

Dear Reviewers and Editor,

Thank you for the opportunity to re-submit our work to Environmental Politics and for sending us such detailed and useful feedback. Your incisive and thoughtful comments have helped us draft a considerably better version of our article. In our revisions, we have completed major changes to all parts of the article to address the reviewers' suggestions and (hopefully) their concerns. We have also taken this opportunity to update our dataset with all presidential speeches for the year of 2022. In what follows, we organize this letter around the main topics identified in both reviews, followed by issues identified by reviewers separately.

*Common threads:*

- **Theoretical framing** (*"The less satisfactory part [...] more systematically"*(R#1); *"First, the authors employ [...] explored by them"*(R#2))
  - Both reviewers convincingly argued that we employ too many concepts without much care about their empirical consequences. After a review of the literature, we fully agree with both reviewers. We have made multiple changes to our manuscript to correct this issue, especially in the theoretical section of the article. First, we re-structured our theoretical framework with a reduced number of concepts and dedicated sub-sections to each of them. In doing so, we hope that the derived expectations from the theoretical section and conceptual contributions to the literature about the Amazon are clear. Second, we now work with Keck and Sikkink's theory of transnationalism, which we adapt to explain why and how problem-constructions vary based on space and time. In terms of space, we show how the expectations that follow from Keck & Sikkink contrast from those related to Putnam's two-level games. Therefore, we drop two-level games vocabulary from the analysis and argue that the former is more aligned with our framework. In terms of time, we now argue that the "external" urgency of problems changes over time, and that's a key determinant of how presidents mention it. We operationalize the urgency of environmental problems and economic problems by taking deforestation rates and inflation respectively. We detail our reasons to do so, and the limitations of this approach, in the research design section of the manuscript.
- **Problem with the independent variable of distance from Manaus** (*"Despite what authors say [...] justification."*(R#1); *"Surprisingly, despite the authors [...] inferential part of the paper"*(R#2))

- As both reviewers suggested, our independent variable (distance from Manaus) did not readily follow from our conceptual framework, which led to disconnection between the theoretical and analytical sections of the article. As we corrected the issues with our theoretical framework, we have now changed our independent variable to tie our analysis to our theory more closely. Instead of working with distance, we have now shifted to a categorical variable containing the setting of the speech, which we believe follows more readily from a logic of transnationalism as we now conceptualize in the theory section. We now explicitly discuss the reasoning and limitations (section 3.3) of this operationalization in the manuscript.
- **Lack of standard discussion of the statistical model and controls**(*“One gap in the discussion [...] I’m not sure what we learn from Figure 6”(R#1); “Minor question regarding [...] Why?”(R#2)*)
  - Both reviews asked for a discussion or a clarification of our model. We have now introduced a section within the methodology detailing the main variables (3.2 and 3.3) and our model choice (3.4). In line with the first reviewer, we have now clarified which variables have a substantial meaning, and which ones are just controls. With the new structure, the model follows right after the methodology section that explains it, contributing to a better understanding of what it is actually predicting. In line with the second reviewer, we have clarified that we use a fixed-effects regression model and the reasoning of it. We then interpret the descriptive trends in the rest of the analysis. While we believe this structure flows well, we welcome any suggestions related to the order of the sections in the analysis.
- **Conclusion**(*“The manuscript ends in a very inconclusive way [...]”(R#1); “Finally, I’d be glad to hear [...]”(R#2)*)
  - Both reviewers pointed out that our conclusion was not clear. We have now re-written the conclusion eliciting the implications of our conceptual and empirical findings. We build upon suggestions made by both reviewers in order to outline pathways for future research.

*Issues pointed out by reviewer the first reviewer*

- **“The other, not fully integrated, part of the theoretical framing links framings or problem-construction to possible policy adoption and implementation/[...]”**: The first reviewer pointed out that the relationship between problem construction and policy is not

clear. Indeed, we alluded to contradictory relationships along the manuscript and we never explicitly explained what we believe deforestation rates measure. We've conducted multiple changes to address this issue. First, we have clarified how a focus on problem-representation relates to policy in section 2.1 and section 2.2. Second, we have now removed the connection between problem constructions and policy implementation, since we cannot measure the latter robustly for all four problem-constructions. Relatedly, we have clarified what we believe our deforestation rates are a proxy of, this is, how urgent the environmental problem is in a given time. Third, we have clarified the relationship between policy adoption and problem-construction (and its limitations), while also downtoning any claim that might entail a causal relationship.

- **“The one problematic coding is that the "environmental conservation" framing used shades into the "social development" framing that is considered separate[...]"**: The first reviewer noticed that environmental conservation problem-construction shades into social development because of socio-environmentalism. Following the reviewers' suggestion, we clarified the environmental conservation problem construction to keep them more independent from each other.
- **“In addition, the discussion should include at least a brief discussion of Brazilian presidentialism and the powers of Brazilian presidents to contextualize the claims to an international audience”**: we have now introduced one paragraph with a brief explanation of the role of presidents in Brazilian politics at the end of section 2.1.
- **Smaller issues :**
  - **“This is not a standard use of "transnationalism"[...]"**: with the new conceptual discussion about transnationalism (2.2), we have now clarified exactly what we mean and how international summits would fall within our conceptualization.
  - **How is the international audience an "interest group"? Audience would be better**: as we dropped the vocabulary of two-level games (which implied interest groups), we refrain from using the interest group vocabulary in the manuscript.
  - **“Note that all of these peaks have something to do with the environment.[...]"**: thanks for pointing this out. While we do not have much to say about Rio+20, we have now weaved this into the analysis and tried to make sense out of it in section 4.2.
  - **It is interesting that climate events apparently drive coverage when the Amazon is at least as important for biodiversity reasons**: this is true, and we think it's a more

generalized problem related to forests as being objects of both 1992 Earth Summit Conventions (Climate and Biodiversity). While we can not address this in detail, we believe it's an avenue of research worth pursuing in the future.

- **Brazil was to host COP25 in 2018, a year before the 2019 peak:** retrieving the host status of COP25 (supposed to happen in 2019) was one of Bolsonaro's campaign promises in 2018; we have now weaved this into the manuscript.
- **"The discursive shift in problem-constructions doesn't seem at all related to the peaks[...]":** that's an interesting point and we went ahead and tested if general peak years drive any specific shift more systematically (in the appendix). Indeed, we did not find any evidence of that being the case. While we could not discuss this in detail, we now mention it in the manuscript.
- **"What is the dynamic that leads to the rise of the sovereignty discourse after 2010?[...]":** we have now detailed what we believe explains the rise in sovereignty after 2008 (section 4.3, p.18)

*Issues pointed out by the second reviewer*

- **"The authors do not engage with foreign policy debates about the political ideology of presidents":** indeed, foreign policy literature could provide an interesting avenue. We conduct a few empirical tests to check whether presidential ideology correlates with problem construction. Specifically, we ran a random-effect logistic regression indexed by year with presidents' party ideology as an independent variable. We found limited evidence of ideology having an effect and it does not change the direction or significance of our main predictors (see appendix). Bearing the possibility of presidential isolation due to ideology in mind, we have introduced a model that controls presidential ideology (fixed effects indexed by the president) and other individual specific characteristics related to presidents and are now confident that our findings hold despite ideology.
- **"Is distance all that important given communication technology":** communication technology changes the meaning of audiences and settings fundamentally. While we tried to better detail what we capture with our new measure of setting, we believe that future research should indeed try to identify the effects of social media in problem-construction. We have formulated this point both as a limitation as well as a future research possibility in our conclusion.

- **“Or else, the authors could have controlled from the venue whether the speech was made [...]”**: with the new conceptualization of settings, we have moved away from modeling based on distance from Manaus. While we would ideally like to code venues in detail, we are limited by the data we have. We discuss in detail why, and how, we code settings, and the limitations of this approach, in the methodology section.

Once again thank you for the opportunity to review our work.

Sincerely,

The authors