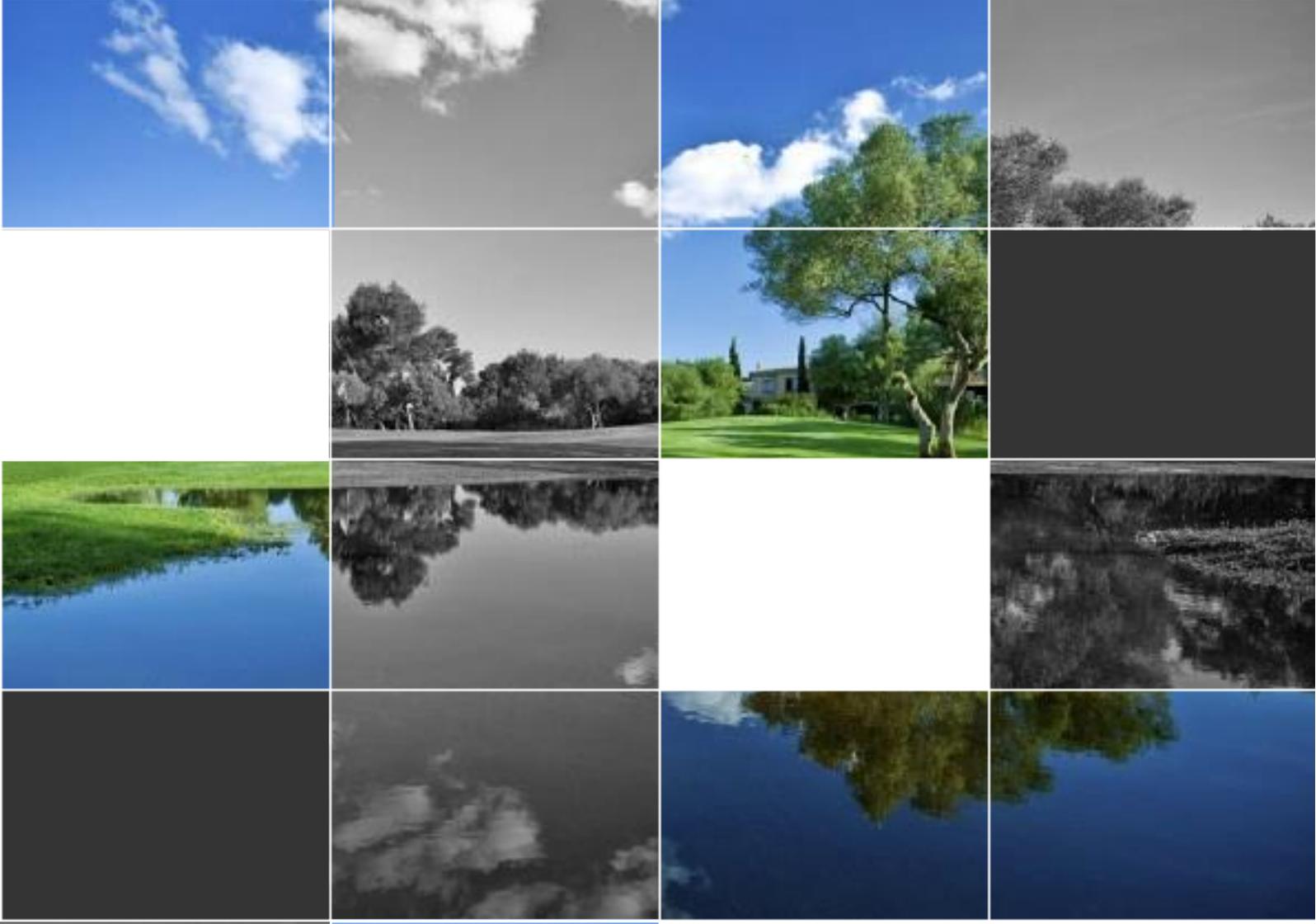




**NICOLE** | **LATIN AMERICA**  
Latin America Network for Soil and Water Management



# Position Paper

Applied Sustainability to  
the Management of  
Contaminated Areas

NICOLE Latin America and  
Surf Brasil



# NICOLE LATIN AMERICA AND SURF BRAZIL



## SURF Brazil

Surf Brazil emerged from the initiative of the Brazilian Forum for Sustainable Remediation (FORESBR), which was created in October 2010. It was created as a result of an initiative by professionals working in the area of industry environment, consultancy and academia.

Sustainable remediation is defined as "the implementation of remediation projects that present an acceptable balance, based on environmental, economic and social indices, between impacts and benefits" (Sustainable Remediation Forum - UK, 2010). Sustainable remediation has been shown to be a cutting edge approach in optimizing the remediation of contaminated areas. With sustainability increasingly assuming a priority position within corporations, governments and society in general, remediation solutions that include concepts of sustainability offer environmental, economic and social advantages.

## NICOLE Latin America

NICOLE Brasil was created in December 2013, as a network formed by professionals in the environmental area, with the objective of disseminating technical and scientific knowledge on management and remediation of contaminated areas; as well as to stimulate and coordinate researches directed to the theme, and to mediate discussions between industry, service providers, universities, environmental entities and society. In 2019, NICOLE Brasil became NICOLE Latin America, with the expansion of the network and the interests in sharing knowledge not only in Brazil, but in all Latin American countries, which made the group's experience even more enriching.

The members of the network are divided into groups that work to produce materials aimed at the Brazilian reality and that meet social, economic and environmental criteria. The exchange of knowledge between network professionals is a valuable differential.



## **Sustainability Applied to the Management of Contaminated Land in Latin America**

Area management activities in Latin America have undergone a process of constant development in recent decades. Although there are countries in the process of implementing standards and legislation regarding the management of contaminated areas, there is a growing increase in environmental projects implemented, which are not always effective when evaluated considering sustainability criteria.

In addition, although there is a legal framework that addresses this issue in some countries, the concept of Management of Contaminated Areas in a sustainable manner, or better known through the term Sustainable Remediation, does not permeate all relevant aspects for a sustainable project, encompassing environmental, economic and mainly social aspects for the reality of Latin America. This issue makes it difficult to create and use techniques aimed at the current and future sustainability of contaminated areas.

In Latin America, socio-economic needs can be acute and more disparate when compared to those in North America and Europe. Given this matter, a better management of resources is required, so that the benefits obtained from a remediation project outweigh the impacts caused by the contamination of the area. The sustainability model to be applied for the Management of Contaminated Areas in Latin America cannot be adopted only as a “Copy and Paste” of the international standards, as resources and their availability are different, so as the advancement of technical, economic and environmental management tools. It also emphasizes the need to integrate views for managers of sustainable projects also with regard to climate change and global scenarios, as well as the need for careful thinking in relation to economic, environmental and social circularity, throughout the process of Management of Contaminated Areas.

In order to show the notoriety of the theme and to position itself in relation to the need for different perspectives for Project Sustainability in Latin America, the NICOLE Latin America network and SURF Brasil have been working on this theme and present a Joint Declaration, exposing their vision of the Contaminated Areas Management process with an emphasis on Sustainability for the entire region.



- They agree that it is necessary for society to mitigate the risks associated with environmental contamination, focusing on social and environmental aspects, in order to protect the population.
- They agree that the decision-making process to define a sustainable remediation project must be transparent, evidence-based and involve the assessment and management of risks to human health and the environment.
- They agree that the definition of sustainable remediation alternatives must take into account all social, economic and environmental impacts, whether positive or negative, and must maximize the common benefit.
- They agree that existing remediation technologies used in Europe and North America must be tested and adapted to our reality and its conditions.
- They recognize the importance of contributing to sustainable development:
- They aim to promote the efficient and responsible use of economic, social and environmental resources.
- They aim to improve land management for society, promoting better solutions and remedial measures in relation to environmental impacts and effects.
- They seek to develop indicators to quantify economic, social and environmental components, since sustainability cannot be measured in absolute terms.
- They understand that sustainability and its principles must be part of the entire process of managing contaminated areas.

Adapted from:

Common Forum EU and NICOLE EU Joint Statement

Available in: [www.commonforum.eu/documents/DOC/Positionpapers/1177/Portugees\\_DDC\\_FLYER\\_05122014\\_v0.1.pdf](http://www.commonforum.eu/documents/DOC/Positionpapers/1177/Portugees_DDC_FLYER_05122014_v0.1.pdf)

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Sustainable Remediation Working Group Leader

Joyce Cruz Di Giovanni

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Sustainable Remediation Working Group Secretary

Mayara Pupo