

# Marcelo S. O. Goncalves

📍 Durham, NC, USA    🌐 [www.marcelo-goncalves.com](http://www.marcelo-goncalves.com)    ✉ [ms1019@duke.edu](mailto:ms1019@duke.edu)    ☎ 984-377-1476

## Education

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**Duke University** Durham, NC, USA  
*PhD in Public Policy* July 2026  
*MA Economics*

- Dissertation: Essays on the Political Economy of Sustainable Development
- **Committee:** Sarah Bermeo (Chair), Alex Pfaff, Subhrendu Pattanayak, Edmund Malesky.

**University of California, San Diego** San Diego, CA, USA  
*Master of International Affairs* June 2018

- Concentration: Public Policy
- Additional Certificates: Policy Design and Evaluation; Quantitative Analysis

**University of Brasilia** Brasilia, Brazil  
*MA Political Science* April 2007  
*BA Political Science* March 2005

**National School of Public Administration** Brasilia, Brazil  
*Specialization in Public Policy and Management* June 2006

## Skills & Additional Training

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**Languages:** Portuguese (native), English (advanced), Spanish (Intermediate), French (beginner)

**Statistical packages and Data Science Tools:** STATA, R, Python, Git

**Geospatial and Remote Sensing:** ArcGIS, Quantum GIS, Google Earth Engine

**Other tools:** MS Office, Qualtrics, L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X

**Additional training:** Summer Institute in Computational Social Science - SICSS (2022); The Institute for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research - IQMR, Syracuse University (2023)

## Publications

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### Peer-reviewed publications

- Building Climate-Resilience in the Global South: How a Decentralized Water Policy Alleviates the Consequences of Climate Shocks in Brazil - *Journal of Environmental Economics and Management (JEEM)*, *Forthcoming*
- Article: [Book Bans in Political Context: Evidence from U.S. Public Schools](#) [🔗](#) (2024) *PNAS Nexus*. (with Isabelle Langrock, Jack LaViolette, & Katie Spoon)
- Book Chapter: [Data-Driven Implementation: The Role of Information and Technology in Public Responses to Social Emergencies](#) [🔗](#). in: *Pandemic, Lockdown, and Digital Transformation: Challenges and Opportunities for Public Administration, NGOs, and Businesses* (2021): 25-45. (With Bruno B. Cardoso)

### Working Papers/ Work in Progress

- The Political Logic of Persistent Deforestation: Electoral Incentives and Public Goods in the Brazilian Amazon (with Pablo Beramendi) - *Submitted/ Editorial Decision Pending*.
- [Grassroots Guardians: How collective institutions Amplify Efforts Against Deforestation in Brazil](#) [🔗](#). (With Mateo Villamizar-Chaparro & Subhrendu Pattanayak)
- Institutions, Incentives, and Identity in Land Use Decisions: A Micro-Level Analysis of Deforestation Drivers in the Global South (with Paula J. Sarmiento)
- Access to Water and Climate Change: Adaptation, Fertility Decisions and Birth Outcomes in the Brazilian Semiarid Region (with Marcos Rangel)
- Environmental Governance and Land-Based Conflict: How Environmental Policy Reduces Conflict in the Amazon

## Policy reports

- [Climate Related Game Changers: Enhancing Adaptation Program Impact to Address Climate Game Changers](#) [↗](#). Research Technical Assistance Center: Washington, DC. Briefing available [here](#) [↗](#). (with Sarah Bermeo, Sarah W. Dickerson, & Paula J. Sarmiento)

## Book chapters

- “O Programa Cisternas como Estratégia de Adaptação Climática (The Cistern Program as a Climate Adaptation Strategy)”. in: *Água para colher futuro: 20 anos do Programa Cisternas* (2024).
- “[Food security and nutrition and the human right to adequate food in Brazil: monitoring indicators and the constitution of 1988 to today](#)” [↗](#) (2010). Conselho Nacional de Segurança Alimentar e Nutricional, Brasília, DF. 284 p.

## Teaching

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### Instructor of Records

*Duke University*

*Durham, NC, USA*

*2025*

- Political Economy of the Climate and Environment. Graduate seminar for PhD and advanced Master’s students.

### Teaching Assistant

*Duke University*

*Durham, NC, USA*

*2022-2024*

- Graduate-level courses: Introduction to Statistics; Causal Inference; Master’s Project; and Evaluation of Public Expenditures.

### Teaching Assistant

*University of California, San Diego*

*San Diego, CA, USA*

*2016-2018*

- Undergraduate courses: Introduction to Statistics, Power and Justice, Introduction to International Relations.
- Graduate courses: Globalization.

### Lecturer

*Centro Universitário do Distrito Federal (UDF)*

*Brasilia, Brazil*

*Feb-July 2013*

- Public Policy Evaluation (Undergraduate course).

### Lecturer

*Getúlio Vargas Foundation (FGV)*

*Brasilia, Brazil*

*Feb-July 2013*

- Planning and Budgeting for the MBA in Public Management.

*National School of Public Administration (ENAP)*

*2008-2012*

- Professional courses in topics such as Brazilian State and Politics, Globalization, Public Administration and Development, and Ethics and Politics.

*University of Brasilia*

*2006 & 2008*

- Introduction to Political Science.

## Grants, Awards and Fellowships

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- 2025-2026: von der Heyden Global Fellowship, competitive fellowship and Duke Fellowship (\$31,875)
- 2024-2026: Social impact assessment of FSC in Brazil, awarded by Center for International Forestry Research (\$56,000)
- 2024: CLACS Research Travel Grant (\$3,000)
- 2021-2023: Latin American and Caribbean Studies Fellowship Award, Duke University (\$10,000)
- 2021-2022: Race and the Professions Fellowship - The Kenan Institute for Ethics at Duke University (\$3,000)
- 2017-2018: Dean's Fellow for academic excellence, student leadership and community involvement
- 2016-2018: Global School of Policy and Strategy, University of California, San Diego - Fellowship Award (\$28,500)
- 2005-2006: Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education (CAPES) - Graduate Fellowship
- 2004-2005: Vocation for Diplomacy Award – Rio Branco Institute (Brazilian Diplomacy Academy), (R\$25,000)
- 2002-2004: Special Training Program (fellowship granted by the Ministry of Education to high-performing Undergraduate Students)

## Professional & Policy Experience

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Before starting the PhD, I served as a [Specialist in Public Policy and Management](#) within the Brazilian Federal Civil Service. In this capacity, I have held the following leadership and technical roles:

### Senior Policy Advisor

*Ministry of Social Development*

*Brasilia, Brazil  
Jan 2019-Aug 2021*

- Deputy Chief of Staff of the Secretariat of Evaluation and Information Management (SAGI).
- Collaborated in the design and execution of 32 research projects, including two randomized controlled trials (RCTs), to evaluate the effectiveness of federal programs.
- Provided technical inputs that informed emergency economic relief for low-income households during the COVID-19 pandemic and improved the design and effectiveness of strategic federal programs, including the National Housing Program and the *Bolsa Família* conditional cash transfer program.

### Joint-Secretary for Racial Equality

*Ministry of Human Rights*

*Brasilia, Brazil  
Jun 2018-Jan 2019*

- Led a national secretariat overseeing two departments, two national councils, and two supporting units, managing a team of approximately 70 professionals to advance key policy initiatives.
- Managed the implementation of nearly 200 projects nationwide, focusing on the promotion of human rights and advancing racial equality.
- Co-chaired the National Council for Racial Equality, driving federal policies to promote racial justice and equality across Brazil.

### Chief of Staff

*National Council for Food Security*

*Brasilia, Brazil  
Aug 2014-Aug 2016*

- Led a 20-person team responsible for providing strategic advice to the Council and the Federal Government on food security and social policy issues.
- Provided technical inputs and authored reports that informed the design of national food security policies, including the National Policy for Adequate Access to Food (PNAA), the National School Feeding Program (PNAE), and smallholder development initiatives.
- Held a joint appointment as General Coordinator of Support for Local Agri-Food Public Systems (Ministry of Social Development), in charge of enhancing coordination between federal and local food security policies.

### Policy Analysis Manager

*Office of the Presidency of the Republic of Brazil*

*Brasilia, Brazil  
Dec 2012-Aug 2014*

- Contributed to the planning and execution of national surveys and qualitative assessments to evaluate citizens' perceptions of federal public policies. Some of the quantitative assessments were pioneering efforts, becoming the first of their kind to cover the entire country.

**Advisor***National Council for Food Security and Ministry of Social Development**Brasilia, Brazil  
Feb 2009-Dec 2012*

- Drafted policy memoranda to support the Council's stance on key social programs implemented by the Brazilian government.
- Held a joint appointment as Technical Advisor to the Ministry of Social Development, advising on policies related to social welfare and development initiatives.

**Project Planning Manager***Ministry of Labor and Employment**Brasilia, Brasil  
Feb 2008-Feb 2009*

- Led an 18-person team responsible for planning and executing the Ministry of Labor's qualification program for low-income, unemployed workers.
- Developed and implemented projects that benefited approximately 270,000 workers over a two-year period.

**Advisor***Ministry of Labor and Employment**Brasilia, Brasil  
Jun 2006-Feb 2008*

- Implemented a budget management program that improved efficiency across the Ministry's 513 decentralized offices, transforming a 10% deficit into a 2% surplus.

**Research Assistant***Diferencial Consultoria**Brasilia, Brasil  
May-Oct 2004*

- Researched and organized data on educational policy to support the elaboration of an educational reform in Brazil

**Consulting Projects**

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- **CIFOR-ICRAF, 2025–2026:** Evaluation of environmental certification schemes, with a focus on development outcomes beyond environmental indicators.
- **Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), 2025–2026:** Impact evaluation of water quality on educational outcomes in Brazil.
- **USAID RTAC, 2022:** Assessment of climate “game changers” and requirements for adaptation interventions, emphasizing theory of change, vulnerability metrics, and foresight analysis.
- **Oxfam International, 2022:** Prepared background inputs for the report *Doing Business on Uneven Ground* [↗](#), examining land inequality in agri-food supply chains.

**Recent Presentations and Talks**

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**Camp Resources***30<sup>th</sup> Camp Resources**Asheville, NC, USA  
Aug, 2025*

- Institutions, Incentives, and Identity: Understanding Deforestation Drivers in the Global South.

**EAERE***30<sup>th</sup> Annual Conf. of the European Assoc. of Environmental Economists**Bergen, Norway  
Jun, 2025*

- Building Climate Resilience in the Global South: How a Decentralized Water Policy Alleviates Climate Shocks Impacts in Low-Income Communities.

**Forest and People***Forest and people: from skyview to local dynamics. Paris School of Economics**Aussois, France  
Jun, 2025*

- The Political Logic of Persistent Deforestation: Electoral Incentives and Public Goods in the Brazilian Amazon

**LAERE***Congress of the Latin American and the Caribbean Assoc. of Environmental and Resource Economists**Bogota, Colombia  
March, 2025*

- Building Climate Resilience in the Global South: How a Decentralized Water Policy Alleviates Climate Shocks Impacts in Low-Income Communities.

**16<sup>th</sup> EFD Annual Meeting***The 16th Environment for Development (EFD) Annual Meeting**Kampala, Uganda  
Sep, 2022*

- Institutions for Sustainable Development: Evidence on collective titling, deforestation, and development

## Other Projects / Service / Outreach

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- Volunteer Work: Co-founder of the projects [Politeia](#) and [Politics at the School](#). Projects designed to promote civic values and educate young students about political participation and democratic institutions.
- Reviewer: *Journal of Environmental Economics and Management*.
- Reviewer: World Congress of Environmental and Resource Economists.
- Reviewer: *Nexus: The Global South Journal* (Undergraduate Journal)

## Academic References

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Below is a list of academic references who are familiar with my research and professional background. They may be contacted in the order presented.

1. **Sarah Bermeo** (sarah.bermeo@duke.edu), Associate Professor of Public Policy and Political Science at Duke University (dissertation committee chair).
2. **Edmund Malesky** (ejm5@duke.edu), Professor of Public Policy and Political Science at Duke University. Director of Duke Center for International Development (DCID).
3. **Pablo Beramendi** (pablo.beramendi@duke.edu), Professor of Political Science.
4. **Subhrendu Pattanayak** (subhrendu.pattanayak@duke.edu), Oak Foundation Distinguished Professor of Environmental and Energy Policy
5. **Alex Pfaff** (alex.pfaff@duke.edu), Professor of Public Policy, Economics and Environment at Duke University.
6. **Marcos Rangel** (marcos.rangel@duke.edu), Associate Professor of Economics.