

PRECARIOUS URBANIZATION: AN IMPORTANT FACTOR TO THE INCREASING OF LANDSLIDE RISK AREAS IN BRAZILIAN MAJOR CITIES

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During the past two decades, the demand for geological expertise in urban areas has increased as a result of the growth of the cities. In large urban areas, such as the metropolitan area around São Paulo City, the amount of problems of geological nature has increased especially because inadequate land use. In Brazilian major cities, such as Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo and Salvador, landslides are by far the most social damaging natural hazard. Besides, the magnitude of the problem tends to become worse as the number of landslide risk areas has largely increased due to continuing expansion of the poor population into the vicinity of steeply sloping terrain. A precarious urbanization process in the borders of the large cities, drastically transforms the natural landscape, altering the hillslope configuration and upsetting established equilibrium conditions. Landslides, especially the ones caused in whole or in part by human activity, are often both predictable and preventable. This kind of remark strengthen the importance of Geology as a tool to prevent and solve related problems in large urban areas. This paper discusses and presents the relationship between precarious urbanization and man-made landslide risk areas in São Paulo Metropolitan Area, and shows some programs and control works to cope with the problem.