

# ASSESSING GREEN GOVERNANCE IN PRACTICE: CONFLICT AND CONTRADICTION IN SUSTAINABLE HYDROPOWER DEVELOPMENT IN THE AMAZON

*Alexandra Sabo*

Department of Geography, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL, USA

This paper presents a case study from the Madeira River, the largest tributary of the Amazon river, in northwestern Brazil where the Santo Antonio and Jirau dams were recently constructed for the production of hydropower. Both dams are climate change mitigation projects and as such followed plans to ensure environmental, social, and economic sustainability. However, in practice, many of the projects' sustainability goals have fallen short, leaving communities impoverished and without access to the resources on which they are dependent. While many technological and institutional advances have been made since the destructive projects of Brazil's past, many of the same socio-environmental impacts persist. This paper analyzes evolving governance for socio-environmental impact mitigation throughout the dam building process. The study employed semi-structured interviews in 3 dam-impacted communities, as well as interviews with state and non-state actors charged with impact governance, document analysis of plans for resource governance and impact management, and participant observation. Drawing on an environmental governance framework and assemblage theory, it demonstrates not only the gaps between planning and practice but also how governance plays out in practice, and thus begins to shed light on the *why* behind the gaps.

**PRESENTER BIO:** Alexandra Sabo is a Water Institute Graduate Fellow and PhD Candidate in Geography at the University of Florida. Her research focuses on the multi-scalar governance of climate change and energy development, the socio-spatial implications of energy development and energy transitions, and the forms of social mobilization that these processes generate.