

Brazil Wants World to Accept Abrolhos Park as Protected Area

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Recognition of a an area in Brazil comprising five million hectares, including the Abrolhos National Marine Park, will qualify the region for sustainable use.

It will permit the implantation of training and research activities and campaigns to raise public awareness in local communities regarding the value of humid zones. It will also permit fund-raising for environmental protection.

The Abrolhos island group constitutes the chief fishing zone of the state of Bahia and contributes 80,000 tourism jobs.

The archipelago is home to various native species, including corals unlike anywhere else in the world, and is a breeding ground for fish and whales and rest stop and hatchery for birds.

It is also the site of mushroom-shaped pinnacles, called "chapeirões," reefs up to 50 meters in diameter and 25 meters high, recognized as the largest formations of this type in the South Atlantic.

To obtain recognition, which acts as an environmental quality seal, the Ministry of Environment (MMA) and Conservation International plan to propose inclusion of the Brazilian area to the secretariat of the Ramsar Convention.

The MMA proposal will be submitted to the 9th Conference of Parties to the Convention, which will take place in Uganda in November.

The United Nations Convention on Humid Zones was adopted in the city of Ramsar, in Iran, in 1971, and ratified by Brazil in 1996.

Prior to being presented in Africa, the proposal will be discussed with other Ministries, such as Defense and Science and Technology, non-governmental organizations, civil society, and teaching and research institutions.

Brazil currently possesses eight protection areas and parks recognized by the Ramsar Convention.

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