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# Strategies and Tools for a Sustainable Rural Rio de Janeiro

 Springer

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Udo Nehren • Sabine Schlüter • Claudia Raedig  
Dietmar Sattler • Helga Hissa  
Editors

# Strategies and Tools for a Sustainable Rural Rio de Janeiro

 Springer

*Editors*

Udo Nehren  
Institute for Technology and Resources  
Management in the Tropics and  
Subtropics – ITT  
TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences  
Köln, Germany

Sabine Schlüter  
Institute for Technology and Resources  
Management in the Tropics and  
Subtropics – ITT  
TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences  
Köln, Germany

Claudia Raedig  
Institute for Technology and Resources  
Management in the Tropics and  
Subtropics – ITT  
TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences  
Köln, Germany

Dietmar Sattler  
Institute of Geography  
Leipzig University  
Leipzig, Germany

Helga Hissa  
Programa Rio Rural  
Secretaria de Agricultura e Pecuária  
Fonseca, Niterói, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

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# Foreword

In recent years, the state of Rio de Janeiro has experienced an alternation of intense floods and droughts, whose unparalleled magnitude leaves little room for doubt that such phenomena derive from climate change. As a matter of fact, in a geographically diverse territory such as Rio's, climate change impacts can be multifaceted, ranging from sea-level rise to landslides in mountainous areas. To face this reality, the state policy on climate change has established an ambitious set of mitigation and adaptation targets to be achieved by 2030. The latter is inextricably intertwined with the expansion of Rio Rural, a sustainable development program for rural areas under the auspices of the State Secretary for Agriculture and Livestock (SEAPEC). The centrality of this program for the state's adaptation agenda is an example of its crucial importance for a wide array of topics that are decisive for Rio's sustainable development, such as land restoration, integrated water management, and ecosystem services, among others.

The program Rio Rural perfectly illustrates the key role regional governments usually play in sustainable development. On top of their multiple legal responsibilities, policy tools, and financial mechanisms, regional governments are ideally suited to deal with issues that trespass local boundaries but are not necessarily nationwide, which is frequently the case of many topics related to sustainable development. Among these are ecosystem services and rural-urban linkages, for instance. While Rio de Janeiro is allegedly the most urbanized federated state in Brazil, traditional statistics often fail to translate the strategic value of its rural areas. The metropolitan region, where three out of every four persons live in the state, is highly reliant on surrounding rural areas for its water supply and food provision, for example. In this sense, the potential benefits of Rio Rural extend far beyond the targeted rural areas it covers. In fact, its territorial planning approach, which is focused on micro-watersheds and several interventions it encompasses, such as water quality recovery, soil conservation, reforestation, or infrastructure investments, can virtually benefit the entire state.

Bearing in mind the importance that Rio Rural has for the state of Rio de Janeiro, one can imagine how meaningful a project focused on offering integrated eco-technology and services solutions to this program could be. This is the exact reason

why INTECRAL should be praised. As a jointly developed scientific cooperation supported by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and SEAPEC, this project aims to improve the competitiveness of the rural economic sector in due consideration of a sustainable watershed management, including environmental risk mitigation and protection of natural resources.

Considering that both Rio Rural and INTECRAL present innovative outcomes that are probably replicable in rural areas of other developing regions, their “strategies and tools for a sustainable rural Rio de Janeiro” will certainly be inspirational for all those interested in exploring the multiple interlinkages of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda that flourish in rural areas.

Joan França  
International Relations Officer  
for the State of Rio de Janeiro and former  
Project Manager of the Regions Adapt initiative

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- Mariana Beauclair (Coordination of Territory Management and Geospatial Information, Instituto Estadual do Ambiente do Rio de Janeiro [Rio de Janeiro Environmental State Agency], Rio de Janeiro, Brazil);
- Rachel Bardy Prado (Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agropecuária [Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation] – Embrapa Solos, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil);
- Henrik Beermann (Fraunhofer Center for International Management and Knowledge Economy, Leipzig, Germany);
- Jan Börner (Center for Development Research – ZEF, University of Bonn, Bonn, Germany);
- Davi José Bungenstab (Embrapa Gado de Corte [Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation], Campo Grande, Brazil);
- Diogo de Carvalho Cabral (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística [Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics] – IBGE, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil);
- Hugo Rosa da Conceição (Center for Development Research – ZEF, University of Bonn, Bonn, Germany);
- Marcelo Eduardo Dantas (Department of Territorial Management – DEGET, Geological Service of Brazil – CPRM, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil);

- Nadir Ahmed Elagib (Institute for Technology and Resources Management in the Tropics and Subtropics – ITT, TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences, Cologne, Germany);
- Leonardo Esteves de Freitas (Institute of Geosciences, Department of Geography, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro – UFRJ and OTSS – Oswaldo Cruz Foundation, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil);
- Gerhard Gerold (Institute of Geography, Department of Landscape Ecology, Georg-August-University of Göttingen, Göttingen, Germany);
- Friederike Grüniger (Department of Physical Geography, University of Passau, Passau, Germany);
- Eliane Guedes (Department of Geology and Palaeontology, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro – UFRJ, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil);
- Claudia Jimenez Escobar (Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Husbandry, National University of Colombia, Bogotá, Colombia);
- Antonio Jose Teixeira Guerra (Institute of Geosciences, Department of Geography, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro – UFRJ, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil);
- Johannes Hamhaber (Institute for Technology and Resources Management in the Tropics and Subtropics – ITT, TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences, Cologne, Germany);
- Darya Hirsch (International Centre for Sustainable Development – IZNE, Department of Management Sciences, Bonn Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences, Sankt Augustin, Germany);
- Antonio Carlos Oscar da Silva Júnior (Institute of Geography, Department of Physical Geography, State University of Rio de Janeiro – UERJ, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil);
- Peter Krause (Thüringer Landesanstalt für Umwelt und Geologie, Gewässer-kundlicher Landesdienst, Hochwassernachrichtenzentrale [Thuringian State Institute for Environment and Geology, hydrological services, flood protection center], Jena, Germany);
- Georg Lamberty (Institute for Technology and Resources Management in the Tropics and Subtropics – ITT, TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences, Cologne, Germany);
- Sven Lautenbach (Institute of Geodesy and Geoinformation - IGG, University of Bonn, Bonn, Germany);
- Toa Loaiza (Centre for International Migration and Development [CIM], Eschborn, Germany);
- Eduardo Luiz Longui (Department of Wood and Forest Products, Instituto Florestal [Forest Institute], São Paulo, Brazil);
- Luiz Firmino Martins Pereira (Câmara Metropolitana de Integração Governmental [Metropolitan Chamber of Governmental Integration], Rio de Janeiro, Brazil);
- Carlos Rogerio de Mello (Department of Engineering, Federal University of Lavras, Lavras, Brazil);
- Marcela de Abreu Moniz (Institute of Humanities and Health, Federal Fluminense University, Rio das Ostras, Brazil);
- Geoffrey Ndegwa (Independent Researcher and Consultant, Nairobi, Kenya);

- Rodrigo Penna-Firme (Department of Geography and the Environment, Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro – PUC, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil);
- Leandro Angelo Pereira (Federal Institute of Paraná – IFPR, Câmpus Paranaguá, Brazil);
- Stefan Porembski (Department of General Botany and Systematic Botany, University of Rostock, Rostock, Germany);
- Hugo Portocarrero (Institute of Geography, Department of Physical Geography, State University of Rio de Janeiro – UERJ, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil);
- Fabrice G. Renaud (School of Interdisciplinary Studies, University of Glasgow, United Kingdom);
- Thiago Libório Romanelli (Department of Engineering and Biosystems, University of São Paulo – USP, São Paulo, Brazil);
- Eduardo Salgado (School of Agronomy, Pontifical Catholic University of Valparaíso, Valparaíso, Chile);
- Simone Sandholz (Institute for Environment and Human Security, United Nations University – UNU, Bonn, Germany);
- Fabio Rubio Scarano (Fundação Brasileira para o Desenvolvimento Sustentável -FBDS [The Brazilian Foundation for Sustainable Development], Rio de Janeiro, Brazil);
- Gerhard Schiefer (International Center for Food Chain and Network Research, University of Bonn, Bonn, Germany);
- Britta Schmalz (Department of Engineering Hydrology and Water Management, Technical University of Darmstadt, Darmstadt, Germany);
- Karl Schneider (Institute of Geography, University of Cologne, Cologne, Germany);
- Zita Sebesvari (Institute for Environment and Human Security, United Nations University – UNU, Bonn, Germany);
- Maxime Souvignet (Institute for Environment and Human Security, United Nations University – UNU, Bonn, Germany);
- Katharina Stein (Department of Botany and Botanical Garden, University of Rostock, Rostock, Germany);
- Karen Sudmeier-Rieux (Faculty of Geosciences and Environment, Institute of Earth Sciences, University of Lausanne, Lausanne, Switzerland);
- Yuri Tavares Rocha (Department of Geography, University of São Paulo – USP, São Paulo, Brazil);
- Gabriela Teixeira Duarte (Department of Biology, Federal University of Minas Gerais – UFMG, Belo Horizonte, Brazil);
- Wiltrud Terlau (International Centre for Sustainable Development – IZNE, Dept. of Management Sciences, Bonn Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences, Sankt Augustin, Germany);
- Ana Paula Turetta (Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agropecuária [Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation] – Embrapa Solos, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil);
- Raul Sanchez Vicens (Department of Geography, Federal Fluminense University, Niterói, Brazil);
- Carmem Lucas Vieira (Department of Geography, Federal Fluminense University, Niterói, Brazil);

Martin Volk (Department of Computational Landscape Ecology, Helmholtz-Zentrum für Umweltforschung GmbH – UFZ, Leipzig, Germany);  
Thomas Zumbroich (Department of Geography, University of Bonn and Planungsbüro Zumbroich, Bonn, Germany).

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# Contributors

**Nelson T. Alves Filho** is a lawyer and senior officer from Rio Government, acting as the Superintendent of Sustainable Development at the Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock, Food Supply, and Fisheries of the State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. He holds the executive director of the Sustainable Rural Development Program – Rio Rural Program and is the head of rural development policies and projects for small farmers' sustainability with the support of the Global Environment Facility, World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, and the United Agency for Food and Agriculture. He used to lead several projects in the area of land tenure and rural settlements in the State.

**Dieter Anhuf** studied Geography between 1976 and 1982 at the universities of Giessen, Munich, and Bonn. He successfully finished his university education with a diploma in Geography in 1982 and a PhD degree in 1987, both from the University of Bonn, Germany. Since then he continuously worked as a scientific assistant at the Universities of Bonn and Mannheim, Germany, where he terminated his professional dissertation in 1994. Between 1994 and 2001, he substituted the Chair of Physical Geography at Mannheim University. For more than 30 years, he has been focusing on climate and vegetation interaction in tropical Africa and later South America with a close link to the University of São Paulo, Brazil, where he was appointed the renowned von Martius Chair of Ecology in 2001. Since 2004, he has been holding the Chair in Physical Geography at the University of Passau, Germany.

**Oscar Manuel Baez Villanueva** is a civil engineer with a master's degree in Water Management. He is currently a PhD candidate at the Institute for Technology and Resources Management in the Tropics and Subtropics (ITT) at TH Köln and TU Dortmund, Germany. He worked as a professor in the Civil Engineering Program of the University of San Luis Potosí (UASLP), Mexico. He also worked on projects related to water management and structural design. His current research interests are hydrology, spatiotemporal analysis of precipitation, satellite products, and application of remote sensing techniques for hydrological modeling.

**Rachel Bardy Prado** graduated in Biological Sciences from the Federal University of São Carlos, Brazil. She holds a master's and a doctoral degree in Science in Environmental Engineering from the University of São Paulo, Brazil, specializing in planning and water management from the Federal University of the Amazon, Brazil. She has been working as a researcher at Embrapa Soils since 2003, especially in monitoring and planning of ecosystem services with a focus on water resources. She leads the Ecosystem Service Embrapa Research Network. Currently, she attends the postgraduate program in Engineering of Biosystems of the Fluminense Federal University in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

**Lauro Bassi** is an agronomist and holds a master's degree in Soil Sciences. For several years, he acted at EPAGRI/SA – Agricultural Research and Rural Extension of Santa Catarina State: At the international level as a consultant of the Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations (FAO) projects in sustainable agriculture, soil and water conservation, and participatory planning in El Salvador, Mexico, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Equatorial Guinea; and at the national level in projects of natural resource management in the States of São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Santa Catarina, and Rio Grande do Sul. Moreover, he advised and supported the preparation and development of six Global Environment Facilities projects focusing on monitoring and evaluation in different States of Brazil.

**Martin Becher** is a technical advisor for Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH in Brazil. He holds a diploma in Geography, Political Sciences, Agronomy, and Urban Planning from the University of Tübingen, Germany. His work focuses on ecosystem-based adaptation to climate change, disaster risk management, and the development of participative risk assessment tools. His current tasks have an emphasis on mainstreaming climate change adaptation into public policies and land-use planning instruments, framed into bilateral cooperation projects “Biodiversity and Climate Protection in the Mata Atlântica and Supporting Brazil to implement its National Agenda to Adapt to Climate Change (BMUB-IKI).”

**Diana Birnbaum** holds a bachelor's degree in Biology from Radboud University Nijmegen, the Netherlands, and a master's degree in Natural Resources Management and Development from the Institute for Technology and Resources Management in the Tropics and Subtropics, TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences, Germany. Her research focuses on river ecology.

**Alexander Brenning** has been a full professor of Geographic Information Science at Friedrich Schiller University Jena, Germany, since 2014. After studying Mathematics and Geography at the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany, Catholic University of Chile, and Technical University of Freiberg, Germany, he earned a PhD degree in Geography from Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Germany, and held a faculty position at the University of Waterloo, Canada, from 2007 to 2015. His research focuses on spatial statistical techniques and open-source

geocomputing tools and their application to a variety of environmental issues related to mountain geomorphology, natural hazards, and environmental remote sensing.

**Alicia Bustillos Ardaya** is a PhD candidate in the geography department of the University of Bonn, Germany, and a researcher at the Center for Development Research (ZEF), Bonn, Germany. She holds an engineering degree from the Zamorano University for Agricultural studies in Honduras and a Master of Sciences degree from TH Köln - University of Applied Sciences, where she worked on a tri-lateral cooperation between Brazil, Mozambique, and Germany doing the Buzi River basin modeling for flood forecasting. Her research focuses on interdisciplinary aspects of disaster risk reduction. Based on flood models, she focuses on communication and perception of the population living in risk areas, and participatory mechanisms for risk governance, particularly in Latin American countries.

**Gabriel Campos Pereira da Costa** is a master's student in Geography at the State University of Rio de Janeiro (UERJ) and holds a bachelor's degree in Geography of the same institution. Moreover, Gabriel studies Environmental Management at the Estácio de Sá University in Rio de Janeiro. His academic interests are mainly linked to environmental management and rehabilitation of degraded lands. His current research emphasizes on pasture degradation and hydric erosion processes.

**Jaime Cardona** is an environmental manager and PhD candidate in Engineering with more than twelve years of working experience driven by the development of environmental economics, climate change abatement, and water resources management projects throughout the world. His professional experiences have been developed among others in the fields of decentralized wastewater treatment and reuse solutions, water, water treatment process engineering, technical and management assistance to water utilities, project cycle management, and capacity development. He brings extensive experience in managing large- and medium-scale development programs, mostly related to the rural urban water resources management in Middle East, i.e., Palestine, Jordan, Israel; Central Asia, i.e., Mongolia; and Latin America, i.e., Costa Rica, Colombia, Panamá, and Brazil. In-depth experience includes development of decision support methodologies, environmental economics, and Geographic Information Systems for orienting decision-making processes for environmental management.

**Pedro Castro** is a geographer and PhD candidate at the Institute for Geodesy and Geoinformation, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Bonn, Germany. He holds a master's degree in Geography from the Fluminense Federal University, Brazil, with an emphasis on environmental planning. He worked as a consultant in several projects in cooperation with Fluminense Federal University, Rio de Janeiro Federal University, Rio de Janeiro State University, and Environmental Agency of the State of Rio de Janeiro – Brazil (INEA-RJ). His research topics include Land Use Land Cover Classification (LULCC) using optical satellite images and spatial dynamics modeling.

**Elaine Cristina Cardoso Fidalgo** graduated in Agronomy from São Paulo University with a master's degree in Remote Sensing at the Brazilian National Institute for Space Research (INPE), and a PhD degree in Agricultural Engineering at Campinas University, Brazil. She is a researcher of the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation, and based at the National Centre for Soil Research (Embrapa Soils). She has experience in GIS and remote sensing applied to studies of land-use change, environmental planning, and ecosystem services.

**Marcelo Costa** is an agronomist engineer with a specialization in Irrigation Engineering (UFRRJ) and GIS (UFRJ). He is currently an MSc student in Biosystems Engineering at Federal Fluminense University, Brazil (UFF), also acting as information management coordinator of the Sustainable Rural Development Program – Rio Rural. He used to be a former rural extensionist from EMATER RIO, acting as a regional coordinator at Serrana region, Brazil.

**Ana Paula Dias Turetta** holds a bachelor's degree from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (1997), a master's degree in Agronomy (Soil Sciences) from the Federal Rural University of Rio de Janeiro (2000), a PhD in Agronomy (Soil Sciences) from the Federal Rural University of Rio de Janeiro (2004) and a postdoctoral degree from the University of Wageningen, The Netherlands. She has experience in environmental management with emphasis in the subject of sustainability assessment and environmental services of soils in agricultural landscapes. Ana Turetta is a permanent professor of the Graduate Program in Territorial Development of the Federal Rural University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRRJ).

**Utz Dornberger** is the director of the International Small Enterprise Promotion and Training (SEPT) Program of the Leipzig University, Germany. He is a biologist with an MBA degree in Small Business Studies and a PhD degree in Natural Sciences. Since 2006, he has been the director of the start-up initiative SMILE (Self-Management Initiative Leipzig) at the Leipzig University, the director of the MBA program at the Hanoi University of Science and Technology (HUST), and of the Vietnamese-German University (VGU). Since 2015, Utz Dornberger has been the head of Unit for Entrepreneurship and Innovation for Development Cooperation at the Fraunhofer Center for International Management and Knowledge Economy (IMW) in Leipzig.

**Maria Luisa Espinel** is a veterinarian from the National University of Colombia and holds a master's degree in Natural Resources Management from the Institute for Technology and Resources Management in the Tropics and Subtropics (ITT), TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences, Germany. Her field research areas include best farming practices in dairy systems and farm system analysis.

**Mariele Evers** is a geographer and works as a professor at the University of Bonn, as head of the Eco-Hydrology and Water Resources Management Group, and as adjunct professor at the Centre for Climate and Safety at Karlstad University,

Sweden. She has national and international expertise in IWRM and human-water research, the management of hydrological risks, the development and implementation of sociotechnical instruments, and collaborative modeling and transdisciplinary research.

**Marco Follador** is a senior scientific officer at the European Commission and consultant at ALSO Consulting. He received a European PhD (France-Italy) in Geography at Toulouse University, France and in Engineering at Bologna University, Italy. Since 2005 he has been working on climate change related issues with a focus on supporting policy and decision making through robust evidence-based planning. He led several projects in Europe and Brazil related to adaptation issues and climate risk assessment, promotion of climate-proof investments, resilience of productive and socio-environmental systems as well as avoidance of potential losses and damages.

**Leonardo S. Fernandes** is a PhD student in the graduate program in Public Policies and Development Strategies at the Institute of Economics of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro and is a biologist at the Institute of the Environment of the State of Rio de Janeiro. He received a degree in Biological Sciences from the Federal University of Juiz de Fora and a master's degree in Forestry Sciences from the Federal University of Viçosa, both in Minas Gerais, Brazil.

**José Márcio Ferreira** is a researcher at the Agricultural Research Company of the State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil – PESAGRO-RIO; at the State Center for Research in Agroenergy and Waste Utilization, located in the municipality of Campos dos Goytacazes, where he is the coordinator of the Development Program Sustainable Rural – Rio Rural, in the Northern region of the State of Rio de Janeiro. He also leads projects in the area of sustainable agriculture and ecosystem services with support from the Global Environment Facility, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the United Food and Agriculture Agency. The main focus of his work is to support smallholder farmers and family farms for environmental conservation agriculture, ecosystem services and integrated environment-agriculture policies, and the sustainability of smallholder agriculture.

**Manfred Fink** is a senior researcher at the Department of Geography, Friedrich Schiller University Jena, Germany. He received a diploma in Geography from Kiel University and a PhD degree in Geography from Friedrich Schiller University Jena, Germany. His research focuses on the development and application of ecohydrological models, the assimilation of primary data in the field by designing and operation monitoring programs, and the development and application of geographic information processing methods to analyze and prepare data for model input. He led and participated in several international projects. Currently, he works on the communication of the implications of climate change in water management practice.

**Silvia Berenice Fischer** is a junior researcher the Center for Development Research of the University of Bonn. Her current research focuses on drought resilience and health. She holds a degree in Forestry Restoration Engineering from Chapingo University, Mexico, and a master's degree in Natural Resources Management from the TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences, Germany. She worked in several multidisciplinary and international teams, focusing on participatory research and sustainable land management in Germany, Brazil, and Mexico.

**Wolfgang-Albert Flügel** is retired head of the Department of Geoinformatics, Hydrology, and Modeling (DGHM) at Friedrich Schiller University Jena, Germany. His expertise is about hydrological system analysis, rainfall-runoff modeling, climate change impact assessment and analysis in large river basins, and Integrated Land and Water Resources Management (ILWRM). He acquired and fundraised 93 interdisciplinary research projects in Southern Africa, Brazil, Europe, and South Asia funded by the European Commission, the German Research Association (DFG), and the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). In addition, he has supervised 96 MSc theses and 24 PhDs and has authorship in more than 120 publications.

**Rosa Maria Formiga-Johnsson's** broad research interests and experiences comprise water resources management and water policy. Since 2006, she has been an associate professor at the State University of Rio de Janeiro (UERJ) in the Department of Environmental and Sanitary Engineering (Brazil). Rosa obtained her bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering (1987), MSc degree (1992), and PhD degree (1998) in Environmental Sciences and Techniques from Université de Paris II-Val de Marne, France. She was the director of Water Management of the Environmental Agency of the State of Rio de Janeiro (INEA-RJ, Jan 2009–Jan 2015), and Water Security Manager of the State Secretariat of the Environment (Feb– Nov 2015).

**Joana Fraga** is a PhD student in the graduate program at the Department of Geography and Environment of Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, with an emphasis on landscape changes and socioecological systems. She received a degree in Geography at the same department and a master's degree in Geography at Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, with a focus on environmental planning and management.

**Beate Frank's** main research areas comprise water resources management, flood control management, and disaster risk management. She was a professor at University Blumenau, Brazil, from 1979 to 2008. Her main experience was formed in the process of the creation and development of the Itajaí River Basin Council, which she headed from 1996 to 2011, as part of Santa Catarina's water resources management system. She obtained her bachelor's degree in Physics (1976) and MSc degree in Physics (1981) at the Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, and a PhD degree in Production Engineering (1995) at the Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Brazil.

**Carl-Friedrich Gaese** is a PhD candidate at the Chair of Agricultural Systems Engineering at TUM School of Life Sciences Weihenstephan Technical University of Munich, Germany, and a researcher at the Institute of Technology and Resources Management in the Tropics and Subtropics (ITT) at TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences, Germany. He holds a degree in Agricultural Sciences from the Bonn University, Germany. His research focuses on the interface of agricultural machinery and economics.

**Daniel Gieseler** is an engineer for Urban and Industrial Water Management. He graduated from Technical University of Dresden and currently works for the Training and Demonstration Centre for Decentralised Sewage Treatment – BDZ e.V. in Leipzig, Germany, in capacity development as well as in research and development. His research focuses on wastewater management solutions for rural areas.

**Lorena Valeria Guzmán Wolfhard** is an environmental engineer from Technical University of Bolivia and holds a master's degree in Natural Resources Management and Development from the Institute for Technology and Resources Management in the Tropics and Subtropics (ITT), TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences, Germany. She works currently as a research assistant in the Centre for Development Research (ZEF), Bonn, in the Bolivian-German cooperation project "Inclusion of biodiversity in the process of environmental impact assessment."

**Anja Hebner** is an environmental engineer who has been working for more than 15 years as a project manager at Vita 34 AG, business unit BioPlanta, Germany. She develops feasibility studies, environmental risk assessments, and approval planning for remediation of water and soil using biotechnologies. In addition, she manages R&D projects focusing on bio- and phyto-technologies as well as bioengineering. Besides national projects, she has developed projects in Asia and Latin America with international consortia.

**Jürgen Heinrich** is a physical geographer and earned a PhD and a habilitation (*venia legendi*) in Geography from the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University Frankfurt/Main, Germany. He holds the professorship for Physical Geography and Environmental Research at the Institute of Geography at the Leipzig University, Germany. His research focuses on geomorphology, especially of Sub-Saharan Africa, Quaternary Geology, Geocology, and genetic questions of landscape development. For more than a decade, he addressed this research to subjects in North and Southeast Brazil within the framework of international research and development projects.

**Mark Hickie** earned his master's degree in Geography from the Department of Geography and Environment of Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro. He previously obtained another master's degree for Transportation and Logistics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA. Consequently, his research interests are varied and far-ranging, primarily to understand environmental history

focused on efficient modeling to solve future environmental issues. Currently, he serves as a Lieutenant Colonel in the United States Air Force as an instructor pilot of fighter aircraft.

**Helga Hissa** is a senior soil researcher at EMBRAPA – the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation working at the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Food Supply and Fisheries of the State of Rio de Janeiro, where she acts as technical coordinator of the Sustainable Rural Development Program – Rio Rural. She also leads projects in the area of Sustainable Agriculture and Ecosystems Services with support of the Global Environment Facility, World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, and the United Agency for Food and Agriculture. She is an agronomist engineer and earned an MSc degree in Soil Sciences from the Rural University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Her work focuses on conservation agriculture, ecosystem services, and environment-agriculture integrated policies aiming at sustainability of conservation agriculture by smallholders.

**Elisabeth Huber-Sannwald** earned a PhD degree in Range Ecology from Utah State University, USA. After a postdoc at the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina, with the Global Change and Biodiversity Program she became an assistant professor at the Chair of Grassland Science at the Technical University in Munich, Germany. In 2001, she joined the national research institute Instituto Potosino de Investigación Científica y Tecnológica, Mexico, as a researcher in the Division of Environmental Sciences. Her research interests are ecosystem services and livelihood analysis, resilience of social-ecological systems, complex system analysis of land degradation, and desertification of drylands. She is a co-coordinator of the international desertification network ARIDnet, and the International Network on Sustainable Drylands.

**Silvia Marie Ikemoto** is a biologist and PhD student in the Environmental Postgraduate Program of the State University of Rio de Janeiro. She holds a master's degree in Environmental Sciences from the Fluminense Federal University. She is coordinator of territory management and geospatial information at the INEA-RJ (Environmental Agency of the State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil). Her work and research emphasize territory and water resources management, ecosystem-based management, payment of environmental services, and disaster risk management. She coordinates the Payment for Environmental Services State Program and two international projects with a focus on sustainable land use management and biodiversity conservation in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

**Viviane Japiassú Viana** holds a PhD degree in Environmental Sciences and a master's degree in Environmental Engineering from the State University of Rio de Janeiro. She is the author of several books relating to environmental topics. Her research areas include disaster risk reduction, land use management, environmental management, and water resources management. She is a faculty member of Veiga de Almeida University and other university centers in Rio de Janeiro. She also works in the environmental regularization of services and industrial activities.

**Guilherme Kangussú Donagemma** graduated in Agronomia from Universidade Federal de Viçosa (1997) with a master's degree in Agronomy at Universidade Federal de Viçosa (2000) and a PhD degree in Agronomy from the Universidade Federal de Viçosa (2005). He has experience in agronomy, focusing on soil physics and acts on the following subjects: nutrient dynamics, fertirrigation, soil columns, and dispersion.

**Sven Kralisch** is a senior researcher and lecturer in the field of Geoinformatics and Environmental Modeling at the group for Geographic Information Science of Friedrich Schiller University Jena, Germany, where he gained a diploma in Computer Science and a PhD degree in Geoinformatics. His research focuses on the development of software tools and methods for a holistic assessment of hydrological processes in river basins and their future development under changing climate and management. The application of these methods is embedded in international research activities with regional foci in Brazil, Southern Africa, Central and South Asia, and Europe.

**André Kirchner** holds a Junior Professorship in Geography at the University of Hildesheim, Germany. He studied Geography, Geology and History at the University of Leipzig and prepared a diploma thesis on geomorphological and pedological processes in the hyperarid Nubian Desert. During his PhD, he focused on fluvial deposits and soils as palaeoenvironmental archives in Southeast Brazil. In recent years, André worked on geoarchaeological research projects and on environmental education. Furthermore, he gives lectures, seminars and field classes on a regular basis. He is an active member of national and international working groups.

**Kristina Kreter** currently works as a Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) program coordinator for an NGO in the Dominican Republic. She holds a master's degree in International Cultural and Business Studies from the University of Passau and a double master's degree in Environment and Resources Management from the TH Köln - University of Applied Sciences, Germany, and from the Autonomous University of San Luis Potosí, Mexico. Her academic field research focused on water governance with an emphasis on the Brazilian water and sanitation sector.

**Annika Künne** is a researcher at the group of Geographic Information Science at Friedrich Schiller University Jena, Germany. She studied Geography with a focus on hydrology and geoinformation science. Her expertise is in ecohydrological modeling as well as climate and land-use change impact assessment on river basin scale. For this purpose, she develops and applies process-based simulation models, designs, and implements hydro-climatic monitoring networks and analyses environmental data sets using geostatistical methods. Her regional foci are in Brazil and Germany.

**Georg Lamberty** is a senior researcher and lecturer in Integrated Water Resources Management at the Institute for Technology and Resources Management in the Tropics and Subtropics, TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences, Germany. He

holds a PhD degree in Geography from the University of Bonn, Germany. His research areas include river ecosystems, hydromorphology, and environmental assessment.

**Wolfram Lange** works as a freelance consultant for projects of international cooperation for sustainable development, NGOs and governmental institutions in Brazil and is a PhD candidate at the Institute of Geography of the University of Cologne, Germany. His expertise is urban and social geography as well as regional planning and natural resources management focusing on land-use management in rural and urban areas and socio-spatial analysis, climate change, and disaster risk reduction. He has been working at and cooperating with several universities in Germany, Brazil, Mozambique, Chile, Mexico, and Indonesia.

**Sven Lautenbach** is an assistant professor of Land-Use Modeling and Ecosystem Services at the University of Bonn, Germany. His work focuses on trade-offs of land-use decisions, environmental modeling, decision support, and statistical modeling of environmental and socioeconomic data.

**Alena Lepilova** graduated in Water Supply and Wastewater Disposal Engineering from the Ural Federal University named after the first President of Russia B.N. Yeltzin, Russia, and continued her studies in Germany to gain a master's degree in Ecotoxicology from University of Koblenz-Landau with a focus on water pollution. After completing her studies, Alena Lepilova started to work as a research assistant supporting Training and Demonstration Centre for Decentralized Wastewater Treatment – BDZ e.V, Leipzig in research and capacity development projects at international level with an emphasis on decentralized water and wastewater management.

**Silke Lichtenberg** works as a lecturer at the Institute for Technology and Resources Management in the Tropics and Subtropics, TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences, Germany. She obtained her bachelor's degree in Environmental and Energy Management at the University of Applied Sciences of Pinkafeld, Austria, and her double master's degree in Environmental and Resources Management from TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences and from the Autonomous University of San Luis Potosi, Mexico. Apart from her academic background, she is a professional violinmaker with a degree from the Violinmaking School in Mittenwald. Her research focuses on social-ecological systems with an emphasis on the interconnection between environment and art.

**Renato Linhares de Assis** is a researcher at Embrapa Agrobiology. He graduated in Agronomy in 1993. He holds a master's degree in Soil Science and a PhD degree in Applied Economics. He works at Embrapa's research and farmers' training advanced office at Rio Serrana, Mountain Region, Brazil, and is also a teacher at UFFRJ/EMBRAPA Master of Science Course on Organic Agriculture, Brazil, and at UFRRJ's PhD binational program on Agriculture Science and Innovation in

partnership with Universidad Nacional de Riocuarto, Argentina. He acts mainly with agroecology, mountain agriculture, family farming, and organic agriculture, especially concerning participatory knowledge transfer and agriculture sustainability indicators.

**Carlos Marconi de Souza Resende** is a biologist with an MBA degree in Quality, Safety, Environment, and Health from the University Castelo Branco, Brazil. He is the head and extensionist of the local office at the Company for Technical Assistance and Rural Extension (EMATER-RIO) in Italva, Northwest of the Rio de Janeiro State, Brazil.

**Peter H. May** received his PhD degree in Resource Economics from Cornell University, USA. He is a full professor of the Department of Development, Agriculture and Society of the Federal Rural University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. He is an author and editor of a number of books in the areas of ecological economics, agroforestry, payment for ecosystem services and environmental policy, including *The Subsidy from Nature*, *Pricing the Planet*, and *Natural Resource Valuation and Policy in Brazil* (Columbia University Press) and *Economia do Meio Ambiente: Teoria e Prática* (Elsevier). Peter May is the past president of the International Society for Ecological Economics-ISEE and founder and current president of the Brazilian Society for Ecological Economics-ECOECO. He previously served as program officer at the Ford Foundation's Brazil office and as forestry officer at the FAO in Rome. He is currently a visiting scholar at the Earth Institute of Columbia University, Center for Sustainable Development, USA.

**Torsten Meyer** graduated as an engineer from the Institute of Agricultural Machinery and Renewable Energies at TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences, Germany. From 2008 to 2013, he was research assistant at TH Köln with international activities in Brazil, South Africa, France, England, and Italy. Currently, he runs the company TM Technik in Kronberg/Taunus in Germany that develops tailor-made solutions in agriculture machine technologies.

**Carlos Frederico de Menezes Veiga** graduated in Agronomy, holds a master's degree in Genetics and Plant Breeding, and a doctorate in Plant Production with an emphasis on plant biotechnology. He is a researcher at the Federal Rural University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and coordinated the genetic improvement program for sugarcane for the States of Rio de Janeiro, Espírito Santo, Southern Bahia, and Northeast of Minas Gerais, Brazil. He led a research project in the area of socio-economics that generated the diagnosis of the sugarcane productive chain of the State of Rio de Janeiro, identifying technological deficiencies of small and medium producers which allowed the creation of the Sugarcane Support Program in the North and Northwest of the State of Rio de Janeiro serving approximately 1,600 producers.

**Joyce M. G. Monteiro** graduated in Agronomy from the Federal University of Lavras, Brazil, with a master's degree in Ecology at the University of Brasilia (UnB) and a PhD degree in Environmental Planning at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. She is researcher of the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation, and based at the National Centre for Soil Research (Embrapa Soils). Her work focuses on environmental planning: ecosystem services and strategies for adaptation and mitigation of climate change in rural area.

**Friederike Naegeli de Torres** is a geographer with a master's degree in Technology and Resources Management in the Tropics and Subtropics and a PhD student at the Geoinformatics and Remote Sensing Department at the Institute for Geography, Leipzig University, Germany. She has worked in different international and interdisciplinary research projects in Latin America. Her research focus is on applicable and transferable remote sensing methods for land-use classification and pasture degradation mapping as well as on GIS-based landscape and forest fragmentation analysis.

**Udo Nehren** is a senior researcher and lecturer in Physical Geography and Ecosystem Management at the Institute for Technology and Resources Management in the Tropics and Subtropics, TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences, Germany. He received a PhD degree in Geography from the Leipzig University, Germany, and a habilitation (*venia legendi*) in Geography from University of Passau, Germany. His research emphasizes landscape evolution, ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction and adaptation, and ecosystem management with regional foci in Latin America and Southeast Asia. Udo Nehren is author and editor of books and articles related to these topics, such as the book *Ecosystem-Based Disaster Risk Reduction and Adaptation in Practice* (Springer). Furthermore, he is one of the developers of the Massive Open Online Course “Disasters and Ecosystems: Resilience in a Changing Climate.”

**Laura Maria Noriega Gamarra** is a junior researcher working on climate change and low carbon development at the Institute for Technology and Resources Management in the Tropics and Subtropics, TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences, Germany. She holds a degree in Environmental and Sanitary Engineering from the Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana in Bucaramanga, Colombia; a specialization in Integrated Management of the Environment from the Universidad de los Andes, Colombia; and a Master of Sciences degree in Technology and Resources Management in Tropics and Subtropics with an emphasis on energy management from the TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences, Germany. Her research focuses on emissions reduction potentials and climate change mitigation strategies.

**Rogério Oliveira** is an associate professor at the Department of Geography and Environment of Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. He holds a PhD degree in Geography from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro and a post-doc from the Institute of Social Ecology, Vienna, Austria. His research areas combine environmental history, historical ecology, and plant ecology. His research focuses on history of landscape, human dimensions of biodiversity, and forest history.

**Aline Pacobahya de Oliveira** graduated in Agronomy from the Federal University of Viçosa, Brazil. She holds a master's and doctoral degree in Soil Science and Plant Nutrition from the Federal University of Viçosa. Since 2011, she has been a researcher at Embrapa Soils and has been working in Genesis, Morphology and Classification of Soil in the Pedology Research Group and Soil and Ecosystem Services in the Ecosystem Services Network at Embrapa.

**Luiz Antonio Oliveira Antunes** graduated in Agronomy from the Federal Rural University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and holds a master's degree in Crop Sciences from the Federal University of Viçosa, Brazil. He is currently the coordinator of the participatory research group of the Sustainable Rural Development Program – Rio Rural. His work focuses on crop sciences and agroecology.

**Alejandra Pedraza Luengas** is a biologist from the Universidad Militar Nueva Granada, Colombia, with a double master's degree in Natural Resources Management in the Tropics and Subtropics from TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences, Germany, and in Environmental Sciences from the Universidad Autónoma de San Luis Potosí, Mexico. Currently, she co-owns a company named Danaus Consultants, dedicated to provide consultancy services and promote good agricultural practices to stakeholders in different crop production systems in Belize, while preserving the natural resources and contributing to food security for the well-being of consumers. The provision of nonformal education through seminars, workshops, and courses in a wide array of thematical areas related to agriculture, environment, and biological sciences is one of her intends.

**Rui Pedroso** is a senior researcher and lecturer in statistics, econometrics, optimization modeling, and nonmarket valuation methods for environmental goods/services at the Institute for Technology and Resources Management in the Tropics and Subtropics, TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences, Germany. He received a PhD degree in Agricultural Economics from the University of Bonn, Center for Development Research (ZEF). His current regional foci are in Vietnam, Kenya, and Brazil. In Brazil, the focus is on land use and land cover change in the State of Rio de Janeiro, agricultural land abandonment, and the econometric analysis of driving factors.

**Santiago Penedo-Julien** graduated in Chemical Engineering from the Monterrey Institute of Technology and Higher Education, Mexico, and continued his studies in Germany gaining a master's degree in Resources Management at the Institute for Technology and Resources Managements in the Tropics and Subtropics (ITT), TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences, Germany. He received a PhD from Friedrich Schiller University Jena, Germany, in Modeling the Impacts of Different Land Uses on Water Quality. He works as a researcher and lecturer at TH Köln in hydrological and water quality modeling, Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA), and Water-Energy-Food (WEF) Nexus.

**Fatima Conceição Marquez Piña-Rodrigues** is a full professor of the Federal University of São Carlos, Brazil. Her research interest lies in the area of applied seed ecology with focus on restoration of degraded areas and conservation of mainly dry zones of tropical forest. She is a forest engineer with a master's degree in Ecological Genetics. She participated in two postdoctoral programs in Tropical Ecology at the University of Missouri Saint Louis and in Conservation in the Missouri Botanical Garden. She is author and editor of many books in the areas of forest seed technology and ecology, genetic conservation, tropical silviculture, and forest restoration. Furthermore, she is the coordinator of the Atlantic Forest Seed Network and founder of the Brazilian Committee of Seed Technology, as well as a member of the Society of Ecological Restoration and of the Brazilian Committee of the International Seed Testing Association (ISTA).

**Augusto João Piratelli** is a professor and senior researcher in Ecology and Conservation at the Federal University of Sao Carlos, Brazil, and a member of the Brazilian Society of Ornithology. He is a biologist and holds a PhD degree in Zoology from the State University of São Paulo, Brazil, and a postdoctoral fellowship in Ecology at the University of Missouri – St. Louis, United States. His research aims at identifying and mitigating the anthropogenic effects, e.g., agriculture and urbanization, on neotropical birds. He investigates their trophic ecology, closely linked with ecosystem functions and services. Augusto J. Piratelli is author and editor of more than 30 articles in peer-reviewed journals, seven book chapters, and three books.

**Claudia Raedig** gained her PhD degree in Biology from Leipzig University, Germany. She works as a senior researcher and lecturer in the field of Biodiversity and Connectivity Conservation at the Institute for Technology and Resources Management in the Tropics and Subtropics at TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences, Germany. Her research focuses on connectivity conservation management, particularly on the development of strategies for enhancing connectivity for biodiversity conservation in tropical and coastal ecosystems in Southeast Asia and Latin America.

**Juan Luis Ramirez Duval** is a civil engineer with a master's degree in Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) from the TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences, Institute for Technology and Resources Management in the Tropics and Subtropics (ITT). He worked as a scientific staff at the ITT and was responsible for implementing and coordinating water monitoring activities within the research project INTECRAL in Rio de Janeiro State (2013–2017). At present he works at the company ribeka GmbH, Germany as project manager and scientific staff in the field of water and environmental monitoring and data management.

**Juan Antonio Reyes-Agüero** is a biologist from the Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo, Mexico. He holds a Master of Sciences degree from the Colegio de Postgraduados, Mexico, and a PhD degree in Biological Sciences from

the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. He was a professor at four Mexican and one foreign higher education institutions (TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences, Germany). Since 1997, he has been a professor-researcher at Universidad Autónoma de San Luis Potosí (UASLP), Mexico. He has the level I of Mexican National System of Researcher. His academic interest is the research on ecology and management of renewable natural resources; as professor, he teaches the subjects of Ecology, General Ecology and Biodiversity, and Evolution in postgraduate and undergraduate courses of the UASLP, Mexico. He published more than 50 research articles, four books, and eight book chapters.

**Lars Ribbe** is a professor for Integrated Land and Water Resources Management and director at the Institute for Technology and Resources Management in the Tropics and Subtropics (ITT), TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences, Germany. He obtained his PhD degree in the field of hydro-informatics and works on river basin assessment, modeling, and management. His research is targeted to develop knowledge systems that help decision makers to cope with prevailing water resources related challenges like water scarcity and drought, floods, and pollution. Current research projects are implemented in various river basins in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

**Ronny Richter** is a field-platform manager at the German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research (iDiv), Halle-Jena-Leipzig, and currently conducts his PhD research at the Department of Geoinformatics and Remote Sensing, Institute for Geography, Leipzig University, Germany. His research focuses on the assessment of scale-dependent biodiversity patterns in forests and their implications for ecosystem functions and services. His methodological background includes the acquisition and analysis of airborne hyperspectral and thermal imagery data as well as tree canopy research at the Leipzig Canopy Crane.

**Vanesa Rodríguez Osuna** is a senior researcher and project manager at the CUNY Advanced Science Research Center in New York, where she leads projects in the area of sustainable investments. She is an environmental engineer, and gained her MSc degree in Natural Resource Management and Technologies in the Tropics from TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences, Germany, and her PhD degree in Physical Geography from the Leipzig University, Germany. Her work focuses on ecosystem services assessments, environmental policy, environmental impact assessment, and bridging the science-policy interface on environmental topics. She is the lead author of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)'s Regional Assessment and Summary for Policymakers for the American continent.

**Simone Sandholz** is a senior scientist at the Institute for Environment and Human Security of United Nations University (UNU-EHS). She is part of the Vulnerability Assessment, Risk Management, and Adaptive Planning (VARMAP) section and holds a PhD degree in Geography from University of Innsbruck, Austria. In her research, she focuses on sustainable urban and regional development, in particular