Summary

In 2024, when Brazil was experiencing its longest drought since 1950 (Brazil MCTI 2024) and wildfires covered much of the country in toxic smoke, President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (known as ‘Lula’) announced the creation of a ‘Climate Authority’. At the outset of Lula’s current term in January 2023, the creation of a Climate Authority was proposed by Marina Silva, a well-known environmentalist who heads the Lula administration’s *Ministério do Meio Ambiente e Mudança do Clima* (MMA; Ministry of Environment and Climate Change), where the new authority was to be housed. Soon afterwards, the National Congress, which is dominated by agribusiness representatives known as *ruralistas* (ruralists), removed various key responsibilities from the MMA and transferred them to agencies friendly to their interests. The Climate Authority proposal therefore remained dormant until President Lula’s recent announcement, and it continues to lack definition of its objectives and attributions (Pitombo & Chagas 2024). The Climate Authority depends on approval of it in the legislature, pending redrafting of a bill (PL 3961/2020) that would require measures to address ‘climate emergencies’ (Dalle 2024). Now, ruralist politicians are manoeuvring to have the proposed Climate Authority separated from the MMA and subordinated to an agency such as the *Casa Civil* (Civil House), which is an office within the presidential palace through which virtually all matters crossing the president’s desk must pass and where these politicians can have great influence. The present Comment aims to analyse the possibilities of an autonomous and technical Climate Authority within the Brazilian political framework and to suggest alternatives for the development of a climate policy that is not constrained by party agreements.