

Sao Paulo sets precedent for role of government intervention in ecological restoration projects

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The role of national governments in ecological or environmental conservation remains contentious the world over. While scientists and campaigners alike often demand that governments regulate and encourage restoration projects; financial priorities and conflicts with land owners or corporations makes such interventions politically difficult.

However, as [Restoration Ecology](#) reports, Brazil is one of a handful of [developing nations](#), alongside South Africa, Namibia, India, Costa Rica and Vietnam, where [public policy](#) and detailed legislation are being developed to promote, encourage and enforce terms for restoration and conservation projects.

The state government in São Paulo provides a test case and precedent for government intervention with legislation SMA 08-2008. The bill sets clear requirements for the minimum number of native tree species to be reached within a given period of time in restoration projects, and the precise proportion of functional groups or threatened species to be included when reforestation with native species is used as a restoration technique.

The legislation has received a mixed response among Brazilian restoration ecologists on the appropriateness of such detailed legal rules. For supporters, the rules help increase the chances that mandatory

projects of ecological restoration will succeed.

However, opponents argue that there is no single way to achieve effective ecosystem restoration, and that the existing science is far from sufficient to establish standardized technical and methodological norms, or to justify that such norms be imposed.

More information: The abstract of this study is available free online: [onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10 ... 0X.2011.00815.x/full](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/1111.00815.x/full)

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