

## **MEETING WATER DEMANDS AT AGRARIAN REFORM SETTLEMENTS IN SOUTH BRAZIL: EXAMPLE OF COORDINATED POLICIES AMONG PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS.**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The southern part of the RS state, next to the Uruguayan border, was chosen to host agrarian reform rural settlements. About 5.000 families, organized in 70 communities are trying to make their living through small scale agriculture and pasture practices. One of their biggest constraints relates to water for consumption and production due to long dry periods, lower soil storage capacity and poor aquifer conditions. Water wells were located and completed inefficiently by means of political driven initiatives, giving rise to frustration among peasants. No single well works properly and public money was wasted. Once public institutions started to cooperate and demand a more comprehensive understanding of the hydrology of the region, successful examples were delivered. Old coal boreholes were assessed under the light of potential groundwater reservoirs and a new conceptual model was set. Productive water wells are already operating and a new paradigm concerning water policy was established.

**PALAVRA-CHAVE: Water demands, Rural Settlements, Policy Coordination, Groundwater reservoirs**