



UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE GOIÁS  
FACULDADE DE LETRAS  
DEPARTAMENTO DE LÍNGUAS ESTRANGEIRAS  
CENTRO DE AVALIAÇÃO DE SUFICIÊNCIA EM LÍNGUA ESTRANGEIRA



## **PROVA DE SUFICIÊNCIA EM LÍNGUA INGLESA - 16 de junho de 2018**

### **FOLHA DE TEXTO**

#### **CRYSTAL UNCLEAR: A FUTURE FOR WATER RESOURCES IN BRAZIL**

Boasting 12% to 16% of the Earth's available fresh water, Brazil has an abundance of this resource that nature freely provides to its people and its economy. Each inhabitant can count on over 43,000 m<sup>3</sup> per year of water from its sources, but only 0.7% of it ends up being used. In comparison, countries like Algeria and regions like Palestine use almost half of their available water resources. Other nations, like Saudia Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, need to obtain it by desalinizing ocean water.

But it only appears that Brazil enjoys a comfortable water supply situation. In the first place, there is a water distribution problem. The liquid is much more abundant in areas where the population is small and where forests are most intact, as in the Amazon. In the country's coastal areas, as in the southeastern and northeastern regions (where 70% of the population is concentrated), many urban centers already face supply difficulties, worsened by droughts like those which, this year, hit São Paulo, and which, in 2012 and 2013, castigated the semi-arid northeast.

To further darken the horizon, global warming could increase supply risks. With the rising emissions of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and other greenhouse gases, caused by the combustion of fossil fuels and other human activities, the Earth's atmosphere retains more solar heat close to the surface. So the temperature of that air increases, the very source of energy that fuels winds and storms. Circulation patterns of atmospheric air currents are altered. Some regions will suffer more serious and frequent dry spells, while others will be more prone to floods. This could happen should the results of future climate simulations done by computer models prove accurate, of course.

#### **MORE HEAT, LESS RAIN**

The Brazilian Climate Change Panel (PBMC), a committee with some of the country's most respected climatologists, made projections about probable climate changes in various regions, but with different degrees of reliability. The most reliable are for the Amazon, northeastern and southern regions. They show a 5°C to 6°C increase in temperature and a 40% to 45% decrease in precipitation for the Amazon by the end of the century, along with a 10% reduction in rainfall in the next five years.

For the semi-arid northeast, projections respectively show a 3.5°C to 4.5°C increase in temperature and a 40% to 50% decrease in rainfall. For the southern pampas, sprawling flatlands, the projections respectively show a 2.5°C to 3°C increase in temperature and a 35% to 40% increase in rainfall. For other regions the reliability of computer forecasts was considered low. For the southeastern region's Atlantic Rain Forest, the PBMC forecast is for a precipitation increase of 25% to 30% and a 2.5°C to 3°C increase in temperature.

It is certainly not possible to affirm that the recent droughts in southeastern and northeastern Brazil – or the severe floodings in Rondônia state in 2014 – have any direct relation to global or regional climate change. Nor can we exclude the possibility of a direct relation. On the other hand, it is certain

that these calamities, as well as the multi-billion-dollar costs that the society and the economy must contend with, constitute a fair sample of what we should expect in the coming decades if global warming gets worse.

During four months, a team of reporters, four graphic artists, and two video professionals addressed these natural disasters to try to provide a more detailed picture of them and translate their complexity into this comprehensive, multimedia report, coordinated by Marcelo Leite.

The reports of the team are not encouraging. In all the situations profiled, be it too many people (São Paulo), too much water (Rondônia) or too little water (the northeastern region), it becomes clear that Brazil has still not awakened to the need to adapt to extreme, climatic events –regardless of whether they are affected by global changes– that impact the most basic human need: water for drinking, bathing, raising crops, and fishing.

Adapted from Folha de S. Paulo, 15/09/2014. Available at <http://arte.folha.uol.com.br/ambiente/2014/09/15/crise-da-agua/en>