

Opinion: Brazil is gaslighting its way to a climate misinformation catastrophe | The Washington Post

By Robert Muggah and Mac Margolis

May 10, 2022

Brazilians know all about fake news. Digital hucksters have attacked the integrity of Brazil's electronic voting system, baselessly accused adversaries of "teaching" homosexuality in the classroom and promoted faith-based covid-19 treatments, all with a nod and a wink from the presidential palace. Now the social media mobs, with the blessings of Brazil's "cabinet of hate," are trolling the world's largest tropical rainforest.

A new post-truth frontier is worrying anywhere. Throw in Brazil's penchant for culture wars and caustic polarization, along with one of the planet's worst environmental crises, and you have the makings of a climate misinformation catastrophe.

It is no surprise that the country that leads the planet in greenhouse gas emissions released from hinterland deforestation also excels in counterfeit climate news. And with deepening societal divisions and agitprop, evidence-based policymaking and any expectation of reining in dangerous climate change are also going up in smoke.

Where disinformation blossoms in Brazil, President Jair Bolsonaro is never far. As forests fell and burned at record rates in 2019, he risibly blamed nongovernmental organizations and their putative foreign sponsors for the conflagration, fanning the flame of online conspiracies. Lately, he has hyped the "new Indian" who is purportedly eager to welcome enterprise — not least gold prospecting — on native lands, even as waves of indigenous protests decry the wildcat miners' onslaught.

[...]

Source: [Opinion: Brazil is gaslighting its way to a climate misinformation catastrophe | The Washington Post](#)