the diverse range of bureaucrats' PE practices and their perceived contextual settings. Finally, we identified patterns within our data and organized our findings into the analytical categories established during this final step, as outlined in the findings section.

In the iterative coding process, we assigned 509 codes to 1,460 text excerpts using the software Dedoose. Since we assigned more than one code to the same excerpt, we ended up with a total of 8,175 code applications. In Appendix 6, we present the main code categories used in the three rounds of coding for this study. For the PE practices, we organized them based on our findings from these three rounds of coding, while also relying on conceptual insights (identified PE practices) from the literature on PE among bureaucrats Cohen (2021, p.17), Edri-Peer et al. (2023, p. 17), and Frisch-Aviram et al (2020, p. 11). We structured the PE practices and their corresponding characteristics, as shown in Table 13.

Table 13 – PE practices and meanings adopted in the interview analysis

N°	PE practice (PE strategy)	Definition adopted in this study
1	Organizational networking (or team leadership)	Articulate support from peers or supervisors.
2	Governmental networking	Articulate support from external governmental actors, such as other federal organizations, subnational governments, actors within the Executive, Legislative or Judiciary system.
3	Civil society networking (or networking outside of government)	Articulate support from social actors such as citizens, local communities, NGOs, and social movements.
4	International networking	Articulate support from international organizations, such as other countries, and multilateral organizations.
5	Rule-changing (or anchor work)	Engage in institutional building practices, by proposing changes to normative content: laws, normative instructions (NI), decrees, regulation, etc.
6	New work-methodology / policy instrument (*)	Propose new ways to develop the work which then become institutionalized in the agency (involving or not new formal policy instruments).
7	Experimentation through pilot projects (*)	Propose and test new policy solutions through innovative ways (i.e., ways that were not executed previously in that context).
8	Problem framing	Framing a problem in an acceptable way by the political and organizational context.
9	Solution seeking	Propose or advocate for a specific policy content.
10	Political risk assessment/ strategic planning	Adapt practices considering the current and the future (expected) opportunities or constraints within the political and organizational setting
11	Arena shifting (or venue shopping)	Strategically move the policy-process to a new favorable policy arena (e.g. from the federal government to subnational governments or Judiciary system), considered more favorable
12	Common-ground solution (or focusing on the core and compromising on minor issues)	Search for a common feasible solution (by giving up conflicting content and focusing on a shared understanding)
14	Minimize damage (*)	Actions aimed at minimizing perceived harmful policy content, by downplaying or mitigating the perceived harms.
14	Information dissemination	Articulating media support to promote policy problems or solutions (using media coverage) or strategically disseminate relevant information to various policy arenas and actors
15	Creative use of data and Artificial Intelligence (*)	Practices aimed at influencing policy outcomes by systematically adopting new available data or AI resource within the policy process

Source: elaborated by the authors, based on this study's interviews and on PE practices identified by Cohen (2021, p.17), Edri-Peer et al. (2023, p. 17), Frisch-Aviram et al (2020, p. 11).

Note: New PE practices in relation to PE practices identified by scholarship are indicated by (*).

Beyond the PE practices presented in Table 13, we also considered a wide range of PE practices identified in the literature (Cohen, 2021; Frisch-Aviram et al, 2020) during the coding process. These practices include 'strategic use of symbols', 'civic engagement', and 'gathering evidence of policy workability' (Cohen, 2021). However, we decided to reorganize these practices to better align with the patterns we observed in the empirical data. For instance, we combined 'civic engagement' with 'civil society networking' and merged 'gathering evidence of policy workability' with 'experimentation through pilot projects'. We also excluded certain PE practices from our analysis, such as the 'strategic use of symbols', as they were not prominent in the interviews. Additionally, to ensure coherence with our empirical data, we included new categories of PE practices, marked in Table 13 with an asterisk (*). These practices involve the development of new work methodologies or policy instruments, experimentation through pilot projects, damage minimization practices, and the creative use of data and artificial intelligence.

In analyzing the changes in bureaucrats' PE practices over time, we examined patterns based on an overall analysis of the data, considering the aggregate results of the coding process at the individual level. Despite bureaucrats describing in interviews how they strategically adjusted their PE practices based on their individual assessments of limitations and opportunities during each government administration, we conducted the analysis of the findings at the aggregate level instead of tracking individual-level changes in PE practices over time. We decided to adopt this analytical approach as a way to provide an overall understanding of changing patterns in PE practices, based on bureaucrats' shared understandings of their organizational setting.

3.3 Results

We organized the results as follows: section 3.3.1 presents bureaucrats' views on their organizational contexts, perceived as long-lasting organizational characteristics regardless of the government administration. These perceptions are referred to as core organizational contexts. While not tied to any specific governmental administration, they represent bureaucrats' interpretations regarding the factors influencing their working conditions. Section 3.3.2 focuses on bureaucrats' perceptions of the influence from different governments on their agencies: Lula (2003-2010), Dilma (2011-2016), Temer (2016-2018), and Bolsonaro (2019-2022). We provide an overview of the salient organizational characteristics mentioned by interviewees during each government, along with the respective PE practices reported during those periods. In section 3.3.3, we present a comparative summary of the perceived organizational constraints and opportunities across different governments, as well as the varying PE practices adopted by interviewees over time.

3.3.1 Perceived core-organizational contexts

Table 14 presents a summary of the perceived core-organizational characteristics, with constraints and opportunities for PE practices. Most of the interviewed bureaucrats perceive their organizational environments as challenging settings, which are not conducive to PE. FUNAI's interviewees provided the highest number of negative mentions of organizational issues.

Common aspects across all interviewees from both policy domains refer to insufficient or inadequate working conditions, limited budgetary resources, and a precarious career structure, leading bureaucrats to quit their agencies, especially in FUNAI. Most of the interviewees emphasize that environmental and indigenous policy issues have never been a

government priority, despite the perceived influence of governmental shifts on their agencies. "No government has been easy" (ID 84 - IBAMA), says an interviewee. Bureaucrats view that, over time, the Brazilian federal government never actually prioritized the environmental and indigenous agenda, which also explains the perceived constraints within agencies: the inadequacy of infrastructure, the insufficiency of staff to meet policy needs, and precarious working conditions. Within FUNAI, the organizational setting is even worse, as indigenist bureaucrats cope with the lack of due acknowledgement by the Brazilian state of the indigenous peoples' rights. Moreover, FUNAI particularly lacks basic infrastructure compared to other domains. This includes inadequate physical facilities, inadequate access to computers and the internet, low institutionality of administrative procedures, among other instruments or basic services needed to develop policies according to indigenous peoples' needs.

Due to the lack of basic organizational conditions, bureaucrats often decide to leave FUNAI temporarily or definitively, aiming to promote the agency's mission through other external organizations, such as NGOs (non-governmental organizations). This was the case of Bruno Pereira, a bureaucrat from FUNAI who had taken a temporary leave from FUNAI in order to be able to defend the rights of indigenous peoples more appropriately¹⁰: *"The entire political context throughout Brazil's history has not been pro-indigenous. (...) We were talking about this with a colleague who left [the agency]. He took leave and is now working for indigenous communities with an NGO"* (ID 11 – FUNAI).

Interviewees cited bureaucratic cleavages (mentioned 85 times) as a major constraint within agencies. In the environmental sector, conflicts arise between socioenvironmentalists advocating for community involvement and preservationists aiming to protect resources from the influence of society's activities. Similarly, in the indigenous sector, there are conflicting approaches regarding guardianship (tutelage) versus indigenous peoples' self-determination. Another perceived issue was the overload of work, and the conflicting tasks assigned to bureaucrats, such as the assignment of participatory activities and oversight activities (issuing fines) conducted within the same territory by the same bureaucrat or group of bureaucrats.

Other organizational constraints mentioned, particularly by FUNAI interviewees, include the low levels of institutionalization of administrative routines, high turnover of political appointees within the agency, and low levels of trust from external actors within the agency: *'Everyone criticizes FUNAI'* (ID 51). This includes actors from academia, social movements, NGOs, external government agencies, and oversight bodies. Bureaucrats also

¹⁰ However, Bruno Pereira was brutally murdered while carrying out his work in 2022, during a boat trip to the indigenous land Vale do Javari.

reported a lack of interinstitutional and intersectoral coordination of actions, as well as a climate of persecution within the branches.

Table 14 also presents the interviewees' accounts of organizational opportunities. A common perception was the strong esprit de corps formed by committed bureaucrats, despite the issues within the organization. The support of coworkers, managers, and professional associations was also seen as important in improving the conditions for bureaucrats to engage in PE practices. Other organizational opportunities include the legal framework (as a legitimate source for bureaucrats' mission-oriented PE practices), professionalism within agencies, the existence of teams or departments with greater organizational autonomy, and a climate that fosters innovation. External support from other agencies, as well as policies relying on international partnerships to enable intersectoral actions and PE practices, were also mentioned.

Within the environmental agencies, interviewees also reported other organizational opportunities, such as mission-oriented training processes, exchanges among external partners, bottom-up managerial approaches to work (enabling frontline bureaucrats to scale-up innovations), and collaborative interdisciplinary teams.

Table 14 – Perceived core organizational constraints

Perceived organizational constraints	Agencies
Environmental and indigenous domains historically excluded from Executive's priorities	■ □ ◇
Inadequate infrastructure and budget to work	■ □ ◇
Insufficient staff to meet the agency's and policy needs	■ □ ◇
Cleavages and divergence among peers (diverging work approaches or policy views)	■ □ ◇
Career poorly structured and undervalued by the state	■ □ ◇
Conflicting attributions and work overload	■ □ ◇
Bureaucrats' exit (due to inadequate organizational conditions to fulfill the agency's mission)	◇
Low institutionality / weaknesses in the administrative managerial procedures	◇
High turnover of political appointees within the agency	◇
External agencies' pressure and requirements misaligned with the agency's mission	◇
Low level of trust from external actors	◇
Challenges for interinstitutional and intersectoral coordination actions	◇
Climate of persecution within the branches (PADs)	◇
Perceived organizational opportunities	Agencies
Bureaucrats' high levels of organizational commitment (administrative esprit de corps)	■ □ ◇
Coworker support and collaborative teams	■ □ ◇
Agency expertise / professional knowledge	■ □ ◇
Professional associations' support	■ □ ◇
Managers' support	■ □ ◇
Existing legal framework	■ □ ◇
Organizational autonomy (within specific teams)	■ □ ◇
External agencies' support aligned with the agencies' mission	■ □ ◇
Programs with international funding and partnership (enabling intersectoral actions)	■ □ ◇
Mission-oriented training processes	■ □
Exchanges with external governmental agencies (national and international level)	■ □
Bottom-up approaches to work	□
Teams working with interdisciplinary and interconnected approaches	■

Symbols: ■ IBAMA □ ICMBio ◇ FUNAI

Source: elaborated by the author, based on the interviews.

3.3.2 Political influence within the organizational setting and PE practices

In this section, we present interviewees' perceptions about their organizations' opportunities and constraints for PE action, according to each governmental administration. After we present the PE practices reported in each period (government administration), we will present an overview of the perceived organizational constraints and opportunities over time, as well as the variations in PE practices over time.

3.3.2.1 Perceptions of Lula's government influence within the agencies (2003-2010)

Lula's government was associated with opportunities for organizational mission-oriented innovations, allowing for bureaucrats to engage in PE practices such as developing new work methodologies (22% of mentioned PE practices mentioned), rule-changing (17%), and piloting experimental projects (13.6%). It also encouraged the formation of networks both within and outside of government agencies, involving civil society actors (12%), colleagues

(12%), and other governmental agencies (10%). Examples of these innovations include the development of new guidelines for environmental oversight policy, new policies for the rehabilitation of seized animals, a new methodological framework for demarcating indigenous lands, procedures for the census of indigenous peoples, policies for the sustainable development of indigenous communities, and new participatory spaces that enable the co-production of policies between the state and society.

During Lula's term, bureaucrats felt that they were "*encouraged to contribute*" (ID32) to policy improvements and change by actively participating in policy design and being heard by political appointees. Interviewees perceived that their advice and expertise were incentivized and welcomed by leadership at various levels: ministers, directors, and supervisors. Reports also emphasize leaders' bottom-up managerial approaches, which fostered PE practices. This contributed to an organizational climate that led to experimentation and rule-changing PE practices. In the interviewees' view, this period opened various 'organizational windows of opportunity' within agencies, as the executive leadership was more aligned with the agencies' mission, and managers built a trusting relationship with their teams and political appointees - strengthening a climate of trust and collaboration among coworkers.

The bottom-up managerial approach, adopted by several political appointees, encouraged bureaucrats to propose new norms and regulations based on their practical experience on the frontlines - when interacting with citizens and dealing with policy gaps. Bureaucrats relied on these experiences to propose legal changes and build new work methodologies by scaling up local experiences. One interviewee described his experience in environmental oversight work: while working at the frontlines, he developed a new work methodology which later was scaled up and institutionalized as IBAMA's norms. With a broader team, he and a larger group within the central headquarters created a training process and guidelines: "*We built a tripod with the standard norm, the strategic objectives, and a course with the practical execution. (...) We debated it collectively. (...) We assembled a team, and we broke the first record (for combating deforestation) at the turn of 2007 to 2008*" (ID 86 - IBAMA).

The organization's openness to external actors through participatory mechanisms - typical of Lula's term - enabled bureaucrats to articulate external social networks, advance participatory methodologies, as well as institutionalize state-civil society partnerships: "*we structured the participatory management councils*" (ID3 - ICMBio). Participatory methodologies were both experienced in pilot projects and institutionalized in the form of norms, providing a new legal framework for the management of environmental units. Another

perceived organizational window of opportunity consisted of the new cohorts of arriving bureaucrats, committed to the agencies' mission and engaged in promoting policy change: “*when we joined (...) we were called the new guys, who wanted to change everything*” (ID 72 – IBAMA). Another interviewee says that “*a lot of committed people arrived willing to build and improve policies. There was a continuous flow of civil servants, which energized the organization*” (ID 76 - IBAMA). Lula’s term was seen as a period of constant innovations and institutional work: “*our colleagues were building the normative from scratch. (...) It was a rich process of formulation and construction of regulation guidelines*”. (ID 76 - IBAMA).

The most emphasized organizational constraints and challenges within this period include the organizational reforms and the influence played by NGOs within the agencies. Two major reforms abruptly changed the structures of the agencies. In the environmental sector, IBAMA was split into ICMBio and IBAMA without sufficient consultation with bureaucrats, leading to the discontinuation of some policies - such as environmental education. In the case of FUNAI, its president Marcio Meira restructured the agency with the primary aim of promoting indigenous self-determination, creating local and regional coordinations - replacing former indigenous posts. This reform, while well-intentioned, distanced bureaucrats from indigenous lands and left room for issues like land invasions and challenges within welfare provision. Additionally, the appointment of former NGO members to leadership roles in FUNAI created internal divergence among bureaucrats. Some saw NGO influence as a chance to improve policies, while others saw it as a challenge due to NGOs' lack of administrative expertise. These conflicting views hindered bureaucrats' engagement in PE practices.

3.3.2.2 Perceptions of Dilma’s government influence within the agencies (2011-2016)

Interviewees perceived more constraints (81%) than opportunities (19%) for PE action under Dilma's government. Among the perceived constraints, bureaucrats reported that the Executive leadership's political agenda was misaligned with agencies' missions, there was greater levels of political interference within agencies' autonomy, and a coercive top-down managerial work approach: political superiors' abusive supervision towards bureaucrats, including undue governmental lawsuits against bureaucrats (referred to by the acronym PADs¹¹). It was also a period in which interest groups opposed to the agencies' mission got closer to the agencies – such as private actors from the agribusiness, mining, and energy sectors. Dilma's government was seen as a moment of distrust, with low levels of dialogue among bureaucrats and the leadership at all levels (ministries, directors, managers), which hindered bureaucrats' proactive work towards policy change: “*Dilma refused to dialogue with indigenous*

¹¹ Disciplinary Administrative Proceedings

peoples. (...) She took away our institutional trust. We had to depend on a government that was already being torn apart. (...) We had the [interest groups of] ruralists coming very close" (ID 5 - FUNAI).

Interviewees perceived that their organizational setting was constantly being pushed and run over due to the pressures of licensing and infrastructure works such as hydroelectric dams like Belo Monte¹², power transmission lines, and highways. The Minister of Environment, Izabella Teixeira, was known for her top-down coercive managerial approach, which hindered the work of the bureaucrats and left little room for their technical advice. One interviewee stated, *"Dilma didn't communicate with anyone... Izabella Teixeira was like Dilma. And the chief of staff had a very bad profile regarding environmental and indigenous policy"* (ID 34 FUNAI). Interviewees also criticize Dilma's term for its lower levels of connection with civil society networks. The Ministry of Environment vetoed 'terms of commitment' (formal agreements aimed at establishing partnerships) between local communities and environmental conservation units. This period was also known for policy dismantling processes, exemplified by the revision of the Brazilian Forestry Code in the Legislative, fostered by the Executive. This contributed to an increase in deforestation: *"there was the revision of the Forest Code and a strong pro-agribusiness stance. We were very disappointed"* (ID 31 - ICMBIO).

Despite the challenges, bureaucrats found opportunities to influence policy-making through various PE practices, such as rule-changing (15%), civil society networking (14%), pilot project experimentation (11%), and organizational networking (11%). During Dilma's term, 'minimizing damage' (5%) and 'finding common ground solutions' (3.8%) were crucial PE practices due to the misalignment between executive goals and agencies' missions. Innovations included new regulations of pilot projects (which were mainly developed within Lula's previous administration), environmental training courses for civil servants and society, a regulatory framework for indigenous children and youth, and regulations on environmental licensing impacting indigenous lands.

Interviewees highlighted 'minimizing damage' and 'finding common-ground solutions' as important PE practices to address the negative impacts of Dilma's policies. For instance, FUNAI's bureaucrats prevented the leasing of indigenous lands by advocating for and creating the IN° 2 (March 27, 2015), which regulates environmental licensing: *"I think we managed to avoid a great loss (...) Indigenous peoples can organize themselves from an environmental standpoint (...) It is an important instrument that helps combat leasing. It involves IBAMA, and*

¹² The Belo Monte hydroelectric dam exemplifies the clash between Dilma's government political agenda and the missions of environmental and indigenous agencies. Interviewees highlight it as a critical case with significant negative impacts on both policy domains.

you force them to declare the rules of the game" (ID 70 – FUNAI). Among the perceived organizational opportunities, interviewees mentioned the governmental courses within the environmental sector, such as Acadebio. It facilitated collaboration among bureaucrats from various branches, fostering exchanges and the development of new policy solutions: *"We had this enormous capillarity within the territory. Acadebio promoted this meeting among bureaucrats: (...) in training processes, solutions are not ready-made. (...) Through deliberate construction, it created an institutional culture of innovations"*. (ID 52 – ICMBio).

Another perceived opportunity was the articulation of governmental networks with other ministries, the judiciary system, and control bodies. FUNAI's bureaucrats leveraged governmental networks to enact Normative Instruction (IN) N° 1 in 2016, regarding indigenous children's rights. They promoted inter-institutional cooperation among ministries and the Federal Attorney General's Office (AGU) to develop the IN: *"We held a lot of workshops in other ministries. (...) We institutionalized not only our role but also the role of other government bodies"* (ID 5 - FUNAI).

3.3.2.3 Perceptions of Temer's government influence within the agencies (2016-2018)

Temer's administration was perceived in contrasting ways by environmental and indigenous agencies. FUNAI's bureaucrats saw Temer's period as another step towards dismantling indigenous policies, marked by political interference within the agency, militarization, growing influence of agribusiness in political decision making, and a misalignment between political leadership and the agency's mission. In contrast, bureaucrats from the environmental agencies viewed this period as an opportunity for mission-oriented policy change processes.

Sarney Filho (also called Sarneyzinho), the Minister of Environment, had strong ties with environmental NGOs and social movements. He fostered external networks and appointed experienced bureaucrats to leadership positions. They adopted bottom-up managerial approaches, creating an organizational climate of trust and collaboration. Interviewees perceived that their agencies were headed by experienced and skilled bureaucrats rather than outsiders. They also reported that Sarney Filho valued and respected bureaucrats' expertise and technical skills, often standing up to other ministries in defense of the environmental agenda, even in situations of political divergence among ministers. Bureaucrats felt empowered to "speak truth to power" without fear for their careers, which fostered attitudes towards rule-changing PE practices.

One interviewee from ICMBio emphasized Temer's administration as a window of opportunity. The minister himself would have told him once *"You write what you believe is*

correct, and I will support it politically". This interviewee also mentioned that *"the organizational climate was very conducive to innovations and institutional building. (...) I felt like a kid in a candy store. (...) We created the largest conservation units in ICMBio; we more than doubled in environmental protected area"*. (ID 52 - ICMBIO). Despite the criticisms on the legitimacy of Temer's government¹³ – as it followed Dilma's impeachment - the political superiors' openness to bureaucrats' ideas fostered an organizational climate enabling innovation and experimentation. The most frequently mentioned PE practices in this term were the development of methodologies and policy instruments (15%), organizational networking (14%), rule-changing (14%), and solution seeking (12%), most in the environmental sector. Some examples of innovation include the development of new environmental oversight policies (and diffusion to other countries in Latin America), new guidelines for environmental management plans, new policy instruments for environmental oversight, new participatory instances, and new regulation on environmental licensing.

One case was the creation of the national guide for environmental conservation units' management plans. Bureaucrats created the guide and the norm IN-7 (December 21, 2017), providing a new methodological milestone in ICMBio. These PE practices of 'rule-changing' and creating a 'new policy instrument' were only possible due to bureaucrats' higher-ups' openness to bottom-up approaches, frontline coworkers' engagement, and external connections with society and academia. As Temer's government was ending and Bolsonaro had won the election, bureaucrats rushed to publish the guide and the IN at the end of Temer's administration. Within this shifting political landscape, we see a rise in PE practices such as 'political scenario assessment' - as bureaucrats were often assessing future risks in the long run.

During Temer's period, we also see an increase in PE practices related to the creative use of data, AI, and new technology. With the greater availability of data in this period, bureaucrats created new policy instruments for environmental oversight, such as a mobile application. This application cross-references data from various ministries and uses algorithms to predict the likelihood of environmental accidents, leveraging evidence-based planning within IBAMA: *"With the app, we can predict a critical situation on an [oil] platform. (...) We captured satellite data, flyover data, accident history, data from the environmental conservation units (...). We were able to set up an algorithm to help in planning actions"* (ID 79 IBAMA). Bureaucrats also perceived an emphasis on digitalizing procedures in Temer's

¹³ One interviewee joked about the favorable organizational setting under Temer's administration by referring to this period as a *"fantasy island in the midst of a highly questionable government"*. (ID 48 – ICMBio)

government, strengthening transparency and accountability, and a greater focus on regulatory incentives.

In contrast, the indigenous policy domain faced a hostile organizational climate. Political interference and governmental lawsuits against bureaucrats complying with FUNAI's mission hindered their autonomous work. In the face of such challenges, bureaucrats engaged in arena shifting PE practices to bypass some constraints, by focusing on local and state actions. One initiative was the creation of intersectoral health networks for indigenous peoples, which began under Dilma's administration and expanded under Temer. Bureaucrats worked with various ministries and local facilities to build a conceptual framework for indigenous health policies, resulting in a methodological and normative guideline in 2018.

3.3.2.4 Perceptions of Bolsonaro's government influence within the agencies (2019-2022)

During the Bolsonaro administration, bureaucrats encountered unprecedented challenges, leading to what they described as the worst period in their agencies' history. They faced abusive supervision, personal threats – including death threats, policy dismantling, institutional undermining, agency militarization, prohibitions on fieldwork tasks, interactions with civil society, the press, and academia, bans on conference participation, publication of research in academic journals, and even receiving awards. These are a few of the issues experienced by bureaucrats during this period. *“Every government was difficult, but nothing compares to Bolsonaro's government. (...) Fulfilling the Brazilian Constitution has always been hard (...), but now it's almost impossible because the policy tools have been removed” (ID49); “it's scorched earth” (ID18), “the Bolsonaro government's policy is to dismantle environmental protection.” (ID69); “we lost dialogue” (ID84); “if things haven't worsened, it's because the civil servants resisted taking Rivotril [anti-anxiety medication]” (ID5); “the current motto is about minimizing losses” (ID3).*

A climate of fear prevailed within agencies. Interviewees mentioned that environmental and indigenous policies have always been difficult to accomplish, as they have never been a priority for governments. However, under the Bolsonaro government, bureaucrats were facing various issues and threats. Political appointees were explicitly working against the agencies' very mission. The climate of fear within the organization served as a barrier to bureaucrats' attempts to fulfill their agencies' missions or engage in PE: *“There is a fear of doing the right job. (...) If you do the right thing, you are afraid because you could receive a PAD [governmental lawsuit]” (ID 74 - FUNAI).* Among the 621 aspects mentioned by interviewees about their organizations during this period, 600 (97%) referred to constraints and 21 (3%) to opportunities. Salient characteristics among the perceived constraints were political appointees'

abusive supervision towards bureaucrats. Many of them were military members who adopted a coercive top-down managerial approach. They hindered dialogue with bureaucrats and excluded them from decision-making. Bureaucrats who dared to offer technical advice by speaking truth to power faced immediate removal, persecution through governmental lawsuits (PADs), or layoff.

The unfavorable organizational conditions prompted bureaucrats to shift their PE practices towards alternative options that were considered feasible. This involved practices like arena shifting (5%), networking with supportive external governmental agencies (11%), and organizational networking within departments that were less impacted by threats from politicians (14%). Bureaucrats focused their efforts on projects that were seen as achievable, taking into account the political limitations of the time. In certain instances, bureaucrats working in less targeted departments adopted rule-changing PE practices (20%) - either by addressing policy that was not under politicians' target, or by establishing partnerships with external governmental agencies, like the Judiciary system.

PE practices of minimizing damage were characteristic of Bolsonaro's term (5%), as bureaucrats sought to mitigate policy dismantling processes led by political appointees. For instance, they developed new regulations about the administrative procedures for issuing environmental fines. Another example involved establishing a fund to distribute resources, sourced from environmental fines to Conservation Units. Bureaucrats stressed that they were championing what was obvious or striving for legal compliance. They actively put themselves and their careers at risk to downplay policy content seen as inconsistent with their agencies' missions: *"You have to fight for compliance. In other administrations, you didn't have to defend the environmental crime law. That wasn't what was at stake"* (ID 67 - ICMBIO).

Another case illustrating 'rule-changing' and 'minimizing damage' practices was reported by interviewees concerning IBAMA's environmental administrative sanctioning process. Bureaucrats aimed to mitigate the impact of a new regulation proposed by the Bolsonaro government. This regulation introduced a conciliation stage before judging environmental infractions, potentially weakening the sanctioning process. Recognizing this issue, the bureaucrats sought to amend the rules to reduce potential damage. They anticipated continuing this work under a more favorable political context in the future, with stronger regulations: *"We did our best to minimize the impacts of the IN under the current government. In a new administration, we will resume the path of suggesting effective improvements"* (ID 22 – IBAMA).

Finally, bureaucrats also formed new alliances among themselves, crossing previously defined bureaucratic boundaries that had been shaped by differing policy preferences. Bureaucrats set aside former differences to collaborate on common-ground solutions. One example of this occurred following the murder of FUNAI's indigenous Bruno Pereira. In response, bureaucrats temporarily put aside their divergent policy views to advocate for policy changes aimed at promoting indigenous peoples' rights and improving civil servants' basic working conditions, with the goal of advancing the agency's mission: *“We found points of convergence, to welcome and embrace each other, which is what gives us strength to keep fighting” (ID 38 – FUNAI).*

3.3.3 Comparative summary of shifting organizational contexts and PE practices

In this section, we present a summary of the perceived shifting organizational dynamics - with their constraints and opportunities for action - by the government, in Table 15 and Figure 11. We also present a comparative summary of the PE practices mentioned by interviewees over time, relating them to each administration: Figure 12 and Figure 13 present the proportion of PE practices reported by interviewees, by government (Lula, Dilma, Temer, Bolsonaro).

Table 15 – Perceived organizational characteristics, by government

Perceived organizational opportunities	Lula	Dilma	Temer	Bolsonaro
Organizational windows of opportunity	■		■ □	
Political appointees' openness to bureaucrats' ideas	■ □ ◇		■ □	
Bureaucrats (in-house staff) appointed to top-level positions			■ □	
Trust and collaboration (among minister, directors, supervisors, teams)	■ □ ◇		■ □	
Bottom-up managerial approach	□		■ □	
External connections with state and non-state actors	■ □ ◇	■ □ ◇	■ □	
Professionalization: public admission exam (new cohorts of bureaucrats)	■ □ ◇	■ □ ◇		
Professionalization: training processes and shared understandings	■ □	■ □		
Organizational climate for innovation	■ □ ◇		■ □	
New management and administrative work processes			■ □ ◇	
Bureaucratic cleavages: new types of alliances among coworkers				■ □ ◇
Heterogeneity in politicians' threats (less attacked sectors or units)				■ □ ◇
Political appointees' dependence on bureaucrats to deliver public services				■ □ ◇
Perceived organizational constraints	Lula	Dilma	Temer	Bolsonaro
Organizational reforms	■ □ ◇		■	■ □ ◇
Low institutionality and NGOs' influence within the agencies	◇			
Bureaucratic cleavages: divergence among coworkers' views	◇			■ □ ◇
Government and political appointees' misalignment with agency's mission		■ □ ◇	◇	■ □ ◇
Loss of agency's connections with social actors		■ □ ◇	◇	■ □ ◇
Political appointees' abusive supervision		■ □ ◇	◇	■ □ ◇
Political shock, high turnover of political appointees, leadership crises			■ □ ◇	■ □ ◇
Political interference in agency's autonomy		■ □ ◇	◇	■ □ ◇
Policy dismantling		■ □ ◇	◇	■ □ ◇
Governmental lawsuits against bureaucrats (PADs)		◇	◇	■ □ ◇
Militarization of the agencies			◇	■ □ ◇
Death threats and other personal threats against bureaucrats				■ □ ◇
Top-down coercive managerial approach		■ □ ◇	◇	■ □ ◇
Forced removal/relocation of bureaucrats				■ □ ◇
Political persecution of bureaucrats				■ □ ◇
Climate of fear within the organization				■ □ ◇
Legal insecurity (conflicting orders and lack of leadership support)				■ □ ◇
Distrust and attacks on bureaucrats' technical knowledge				■ □ ◇
Various types of censorship (training, conferences, publications, media)				■ □ ◇

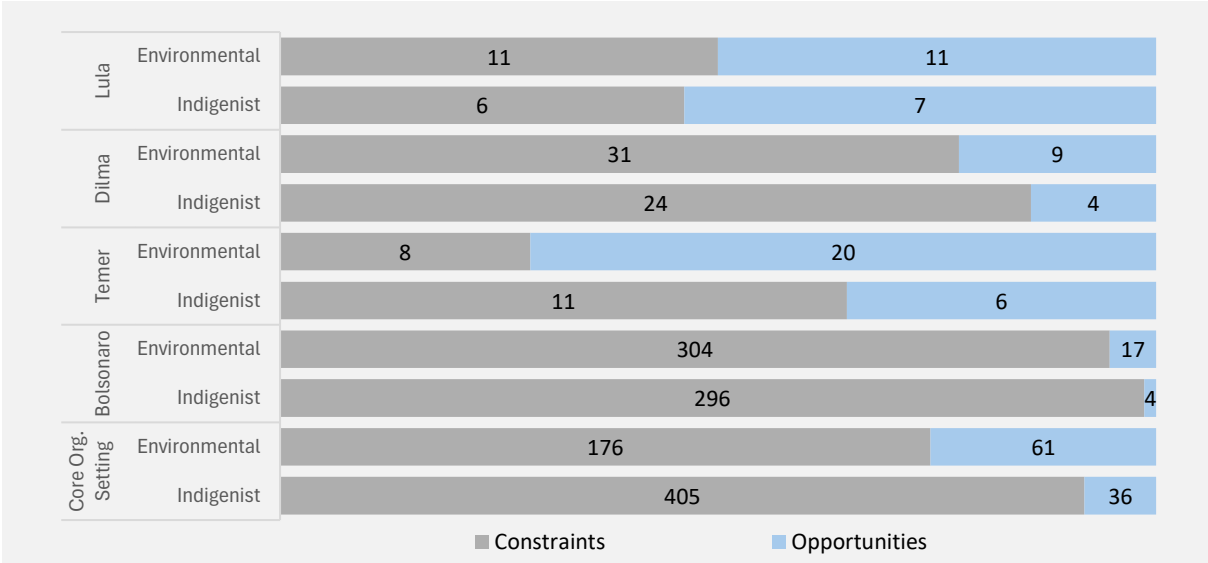
Symbols: ■ IBAMA □ ICMBio ◇ FUNAI

Source: elaborated by the author, based on the interviews.

Figure 11 presents an overview of interviewees' mentions about their organizational context by governmental administration, as well as the perceived core organizational characteristics. The organizational setting perceived as more conducive to PE practices (with a higher proportion of opportunities) within both environmental and indigenous agencies was the Lula government. On average, the Dilma and Bolsonaro governments received the highest proportions of perceived constraints (97% and 81%, respectively). Concerning the Temer administration, environmentalists and indigenists have different perceptions: Temer's influence on environmental agencies is mostly well evaluated, compared to FUNAI's bureaucrats'

accounts. Regarding the core-organizational characteristics, we also observe that indigenists' perceptions about organizational constraints are greater than environmentalists.

Figure 11 – Interviewees’ perceptions of the core organizational settings and governments’ influence (N° of mentions)



Obs.: “Core Org. Setting” refer to the core-organizational settings (long-lasting characteristics regardless of government)
 Source: elaborated by the author, based on the interviews.

Comparing the PE practices mentioned throughout the different administrations, the 'new work methodologies / policy instruments', as well as the 'pilot project experimentation' and 'rule-changing' practices were the most salient PE practices during the Lula administration. This reflects the accounts of the interviewees, who emphasized that the Lula administration brought about various organizational opportunities. These opportunities included the influx of new cohorts of bureaucrats to the agencies, the willingness of political appointees to consider bureaucrats' ideas, and increased organizational connections with external state and non-state networks.

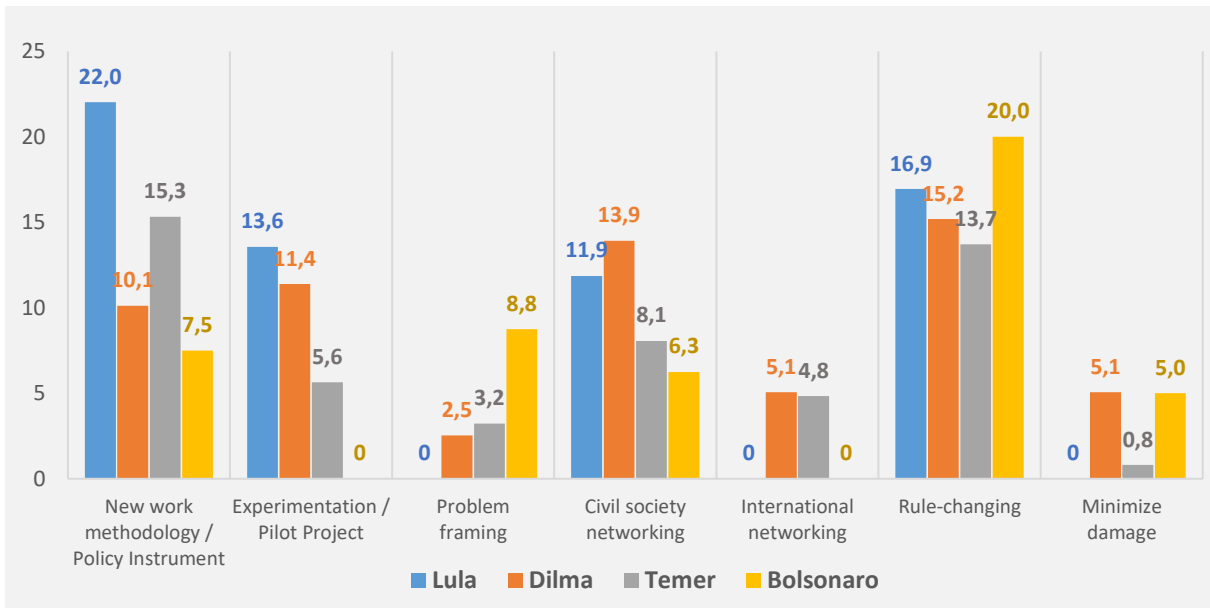
Compared to other governments, the administrations of Bolsonaro and Dilma are the ones with higher proportions of 'minimizing damage' and 'common-ground solution' PE practices. This reflects the organizational constraints and conflicts highlighted by bureaucrats during the Bolsonaro and Dilma periods. Although the Bolsonaro administration was interpreted as the worst moment by far, with the highest number of constraints and issues. Additionally, 'governmental networking' and 'rule-changing' are also salient practices within Bolsonaro government, as bureaucrats attempted to reduce perceived harms and to seek support within alternative governmental networks outside their agencies, such as the Judiciary system and the Legislative.

Analyzing the Temer government in relation to other administrations, the salient PE practices consist of 'solution seeking', 'organizational networking', 'new work methodology', and 'creative use of data and AI'. Particularly within the environmental agencies, this period

was perceived by interviewees as favoring innovations, mainly due to politicians and higher echelons' support for bureaucrats' ideas – with an emphasis on the top-level positions occupied by bureaucrats themselves. However, such perceived organizational opportunities were not reported by bureaucrats within the indigenous domain.

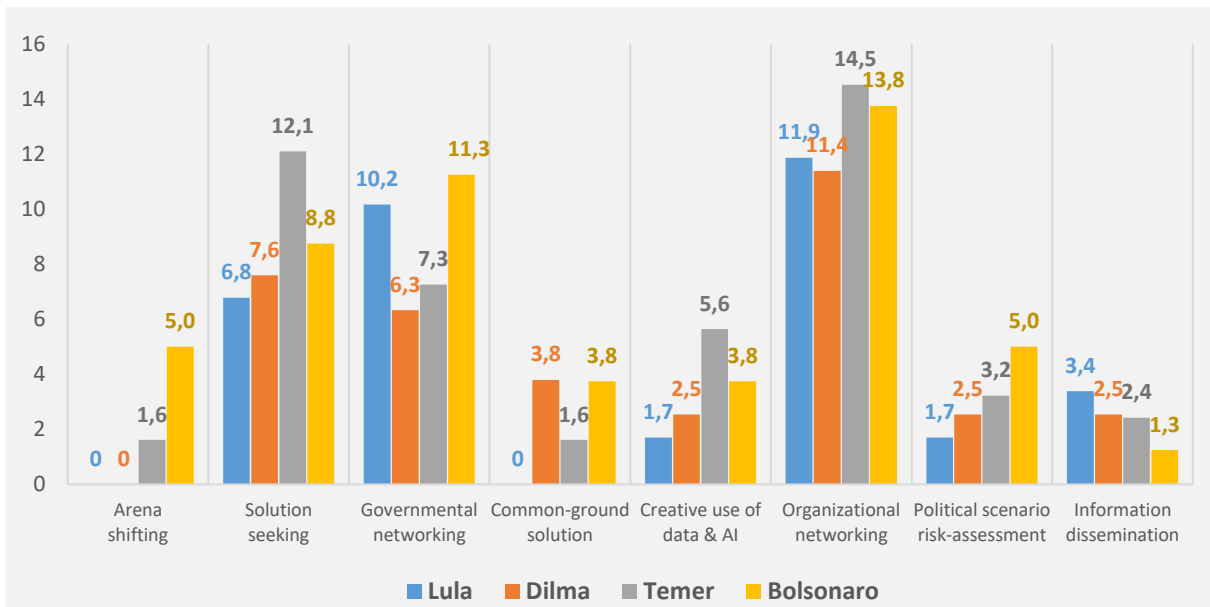
Throughout the four governments over time - from Lula to Bolsonaro governments - we can see a decrease in the mentioned PE practices, such as 'pilot project experimentation', 'new work methodologies', 'civil society networking', and 'information dissemination'. On the contrary, we see an increase in mentioned PE practices such as 'political scenario risk assessment', 'arena shifting', and 'problem framing'. We associate these shifts and trends in PE practices over time with the perceptions of bureaucrats regarding the organizational constraints and opportunities underlying the changing governments. The ways in which bureaucrats navigate these shifting organizational (and challenging) settings reflect the various PE practices they strategically deploy over time.

Figure 12 - Policy Entrepreneurship (PE) practices mentioned by government (% of mentions) - Part 1



Source: elaborated by the author, based on the interviews.

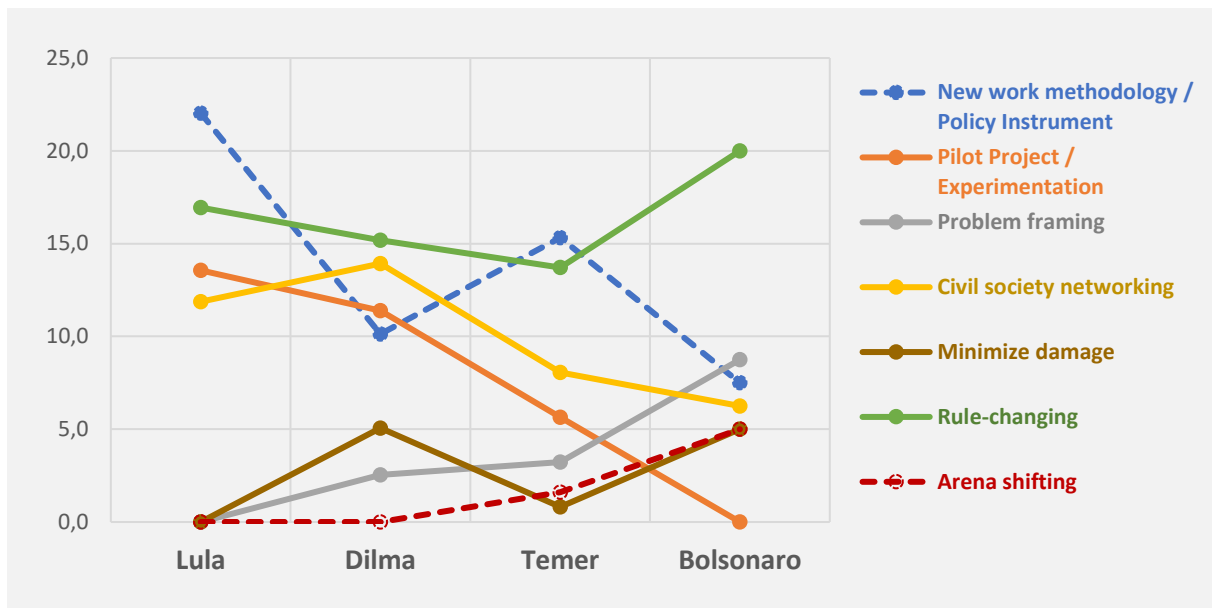
Figure 13 - Policy Entrepreneurship (PE) practices mentioned by government (% of mentions) - Part 2



Source: elaborated by the author, based on the interviews.

Figure 14 illustrates some of the changes in PE practices over time, emphasizing the shifts in practices that had greater variation throughout time or that were highly emphasized during the interviews. It encompasses PE practices such as creating new work methodologies and policy instruments - with a decrease of 14 percentage points (pp.) from the Lula to the Bolsonaro government -, experimentation of pilot projects (-13 pp.), problem framing (+8.8 pp.), civil society networking (-5.6 pp.), minimizing damage (+5 pp.), rule-changing (+3 pp.), and arena shifting (+5 pp.).

Figure 14 – Highlights of changes in the mentioned PE practices over time / government



Source: elaborated by the author, based on the interviews.

3.4 Discussion and conclusion

This study aimed to investigate how bureaucrats deploy PE practices based on their perceptions of shifting political and organizational contexts. Relying on interviews with 82 bureaucrats working at the Brazilian federal government within environmental and indigenous agencies, we associated bureaucrats' perceptions - constraints and opportunities from shifting organizational and political contexts, with PE practices. We found that bureaucrats strategically adapt varying sets of PE practices, based on the changing organizational and political settings over time. Additionally, our results identify the contextual factors enabling and limiting PE practices.

Our findings have five main implications for the literature on policy entrepreneurship (Cohen 2021; Petridou et al. 2023; Arnold 2021). First, we show that bureaucrats are constantly assessing their contextual settings and thereby strategically prioritizing the adoption of certain PE practices instead of others - based on the perceived constraints and opportunities for action. We argue that PE is not only dependent on the actors' behavior, but on the contextual environment. In other words, we argue that PE among bureaucrats is not necessarily a phenomenon characterized by agentic-heroes. It can rather be understood as a process triggered by committed bureaucrats relying on the available organizational resources for action (Abers 2020; Frisch-Aviram, Beeri, and Cohen 2020; Wihlborg and Iacobaeus 2023). Our findings respond to a call for context-driven investigations, assessing to what extent broader administrative and political systems may influence the conditions in which policy entrepreneurs work as well as how they navigate complexity (Petridou and Mintrom 2021b).

Second, our findings also have implications for the PE literature concerning the characteristics of policy entrepreneurs “as a distinct class of actor” (Petridou and Mintrom 2021, p. 955). While we primarily focus on the contextual factors influencing PE practices, our findings also offer new insights for a more nuanced understanding of policy entrepreneurs and their unique characteristics. We show that, despite facing challenges from adverse governmental administrations, bureaucrats actively sought alternative ways to continue influencing the policy-making process. They did this by creatively adapting their PE practices based on the available organizational resources for action. Our research contributes new elements to understanding the characteristics of policy entrepreneurs, by moving away from a binary approach (whether a person is or is not a policy entrepreneur) and instead adopting a more processual understanding of how bureaucrats interpret their environments and how they navigate them through PE practices. The bureaucrats in our study actively sought to influence policy design, even though their strong commitment to their agency's mission does not automatically translate into PE practices.

Third, we rely on Kingdon’s classical work on windows of opportunity (Kingdon 1995) - and the convergence between the problems, policies, and politics streams - to work with the notion of ‘*organizational windows of opportunity*’. By this notion, we mean shifts within the organization influencing one or more streams’ dynamics at the organizational-level. For instance, when a newly elected government appoints a new board of directors to an agency, such a change may be an organizational window of opportunity. Our findings provide novel insights with theoretical implications on how policy entrepreneurs capitalize on organizational windows of opportunities, by strategically adapting their PE practices based on perceived dynamics at the meso-level (organizational level).

Fourth, our findings show that not only opportunities, but also *constraints* may serve as raw material for bureaucrats’ policy entrepreneurial action. Although relying on a different analytical approach, our findings align with the work of Masood and Nisar (2022) on ‘policy repair’. These authors show that frontline bureaucrats creatively draw from state scarcity to craft new solutions aimed at attending citizens. Our results contribute to this ongoing debate by showing that middle-level bureaucrats engage in another type of policy repair practice: when bureaucrats perceive organizational constraints, they may creatively adopt PE strategies of ‘minimizing damages’ and ‘rule-changing’ to craft mission-oriented innovations within their organizations. Therefore, understanding PE practices requires considering not only opportunities but also constraints and challenges for action.

Fifth, our findings provide new insights into how bureaucrats plan their PE practices over time. We suggest that time is crucial for PE among bureaucrats, as they rely on organizational windows of opportunity, favoring certain initiatives over others. Likewise, Arnold's work (2021) emphasizes the importance of bureaucrats' consistent efforts over time as part of their PE strategies. Frisch Aviram and colleagues (2020) suggest that policy entrepreneur bureaucrats may adopt a long-term plan for their actions, anticipating opportunities or issues for action. Our findings contribute new elements to this analytical effort by providing a processual understanding of how bureaucrats deploy various PE practices over time. By examining how the same group of bureaucrats navigate shifting contexts and craft PE practices according to these changes, we offer a novel longitudinal perspective on PE practices. We show that, as time passes, bureaucrats engage in multiple forms of PE practices grounded in small daily practices, while others target broad rule change processes. In the long run, this variety of accumulated PE practices may trigger significant changes in policy design and policy outcomes.

Finally, although this work offers novel insights into the perceived contextual factors that influence bureaucrats' PE practices, it also has limitations. One main limitation of this work is that the study relies on bureaucrats' perceptions and memories of their past experiences. Future research aimed at investigating variations in PE practices over time can benefit from other forms of data collection, such as interviewing the same group of bureaucrats during different government administrations, rather than just conducting one round of interviews (as is the case in this study). Mixed-methods approaches, combining interview data and survey data, may also provide additional elements for further comparison over time.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation aimed to investigate the impact of organizational and individual factors on bureaucrats' attitudes towards policy entrepreneurship (PE) and divergence. To achieve this, we utilized a mixed-methods approach, analyzing data from a survey-experiment as well as conducting qualitative semi-structured in-depth interviews with 82 bureaucrats working in the environmental and indigenous sector of the federal government.

Considering the results from the three essays altogether, our findings have three main implications for the field of public administration literature. First, we offer new causal evidence regarding the factors at the organizational level, such as support from coworkers and professional associations, that influence bureaucrats' attitudes towards mission-oriented divergence. This research is particularly relevant for studies on behavioral public administration (Tummers, Steijn, and Bekkers 2012; Hollibaugh, Miles, and Newswander 2020; Schuster et al. 2024), especially in contexts where there is a misalignment between political principals and agencies' mission (Schuster et al. 2022; Lotta et al. 2023; Leary and Amsler 2017), abusive supervision (Story, Lotta, and Tavares 2023), and backsliding governments (Yesilkagit et al. 2024). Our findings emphasize the importance of support from peers and professional associations in bureaucratic mission-oriented divergence, and also contribute to the ongoing debate on the resilience of public agencies in the face of challenges posed by democratic backsliding governments (Yesilkagit et al. 2024).

Second, our findings contribute new insights to the literature on bureaucracy, divergence, and behavioral public administration (Hollibaugh et al. 2020; Schuster et al. 2024). We show that individuals' characteristics impact the way bureaucrats respond to the same organizational-level source of support, such as the support provided by professional associations' networks. Using a mixed-methods approach, we provide new insights into how bureaucrats deal with divergence and offer causal evidence on the factors at both the meso-level and individual-level that drive bureaucratic dissent attitudes. When bureaucrats have the support of their professional associations, they may exhibit different forms of dissent attitudes based on their individual traits. This highlights the importance for the public administration literature to recognize that bureaucrats can react differently to the same organizational-level incentive they receive.

Third, our study contributes to the existing research on policy entrepreneurship (Cohen 2021; Petridou et al. 2023; Lavee and Cohen 2019; Arnold 2021) by examining how contextual factors, such as the perceived influence of shifting government administrations, are related to the different strategies adopted by bureaucrats over time. Our research highlights the

importance of conducting a longitudinal analysis in order to gain a better understanding of bureaucrats' adaptive PE strategies. Furthermore, we emphasize the concept of "organizational windows of opportunity," which refers to shifts at the meso-level (i.e., at the organizational level) that enable bureaucrats to leverage their policy entrepreneurship practices and influence policy design. Our findings also provide a more nuanced understanding of policy entrepreneurs as a "distinct class of actor" (Petridou and Mintrom 2021a), demonstrating that these actors may engage in a wide range of PE practices, capitalizing on organizational opportunities at certain times, while downplaying some PE strategies during less favorable periods. This dynamic adaptive behavior does not categorize these bureaucrats as "more or less" policy entrepreneurs. Rather, it adds nuance to our understanding of policy entrepreneurs. Additionally, our research demonstrates the significance of both opportunities and constraints in studying policy entrepreneurship and the conditions under which bureaucrats can influence the policy process.

Finally, we conclude by acknowledging the limitations of this dissertation. Since the focus of the essay on PE was to assess the variations in PE strategies adopted by bureaucrats over time, we were unable to provide in-depth descriptions and analysis of each of the numerous cases of PE mentioned by the interviewees. During multiple interviews, they shared instances of innovation and policy changes they had promoted throughout their years of experience working in environmental and indigenous agencies. Due to the scope of the third article, it was not possible to include all of this rich material in the dissertation. However, we do intend to continue analyzing this data and pursue future research projects based on it. Additionally, this article's reliance on bureaucrats' recollections of their experiences under different administrations (Lula, Dilma, Temer, and Bolsonaro), and not their current experiences, is a limitation. Future research should consider interviewing the same group of bureaucrats at multiple points in time to provide a more comprehensive understanding. Another limitation is that we did not collect data from other policy domains, as our analysis was focused on the environmental and indigenous sectors. Future research assessing organizational and individual factors influencing bureaucrats' behavior towards PE and divergence may benefit from a broader scope of policy domains, enabling further cross-sectoral comparisons.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1.a. Vignettes used in the survey experiment for each organization - FUNAI, ICMBio, IBAMA and MMA.

FUNAI (indigenous domain)	ICMBio (environmental domain)	IBAMA (environmental domain)	MMA (environmental domain)
<p>Message displayed to all respondents in the beginning of the vignette:</p> <p>Imagine that you are working in one of FUNAI's Regional Coordination Offices (CR), during the Bolsonaro administration, headed by Marcelo Xavier as FUNAI's president. You are a career civil servant, with extensive experience in different FUNAI units - having a deep understanding of the challenges and needs faced by diverse indigenous communities residing in the territory within the CR's territory.</p> <p>Suppose you have been tasked with drawing up a regional work plan aligned with the specific agendas and needs of the indigenous communities in the territory. These agendas clash with the political agenda of Xavier and Bolsonaro. The head of the CR is a military official known for initiating governmental lawsuits against ICMBio employees during the Bolsonaro government.</p>	<p>Message displayed to all respondents in the beginning of the vignette:</p> <p>Imagine that you are working in one of ICMBio's Environmental Conservation Units (ECU), during the Bolsonaro administration, headed by President Homero Cerqueira at ICMBio and by Minister Ricardo Salles at the Environment Ministry. You are a career civil servant, with extensive experience in different environmental units - having a deep understanding of the challenges and needs within the territory encompassed by your ECU.</p> <p>Suppose you have been tasked with developing the ECU management plan. Initial studies of the management plan clash with the political agenda of Salles and Bolsonaro. The head of the Conservation Unit is a military official known for initiating governmental lawsuits against ICMBio employees during the Bolsonaro government.</p>	<p>Message displayed to all respondents in the beginning of the vignette:</p> <p>Imagine that you are working in one of IBAMA's superintendencies, during the Bolsonaro administration, headed by President Eduardo Bim at IBAMA and by Minister Ricardo Salles at the Environment Ministry. You are a career civil servant, with extensive experience in analyzing environmental licensing processes - having a deep understanding of the challenges of this area, field experience and dialogue with communities impacted by projects.</p> <p>Suppose you have been tasked with providing technical report on a project that could impact traditional communities within its surroundings. The concerns voiced by these communities during public hearings and in the report clash with the political agenda of Salles and Bolsonaro, who push for the projects' approval. The head of the Superintendence is a military official known for initiating governmental lawsuits against IBAMA employees during the Bolsonaro government.</p>	<p>Message displayed to all respondents in the beginning of the vignette:</p> <p>Imagine that you are working in MMA during the Bolsonaro administration, with Ricardo Salles as the Minister of the Environment. You are a career civil servant, with extensive experience in the environmental field - having a deep understanding of the challenges and needs in the sector where you work.</p> <p>Suppose you have been tasked with providing technical report in the context of a public civil action brought by the Federal Public Prosecutor's Office in defense of the environmental cause. The aspects of the case suggest technical guidelines that clash with the political agenda of Salles and Bolsonaro. The head in your sector is a military official known for initiating governmental lawsuits against MMA employees during the Bolsonaro government</p>
<p>Control group: Your manager and colleagues show limited enthusiasm for your ideas and initiatives, yet they neither obstruct nor oppose your activities. Over the past few years in your daily work, you have not sought support from the FUNAI's employee associations or unions.</p>	<p>Control group: Your manager and colleagues show limited enthusiasm for your ideas and initiatives, yet they neither obstruct nor oppose your activities. Over the past few years in your daily work, you have not sought support from the ICMBio's employee associations or unions.</p>	<p>Control group: Your manager and colleagues show limited enthusiasm for your ideas and initiatives, yet they neither obstruct nor oppose your activities. Over the past few years in your daily work, you have not sought support from the IBAMA's employee associations or unions.</p>	<p>Control group: Your manager and colleagues show limited enthusiasm for your ideas and initiatives, yet they neither obstruct nor oppose your activities. Over the past few years in your daily work, you have not sought support from the MMA's employee associations or unions.</p>
<p>Treatment group (manager support): Your manager is a career civil servant who has consistently supported you and your peers, providing conditions for the team to work in a technical manner, constantly improving the actions to promote indigenous peoples' rights. Your colleagues don't help you much, but they don't oppose to your ideas either. Over the past few years in your daily work, you have not sought support from the FUNAI's employee associations or unions.</p>	<p>Treatment group (manager support): Your manager is a career civil servant who has consistently supported you and your peers, providing conditions for the team to work in a technical manner, constantly improving the actions to protect the environment and to promote social and environmental development. Your colleagues don't help you much, but they don't oppose to your ideas either. Over the past few years in your daily work, you have not sought support from the ICMBio's employee associations or unions.</p>	<p>Treatment group (manager support): Your manager is a career civil servant who has consistently supported you and your peers, providing conditions for the team to work in a technical manner, constantly improving the actions related to the environmental licensing process. Your colleagues don't help you much, but they don't oppose to your ideas either. Over the past few years in your daily work, you have not sought support from the IBAMA's employee associations or unions.</p>	<p>Treatment group (manager support): Your manager is a career civil servant who has consistently supported you and your peers, providing conditions for the team to work in a technical manner, constantly improving the work processes in the formulation or implementation of environmental policies. Your colleagues don't help you much, but they don't oppose to your ideas either. Over the past few years in your daily work, you have not sought support from the MMA's employee associations or unions.</p>
<p>Treatment group (peer support): Your colleagues have a long-standing history of mutual support and collaboration, providing support for the team to act in a technical manner, constantly improving the actions to promote indigenous peoples' rights. Your manager doesn't help you much, but he doesn't oppose to your ideas either. Over the past few years in your daily work, you have not sought support from the FUNAI's employee associations or unions.</p>	<p>Treatment group (peer support): Your colleagues have a long-standing history of mutual support and collaboration, providing support for the team to act in a technical manner, constantly improving the actions to protect the environment and to promote social and environmental development. Your manager doesn't help you much, but he doesn't oppose to your ideas either. Over the past few years in your daily work, you have not sought support from the ICMBio's employee associations or unions.</p>	<p>Treatment group (peer support): Your colleagues have a long-standing history of mutual support and collaboration, providing support for the team to act in a technical manner, constantly improving the actions related to the environmental licensing process. Your manager doesn't help you much, but he doesn't oppose to your ideas either. Over the past few years in your daily work, you have not sought support from the IBAMA's employee associations or unions.</p>	<p>Treatment group (peer support): Your colleagues have a long-standing history of mutual support and collaboration, providing support for the team to act in a technical manner, constantly improving the work processes in the formulation or implementation of environmental policies. Your manager doesn't help you much, but he doesn't oppose to your ideas either. Over the past few years in your daily work, you have not sought support from the MMA's employee associations or unions.</p>

FUNAI (indigenous domain)	ICMBio (environmental domain)	IBAMA (environmental domain)	MMA (environmental domain)
Treatment group (PA support): You have relied on the support of FUNAI's union, which has implemented actions such as campaigns against governmental harassment of bureaucrats, legal guidance and assistance to civil servants seeking support. Recently, you contacted the union and realized that you can count on their support in your daily work if needed. Your manager and peers aren't very enthusiastic about your ideas and initiatives. But they don't harm you, nor oppose to you or your activities.	Treatment group (PA support): You have relied on the support of ICMBio's union, which has implemented actions such as campaigns against governmental harassment of bureaucrats, legal guidance and assistance to civil servants seeking support. Recently, you contacted the union and realized that you can count on their support in your daily work if needed. Your manager and peers aren't very enthusiastic about your ideas and initiatives. But they don't harm you, nor oppose to you or your activities.	Treatment group (PA support): You have relied on the support of IBAMA's union, which has implemented actions such as campaigns against governmental harassment of bureaucrats, legal guidance and assistance to civil servants seeking support. Recently, you contacted the union and realized that you can count on their support in your daily work if needed. Your manager and peers aren't very enthusiastic about your ideas and initiatives. But they don't harm you, nor oppose to you or your activities.	Treatment group (PA support): You have relied on the support of MMA's union, which has implemented actions such as campaigns against governmental harassment of bureaucrats, legal guidance and assistance to civil servants seeking support. Recently, you contacted the union and realized that you can count on their support in your daily work if needed. Your manager and peers aren't very enthusiastic about your ideas and initiatives. But they don't harm you, nor oppose to you or your activities.
Final vignette message displayed to all respondents: The regional plan for this CR is on the radar of FUNAI's political leaders, including Xavier and Bolsonaro. It is a region of high interest for agribusiness interest groups. Consequently, the regional plan has become a subject of significant conflict between the government's high echelons and FUNAI's civil servants.	Final vignette message displayed to all respondents: The management plan for this ECU is on the radar of ICMBio's political leaders, including Salles and Bolsonaro. It is a region of high interest for agribusiness interest groups. Consequently, the management plan has become a subject of significant conflict between the government's high echelons and ICMBio's civil servants.	Final vignette message displayed to all respondents: This licensing process is on the radar of IBAMA's political leaders, including Salles and Bolsonaro. The licensing project covers a region of high interest for agribusiness interest groups. Consequently, the licensing process has become a subject of significant conflict between the government's high echelons and IBAMA's civil servants.	Final vignette message displayed to all respondents: The technical report is on the radar of the MMA's political leaders, including Salles and Bolsonaro. The technical report refers to a region for agribusiness interest groups. Consequently, the report has become a subject of significant conflict between government's high echelons and MMA's civil servants.
Message displayed to all respondents: How would you act in a situation like this? Please indicate to what degree you agree with the following sentences. (5 point-Likert scale, from strongly disagree=1 to strongly agree=5)			
["Mission fulfillment" – used in the reverse scale to assess divergence]: I would develop the plan according to the demands of the indigenous communities. However, I would avoid addressing polemic words, that the Bolsonaro administration would possibly veto.	["Mission fulfillment" – used in the reverse scale to assess divergence]: I would support the development of the management plan following the ICMBio's guidelines. However, I would avoid addressing polemic words, that the Bolsonaro administration would possibly veto.	["Mission fulfillment" – used in the reverse scale to assess divergence]: I would prepare the technical report according to the methodology already established in my area. However, I would avoid addressing polemic words, that the Bolsonaro administration would possibly veto.	["Mission fulfillment" – used in the reverse scale to assess divergence]: I would prepare the technical report according to the methodology already established in my area. However, I would avoid addressing polemic words, that the Bolsonaro administration would possibly veto.
["Innovation" question]: I would explicitly formulate the plan in accordance with the demands of the indigenous communities, allowing for adjustments or improvements to the actions in the territory based on the unique needs and specificities of each community.	["Innovation" question]: I would support the development of the management plan following the ICMBio's guidelines, considering the adoption of continuous strategies of citizen participation, including local communities - leaving room for policy improvement and policy feedback, according to communities' suggestions.	["Innovation" question]: I would prepare the technical report according to the methodology established in my field, while also addressing the requirement, as stated in the Basic Environmental Plan, to continuously explore solutions for community participation and enhance compensatory actions based on the territory's needs and demands.	["Innovation" question]: I would prepare the technical report according to the established technical guidelines in my field. Additionally, I would include, if relevant, the necessary measures aimed at fostering the participation of local traditional communities affected by agribusiness activities in the relevant territory.
["Convince the political principal" question]: I would attempt to talk to the military member (coordinator of the CR), trying to make him aware of the importance of the specific demands of each indigenous people in the territory, encouraging him to advocate for the plan with the upper echelon of government.	["Convince the political principal" question]: I would attempt to talk to the military member (head of the ECU), trying to make him aware of the importance of the development of the management plan in accordance with the ICMBio's guidelines, encouraging him to advocate for the plan with the upper echelon of government.	["Convince the political principal" question]: I would attempt to talk to the military member (head of the Superintendency), trying to make him aware of the importance of issuing a report in accordance with IBAMA's technical guidelines, encouraging him to advocate for the report with the upper echelon of government.	["Convince the political principal" question]: I would attempt to talk to the military member (head of the sector), trying to make him aware of the importance of issuing the report in line with the MMA's guidelines, encouraging him to advocate for the report with the upper echelon of government.
["Open & formal dissent"]: Even in case of disagreement with superiors or the agency's higher echelon (about the contents of the plan), I would formalize my initial technical advice (first version of the management plan) in the Electronic Information System (SEI).	["Open & formal dissent"]: Even in case of disagreement with superiors or the agency's higher echelon (about the management plan's topics), I would formally register my initial technical advice (first version of the management plan) in the Electronic Information System (SEI).	["Open & formal dissent"]: Even in case of disagreement with superiors or the agency's higher echelon (about the management report topics), I would formally register my initial technical advice (first version of the report) in the Electronic Information System (SEI).	["Open & formal dissent"]: Even in the event of a disagreement with superiors or senior staff at the MMA (on the contents of the report), I would formalize my initial technical advice (first version of the report) in the Electronic Information System (SEI).
["Secret & informal dissent"] If there is political interference in the regional plan (with government vetoes of the plan's key guidelines), I would informally encourage indigenous communities to protest against the government, without the knowledge of FUNAI's higher echelon.	["Secret & informal dissent"] If there is political interference in the management plan (with government vetoes of the plan's key guidelines), I would informally encourage local communities to protest against the government, without the knowledge of ICMBio's higher echelon.	["Secret & informal dissent"] If there is political interference in the licensing process (with government vetoes on key issues in the report), I would informally encourage local communities to protest against the government, without the knowledge of IBAMA's higher echelon.	["Secret & informal dissent"] If there is political interference in the report (with government vetoes on key issues in the report), I would informally encourage local communities to protest against the government, without the knowledge of MMA's higher echelon.

Appendix 1.b. Survey Original Questions in Portuguese (Example from IBAMA)

RCT - IBAMA

Survey Flow

Standard: INTRODUÇÃO (1 Question)
Standard: PERCEPÇÕES EM RELAÇÃO À ORGANIZAÇÃO (1 Question)

BlockRandomizer: 1 - Evenly Present Elements

Block: CENÁRIO 1 (1 Question)
Standard: CENÁRIO 2 (1 Question)
Standard: CENÁRIO 3 (1 Question)
Standard: CENÁRIO 4 (1 Question)

Standard: PRÁTICAS CONFORME O CENÁRIO (8 Questions)
Standard: PERCEPÇÕES EM RELAÇÃO À ORGANIZAÇÃO AO LONGO DO TEMPO (5 Questions)
Standard: PRÁTICAS ATUAIS: (1 Question)
Block: PERFIL (11 Questions)
Standard: OBSERVAÇÕES (1 Question)

Page Break

Start of Block: INTRODUÇÃO

1 Você está sendo convidado/a para responder à pesquisa "**Desafios e práticas de servidores/as do IBAMA ao longo dos anos**". É uma pesquisa de doutorado, realizada por Mariana Costa Silveira (FGV), orientada pela Prof^a Gabriela Lotta (FGV/EAESP). O objetivo é identificar práticas cotidianas de servidores/as e desafios de atuação ao longo dos anos. Esta pesquisa conta com o apoio da **Associação Nacional dos Servidores de Meio Ambiente - ASCEMA Nacional**, além da INA, Ansef e NEB-FGV.

- **Quanto tempo leva?** Cerca de 6 minutos 🕒

- **Quem pode responder?** Todos/as os/as servidores/as do IBAMA, voluntariamente.

- **A pesquisa garante anonimato?** Sim. Os dados coletados são anônimos. Não coletamos nenhum dado pessoal ou informação que possa te identificar. Os dados são para uso acadêmico e seguem padrões éticos de sigilo em pesquisa (Estudo aprovado pelo Comitê de Ética FGV - N° 88/2022).

- **Eu já dei entrevista à Mariana. As perguntas são as mesmas?** As perguntas são diferentes. Se você puder preencher também esse questionário, será uma enorme ajuda!

- **Tenho dúvidas ou sugestões. Como faço?** Envie um email a silveira.mariana@fgv.edu.br ou acesse os canais do site: www.marianasilveira.com

Obrigada por sua possível participação!

() Concordo em participar da pesquisa.

End of Block: INTRODUÇÃO

Start of Block: PERCEPÇÕES EM RELAÇÃO À ORGANIZAÇÃO

2 Considere a sua percepção sobre políticas públicas ambientais **ao longo do tempo (independentemente de governos)**. Qual o seu grau de concordância em relação às afirmações a seguir?

- Eu me identifico com o trabalho de proteger o meio ambiente e assegurar a sustentabilidade no uso dos recursos naturais. É coerente com minha visão de mundo. () *Discordo totalmente* () *Discordo* () *Nem discordo nem concordo* () *Concordo* () *Concordo totalmente*
- Meus valores pessoais coincidem com os valores e a cultura organizacional do IBAMA. () *Discordo totalmente* () *Discordo* () *Nem discordo nem concordo* () *Concordo* () *Concordo totalmente*
- Eu me sinto emocionalmente ligado/a ao trabalho que desenvolvo no IBAMA. () *Discordo totalmente* () *Discordo* () *Nem discordo nem concordo* () *Concordo* () *Concordo totalmente*
- Eu ficaria muito feliz em passar o resto da minha carreira no IBAMA. () *Discordo totalmente* () *Discordo* () *Nem discordo nem concordo* () *Concordo* () *Concordo totalmente*

End of Block: PERCEPÇÕES EM RELAÇÃO À ORGANIZAÇÃO

Start of Block: **CENÁRIO 1 (grupo controle)**

3 Apresentamos a seguir um cenário hipotético. Mesmo que não seja a sua área/escopo de atuação no IBAMA, procure se imaginar nesta situação e refletir como você agiria, se estivesse neste contexto:

Imagine que você está trabalhando em uma das Superintendências estaduais do IBAMA, no governo Bolsonaro (com Eduardo Bim na presidência do IBAMA e Ricardo Salles como Ministro do Meio Ambiente). Você é um/a servidor/a de carreira concursado/a, com muita experiência na análise de processos de licenciamento ambiental no meio socioeconômico – tendo conhecimento dos desafios dessa área, experiência de campo e de diálogo com comunidades impactadas por empreendimentos.

Você foi incumbido/a de elaborar um parecer técnico de um empreendimento com um alto potencial de impacto para comunidades tradicionais na área de influência direta e indireta de um projeto. Aspectos apontados pelas comunidades nas audiências públicas e no Estudo de Impacto Ambiental se chocam com interesses de Salles e Bolsonaro, cuja agenda política é a favor da aprovação/ licenciamento do projeto. O chefe da Superintendência é um militar, que já desencadeou Processos Administrativos (PADs) indevidos contra servidores do IBAMA, ao longo do governo Bolsonaro.

Sua chefia mais imediata e seus colegas na Superintendência não são grandes entusiastas das suas ideias e iniciativas. Mas eles não te prejudicam, nem se opõem a você ou suas atividades. No seu cotidiano de trabalho, nesses últimos anos, você não mobilizou apoio das associações de servidores do IBAMA.

Este processo de licenciamento “está no radar” dos dirigentes políticos do IBAMA, inclusive no radar de Salles e Bolsonaro: o projeto abrange uma região de alto interesse para o agronegócio. Por isso, o processo de tem sido um tema de muito conflito entre o alto escalão do governo e as equipes técnicas do IBAMA.

Como você agiria em uma situação como essa? Assinale o seu grau de concordância com cada uma das frases a seguir:

End of Block: CENÁRIO 1

Start of Block: **CENÁRIO 2 (apoio de chefias)**

3 Apresentamos a seguir um cenário hipotético. Mesmo que não seja a sua área/escopo de atuação no IBAMA, procure se imaginar nesta situação e refletir como você agiria, se estivesse neste contexto:

Imagine que você está trabalhando em uma das Superintendências estaduais do IBAMA, no governo Bolsonaro (com Eduardo Bim na presidência do IBAMA e Ricardo Salles como Ministro do Meio Ambiente). Você é um/a servidor/a de carreira concursado/a, com muita experiência na análise de processos de licenciamento ambiental no meio socioeconômico – tendo conhecimento dos desafios dessa área, experiência de campo e de diálogo com comunidades impactadas por empreendimentos.

Você foi incumbido/a de elaborar um parecer técnico de um empreendimento com um alto potencial de impacto para comunidades tradicionais na área de influência direta e indireta de um projeto. Aspectos apontados pelas comunidades nas audiências públicas e no Estudo de Impacto Ambiental se chocam com interesses de Salles e Bolsonaro, cuja agenda política é a favor da aprovação/ licenciamento do projeto. O chefe da Superintendência é um militar, que já desencadeou Processos Administrativos (PADs) indevidos contra servidores do IBAMA, ao longo do governo Bolsonaro.

A sua chefia imediata é um/a servidor/a de carreira do IBAMA que sempre apoiou e defendeu a atuação dos servidores, dando condições para que a equipe atue de forma técnica, constantemente aprimorando as ações ligadas ao processo de licenciamento ambiental. Seus colegas na Superintendência não te ajudam muito, mas também não se opõem às suas ideias. No seu cotidiano de trabalho, nesses últimos anos, você não mobilizou apoio das associações de servidores do IBAMA.

Este processo de licenciamento “está no radar” dos dirigentes políticos do IBAMA, inclusive no radar de Salles e Bolsonaro: o projeto

abrange uma região de alto interesse para o agronegócio. Por isso, o processo de tem sido um tema de muito conflito entre o alto escalão do governo e as equipes técnicas do IBAMA.

Como você agiria em uma situação como essa? Assinale o seu grau de concordância com cada uma das frases a seguir:

End of Block: CENÁRIO 2

Start of Block: **CENÁRIO 3 (apoio de colegas)**

3 Apresentamos a seguir um cenário hipotético. Mesmo que não seja a sua área/escopo de atuação no IBAMA, procure se imaginar nesta situação e refletir como você agiria, se estivesse neste contexto:

Imagine que você está trabalhando em uma das Superintendências estaduais do IBAMA, no governo Bolsonaro (com Eduardo Bim na presidência do IBAMA e Ricardo Salles como Ministro do Meio Ambiente). Você é um/a servidor/a de carreira concursado/a, com muita experiência na análise de processos de licenciamento ambiental no meio socioeconômico – tendo conhecimento dos desafios dessa área, experiência de campo e de diálogo com comunidades impactadas por empreendimentos.

Você foi incumbido/a de elaborar um parecer técnico de um empreendimento com um alto potencial de impacto para comunidades tradicionais na área de influência direta e indireta de um projeto. Aspectos apontados pelas comunidades nas audiências públicas e no Estudo de Impacto Ambiental se chocam com interesses de Salles e Bolsonaro, cuja agenda política é a favor da aprovação/ licenciamento do projeto. O chefe da Superintendência é um militar, que já desencadeou Processos Administrativos (PADs) indevidos contra servidores do IBAMA, ao longo do governo Bolsonaro.

Seus colegas na Superintendência trabalham juntos/as há um bom tempo e sempre foram muito solidários/as entre si, dando apoio para que a equipe atue de forma técnica, constantemente discutindo e aprimorando as ações ligadas ao processo de licenciamento ambiental. Sua chefia mais imediata na Superintendência não te ajuda muito, mas também não se opõe às suas ideias. No seu cotidiano de trabalho, nesses últimos anos, você não mobilizou apoio das associações de servidores do IBAMA.

Este processo de licenciamento “está no radar” dos dirigentes políticos do IBAMA, inclusive no radar de Salles e Bolsonaro: o projeto abrange uma região de alto interesse para o agronegócio. Por isso, o processo de tem sido um tema de muito conflito entre o alto escalão do governo e as equipes técnicas do IBAMA.

Como você agiria em uma situação como essa? Assinale o seu grau de concordância com cada uma das frases a seguir:

End of Block: CENÁRIO 3

Start of Block: **CENÁRIO 4 (apoio de associações de servidores)**

3 Apresentamos a seguir um cenário hipotético. Mesmo que não seja a sua área/escopo de atuação no IBAMA, procure se imaginar nesta situação e refletir como você agiria, se estivesse neste contexto:

Imagine que você está trabalhando em uma das Superintendências estaduais do IBAMA, no governo Bolsonaro (com Eduardo Bim na presidência do IBAMA e Ricardo Salles como Ministro do Meio Ambiente). Você é um/a servidor/a de carreira concursado/a, com muita experiência na análise de processos de licenciamento ambiental no meio socioeconômico – tendo conhecimento dos desafios dessa área, experiência de campo e de diálogo com comunidades impactadas por empreendimentos.

Você foi incumbido/a de elaborar um parecer técnico de um empreendimento com um alto potencial de impacto para comunidades tradicionais na área de influência direta e indireta de um projeto. Aspectos apontados pelas comunidades nas audiências públicas e no Estudo de Impacto Ambiental se chocam com interesses de Salles e Bolsonaro, cuja agenda política é a favor da aprovação/ licenciamento do projeto. O chefe da Superintendência é um militar, que já desencadeou Processos Administrativos (PADs) indevidos contra servidores do IBAMA, ao longo do governo Bolsonaro.

Você tem contado com o apoio das associações de servidores do IBAMA, que têm realizado desde ações mais amplas, como campanhas contra o assédio institucional, até ações mais específicas de orientação jurídica a servidores que buscam por apoio. Recentemente, você contactou uma das associações e percebeu que você pode contar com esse suporte, no seu dia a dia de trabalho, caso precise. Sua chefia mais imediata e seus colegas na Superintendência não são grandes entusiastas das suas ideias e iniciativas. Mas eles não te prejudicam, nem se opõem a você ou suas atividades.

Este processo de licenciamento “está no radar” dos dirigentes políticos do IBAMA, inclusive no radar de Salles e Bolsonaro: o projeto abrange uma região de alto interesse para o agronegócio. Por isso, o processo de tem sido um tema de muito conflito entre o alto escalão do governo e as equipes técnicas do IBAMA.

Como você agiria em uma situação como essa? Assinale o seu grau de concordância com cada uma das frases apresentadas seguir.

End of Block: CENÁRIO 4

Start of Block: **PRÁTICAS CONFORME O CENÁRIO**

Como você agiria em uma situação como essa? Assinale o seu grau de concordância com as frases a seguir. (Se você precisar reler o texto sobre o cenário hipotético, clique no botão "voltar" ao final da página)

3-a Eu elaboraria o parecer técnico conforme a metodologia estabelecida em minha área. Porém, eu evitaria inserir (no parecer) certas palavras consideradas "polêmicas", que a gestão Bolsonaro/Salles possivelmente vetaria.

() Discordo totalmente () Discordo () Nem discordo nem concordo () Concordo () Concordo totalmente

3-b Eu elaboraria o parecer técnico conforme a metodologia estabelecida em minha área, considerando também a necessidade de que o Plano Básico Ambiental considere soluções contínuas de participação da comunidade e aprimoramento das ações compensatórias conforme necessidades e demandas no território.

() Discordo totalmente () Discordo () Nem discordo nem concordo () Concordo () Concordo totalmente

3-c Eu tentaria conversar com Superintendente (militar), tentando sensibilizá-lo quanto à importância de emitir um parecer em conformidade com as diretrizes técnicas do IBAMA, incentivando que ele "chancele" o parecer junto ao alto escalão em Brasília.

() Discordo totalmente () Discordo () Nem discordo nem concordo () Concordo () Concordo totalmente

3-d Mesmo em caso de divergência com superiores ou alto escalão do IBAMA (sobre conteúdos do parecer), eu formalizaria minha posição/postura técnica inicial (primeira versão do parecer) no Sistema Eletrônico de Informações (SEI).

() Discordo totalmente () Discordo () Nem discordo nem concordo () Concordo () Concordo totalmente

3-e Caso haja ingerência política no licenciamento (com vetos governamentais a temas centrais do parecer), eu incentivaria informalmente (sem o conhecimento do alto escalão do IBAMA) as comunidades locais a se manifestarem contra o governo.

() Discordo totalmente () Discordo () Nem discordo nem concordo () Concordo () Concordo totalmente

3-f Se possível, eu evitaria a tarefa de elaborar um parecer considerado "polêmico" e tentaria encaminhar essa atribuição a outro colega que esteja em mais condições de assumir riscos – pois, se eu me arriscar muito, posso ser alvo de um PAD ou algum outro tipo de assédio institucional.

() Discordo totalmente () Discordo () Nem discordo nem concordo () Concordo () Concordo totalmente

3-g Eu evitaria a tarefa de elaborar o parecer e solicitaria uma licença por motivos de saúde, já que o período tem sido marcado por enorme sobrecarga mental e situações de assédio institucional no trabalho.

() Discordo totalmente () Discordo () Nem discordo nem concordo () Concordo () Concordo totalmente

3.1 Considere a sua experiência de trabalho no IBAMA.

Em algum momento de sua carreira no IBAMA, você já trabalhou em processos de licenciamento ambiental?

() Sim () Não () Não sei / prefiro não responder

End of Block: PRÁTICAS CONFORME O CENÁRIO

Start of Block: PERCEPÇÕES EM RELAÇÃO À ORGANIZAÇÃO AO LONGO DO TEMPO

4 Considerando o IBAMA no Governo Bolsonaro (de 2019 a 2022), qual o seu grau de concordância com as frases a seguir?

- No governo Bolsonaro, os **dirigentes (cargos políticos) no IBAMA** agiram para defender interesses **contrários** à agenda de preservação ambiental.

() Discordo totalmente () Discordo () Nem discordo nem concordo () Concordo () Concordo totalmente

- Eu me identifico com a **agenda política ambiental** do governo Bolsonaro (2019-2022)

() Discordo totalmente () Discordo () Nem discordo nem concordo () Concordo () Concordo totalmente

5 Qual seu grau de concordância com a frase abaixo, considerando os diferentes governos ao longo do tempo:

"O governo ' _____ ' **interferiu na autonomia do IBAMA, impedindo que o IBAMA proteja o meio ambiente e assegure a sustentabilidade no uso dos recursos naturais**".

- Lula (2003-2010) () Discordo totalmente () Discordo () Nem discordo nem concordo () Concordo () Concordo totalmente

- Dilma (2011-2016) () Discordo totalmente () Discordo () Nem discordo nem concordo () Concordo () Concordo totalmente

- Temer (2016-2018) () Discordo totalmente () Discordo () Nem discordo nem concordo () Concordo () Concordo totalmente

- Bolsonaro (2019-2022) () Discordo totalmente () Discordo () Nem discordo nem concordo () Concordo () Concordo totalmente

6 Qual seu grau de concordância com a frase abaixo, considerando diferentes governos ao longo do tempo:

"No governo ' _____ ', os/as servidores/as tiveram **espaço** para **propor e discutir ideias** de política pública com o **quadro diretivo do IBAMA**"

- Lula (2003-2010) () *Discordo totalmente* () *Discordo* () *Nem discordo nem concordo* () *Concordo* () *Concordo totalmente*
- Dilma (2011-2016) () *Discordo totalmente* () *Discordo* () *Nem discordo nem concordo* () *Concordo* () *Concordo totalmente*
- Temer (2016-2018) () *Discordo totalmente* () *Discordo* () *Nem discordo nem concordo* () *Concordo* () *Concordo totalmente*
- Bolsonaro (2019-2022) () *Discordo totalmente* () *Discordo* () *Nem discordo nem concordo* () *Concordo* () *Concordo totalmente*

7 Considere o **conhecimento técnico** acumulado **pelos/as servidores/as no IBAMA, ao longo dos anos**.

Qual o seu grau de concordância com as frases abaixo:

- Os/as servidores/as do IBAMA entendem os problemas e desafios da política ambiental / socioambiental () *Discordo totalmente* () *Discordo* () *Nem discordo nem concordo* () *Concordo* () *Concordo totalmente*
- Seria difícil para uma outra organização estatal realizar o trabalho que o IBAMA é capaz de realizar. () *Discordo totalmente* () *Discordo* () *Nem discordo nem concordo* () *Concordo* () *Concordo totalmente*
- Independentemente de governos, o IBAMA (enquanto agência de Estado), tem uma boa reputação perante a opinião pública. () *Discordo totalmente* () *Discordo* () *Nem discordo nem concordo* () *Concordo* () *Concordo totalmente*

8 Você já foi vítima de assédio institucional no IBAMA, em algum destes governos?

- Lula (2003-2010) () Sim, fui assediado/a **muitas** vezes () Sim, fui assediado/a **poucas** vezes () Não fui assediado/a () Não trabalhei no IBAMA nessa época
- Dilma (2011-2016) () Sim, fui assediado/a **muitas** vezes () Sim, fui assediado/a **poucas** vezes () Não fui assediado/a () Não trabalhei no IBAMA nessa época
- Temer (2016-2018) () Sim, fui assediado/a **muitas** vezes () Sim, fui assediado/a **poucas** vezes () Não fui assediado/a () Não trabalhei no IBAMA nessa época
- Bolsonaro (2019-2022) () Sim, fui assediado/a **muitas** vezes () Sim, fui assediado/a **poucas** vezes () Não fui assediado/a () Não trabalhei no IBAMA nessa época

End of Block: PERCEPÇÕES EM RELAÇÃO À ORGANIZAÇÃO AO LONGO DO TEMPO

Start of Block: PRÁTICAS ATUAIS:

9 Considere as **suas práticas** formais ou informais no IBAMA no **Governo Bolsonaro (entre janeiro/2019 até outubro/2022, antes das eleições presidenciais de 2022)**, voltadas a promover a agenda ambiental ou socioambiental.

Qual o seu grau de concordância com as frases abaixo?

() *Discordo totalmente* () *Discordo* () *Nem discordo nem concordo* () *Concordo* () *Concordo totalmente*

Articuli uma rede ou coalizão de apoio (estatal ou não estatal) para defender a agenda ambiental / socioambiental.

Mobilizei a imprensa para defender a agenda ambiental / socioambiental.

Abordei ou negociei com tomadores de decisão para defender a agenda ambiental / socioambiental.

Desenvolvi projetos-piloto ou iniciativas experimentais para defender a agenda ambiental / socioambiental.

Usei meus conhecimentos técnicos (processos, notas técnicas, relatórios, leis etc.) - para defender a agenda ambiental / socioambiental.

Pratiquei ações “fora do radar” (sem o conhecimento) da alta administração - para defender a agenda ambiental / socioambiental.

Articuli apoio com **membros do Judiciário ou Ministério Público** para defender a agenda ambiental / socioambiental.

Articuli apoio com **Parlamentares** para defender a agenda ambiental / socioambiental.

Articuli apoio com atores dos **Estados ou Municípios** para defender a agenda ambiental / socioambiental.

Articuli apoio com **comunidades, movimentos sociais, ONGs, ou universidades** para defender a agenda ambiental / socioambiental.

Me engajei em ações coletivas **associativas ou sindicais** para defender a agenda ambiental / socioambiental.

Ajustei minha linguagem, formas de expressão e estratégias de comunicação, para facilitar diálogo, negociações ou evitar conflito.

End of Block: PRÁTICAS ATUAIS:

Start of Block: PERFIL

10 Quantos anos você tem de experiência de trabalho em organizações vinculadas ao Ministério do Meio Ambiente (MMA)?

(Considere o *seu tempo total de trabalho nas diferentes organizações: IBAMA, ou ICMBIO, ou outras organizações vinculadas ao MMA, seja como servidor/a concursado/a, ou terceirizado/a, ou estagiário/a, etc.*)

11 Atualmente, você está em qual carreira / cargo?

Especialista em Meio Ambiente / Analista administrativo

Especialista em Meio Ambiente / Analista ambiental

Especialista em Meio Ambiente / Auxiliar administrativo

Especialista em Meio Ambiente / Técnico administrativo

Especialista em Meio Ambiente / Técnico ambiental

ATPS

EPPGG

Outra carreira/cargo. Qual?

12 Atualmente, em qual região do Brasil você está trabalhando?

Unidade central - DF

Unidade descentralizada - Norte

Unidade descentralizada - Nordeste

Unidade descentralizada - Centro-Oeste

Unidade descentralizada - Sudeste

Unidade descentralizada – Sul

Outra situação. Qual?

13 Qual sua situação, hoje?

Servidor/a ativo/a

Servidor/a licenciado/a

Servidor/a aposentado/a

Outra situação. Qual?

19 Você já ocupou cargo de chefia no IBAMA? Quando?

- Lula (2003-2010) () Sim () Não () Não trabalhei no IBAMA nessa época

- Dilma (2011-2016) () Sim () Não () Não trabalhei no IBAMA nessa época

- Temer (2016-2018) () Sim () Não () Não trabalhei no IBAMA nessa época

- Bolsonaro (2019-2022) () Sim () Não () Não trabalhei no IBAMA nessa época

20 Atualmente, você está vinculado/a a alguma associação de servidores ou sindicato?

() Sim () Não

End of Block: PERFIL

Start of Block: OBSERVAÇÕES

21 Há algum outro aspecto que você gostaria de comentar sobre o IBAMA ou sobre os/as servidores/as, considerando desafios e possibilidades de atuação na área ambiental ou socioambiental? [open question]

End of Block: OBSERVAÇÕES

14 Qual seu gênero?

Masculino

Feminino

Categorias não binárias de gênero

Outro/a. Qual?

15 Qual a sua idade?

16 Escolaridade: Qual foi o último grau que você concluiu?

Nível fundamental

Nível médio

Ensino superior

Pós graduação *latu-sensu* (especialização)

Mestrado ou Doutorado

Outro. Qual?

17 No seu cotidiano de trabalho, em geral, com que frequência você interage com comunidades locais ou outros atores sociais/ atores não-estatais? (presencial ou remotamente)

Nunca

Raramente

De vez em quando

Frequentemente

Sempre

18 Antes de entrar no IBAMA, você já atuou em organizações em outros setores?

(Selecione uma ou mais organizações onde você já atuou antes)

Atuei em outras organizações no setor público

Atuei em organizações da sociedade civil / terceiro setor

Atuei no setor privado

Appendix 2. Balance test (article 1)

Regression models, considering the treatments (managers, peers and PAs' support) as dependent variables.

Variables	Managers' support		Coworkers' support		PAs' support	
	$\hat{\beta}$	SE	$\hat{\beta}$	SE	$\hat{\beta}$	SE
Age	1.670	(1.427)	-0.466	(1.518)	-0.662	(1.444)
Gender	0.069	(0.070)	0.054	(0.069)	-0.003	(0.069)
Education (1st level)	-0.019	(0.019)	-0.001	(0.023)	0.016	(0.026)
Education (2nd level)	-0.087	(0.053)	0.038	(0.059)	-0.043	(0.055)
Education (3rd level)	0.019	(0.058)	0.076	(0.060)	0.084	(0.060)
Education (4th level)	0.087	(0.069)	-0.113	(0.069)	-0.057	(0.069)
Working experience (years)	-1.202	(1.242)	-0.708	(1.360)	-1.684	(1.316)
PA membership	0.023	(0.067)	-0.002	(0.067)	0.038	(0.065)
Managerial experience	0.023	(0.069)	-0.025	(0.068)	-0.027	(0.068)
Type of unit	0.023	(0.068)	-0.051	(0.064)	0.006	(0.066)
Similar task (bureaucrat's routine similar to the vignette task)	0.048	(0.064)	0.032	(0.065)	-0.032	(0.065)
Organizational commitment index	-0.012	(0.181)	0.091	(0.185)	-0.288	(0.189)

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Appendix 3. Interview guide

A - INDIVIDUAL PROFILE:

- What is your educational background and professional trajectory before joining the organization?
- What has been your trajectory since joining the organization?
- How your worldviews, values, ideas, and personal projects relate to the organization's institutional mission?
- Are you affiliated with professional associations? How do you engage with them?
- What are your perceptions regarding the professional association's actions?

B - ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT & PRACTICES (BOLSONARO GOVERNMENT)

- What is your daily work routine in the organization? What are your responsibilities and main activities?
- What are your main skills that you consider important in fulfilling the organization's institutional mission?
- How is your relationship with superiors and colleagues? How do you deal with divergence from political superiors?
- How do you perceive your ability to present ideas to the organization, act creatively, and autonomously? (organizational aspects)
- Currently, how do you work to promote policy-changes or improvements in policies, defending the organizational mission?
 - What are the main achievements? Could you give some examples?
 - What are the main challenges? Could you give some examples?
 - Have you adapted practices since 2019?

C - PRACTICES (LULA, DILMA, TEMER GOVERNMENTS)

- What were your work practices - throughout the various administrations - to promote policy-changes or improvements in policies, fulfilling the organization's institutional mission?
 - What are the main achievements? Could you give some examples?
 - What are the main challenges? Could you give some examples?
 - Have you adapted practices throughout administrations?
 - How do you perceive your ability to work over time in the organization? (organizational context and organizational support for bureaucrats' work)

D - RELATION BETWEEN THE ORGANIZATION AND THE POLICY NETWORK

- How do you view the organization's relations with other government agencies? (other Ministries, executive at the subnational context, parliamentarians, Public Prosecution Service, etc.).
 - How do you see these relations over time?
 - Who are the most important partners? (key state-actors of the policy network)
- How do you view the organization's relations with other government agencies? (social movements, NGOs, experts/academics, participatory instances)
 - How do you see these relations over time?
 - Who are the most important partners? (key non-state actors of the policy network)

E - OPEN QUESTION: Is there anything else that you would like to highlight, considering your work practices, the organization and its challenges?

Appendix 4. Categories adopted in the coding process (article 2)

1 st round of coding (Macro-codes)	2 nd round of coding (Detailed codes / subcategories)	3 rd round of coding (Aggregated codes, based on patterns identified in the 2 nd round of coding)
Professional Associations' (PAs) support	Connection with external social actors (social movements, NGOs, local communities, media, academia, etc.)	(i) Building coalitions and articulating support from external actors
	Connection with external state actors (Public Prosecutors' Office, Legislative, subnational governments, etc.)	
	Exchange and learning among peers	(ii) Fostering a sense of shared understanding and belonging
	Legal support	(iii) Providing individual support
	Financial support	
	Emotional /psychological support	
	Reports, denunciations & collective ways to avoid setbacks	(iv) Organizing collective actions of support and resistance
Advocacy practices	(v) Advocating for policy solutions	
Bureaucrats' approaches of dissent action:	Formal practices	Legalist approach
	Open (transparent) practices	
	Open & secret practices	Guerrilla government approach
	Informal practices	
	Sabotage practices	
	Secret practices	Policy entrepreneurship approach
	Practices aimed at influencing policy change	
	Practices aimed at influencing gradual policy improvements (policy ad-on)	
	Practices aimed at preventing policies setback / policy dismantling	

Appendix 5 . Balance tests (article 2)

Variables	Professional Associations' support	
	$\hat{\beta}$	SE
Age	-0.31	(1.48)
Gender	-0.02	(0.07)
Education (1st level)	0.02	(0.03)
Education (2nd level)	-0.08	(0.06)
Education (3rd level)	0.08	(0.06)
Education (4th level)	-0.02	(0.07)
Working experience (years)	-0.81	(1.34)
Professional Association membership	0.03	(0.07)
Managerial experience	-0.04	(0.07)
Type of unit	0.01	(0.07)
Similar task (bureaucrat's routine similar to the vignette task)	-0.01	(0.07)
Bureaucrat's career status dummy (1=active)	0.02	(0.04)
Bureaucrat's agreement with Bolsonaro policy agenda (1=strongly agree; 5=strongly disagree)	0.04	(0.10)
Guerrilla government profile	0.14	(0.17)
Legalist profile	0.13	(0.15)
Policy entrepreneur profile	0.24*	(0.13)

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Appendix 6. Categories adopted in the coding process (article 3)

1 st round of coding (Macro-codes)	2 nd round of coding (Detailed codes / subcategories)	3 rd round of coding (Aggregated codes, based on patterns identified in the 2 nd round of coding)
Constraints by government	<p>Abusive supervision / PADs</p> <p>Censorship: Prohibition from receiving awards, participating in congresses or training processes</p> <p>Cleavages accommodation</p> <p>Conflict: Executive's agenda vs. agencies' mission</p> <p>Death threats or other types of personal threats</p> <p>Distrust and attacks on the technical expertise of bureaucrats</p> <p>Executive leadership connections with interest groups (opposed to the agency's mission)</p> <p>External connections</p> <p>Feelings about democratic backsliding</p> <p>Higher ups pressure and misalignment</p> <p>Individualism, fear, coworkers conflict, cleavages</p> <p>Legal insecurity to work</p> <p>Less resources and poor infrastructure for work</p> <p>Low institutional and high presence of NGOs in agencies</p> <p>Militarization</p> <p>Organizational reforms</p> <p>Policy dismantling</p> <p>Political interference in agency autonomy</p> <p>Political oppressions against bureaucrats</p> <p>Political and higher ups turnover, leadership crisis</p> <p>Politization or appointment of politicians (without expertise) in technical positions</p> <p>Public opinion and offenders' perception of the Executive's position</p> <p>Removal and relocation of civil servants without their knowledge</p> <p>Verticalization / Top-down management</p>	<p>Bureaucratic cleavages: divergence among coworkers' views</p> <p>Climate of fear within the organization</p> <p>Death threats and other personal threats against bureaucrats</p> <p>Distrust and attacks on bureaucrats' technical knowledge</p> <p>Forced removal/relocation of bureaucrats</p> <p>Government and political appointees' misalignment with agency's mission</p> <p>Governmental lawsuits against bureaucrats (PADs)</p> <p>Legal insecurity (conflicting orders and lack of leadership support)</p> <p>Loss of agency's connections with social actors</p> <p>Low institutional and NGOs' influence within the agencies</p> <p>Militarization of the agencies</p> <p>Organizational reforms</p> <p>Policy dismantling</p> <p>Political appointees' abusive supervision</p> <p>Political interference in agency's autonomy</p> <p>Political persecution of bureaucrats</p> <p>Political shock, high turnover of political appointees, leadership crises</p> <p>Top-down coercive managerial approach</p> <p>Various types of censorship (training, conferences, publications, media)</p>
Core organizational constraints (long-lasting constraints)	<p>Bad management and lack of planning</p> <p>Bureaucratic cleavages</p> <p>Burden on bureaucrats</p> <p>Career fragilities</p> <p>Career poorly structured and undervalued</p> <p>Counter-hegemonic agendas over time</p> <p>Evasion of bureaucrats</p> <p>Gender issues</p> <p>Institutional distrust or conflictual relation</p> <p>Organizational infrastructure</p> <p>PADs against bureaucrats</p> <p>Tensions with NGOs</p> <p>Issues -organizational culture / context</p>	<p>Bureaucrats' exit (due to inadequate organizational conditions to fulfill the agency's mission)</p> <p>Career poorly structured and undervalued by the state</p> <p>Challenges for interinstitutional and intersectoral coordination actions</p> <p>Cleavages and divergence among peers (diverging work approaches or policy views)</p> <p>Climate of persecution within the branches (PADs)</p> <p>Conflicting attributions and work overload</p> <p>Environmental and indigenous domains historically excluded from Executive's priorities</p> <p>External agencies' pressure and requirements misaligned with the agency's mission</p> <p>High turnover of political appointees within the agency</p> <p>Inadequate infrastructure and budget to work</p> <p>Insufficient staff to meet the agency's and policy needs</p> <p>Low institutional / weaknesses in the administrative managerial procedures</p> <p>Low level of trust from external actors</p>
Opportunities by government	<p>Meso-level window of opportunity</p> <p>Channels enabling collaboration</p> <p>Decentralized units and local innovation</p> <p>External connections</p> <p>External demands</p> <p>Formative processes and professionalism</p> <p>Heads respecting bureaucrats' work</p> <p>Higher ups openness towards PE</p>	<p>Bottom-up managerial approach</p> <p>Bureaucratic cleavages: new types of alliances among coworkers</p> <p>Bureaucrats (in-house staff) appointed to top-level positions</p> <p>External connections with state and non-state actors</p> <p>Heterogeneity in politicians' threats (less attacked sectors or units)</p> <p>New management and administrative work processes</p>

1st round of coding (Macro-codes)	2nd round of coding (Detailed codes / subcategories)	3rd round of coding (Aggregated codes, based on patterns identified in the 2 nd round of coding)
	<p>Infrastructure and resources to work Management processes and flows Manager influence Peers support Politicians needing bureaucrats Professional Associations influence Reputation built over time Subnational context and opportunities</p>	<p>Organizational climate for innovation Organizational windows of opportunity Political appointees' dependence on bureaucrats to deliver public services Political appointees' openness to bureaucrats' ideas Professionalization: public admission exam (new cohorts of bureaucrats) Professionalization: training processes and shared understandings Trust and collaboration (among minister, directors, supervisors, teams)</p>
Core organizational opportunities (long-lasting opportunities)	<p>Agencies' external connections Agency "disconnected capillarity" Bureaucrats' commitment Courses such as Acadebio External trust Issues -organizational culture / context Professionalism Manager support Organizational environment favorable to innovations Participatory institutions Peers support Reputation and expertise Professional association support</p>	<p>Bureaucrats' high levels of organizational commitment (administrative esprit de corps) Coworker support and collaborative teams Agency expertise / professional knowledge Professional associations' support Managers' support Existing legal framework Organizational autonomy (within specific teams) External agencies' support aligned with the agencies' mission Programs with international funding and partnership (enabling intersectoral actions) Mission-oriented training processes Exchanges with external governmental agencies (national and international level) Bottom-up approaches to work Teams working with interdisciplinary and interconnected approaches</p>
(PE) - Policy Entrepreneurship Practices	<p>Propose normative, laws, institutional design work New working methodologies New policy instruments Policy add-on Bolsonaro Policy add-on Dilma Policy add-on Lula Policy add-on Temer New policy Bolsonaro New policy Dilma New policy Temer New policy Lula</p>	<p>Organizational networking Governmental networking Civil society networking International networking Rule-changing New work-methodology / policy instrument Experimentation through pilot projects Problem framing Solution seeking Political scenario risk-assessment / long-term planning Arena shifting (or venue shopping) Common-ground solution Minimize damage Information dissemination Creative use of data and Artificial Intelligence</p>