

Asymmetry between participatory channels in Brazil's 1st National Conference on the sustainable development goals: digital invisibility of territorially legitimate proposals

Sustainable Development Goals / ONU

SDG 16 — Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions | SDG 17 — Partnerships for the Goals

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Abstract. Brazilian national conferences now operate through a hybrid participatory architecture in which in-person preparatory stages feed a consolidated national record, while a parallel digital stage submits proposals to public scrutiny and voting. This study examines whether both channels display the same content, using the 1st Brazilian National Conference on the Sustainable Development Goals (2026) as a case. Two independent official bases for Thematic Axis 2 (Environmental Sustainability) were compared: the National Proposal Book, issued by the conference organising committee, and the Digital Stage hosted on the Brasil Participativo platform, retrieved through its public GraphQL Application Programming Interface. Proposal codes were extracted, paired by originating conference and federation unit, and analysed through chi-square tests of homogeneity, odds ratios and concentration indices. Of the 186 Axis 2 proposals consolidated in the National Proposal Book, only 88 (47.3%) appeared in the Digital Stage, leaving 98 proposals (52.7%) outside public digital deliberation. Migration rates ranged from 30.8% in the Northeast to 56.0% in the North; the global homogeneity test was borderline ($p = 0.089$), yet Northeastern proposals showed significantly lower odds of digital migration (odds ratio = 0.383; 95% confidence interval 0.194–0.755). Territorial concentration increased in the digital channel (Herfindahl-Hirschman Index 878 to 1,121; Gini 0.493 to 0.517) and three federation units disappeared entirely. Findings are restricted to Axis 2 and indicate that multichannel participatory designs may amplify rather than mitigate territorial inequality, with implications for SDG 16 and SDG 17.

Keywords: Participatory governance; Digital democracy; 2030 Agenda; National conference; Territorial inequality.

Contextualization and goals

The 2030 Agenda establishes seventeen Sustainable Development Goals as a global policy reference, yet its translation into territorially referenced action depends on institutional arrangements capable of connecting local demands to national decision-making (United Nations, 2015; IPEA, 2024). In Brazil, national conferences have historically fulfilled this mediating function, articulating municipal, state and thematic instances into consolidated policy proposals submitted to federal deliberation (Avritzer, 2013; Pogrebinschi; Santos, 2011).

The 1st Brazilian National Conference on the Sustainable Development Goals, convened by presidential decree and held throughout 2026, represents the broadest deliberative arrangement ever mobilised around the 2030 Agenda in the country. Its design combined four preparatory modalities — free, municipal, state and thematic

conferences — with a Digital Stage hosted on the Brasil Participativo platform between 1 and 20 May 2026, followed by an in-person National Stage held in Brasília from 30 June to 2 July 2026 (Brasil, 2026). This hybrid architecture is notable because it operates two parallel channels: an institutional channel, through which preparatory instances submit reports to the National Organising Committee, and a digital channel, through which a subset of proposals is exposed to public voting and commentary.

Scholarship on Brazilian national conferences has extensively documented territorial asymmetries, metropolitan concentration and uneven appropriation of results by subnational governments (Avritzer, 2013; Faria; Lins, 2013; Pogrebinschi; Santos, 2011). More recent work has extended this concern to climate and environmental governance, examining how institutional frameworks mediate the

translation of sustainability commitments into territorial practice (Balduino Junior et al., 2025; Pereira Pessoa et al., 2025; Fausto et al., 2026). What remains unexamined, however, is asymmetry between channels — that is, the mismatch between what is institutionally recorded and what is publicly displayed for digital deliberation within the same conference cycle.

This gap matters for two reasons. First, digital participation platforms are frequently presented as democratising instruments that expand access and transparency; if their coverage is partial and territorially skewed, they may reproduce or intensify the very inequalities they are meant to address (Nunes et al., 2025). Second, the legitimacy of national deliberation rests on the assumption that the material submitted to public scrutiny adequately represents the material produced by preparatory instances. Where that assumption fails, proposals that followed the official procedure correctly may nonetheless become invisible to the wider public.

The 1st National SDG Conference offers a rare empirical opportunity to test this assumption, because it simultaneously produced (i) a National Proposal Book with traceable territorial origin for each proposal and (ii) a public digital platform with retrievable records of proposals submitted to voting. The present study builds on prior documentation of one municipal instance of this cycle — the 1st Free Municipal Conference of Divinópolis, coordinated by the authors' institution (Pereira, 2026) — and on the methodological protocol developed for its technical-scientific preparation (Pereira; Fonseca e Silva, 2026), extending the analysis from a single municipality to the national comparison of channels.

The general objective of this study is to measure and characterise the asymmetry between the institutional and digital participatory channels of the 1st Brazilian National SDG Conference in Thematic Axis 2 (Environmental Sustainability). Specifically, the study aims to: (i) quantify the magnitude of the coverage gap between the two channels; (ii) test whether digital migration rates are homogeneous across macro-regions; (iii) estimate the odds of digital migration by region; and (iv) compare territorial concentration between channels. The analysis is deliberately confined to a single thematic axis, and the scope conditions of this choice are stated explicitly in the following section.

Methodology

This is a comparative documentary study of census-based scope, combining descriptive and inferential quantitative analysis. Two independent official bases from the same conference cycle were confronted to identify and characterise coverage discrepancies. Because the study relies exclusively on publicly consolidated documents and contains no data collected from identifiable human subjects, it is exempt from Research Ethics Committee review

under Brazilian Resolution CNS No. 510/2016, Article 1, sole paragraph, items III and V.

Scope conditions. The analysis is restricted to Thematic Axis 2 (Environmental Sustainability), one of the six axes of the conference. This delimitation follows from the research team's direct involvement in the Axis 2 Working Group of a municipal instance of the same cycle, which granted detailed procedural familiarity with how proposals in this axis were formulated, consolidated and forwarded. The consequence for inference is explicit and applies throughout: all coverage rates, concentration coefficients and odds ratios reported here characterise Axis 2 only. They must not be extrapolated to the remaining five axes without independent empirical verification, since axis-specific curatorial practices, thematic salience and Working Group composition may plausibly generate different migration patterns. Wherever aggregate conference figures are cited for contextual purposes, this is signalled in the text.

Data sources. Two bases were used. The National Proposal Book of the 1st National SDG Conference was obtained in Portable Document Format from the official conference repository (Brasil, 2026) in August 2026 and comprises the consolidated proposals forwarded by all preparatory instances, together with a traceability section linking each proposal code to its originating conference and destination Working Group. The Digital Stage base was retrieved from the Brasil Participativo platform through the native GraphQL Application Programming Interface of the Decidim system on which the portal is built (Decidim Association, 2024), querying component identifier 4486 (Thematic Axis 2) with paginated requests returning proposal identifier, title, body text, creation timestamp and public comment count. Digital retrieval was performed on three independent dates — 12 May, 17 June and 3 July 2026 — to verify base stability after the closure of the submission window.

Extraction and pairing. Proposal codes were extracted from the National Proposal Book by regular expression matching on the institutional pattern L###-E#-##, where L### identifies the originating conference, E# the thematic axis and ## the sequential number within that axis. Each conference block was parsed line by line to associate its full institutional name with the corresponding proposal codes and Working Group destinations. Federation units were derived from the standardised naming convention "Municipality – State" present in conference titles, with manual resolution for university-hosted conferences whose titles omit the state abbreviation. Macro-regions followed the official classification of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 2024). Pairing between bases was performed at the level of federation unit and thematic axis.

Statistical analysis. Four analytical procedures were applied: (i) descriptive coverage

statistics, reporting absolute and relative frequencies of Axis 2 proposals in each channel by federation unit and macro-region, with the digital migration rate calculated as the ratio of digital to consolidated proposals; (ii) a chi-square test of homogeneity on the contingency table of migrated versus non-migrated proposals across the five macro-regions, complemented by Cramér's V as a measure of effect size; (iii) odds ratios with 95% confidence intervals estimated for each macro-region against all other regions combined, using the Haldane-Anscombe correction where any cell contained zero; and (iv) territorial concentration measured by the Herfindahl-Hirschman Index and the Gini coefficient, computed separately for each channel. The two inferential procedures answer complementary questions and are reported jointly: the chi-square test assesses whether migration rates differ across all five regions simultaneously, whereas odds ratios isolate the contribution of each region individually. A borderline global test therefore does not preclude a statistically robust regional effect, and both results are interpreted together in the following section. The significance level was set at 5%. Processing was performed in Python 3 with the pandas, NumPy, SciPy and Matplotlib libraries. Extraction and analysis scripts are available upon request to the corresponding author.

Results and discussion

The National Proposal Book of the 1st National SDG Conference registered 277

preparatory conferences and 923 traceable proposal codes across the six thematic axes. Thematic Axis 2 (Environmental Sustainability) accounted for 186 proposals distributed among 24 federation units. The Digital Stage base, retrieved on three independent dates, contained 88 free-conference proposals for the same axis distributed among 22 federation units, plus ten state-conference entries and one institutionally distinct record. Because the comparison requires equivalent units of analysis, free and municipal conference proposals were used as the common denominator throughout. All figures reported in this section refer exclusively to Axis 2 unless explicitly stated otherwise.

Magnitude of the coverage gap

Of the 186 Axis 2 proposals consolidated in the National Proposal Book, 88 (47.3%) appeared in the Digital Stage. The remaining 98 proposals (52.7%) never entered the public voting channel, despite having followed the official submission procedure and having been formally registered by the National Organising Committee. This gap is the central empirical finding of the study: within Axis 2, more than half of the institutionally validated environmental proposals remained invisible to public digital deliberation. Whether an equivalent gap characterises the other five axes is not established by these data and constitutes a distinct empirical question.

Table 1. Axis 2 proposal coverage by federation unit in the two participatory channels of the 1st Brazilian National SDG Conference (2026)

Federation unit	National Proposal Book	Digital Stage	Gap	Migration rate (%)
SP	39	23	16	59.0
RJ	18	9	9	50.0
MG	16	5	11	31.2
BA	13	3	10	23.1
DF	13	8	5	61.5
AM	12	8	4	66.7
CE	10	4	6	40.0
PA	9	4	5	44.4
ES	8	6	2	75.0
PE	7	2	5	28.6
PB	6	1	5	16.7
SE	6	2	4	33.3
AL	4	1	3	25.0
MA	4	2	2	50.0
PR	4	1	3	25.0
RS	4	2	2	50.0
AP	2	0	2	0.0
GO	2	0	2	0.0
MT	2	1	1	50.0
RN	2	1	1	50.0
SC	2	2	0	100.0
MS	1	1	0	100.0
RO	1	0	1	0.0
RR	1	1	0	100.0
Total	186	88	98	47.3

Source: prepared by the authors from the National Proposal Book (Brasil, 2026) and the Brasil Participativo GraphQL Application Programming Interface (Decidim Association, 2024). Migration rate = Digital Stage ÷ National Proposal Book × 100. Data refer to Thematic Axis 2 only. One Digital Stage record originating in Acre (AC) had no matching entry in the National Proposal Book and was excluded from paired comparison. Federation unit abbreviations: AL = Alagoas; AM = Amazonas; AP = Amapá; BA = Bahia; CE =

Ceará; DF = Distrito Federal; ES = Espírito Santo; GO = Goiás; MA = Maranhão; MG = Minas Gerais; MS = Mato Grosso do Sul; MT = Mato Grosso; PA = Pará; PB = Paraíba; PE = Pernambuco; PR = Paraná; RJ = Rio de Janeiro; RN = Rio Grande do Norte; RO = Rondônia; RR = Roraima; RS = Rio Grande do Sul; SC = Santa Catarina; SE = Sergipe; SP = São Paulo.

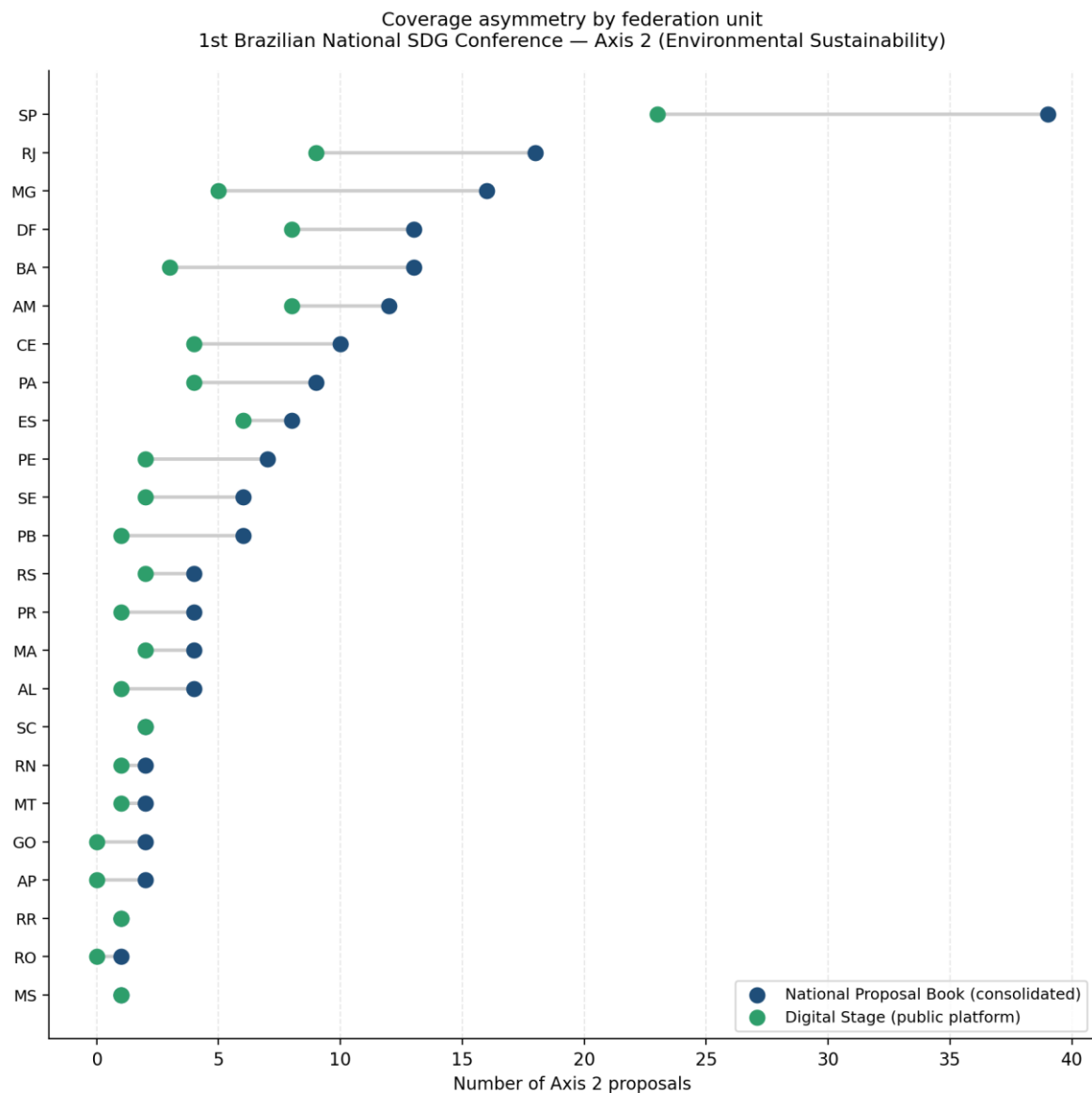


Figure 1. Coverage asymmetry by federation unit, Thematic Axis 2. **Source:** prepared by the authors. Each horizontal line connects the number of proposals consolidated in the National Proposal Book (dark markers) to the number displayed in the Digital Stage (light markers) for the same federation unit; line length represents the coverage gap. Federation unit abbreviations: AL = Alagoas; AM = Amazonas; AP = Amapá; BA = Bahia; CE = Ceará; DF = Distrito Federal; ES = Espírito Santo; GO = Goiás; MA = Maranhão; MG = Minas Gerais; MS = Mato Grosso do Sul; MT = Mato Grosso; PA = Pará; PB = Paraíba; PE = Pernambuco; PR = Paraná; RJ = Rio de Janeiro; RN = Rio Grande do Norte; RO = Rondônia; RR = Roraima; RS = Rio Grande do Sul; SC = Santa Catarina; SE = Sergipe; SP = São Paulo.

Table 1 disaggregates coverage by federation unit. Complete migration (100%) occurred in only three units, each holding a single consolidated proposal (Mato Grosso do Sul, Roraima and Santa Catarina). Three units with consolidated proposals recorded no digital presence whatsoever (Amapá, Goiás and Rondônia). São Paulo, the unit with the largest consolidated volume, achieved 59.0% migration; Minas Gerais, third in consolidated volume, achieved only 31.2%.

Regional distribution and homogeneity testing

Aggregating federation units into the five official macro-regions produced the distribution shown in Table 2. Migration rates ranged from 30.8% in the Northeast to 56.0% in the North. The chi-square test of homogeneity returned $\chi^2 = 8.069$ with four degrees of freedom ($p = 0.089$), indicating that regional differences approach but do not reach conventional statistical significance at the 5% level. Cramér's V of 0.208 characterises the association as weak to moderate. Two factors constrain the

power of this global test: the Southern region contributed only ten consolidated proposals, and the simultaneous comparison of five categories distributes the available evidence across a larger number of cells. A borderline global result of this

kind does not exclude the possibility that one specific region departs significantly from the others, which is precisely what the bivariate analysis reported below establishes.

Table 2. Axis 2 proposal coverage by macro-region and digital migration rate

Macro-region	National Proposal Book	Digital Stage	Not migrated	Migration rate (%)
North	25	14	11	56.0
Northeast	52	16	36	30.8
Central-West	18	10	8	55.6
Southeast	81	43	38	53.1
South	10	5	5	50.0
Total	186	88	98	47.3

Source: prepared by the authors. Macro-regions follow the official classification of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 2024). Chi-square test of homogeneity on the 5×2 contingency table of migrated versus non-migrated proposals: $\chi^2 = 8.069$; degrees of freedom (df) = 4; $p = 0.089$; Cramér's $V = 0.208$. Cramér's V is a measure of effect size ranging from 0 (no association) to 1 (perfect association). Data refer to Thematic Axis 2 only.

Odds of digital migration by region

Odds ratio estimation clarified what the aggregate chi-square could not resolve. Whereas the global test evaluates whether all five regions differ simultaneously — a demanding criterion under unequal and partly small cell counts — the bivariate approach isolates each region against the pooled remainder. Under this specification, proposals originating in the Northeast displayed significantly lower odds of migrating to the digital channel than proposals from all other regions combined (odds ratio = 0.383; 95% confidence interval 0.194–0.755), with the interval entirely below unity. In practical terms, a Northeastern proposal had approximately 62% lower odds of appearing in the Digital Stage. No other region showed a statistically distinguishable effect: North (0.641–3.495), Central-West (0.542–3.835), Southeast (0.842–2.703) and South (0.313–4.008) all produced intervals crossing unity. The two procedures are therefore complementary rather than contradictory: the borderline global test reflects the dilution of a single strong regional effect across five simultaneous comparisons, while the bivariate estimate identifies where that effect is concentrated. Figure 2 presents both results.

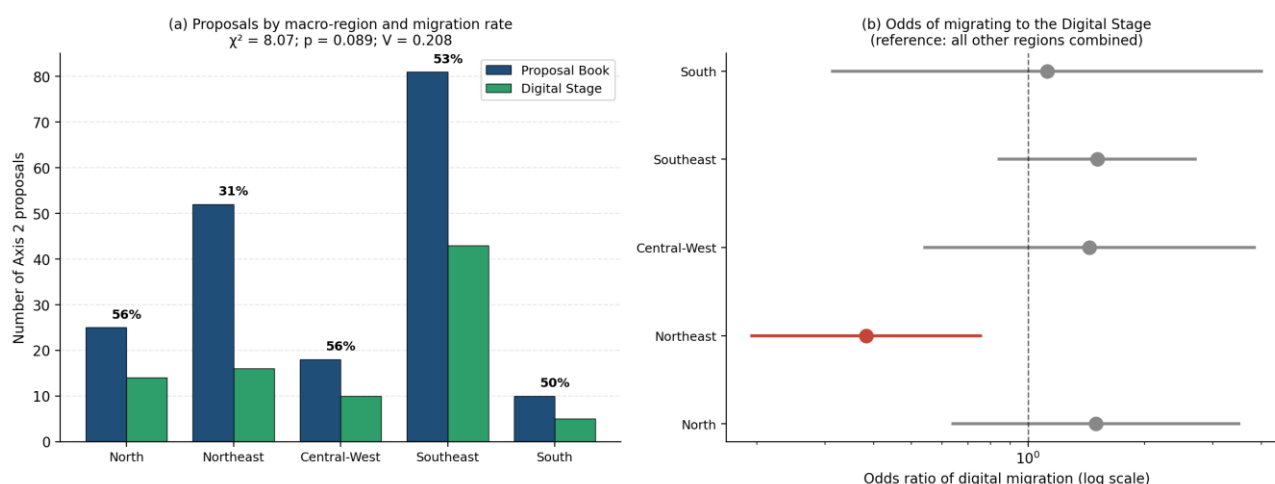


Figure 2. Regional distribution of Axis 2 proposals and odds of digital migration. **Source:** prepared by the authors. Panel (a) compares proposal counts per channel by macro-region, with percentages above bars indicating the migration rate. Panel (b) shows odds ratios (OR) with 95% confidence intervals (CI) on a logarithmic scale; each region is compared against all other regions combined, and the dashed vertical line marks OR = 1 (no difference in odds). Intervals not crossing OR = 1 indicate a statistically significant effect at the 5% level. Data refer to Thematic Axis 2 only.

The Northeastern result deserves particular attention because it is the single regional effect that survives statistical scrutiny. The region contributed the second largest volume of consolidated proposals (52, or 28.0% of the Axis 2 total) yet accounted for only 18.2% of digital entries. This pattern is not explained by low participation in preparatory instances — the Northeast mobilised substantially more conferences than the Central-

West, North and South — but by differential conversion between channels.

Territorial concentration by channel

If the digital channel operated as a neutral relay of the consolidated record, territorial concentration should remain approximately constant between channels. Within Axis 2, it did not. The Herfindahl-Hirschman Index rose from 878 in the

National Proposal Book to 1,121 in the Digital Stage, an increase of 27.7%, while the Gini coefficient rose from 0.493 to 0.517. The share held

by the largest single unit increased from 21.0% to 26.1%, and the number of represented federation units fell from 24 to 22 (Table 3, Figure 3).

Table 3. Territorial concentration indicators by participatory channel, Thematic Axis 2

Indicator	National Proposal Book	Digital Stage
Herfindahl-Hirschman Index (HHI)	878	1,121
Gini coefficient	0.493	0.517
Federation units represented	24	22
Share of largest unit (%)	21.0	26.1

Source: prepared by the authors. The Herfindahl-Hirschman Index (HHI) is the sum of squared market shares multiplied by 10,000 and ranges from near 0 (perfectly dispersed) to 10,000 (single unit holds everything); here, shares correspond to each federation unit's proportion of Axis 2 proposals within the channel. The Gini coefficient ranges from 0 (perfect equality) to 1 (maximum inequality). Higher values of either indicator denote greater territorial concentration. Data refer to Thematic Axis 2 only.

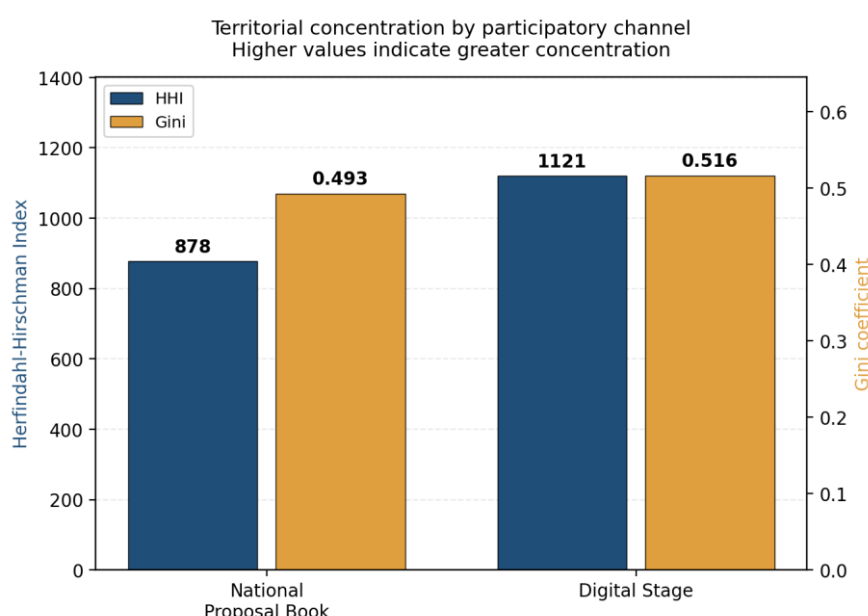


Figure 3. Territorial concentration by participatory channel. **Source:** prepared by the authors. HHI = Herfindahl-Hirschman Index (left axis); Gini = Gini coefficient (right axis). Higher values indicate greater territorial concentration of Axis 2 proposals within each channel.

This finding inverts a common expectation about digital participation. Rather than broadening the territorial base of deliberation, the digital channel of this conference reproduced the consolidated record in a more concentrated form. Units already dominant in the institutional record became proportionally more dominant in the public-facing channel, and units with marginal presence disappeared entirely. The literature on digital democracy has long warned that platform-mediated participation may reproduce existing inequalities of technical capacity and institutional resources (Nunes et al., 2025); the present data provide a quantified illustration of that mechanism operating within a single thematic axis of a single conference cycle.

The deliberative funnel

Placing the channel asymmetry within the full deliberative sequence clarifies its consequences, with one important caveat about comparability. Of the 186 Axis 2 proposals consolidated institutionally,

88 reached digital scrutiny. The in-person National Stage, held in Brasília from 30 June to 2 July 2026, subsequently approved 75 proposals in Working Group sessions, of which 15 were prioritised and acclaimed in the closing plenary; twenty-four of forty-one motions presented were also approved (Brasil, 2026). These last two figures aggregate all six thematic axes and are therefore not directly commensurable with the Axis 2 counts that precede them. Figure 4 represents the sequence with this distinction marked.

A methodological caveat applies to the final stages of this funnel: the officially approved proposals were thematically consolidated by the Organising Committee and no longer carry individual attribution to their originating conferences. It is therefore not possible to determine, from public documents alone, whether any specific municipal proposal survived to the plenary. This loss of traceability at the point of national consolidation is itself a governance finding worth registering.

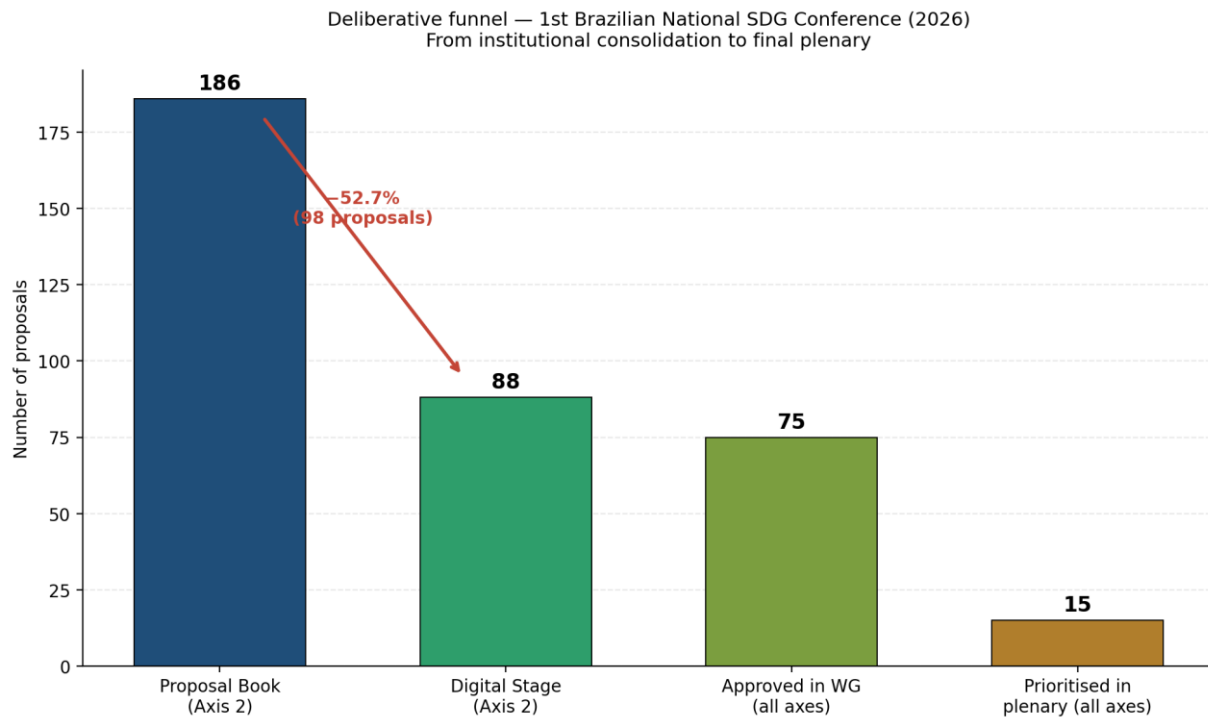


Figure 4. Deliberative funnel of the 1st Brazilian National SDG Conference. **Source:** prepared by the authors from official conference documents (Brasil, 2026). The first two stages refer to Thematic Axis 2 exclusively; the third and fourth stages aggregate all six thematic axes and are shown for sequential context, not as a direct continuation of the Axis 2 series. The percentage indicates the loss between consolidated and digitally displayed proposals within Axis 2.

An illustrative case: Divinópolis (MG)

The municipality of Divinópolis, in the Central-Western mesoregion of Minas Gerais, offers a concrete illustration of the mechanism identified. Its free municipal conference, held on 15 May 2026 at the Universidade do Estado de Minas Gerais with approximately eighty in-person participants, consolidated proposals across three thematic axes and elected a delegate to the National Stage (Pereira, 2026). The National Proposal Book registers this conference as L257 with three proposals: L257-E2-01 (Working Group 06, revision of urban selective waste collection guidelines and technological solutions for final solid waste treatment), L257-E3-01 (Working Group 08, creation of public positions for specialised education professionals) and L257-E4-01 (Working Group 06, national policy for tracking and education on hazardous and technological waste).

None of these three proposals appears in the Digital Stage base. The municipality followed the regulatory procedure correctly — it registered the conference in advance, held it within the calendar, submitted its report to the National Organising Committee within the five-day window and elected a delegate who attended the National Stage in Brasília. Its proposals were formally consolidated. Yet they remained absent from the channel through which the wider public could read, comment and vote. The case demonstrates that digital invisibility is not necessarily a consequence of procedural failure at the local level.

It is analytically relevant that the Axis 2 proposal from Divinópolis concerns solid waste management, a domain governed in Brazil by the National Solid Waste Policy, whose role as an instrument of sustainability governance has been examined elsewhere (Fausto et al., 2026). Proposals of this kind connect municipal operational demands to established national legal frameworks, and their exclusion from public digital scrutiny removes precisely the type of territorially grounded, legally anchored contribution that multichannel participatory designs are meant to surface.

Interpreting the asymmetry

Three non-exclusive mechanisms may account for the observed gap within Axis 2. The first is procedural: free conferences submit proposals through institutional reports to the National Organising Committee, and migration to the digital platform depends on a subsequent curatorial or technical step that is not documented in publicly available regulations. The second is temporal: the digital submission window ran from 1 to 20 May 2026, but 78.4% of the digital base was created on a single day (7 May), suggesting batch loading of a pre-selected subset rather than continuous incorporation; conferences held after that date faced a structurally narrower window. The third is capacity-related: operating a digital participation platform requires institutional registration and trained facilitation, resources unevenly distributed across Brazilian municipalities and consistent with

the significantly lower migration odds observed in the Northeast.

Whatever the relative weight of these mechanisms, the consequence for the 2030 Agenda is the same. SDG 16 commits signatories to responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels, and SDG 17 to effective multi-stakeholder partnerships. A participatory architecture in which the publicly visible channel systematically under-represents half of the institutionally validated contributions of a thematic axis, and does so with regional bias, is in tension with both commitments. The finding does not invalidate the conference as a democratic achievement — it mobilised over thirty-one thousand participants across 424 free and municipal instances and twenty state instances — but it identifies a specific design weakness amenable to correction in subsequent cycles, whose extent across the remaining axes remains to be established.

Final Considerations

This study measured the asymmetry between the institutional and digital participatory channels of the 1st Brazilian National Conference on the Sustainable Development Goals in Thematic Axis 2. Of the 186 proposals consolidated in the National Proposal Book, 88 (47.3%) reached the Digital Stage, leaving 52.7% outside public digital deliberation despite full procedural compliance by the originating conferences.

Three findings stand out. First, the coverage gap is substantial and not attributable to territorial inactivity, since all non-migrated proposals had been formally registered by preparatory instances. Second, the gap carries regional bias: while the global homogeneity test was borderline ($\chi^2 = 8.069$; $p = 0.089$), bivariate estimation identified a robust and isolated effect in the Northeast, whose proposals showed significantly lower odds of digital migration (odds ratio = 0.383; 95% confidence interval 0.194–0.755). Third, and most consequentially for participatory design, the digital channel amplified rather than attenuated territorial concentration, with the Herfindahl-Hirschman Index rising from 878 to 1,121 and three federation units disappearing entirely from public view.

The case of Divinópolis illustrates the mechanism at the municipal scale. A conference that complied with every regulatory requirement — advance registration, timely execution, report submission within the prescribed window, delegate election and attendance at the National Stage — nonetheless saw none of its three consolidated proposals appear in the channel open to public scrutiny. Digital invisibility, in this configuration, is a property of the architecture rather than a symptom of local failure.

Four limitations qualify these conclusions. First and most importantly, the analysis is confined

to Thematic Axis 2, and no coverage rate, concentration coefficient or odds ratio reported here should be generalised to the remaining five axes without independent empirical verification. Second, the comparison relies on documents published by the organising committee, whose internal curatorial criteria for digital inclusion are not publicly specified; the mechanisms proposed here are therefore plausible inferences rather than verified causes. Third, one Digital Stage record originating in Acre had no counterpart in the National Proposal Book, indicating a residual inconsistency between official bases that could not be resolved from public sources. Fourth, the thematic consolidation applied to nationally approved proposals removes individual territorial attribution, preventing verification of which specific municipal contributions reached the closing plenary.

Two lines of inquiry follow directly. The first is a comparative extension to all six thematic axes, which would test whether channel asymmetry is a general property of the conference architecture or a characteristic of environmental deliberation specifically — a question this study raises but cannot answer. The second is a longitudinal design applied to subsequent conference cycles, capable of assessing whether corrective measures — such as automatic migration of consolidated proposals, extended digital windows, or technical support targeted at under-resourced municipalities — reduce the gap. For institutions affiliated with the United Nations Academic Impact, this agenda offers a concrete contribution to SDG 16 and SDG 17: strengthening the evidentiary basis on which inclusive, accountable and genuinely multichannel participatory institutions can be designed.

Acknowledgments

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The authors also acknowledge the Research Group on Animal Nutrition and Forage Science (GNAFOR), which coordinated the Working Group of Thematic Axis 2 (Environmental Sustainability) at that municipal conference. This coordinating role explains both the analytical focus of the present study on Axis 2 and the research team's procedural familiarity with how proposals in this axis were formulated, consolidated and forwarded to the National Organising Committee. Although GNAFOR's primary research agenda lies in tropical forage science and animal nutrition, its participation in the conference followed from the thematic overlap between agricultural production systems and the

environmental sustainability agenda at the municipal scale.

The technical-scientific preparation of that Working Group — including the territorial diagnosis and the systematic analysis of national proposals that generated the methodological protocol later published in Pereira and Fonseca e Silva (2026) — was carried out within the university extension project "Low-Carbon Forages: Science, Extension and Technology for a More Sustainable Livestock Production" (PROINPE/Extension UEMG, project identifier 26773, voluntary and unfunded). The project provided the institutional framework under which the research team engaged with the conference process; it did not provide financial support for the present study.

Finally, the authors thank the partner institutions and the approximately eighty participants of the Divinópolis conference, whose deliberations produced the proposals whose institutional trajectory is examined in this article.

Ethical and Peer Review Principles

The authors confirm that this publication has been peer-reviewed by expert committees from a participating institution in the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI).

The study is strictly documentary, based on publicly consolidated official records, and involves no data collection from identifiable human subjects and no animal experimentation. It is therefore exempt from Research Ethics Committee review under Brazilian Resolution CNS No. 510/2016, Article 1, sole paragraph, items III and V. The authors declare no conflict of interest and received no financial support for this research.

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