

## Brazilian Conservationist Kills Self to Protest Alcohol Plants

Contributed by A.M.  
Monday, 14 November 2005

Francisco Anselmo de Barros, 65, wrapped himself in an alcohol-soaked blanket and set it on fire during a protest Saturday, November 12, in Campo Grande, state of Mato Grosso do Sul, 1,200 kilometers (750 miles) northwest of Rio de Janeiro, according to officials at the Santa Casa hospital.

Fellow protesters smothered the fire with blankets and sprayed it with a fire extinguisher. Barros was taken to Santa Casa with burns over 90 percent of his body. He died Sunday, the hospital said.

The Mato Grosso do Sul state assembly is debating a project to build alcohol plants on the upper Paraguay River, which runs through the Pantanal, the world's largest wetlands.

Ecologists say the environmental balance of the Pantanal and the western Amazon are threatened by the expansion of cane plantations that produce sugar and alcohol, which is widely used for automobile fuel in Brazil.

Barros was president of the Foundation for Nature Conservation in Mato Grosso do Sul state, a group he founded in 1980.

In a letter left to his family and friends, Barros wrote that he "did what he did as the only way to wake the people up" to the environmental threat, the Globo news agency said.

This article appeared originally in Pravda &ndash; [www.pravda.ru](http://www.pravda.ru).