

BRAZIL'S NATIONAL PROGRAM FOR PETROLEUM PRODUCTS AND NATURAL GAS CONSERVATION – HISTORIC OVERVIEW, CRITICISM AND PERSPECTIVE FOR THE FUTURE

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to present an historical overview, some criticisms and a brief discussion about future perspective for the Brazilian National Program for Petroleum Products and Natural Gas Conservation (CONPET). Initially focusing on the 1970's energy crisis period, the paper starts by tracking backward early initiatives for oil conservation in Brazil. The origin as well as the principles of CONPET is then described. The paper criticises CONPET's organization and main achievements over its first 12 years of existence since 1991. The actions implemented by CONPET are limited in scope and wideness. Moreover, the lack of adequate accountability instruments is highlighted as a major difficult to measure the Program's long-term results. It is stated that CONPET has never received enough support from the government, having been managed primarily by the National Oil Company, Petrobras. The company has been in charge for keeping the initiatives alive during this long period. CONPET would have died otherwise. Yet, Petrobras may also be responsible for having reduced CONPET's influence. The Program has lost status, turning into a company's initiative rather than a governmental policy. The paper proposes the urgent need for Brazil to put forward new strategies for petroleum and natural gas conservation. Some future perspectives for CONPET are suggested.

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