

FIRE IN OUR BACKYARD

A CITIZEN SCIENCE REPORT FROM SÃO JOÃO DO SABUGÍ, RN

Presented by the
Meninas no Espaço Project

*“We watched the sky. We measured the data.
We asked the community.”*

THE HEAT OF THE SERIDÓ

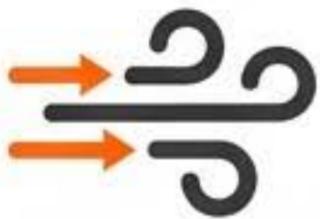
São João do Sabugí,
Rio Grande do Norte, Brazil.



High Temperatures



Low Humidity



Strong Winds



No Rain

**THE CLIMATE CREATES THE FUEL.
BUT WHO LIGHTS THE MATCH?**





THE SMOKE AMONG US

- ✓ In our city, burning is a tradition.
- ✓ Used to clean land and destroy trash.
- ✓ But the smoke does not stay in one place.

The wind carries the problem to our homes.

OUR TOOLS: SCIENCE IN OUR HANDS



**GLOBE OBSERVER
APP (NASA):**
Tracking clouds & sky.



CPTEC/INPE:
Tracking weather data.



We combined satellite data with eyes on the street.

WE ASKED THE COMMUNITY



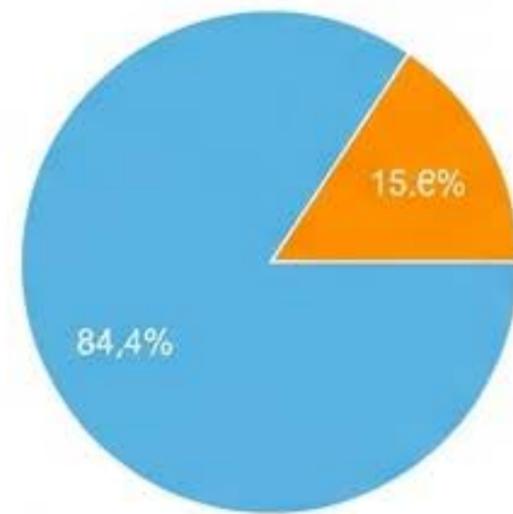
84% Urban Residents

90

INTERVIEWS



16% Rural Residents



- Zona urbana (84.4%)
- Zona rural (15.6%)

Goal: To understand why people burn.

WHY DO THEY BURN?

Cleaning Properties

82%

Cleaning Empty Lots

62%

Burning Domestic Trash **53%**

“ Fire is used as a broom. It is a cheap way to clean.

CLEANING WITH FIRE



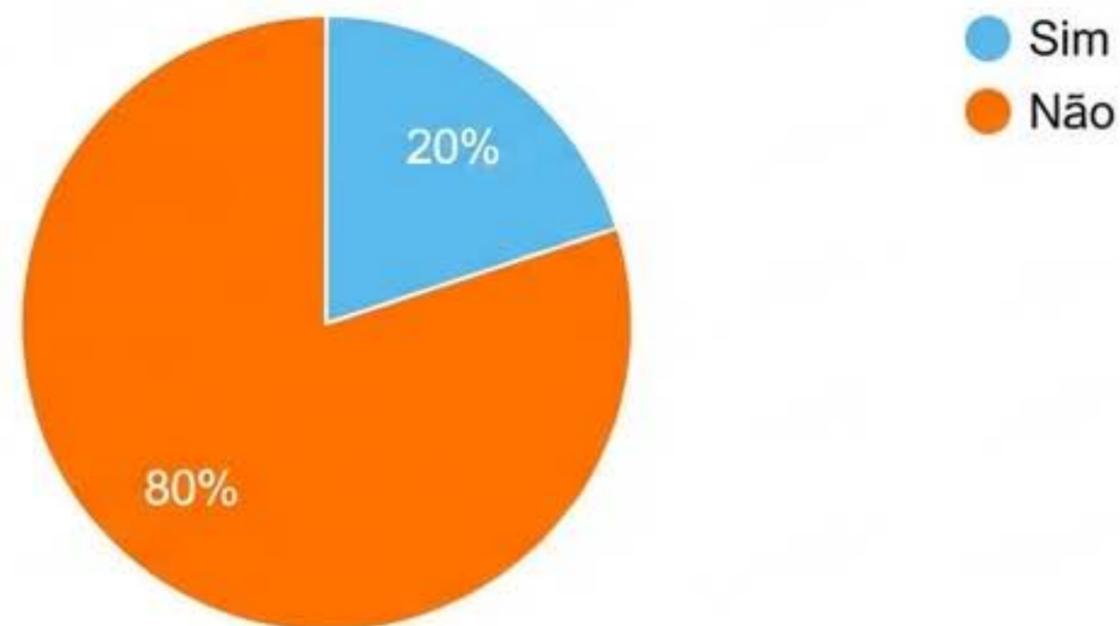
Many people burn trash to reduce its volume. They think think they are **cleaning the environment.**

They remove the trash from the ground, but put poison in the air.

KNOWLEDGE VS. THE LAW

95% know what
“illegal burning” is.

80% do NOT know
the laws.



We know it is dangerous.
We do not know it is a crime.

A DANGEROUS PROXIMITY

45% of burns happen near houses.

33% use **NO** safety measures.



No water. No monitoring. Just fire.

WE FEEL IT IN OUR LUNGS



Cough: 54%

54%

Short of Breath: 47%

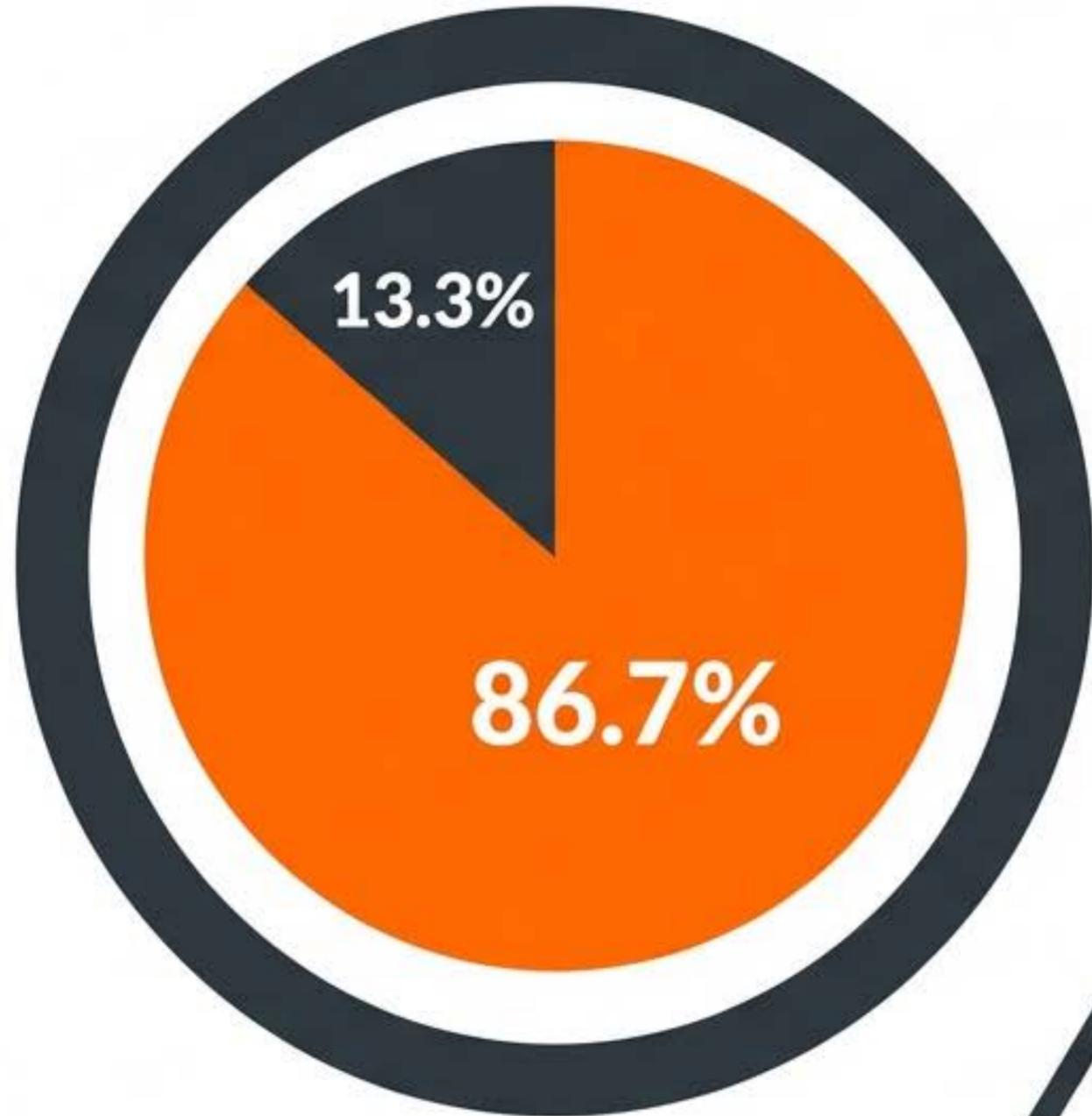
47%

Eye Irritation: 30%

30%

The smoke enters our homes. It enters our lungs.

HARD TO IGNORE



86% have witnessed illegal burning.

Dry Season = Fire Season



JUL

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER

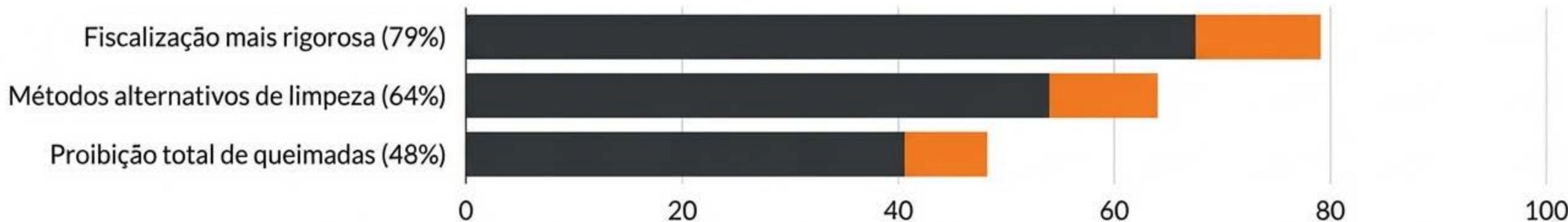
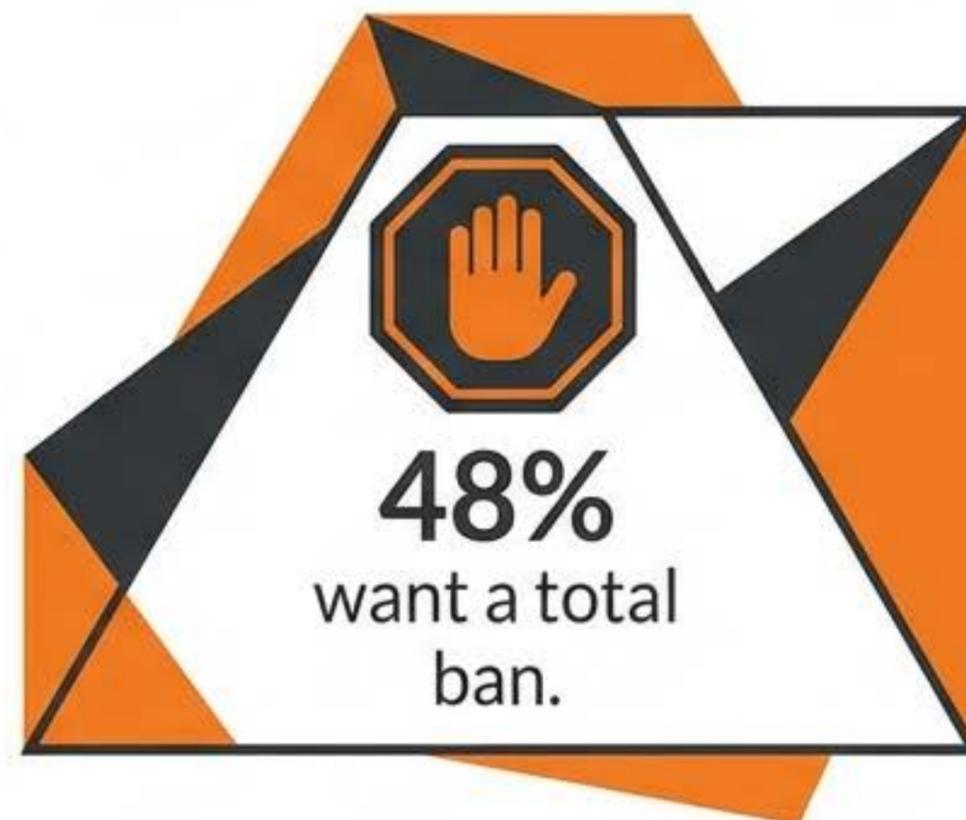
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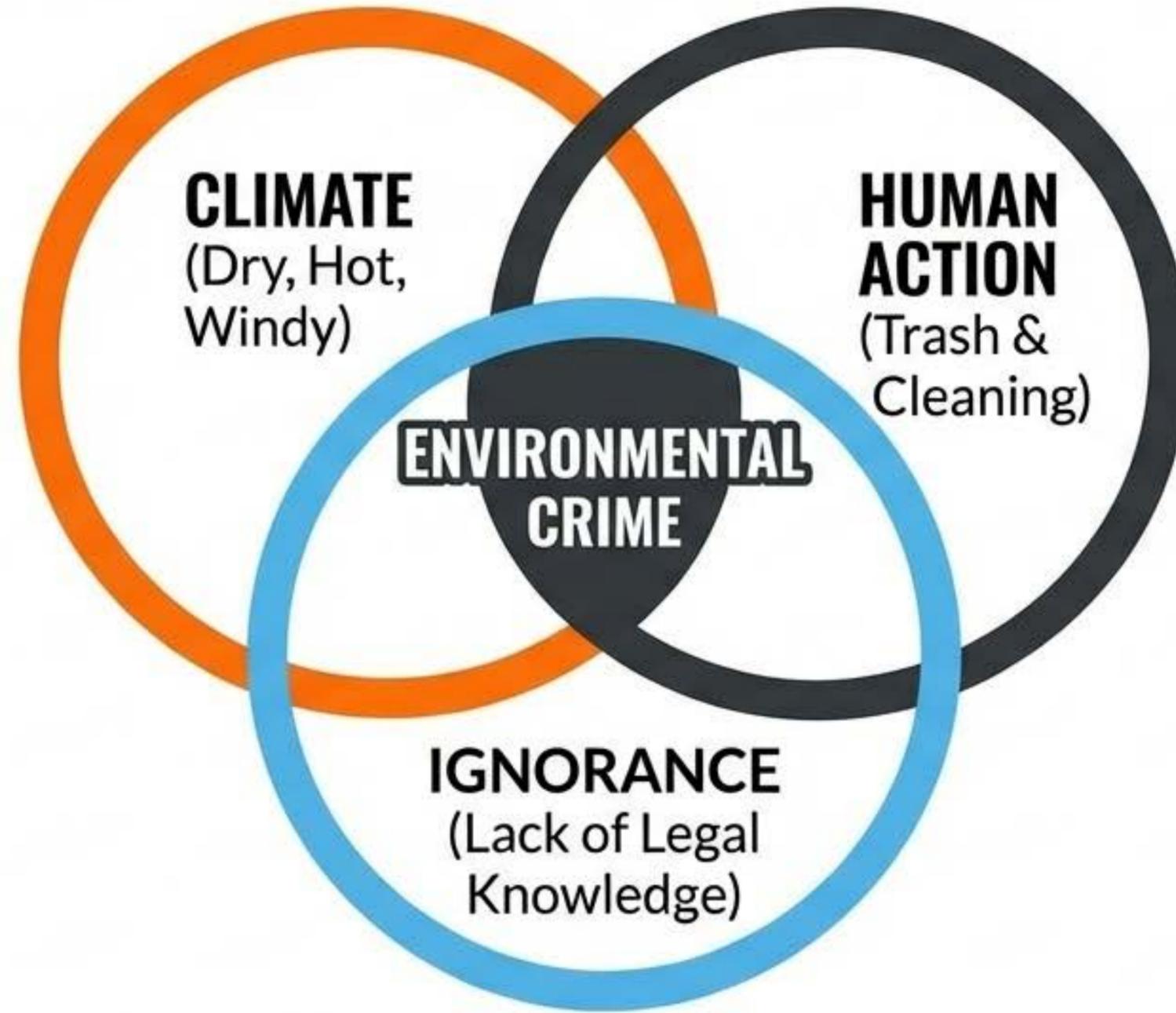
When the rain stops, the fires start.

THE COMMUNITY WANTS CHANGE

We need help to break the habit.



THE VERDICT



It is an environmental crime disguised as a chore.

WHAT WE NEED

- EDUCATION:** Teach the laws, not just the concept.
- ALTERNATIVES:** Sustainable ways to manage trash and weeds.
- MONITORING:** Use technology to watch over our home.

Preserving the Caatinga starts with ending the fire.





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