



The Spoiling of Land and the Degradation of Work in the New Pulp Production  
Areas of Brazil

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**Introduction:** This project stems from three fundamental observations. The first is that, currently, we are seeing the initial and ongoing stages of intense movement and transfer in the international pulp and paper production chain, from the traditional production countries in the Northern Hemisphere to the South, brought about by the wish to reduce production costs and get round the restrictions imposed by work and environmental legislation in the key countries. Secondly, it is also true that internally in Brazil there have also been moves to relocate production, in the new pulp and paper manufacturing plant are being transferred and installed from preference in new areas far from the dynamic centre of the national economy, the south-east, and with no tradition in this type of activity. This is so in the states of MatoGrosso do Sul, Tocantins, Bahia, Maranhão and Piauí, attracting investors mainly because of relative advantages in the price of land, since each large-scale project requires hundreds of thousands of hectares of land to create adjacent bases for the monoculture of trees, mainly the eucalyptus species. Another important factor governing location is the availability of abundant supplies of water, necessary both for the cultivation of eucalyptus and for industrial processing. And finally, it was found in a previous research that, to a large extent, companies make use of a flexible and pragmatic accumulation regime, imposing links and working conditions that are extremely dangerous and degrading to workers, a fact which has resulted in frequent riots and strikes in the areas surveyed.

**Methodology and development:** The aim of the research is to understand the geographical dynamics of work in the production of pulp and paper in Brazil, and its relationship with global developments in the sector at the present time, by means of an analysis of the appropriation and exploitation of nature and the workforce. In order to do this we will seek to combine the methods of quantitative research (secondary data) with qualitative methods (participant observation and making semi-structured interviews), giving great importance to field work in the areas under study, that is, Brazil's newest regions of eucalyptus monoculture and pulp and paper production (eastern Mato Grosso do Sul, southern Tocantins, southern Bahia, western Maranhão and western Piauí). Theoretical reference will be made to authors who base themselves on historical and dialectical materialism, allowing us to understand the phenomena under study as part of an uncontrollable and irremediable systemic of socio-metabolism of capital in the era of globalization. **Final thoughts:** Even in the early stages, we anticipate the research providing material for a critical debate concerning, in particular, the fallacy of the green economy and sustainability involving economic activities around the eucalyptus monoculture and pulp and paper industry, as a way of legitimizing environmental disasters and social and labour breaches.

**Keywords:** spoiling of land, degradation of work, productive restructuring, pulp.