

## **Governance and the promotion of sustainable and healthy territories: the experience of Bocaina, Brazil\***

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### **ABSTRACT**

This paper describes and evaluates the governance of sustainable development applied to the territory within the strategic, integrated, participatory management of the Bocaina Project (the Observatory of Sustainable and Healthy Territories — OSHT), highlighting the mechanisms and tools that allowed the Agenda of Sustainable and Healthy Territories to be implemented territorially. The paper discusses and further develops governance strategies and practices implemented in the territory through the characterization, analysis, monitoring and evaluation of sustainable and healthy experiences — based on the Bocaina Project / OSHT, an actual experience currently being implemented at the Mosaico Bocaina (in the municipalities of Angra dos Reis, Paraty and Ubatuba, the latter at the state of São Paulo and the previous two at the state of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil — in a coastal zone providing coastal area ecosystem services), where traditional communities of three ethnic groups (Indigenous, Quilombola and Caiçara) live. The Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Territorialized Strategies for Sustainable Development showed that the implementation of the Project brought about more integration and the adoption of values (equity, sustainability and autonomy) and parameters (diversity, vulnerability, integrality, ecology of knowledge, territorialization, intersectorality, participation and empowerment) which, in turn, raised the standard of environmental governance and local sustainability.

**Keywords:** Mosaico Bocaina, Traditional Communities, Governance, Sustainable and Healthy Territories, Effectiveness Evaluation.

### **RESUMO**

*Governança para a promoção de territórios sustentáveis e saudáveis: a experiência da Bocaina, Brasil*

*Este artigo descreve e analisa o processo de governança em desenvolvimento sustentável aplicado ao território, no contexto da gestão estratégica, integrada e participativa, do Projeto Bocaina / Observatório de Territórios Sustentáveis e Saudáveis da Bocaina (OTSS), destacando os mecanismos e ferramentas para implementar territorialmente a Agenda Territórios Sus-*

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*tentáveis e Saudáveis, por meio da caracterização, análise, monitoramento e avaliação desta experiência, em andamento nos municípios de Angra dos Reis e Paraty, no litoral do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, e município de Ubatuba, no litoral do Estado de São Paulo, Brasil, onde vivem comunidades tradicionais de três etnias: indígena, quilombola e caçara. Da aplicação da Matriz de Análise de Efetividade de Estratégias Territorializadas de Desenvolvimento Sustentável constatou-se que há evidências de integração e apropriação das dimensões (equidade, sustentabilidade e autonomia) e dos parâmetros (diversidade, vulnerabilidade, integralidade, ecologia de saberes, territorialização, intersectorialidade, participação e empoderamento), com impacto positivo para a governança ambiental e sustentabilidade local.*

**Palavras-Chave:** Mosaico Bocaina, Comunidades Tradicionais, Governança, Territórios Sustentáveis e Saudáveis, Avaliação de Efetividade

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Governance and Sustainable Development

In the last 50 years, ecosystems suffered quicker and more intense changes than in any other period in human history. This has led to considerable loss of biodiversity and, consequently, ecological imbalance. Loosing biodiversity may affect the dynamics of and how ecosystems work, as well as cause diseases to emerge (Keesing *et al.*, 2010) and interfere with the provision of ecosystem services (Cardinale *et al.*, 2012). The relationship between human beings and the environment has, throughout time, determined the impact of diseases on humanity, as well as the health of the environment. If the eradication of poverty and hunger is not only a global challenge, but also an indispensable prerequisite for sustainable development, strategies for addressing socioenvironmental determinants are, therefore, necessary for all social groups to be economically productive, healthy and sustainable. This implies a model of governance that sees society and the environment non dualistically, which can be achieved by including various agents (governmental and non-governmental) in the planning process, thus broadening the scope of social participation in the decision-making process (Gallo and Setti, 2012).

The idea of "governance" has been developed through a continuous and complex process that produced an array of approaches that vary depending on ideology or the scope in question (see SI-I).

Governance for sustainable development understands the deliberative practice, in the perspective of what is fair, and development as processes through which freedoms and both individual and collective capacities are expanded, which means that it should be structured and operate to promote autonomy, equity and socioenvironmental justice. For that, governance should mobilize the intersectoral government policies that include shared goals and joint planning, in the national and global spheres, via negotiations within governments and the participation of different segments of the civil society (Buss *et al.*, 2014). Participation must stimulate pluralism and promote people's autonomy, which can make choices free from embarrassment and in conditions of respect and equality (Habermas, 1997).

The challenge of intersectorality has to be overcome at the level of State institutions (whether these are central, state or municipal), which not only have been created and developed with a sectoral rationale, but also are unprepared to share decision-making power and are dominated by the urgencies of short political cycles (Bógus & Westphal, 2007; Fernandez & Mendes, 2007; Schmidt & Guerra, 2010).

For better results, the structure and operation of the global and national governance of sustainable development — as well as the internal and specific governances of the health and environment sectors and of segments of the civil society that relate primarily with each of these government segments — must be evaluated in the light of sustainable development, of the environment and of health (Buss *et al.*, 2012).

### 1.2 Local Governance and Traditional Communities / Social Movement

Territorial development assumes the organized participation of social actors in the decision-making process. In the context of traditional communities, the goal is to contribute to an equitable model of development that includes the protection of the environment and natural resources, the promotion of economic growth and the improvement of the quality of life of the populations.

The protagonism of social movements opens more space for participation, changes norms, rules and habits with their organization and struggle, but, when evaluated at the light of their contribution for localized processes of productive transformation, of their capacity to lead the development of new conditions in the realms of the economy, education, culture and health, results are not as uplifting (Bebbington *et al.*, 2008). Therefore, it is fundamental to train social movements to carry out institutional actions at the level of the territory by strengthening their governance capacity (see SI-II).

### 1.3 Sustainable and Healthy Territories

The complexity of problems affecting and determining the health of the population is a challenge for public health, given that health is not limited to biology (that is, the absence of disease) and includes social and political aspects, life styles, culture, the environment and

the economy. The goal is a type of development that is environmentally sustainable as to the access and use of natural resources and the preservation of biodiversity; socially sustainable concerning the reduction of poverty and social inequalities, promoting justice and equity; culturally sustainable as to the conservation of its system of values, practices and symbols of identity; and politically sustainable for strengthening democracy and assuring the access and the participation of all in decisions regarding the public order (Guimarães, 2001).

Sustainable development and health promotion programs seek to respond, in the field of public health, to the global trend of integrating sectors and knowledge areas, promoting social participation applied to specific territories, as well as building autonomy, equity and sustainability. This assumes not only opening the issue for discussion and negotiating the convergence of interests, but also all sectors sharing planning and evaluation. This way, an active conversation between different forms of knowledge, disciplines and practices needs to be assured, a model of participatory governance capable of developing not only a hierarchy of priorities based on the needs of the territory, but also technopolitical solutions based on the ecology of knowledge, in a strategic/situational and communicative management process (Gallo & Setti, 2014). Because of their complexity, strategies like that are applicable to social settings, demanding approaches that triangulate methodologies, that implement situational and strategic analyses, that design actions for social transformation and incorporate participatory evaluation as an effort that always feeds back into action (Matus, 1993; Ribeiro *et al.*, 2002; Gallo & Setti, 2012).

This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of Bocaina Project / OSHT, which is being implemented at the Mosaico Bocaina, an area in the municipalities of Angra dos Reis and Paraty (in the state of Rio de Janeiro) and the municipality of Ubatuba (in the State of São Paulo), Brazil, in the context of traditional communities living in this coastal zone and in most cases interacting with this coastal area ecosystem services in a governance for sustainable development perspective and integration.

## **2. Study area**

### **2.1 South America**

The governance of environmental health in South America has been pointing at human rights and environmental justice as ethical values and pillars, linking them to global public goods and human security.

### **2.2 Brazil - Southeast Region - Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo**

Currently, the Southeast of Brazil has been going through a water crisis caused by factors such as: a large population; a growing demand for water, especially in

industries; environmental degradation of water sources; disorderly urban expansion; waste during distribution; a lack of involvement of the population and a lack of political will, which shows it is not simply a problem of low levels of rainfall, but, essentially, a lack of adequate governance to face its determinants (Machado, 2014). Water governance includes a theory and practice that seek to establish a dialogue between different social actors toward solutions that respond to the needs of the territory.

### **2.3 The Mosaico Bocaina Region**

The studied area — the Mosaico Bocaina — is protected and located in the coast of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo states, in the Southeast region of Brazil (Figure 1 in SI-III).

The Mosaico Bocaina is composed of a set of conservation units in the federal, state and municipal levels and their respective buffer, with around 216 thousand acres of forests under special conditions of management and legal protection, it includes 59 traditional communities in three segments, 44 of them Caiçara (most are traditional artisanal fishermen), 7 Indigenous and 8 Quilombola, as well as their buffer zones.

Large construction projects caused social and economic changes in the region, among which: the construction of the Rio-Santos Highway (BR-101), port terminal and of the Angra dos Reis nuclear power plants, which intensified the urbanization of the coast and caused tourism to be the main economic activity of the region rather than artisanal fishing (Mattoso & Moraes, 2006).

The use and occupation of the territory occurred both via disorderly growth with a large environmental impact — like the clearing and landfilling of mangrove areas for the construction of homes — and the preservation of areas in which occupation is restricted and monitored by environmental agencies. Real estate speculation and predatory tourism, among other factors, threaten the way of life and the permanence of traditional communities in their territories.

In this context, the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation (Fiocruz) has been developing, since 2009, a set of strategies through the Bocaina Project (see SI-IV Bocaina Project / Observatory of Sustainable and Healthy Territories of Bocaina – OSHT), in partnership with the Forum of Traditional Communities (FTC). This is an action research project whose goal is contributing to the promotion of a better quality of life, focusing on reducing inequalities and promoting autonomy and sustainability through collective development and the implementation of a local strategic agenda — Healthy Community —, that is integrated to the agenda of traditional communities, focused on community-based tourism and the promotion of solidarity economy (Gallo & Setti, 2012).

### 3. Traditional communities

In Brazil, the idea of traditional communities emerged in the context of the creation of protected areas referring to communities that originally lived in these areas, since they maintained centuries-old aspects of their culture and still practiced subsistence agriculture or fishing (Santos, 2003) (see SI-V).

Indigenous peoples are traditional populations that settled in Brazil around eleven or twelve thousand years ago, with an estimated population of between two and five million individuals when the European colonizers arrived, in 1,400 ethnic groups, suffering a strong reduction in numbers: around 600,000 individuals in 225 ethnic groups today (Kayser, 2010).

The Quilombolas are black slave descendants that settled in public land and conserved their cultural traces until today. They originated mainly by runaway slaves occupying free — generally isolated — land, but also obtained via conquest, inheritance, donation or in payment for services provided to the State or by the simple permanence on the land (Giddens, 2010).

The Caiçara are non Indigenous traditional peoples, the product of intense miscegenation between colonizers, the native Indigenous populations and slaves, who developed specific life styles that depend on natural cycles, the knowledge of biological cycles and natural resources, technologies, symbols and myths (Diegues, 1999). Most are traditional artisanal fishermen.

### 4. Methods

Action research (Thiollent, 2006; Toledo *et al.*, 2014) was used to generate contextualized understandings on the phenomena studied and implement structural and structuring actions in the fields of health promotion and socioenvironmental sustainability with the goal of strengthening the life styles of traditional communities, stimulating the sustainable use of the territory and expanding the access of these communities to goods and services.

Accordingly to Thiollent (2006), action research involves participation and planned action by interveners (people and social groups) within the problem under observation.

In the processes should be valorised the acquired knowledge by the intervenient being able to produce new knowledge and to participate in the decision making (empowerment).

Both an ecosystemic (Freitas, 2005; OPAS, 2009; Gallo & Setti, 2012) and a communicative approach of the strategic/situational planning (Matus, 1993; Gallo, 2009) were adopted to facilitate the permanent agreement between the various agents involved, to create opportunities for dialogue, participation, learning and

networking, with the goals of creating solutions that promote autonomy and socioenvironmental justice.

The literature was searched, documents were analyzed, and methods such as participant observation and focal groups with a previously-structured script were applied to representatives of traditional communities. Thus, a conversation was established through methodologies and tools that facilitate the collective development of the project, focusing on collective register and visualization and consensus building techniques.

The participant observation emerges from the need of the researcher to become an integrated member of the social group under research and being able to understand practices, attributed means, beliefs and values. The observational data was register in a field book diary.

The focal group methodological technique was realized in the “Quilombo do Campinho da Independência”, Paraty, Rio de Janeiro, on the 27th April 2015. It takes 90 minutes and the moderator managed the questions and discussion dynamics and focus. The group integrated the representatives from the traditional communities (same age interval and social valorisation within the group from traditional communities representatives was tried). The meeting was recorded.

The focal group was carried out with the goal of identifying ideas and collecting beliefs, perceptions, expectations, motivations and needs of traditional communities regarding the Bocaina Project / OSHT and included the participation of 06 (six) people — 02 (two) of them Caiçara, 04 (four) of them Quilombola and no Indigenous persons. The interviews with the focal group were transcribed literally and the transcription was analyzed concerning sustainability, equity, autonomy, evaluational parameters and a few indexes/variables established at the Matrix for the Analysis of the Effectiveness of Territorialized Sustainable Development Strategies (Table 1 in SI-VI).

The chosen conceptual framework includes, as structuring elements of sustainable development, the promotion of equity, autonomy and sustainability, which, in turn, are split into parameters that allow the analysis of the consistency and the coherence of projects as to their development, implementation and generation of evidence of effectiveness (Gallo & Setti, 2012). The theoretical/methodological process that led to the development of an approach that integrated the principles and categories of sustainable development and health promotion produced a tool to evaluate the effectiveness of territorialized agendas.

Issues and categories were triangulated/collated with secondary information. Data collected in the focal group are in line with the theoretical/methodological framework and will be introduced below.

## 5. Results and discussion

The results here introduced and discussed follow an analytic structure stemming from the established methodology (see Table 1 in the SI-VI) and portray the data obtained via literature search, participant observation and focal groups with representatives of traditional communities.

### 5.1 Equity

#### 5.1.1 Diversity

Cultural diversity is a striking aspect of the territory at hand, the result of a historic/social process. Multiculturalism is observed in material and immaterial goods, including cultural events, modes of creating, doing and living, as well as artistic and technological creations of traditional communities.

#### Representativeness of ethnic groups

One of the challenges and a central pivot of the interests and needs pointed out by participants has to do with the representativeness of the three ethnic groups (Indigenous, Quilombola and Caiçara) in the implementation of the project.

*(...) the project has the very encompassing goal of supporting the forum of traditional communities, which is not that easy, as you can imagine, since there are various groups* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

The low level of participation of the Indigenous group in the implementation of the Bocaina Project / OSHT — when compared to the Quilombolas and Caiçaras — was diagnosed through participant observation which evinces the need to consider the specificities of this group in the intercultural context. A difficulty in communicating and understanding Portuguese was identified among Indigenous groups whose main language is Guarani. The transportation to where the meetings was also identified as a problem spot for the participation of Indigenous groups. However, these hypotheses are sufficient to understand the phenomenon and assure the active participation of Indigenous groups in the implementation of the project. They should be further investigated in a specific research project.

#### Valorization of the culture of different ethnic groups

Throughout history, culture — understood as the dynamic means of living, creating and doing of a group — was marked by the struggle between different ethnic groups, by the determination of their goals and values, which suggests a rupture of social and cultural reproduction via alternative practices and resistance (Giroux, 1995). Cultural diversity was identified as a legacy in the speech of a representative of traditional communities in the focal group.

*(...) we are the heirs to a story, a legacy, so continuing that legacy is a great honor for us* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

Representativeness and valorization of their culture are structural for the resilience of traditional communities and for ensuring their space in society, which is crucial for any participatory process of governance that seeks to promote autonomy, equity and socioenvironmental justice.

#### 5.1.2 Vulnerability

Vulnerability is also an issue in the territory, a product of a historic/social process and of the dimension of equity as a collective effort toward facing avoidable, unjust and unnecessary inequalities. Inequities produce a negative impact in the health of traditional communities through increased exposure to generational risk, the non recognition of their fundamental rights, and restricted access to social goods and services.

#### Conquering and preserving territory

One of most important issues regarding the interests and needs identified by the participants of this study has to do with maintaining their ways of life and preserving their culture.

*(...) considering that this is a conservation area, that mass tourism has been arriving at our communities, and that we continue there with our culture and leading our ways of life, for me, it's resistance* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

The argument is that, in order for Bocaina to have sustainable and healthy territories, the implementation of a project for the valorization of multicultural and participatory citizenry, ensuring the access to land as a prerequisite for the survival of traditional communities, is necessary.

*(...) this project goes way beyond what is written there (...) regarding the ways of life because it was created with that goal in mind, the goal of, first of all, ensuring our territory and increasingly valorizing our culture* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

#### Social exclusion and the impact on self esteem

Inequality generates poverty and social exclusion, causing a negative impact on the living and health conditions of the population and expanding inequities related to social determinants: violence, precarious access to health services and education (Buss *et al.*, 2014), ethnic discrimination, among others. Such relationship can be observed in the focal group, in the speech of representatives of traditional communities, who mentioned the negative impact generated on collective health.

*(...) no one can take knowledge away from you, but they are able to undermine that, so there are several generations of people with a series of problems that, then, affect their health, lower their self esteem, which brings insecurity, stress, depression. All of that is the product of a person that is not healthy, of the insecurities that they planted in their minds: "you are no one, you are stupid" (...), to a point that even they repeat it: "I am stupid, I can't learn anything and there's no way around that"* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

*(...) prejudiced people may look at Indigenous communities and say: "that people is horrible, their houses are horrible, that people is nothing," but that people is everything, it is more than any other people* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

In this context, the vulnerability that traditional communities are usually assumed to have — understood as the exposure to different risks (economic, cultural, social) — poses challenges that are caused by exclusion and social inequality. This has a negative impact in the living and health conditions of traditional communities, which indicates the need to establish a model of governance that addresses the social determinants of health.

### 5.1.3. Integrality

Integrality has become essential for healthcare practices that consider the multidimensionality of subjects. The goal is to meet the needs of individuals and population groups in an expanded perspective. In this context, healthcare actions include dialogue, listening, sheltering, generating bonds, providing access, and being accountable with a formal and political quality (González & Almeida, 2010).

#### Generational integrality

Generational integrality, in the context of the Bocaina Project / OSHT, is understood both in terms of assuring human rights and promoting intergenerational equity. This implies assuring social, cultural, collective and diffuse rights, but also rights related to communication, the development of peoples, freedom, democracy, information and pluralism (Lafer, 1998). It also implies a commitment to future generations regarding the quality of the environment, the valorization and preservation of ethnocultural diversity and the equitable access to resources, goods and services (Weiss, 1992). In that sense, the idea of integrality was observed in the speeches of representatives of traditional communities, in the focal group.

*(...) as human beings, we are always fighting a battle. A battle to grow, to change, and then to aggregate all these values (...) so, at the right moment, we can pass*

*it them on* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

*The project, in sum, needs to aim at the future of the children. The tourism that we have; is that what we want? Is that the education that we want, that only trains youths for the job market?* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

#### Establishing a bond with the territory and between actors

The bond and identification with the land increase the efficacy of actions and stimulates autonomy and citizenry, promoting participation in the identification of the needs of the territory (Campos, 1997). Voluntary social participation, in turn, strengthens minorities in conflicts of interest and in the power relations that are inherent to society (Tavares, 2014). Therefore, the Bocaina Project / OSHT established that strengthening traditional communities was identified in the speech of their representatives in the focal group.

*Strengthening not only the local communities, but the surrounding communities. Not only the surrounding ones, but all of them in the region, which used to happen in the past. With this project, we also brought back sociability, which happened in the past* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

*(...) we are very happy to be part of a traditional community and to have you as partners, you know? I say it from the heart. They are our friends. So if we get it wrong, everybody gets it wrong. If we get it right, we will all get it right, because it is something we can get right or wrong* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

The knowledge and the acceptance of their culture and the opportunity to learn about other cultures are requisites for people to feel capable of voluntarily participating in processes of social interaction (Tavares, 2014). The feeling of belonging to a traditional community and their valorization was pointed out in the speech of one of its representatives in the focal group.

*(...) a strong people, a happy people (...) belonging to this ethnic group that not only built this region, but the whole country* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015)

In this context, the specific needs of certain groups (regarding ethnicity, gender, age, etc.) concerning their exposure to additional risks should be considered according to their level of social vulnerability (Tavares, 2014).

Equity is one of the pillars of territorialized agendas of sustainable development and health and very important for the promotion of a fairer society that is more equitable in the distribution of income, of the access to goods



and services, in the use of resources and in fulfilling human rights, intervening in its parameters of vulnerability, integrality and cultural diversity.

## 5.2 Sustainability

### 5.2.1. Ecology of knowledge

The ecology of knowledge recognizes the plurality of heterogeneous knowledges (modern science being one of them), which interact with one another sustainably and dynamically without compromising their autonomy. There are various different forms of knowing about matter, society, the life and the spirit, etc., but also many other ideas and criteria about what counts as knowledge (Santos, 2007).

#### Mechanisms of producing knowledge

Knowledge is historical and socially produced. With knowledge, the world can be understood and transformed. Actions are always intentional and aim either to liberation or oppression. Knowledge is liberational when it includes the needs and desires of all people involved in the process (Freire, 2004; Luckesi, 2012). Therefore, the Bocaina Project / OSHT sought to involve the different social actors in the territory, especially traditional communities so that, based on a dialogue between different forms of knowledge and different practices and on the relationships they develop among themselves and with the environment in which they live, their needs can be understood and their actions can acquire meaning. This mechanism of knowledge generation was identified in the speech of representatives of traditional communities, in the focal group.

*(...) it is a big community. Actually, it even sustains our counter hegemony, (...) it sustains our ideal of society, it helps us think and reflect on how we debate, how we should debate and where we want to get (...) it will leave a legacy, even the things we were not able to accomplish* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

*(...) a project of ecological sanitation. It is a new way of thinking on a new model of society; a new model that speaks of health when talking about ecological sanitation.* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

Although it recognizes the positive results of empowering the social movement, this study observed the non involvement of the local government in the beginning of the implementation of the project.

In this context, the strategies of the agenda of sustainable and healthy territories aim at promoting the health of the population and stimulating the local government to develop a new form of governing based on intersectoral actions and the assurance of equity and social participation, introduced in the Intersectorality section.

### Valorization of popular / traditional / native knowledge

Traditional knowledge is a relevant, contemporary issue, addressed, at the international level, by multilateral organization which have different perspectives on the protection of traditional knowledge, which makes it hard for an international norm that meets different interests to be implemented (Zanirato & Ribeiro, 2007). However, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) recognized that many biological resources depend on local communities and populations with a traditional lifestyle (ONU, 2000), which was highlighted by a representative of traditional communities in the focal group.

*(...) traditional communities have this defense, this thing with nature, this sensibility* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

Traditional knowledge — understood as traditions, beliefs, practices and customs transmitted from parents to their children in traditional communities that live in direct contact with nature — is a cumulative, informal, long-term process that constitutes a shared heritage of that social group (Zanirato & Ribeiro, 2007). The traditional knowledge and practices regarding healthcare were mentioned, in the focal group by a representative of traditional communities, who highlighted the interference of conventional medicine in their traditional lifestyles.

*(...) it is a lot of work to bring back natural medicine today. It is a big problem; it isn't easy. Even though we talk to the people, they stop using the herbs and go to the doctor, to a point that the doctor tells them that they didn't have to go there for that* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

The Ecology of Knowledge integrates technical, scientific and traditional knowledge — consequently, both universities and social movements — in search of innovative solutions that promote a fairer and more egalitarian society. In this sense, the methodological design of the partnership of the project (see the Methodology section) makes the exchange of experiences and the transfer of technology and knowledge possible, as well as promotes greater political and institutional support.

### 5.2.2. Territorialization

Territorialization is a social product with economic, political and cultural aspects. Therefore, territorialization assumes different configurations depending on the needs and the model of management of the territory.

#### Needs and priorities of the territory

Regarding the access to goods produced by the society, the understanding of the territory includes prioritizing

the valorization of the local culture, which will keep future generations in activities that are inherent to each community. In this context, representatives of the traditional communities mentioned issues regarding their life styles, a question that is being developed at the Bocaina Project / OSHT.

*(...) community-based tourism is stimulating the people in communities to continue living and working in their own communities* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

*(...) strengthening culture (...) as a cross-cutting issue (...) agroecology (...) a differentiated education* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

Despite recognizing the cultural diversity in the region, the local educational system does not incentivize traditional practices, as highlighted by a representative of traditional communities, in the focal group.

*(...) the issue of education (...) we have to do something about it because we had a meeting with students and things are impossible and sad. All they talk about is their cell phones, their TVs. They never speak about their rows, their canoes, the fish (...) canoeing (...) it has potential (...) we want to implement in the community* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

### Shared management, co-management

The coordination of institutional and social actors to establish priorities and collectively decide on solutions was observed by traditional communities, in the focal group.

*(...) when the project got here (...) it had nothing (...) it took some time to get to practice, from the meetings to the execution (...) This is what is cool about the project: it has been listening a lot to the community and even redesigning what we thought was wrong* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

Moreover, the shared responsibility as to the planning, the programming, the coordination and the execution of actions were also pointed out.

*(...) the forum has a series of projects, and all of them are embraced. This is very interesting to see, because they could say something like: "no, now we are only talking about sanitation," which would be reductionist (...) and we would accept it because we know that it is big, but that is not the case, their attitude is always very receptive. That was the case with differentiated education. We made suggestions, we understood the process, and there it is* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

In this context, to promote sustainable and healthy territories, it is necessary to incentivize a model of govern-

ance that addresses the social determinants related to ethnicity, promote social cohesion, strengthen traditional communities and valorizes culture.

### 5.2.3. Intersectorality

Through intersectorality, different forms of knowledge are coordinated and common goals are shared, which facilitates the implementation of public policies. Meanwhile, new problems and challenges linked to the fragmentation and the coordination of public policies emerge, especially when considering the sectoral culture that still prevails in the public administration (Gallo & Setti, 2014).

### Converging agendas

Representatives of traditional communities understand intersectorality as related to the integration, of sectors and agendas not only among themselves, but with society, although the implementation of intersectorality had not been noticed in practice, as highlighted by a representative of the traditional communities in the focal group.

*(...) one project will have to dialogue with the other, and with the other, and with the other (...) There are different proposals and activities for differentiated education, for agroecology, for community-based tourism, for the project itself (...) How do we converge all that?* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

### Inter-scale integration

They also referred to intersectorality as a good strategy toward strengthening traditional communities to solve their own problems and facilitating the implementation of public policies, which makes it possible for inter-scale actions to be promoted (Gallo & Setti, 2014).

*I think we are very experienced as to that. Through this project, we can keep progressing; until, one day, this policy is discussed at someone's office in Brasília* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

### Integrating stakeholders

Regarding that experience, they pointed out the challenge to involve the public sector so that intersectoral actions that promote equity could be implemented.

*The public sphere has to be stimulated, and that is what we are doing when we launch a campaign. The goal is to stimulate them; we want this or that, but we also want you to do your duty, to incentivize the implementation of policies* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

The low levels of participation of traditional communities in the decision-making process regarding issues that



affect them and have to do with the future of the municipality should be highlighted.

Therefore, the coordination between the Forum of Traditional Communities and the municipal governments of Angra dos Reis, Paraty and Ubatuba was promoted toward the development of a Regional Solidarity Economy Plan. The Angra, Paraty and Ubatuba Regional Integration Center (RIC) was then created to carry out coordinated actions related to solidarity economy and sustainable development in the region. The process was benefited from the political alignment between the three municipal governments and the federal government, although it still has problems in its administration, which makes its implementation still a challenge.

### Idea / Holistic approach

Under the perspective of sustainable and health territories, health was understood by the participants of the focal group as a multidimensional phenomenon that involves physical, mental, social and spiritual aspects that are constantly affected by biogenetic, environmental, socioeconomic, political and cultural aspects, all of which are interdependent.

*(...) health is a very wide field. There's mental health, spiritual health, all of them converging for human beings and communities to be well. It is not just a matter of giving someone medication for them to be fine. That is not the case. I believe that giving medication is a last resort, when there is nothing else to do. That's what medication is for. Before that, there are things that we can do to make that community healthy and not need the medication in the first place.* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

*(...) society teaches us that we need to have a doctor (...) to give us medicine, but we have prevention, we have health promotion, and it is not just about health, it is leisure too, which means things work together* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

Intersectorality was observed by traditional communities in the coordination of different forms of knowledge and experiences for the planning, execution and evaluation of actions carried out to promote sustainable and healthy development.

*(...) when I joined the project, I thought it was just for sanitation and that it would be over afterwards (...) but that was not the case. I was able to get deeper into it and realize that sanitation has to do with tourism, with community-based tourism, with education, that education has to do with sanitation, (...) and that the community is empowered by that. Today, I can see we progressed a lot* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, 2015).

Tackling challenges in an integrated manner implies promoting horizontal power relations in the decision-making. In this context, in order to implement healthy and sustainable public policies, intersectorality is necessary for governance (Gallo & Setti, 2014).

Sustainability seeks to assure that processes last long and remain strong. Therefore, participation in the planning and management is a prerequisite for local governance; a process guided by intersectoral action, which coordinates different forms of knowledge and shares common goals.

## 5.3 Autonomy

### 5.3.1 Social Participation

The active participation of communities is crucial for the governance for sustainable development. It develops their ability to meet their immediate needs, identifies and incentivizes their local vocations and systematically evaluates the promotion of sustainable and healthy territories.

### Capacity for intervention

Management models that consider the implementation of healthy public policies strengthen community actions and the development of personal abilities (Westphal *et al.*, 2013; Gallo & Setti, 2012). The effective participation of traditional communities in the development of the Project was observed in the speech of their representatives, in the focal group.

*(...) have been giving us the privilege of contributing to this development. The project has great respect for this population. In the past, there were actions, but they were imposed. Now we have the perspective of strengthening our identities even further in this process* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

The challenge of overcoming the culture of non participation in Brazil — which makes it harder for the civil society to participate in the discussion of local problems and in the search for possible solutions (Gohn, 2004) — was identified by the representatives of traditional communities.

*(...) we still have trouble bringing people in the communities to the forum. Therefore, activities are often concentrated in the people that are here every day* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

The effectiveness participation of traditional communities was seen in the performance of the protagonist role. The use of methodologies that are guided by participation seems to instill a need to change the reality of communities day by day, which is observed in the need to involve youths in the process.

*(...) increasingly protagonists of the process, and not merely a target public, and that is nice because it reveals our identity more and more* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

*(...) the forum has great work to do in that matter. How to bring more people in and how to involve (...) youths?* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

In this context, social participation and new management structures are pivotal for local governance processes that promote sustainable development, that are based on cultural and social diversity, that consider social movements in advancing citizenry, that expand the political space, that change dominant practices and include new social actors.

### 5.3.2 Empowerment

Empowerment strategies stimulate effective participation, ensuring autonomy in the decision-making process and strengthening social movements through a problem-based approach.

#### Ability to formulate

Empowerment allows people to take control over their lives. At the level of the individual, it relates to the development of personal abilities, like the ability to develop critical thinking on problems and of implementing self-care and autonomy (Setti & Bógus, 2010), which were highlighted by representatives of traditional communities in the focal group.

*(...) now we have the conditions to rethink and recreate ourselves (after all, that what human life is about)* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

*(...) I have learned a lot and become more autonomous* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

*(...) the project has been listening to these populations. It is great to know that we have the privilege of being able to develop this model in Brazil, and even in the world* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

#### Protagonism of the social movement

Practices developed within the Bocaina Project / OSHT contributed for the individual and collective empowerment of the community and the social movement. Issues regarding the valorization of cultures and local potentials — as well as the mobilization for change and for solving problems — were observed in the speech of representatives of traditional communities in the focal group.

*(...) we are currently very fortunate to be able to continue with our struggle, because we are movement*

(Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

*(...) the forum has been giving the project a direction. The project has a partnership with the forum, in the region, through their leaders* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

*(...) the forum is autonomous to make suggestions. That's one thing, since it follows a new* (Extracted from the Focal Group on Traditional Communities, in 2015).

At the level of autonomy, empowerment strategies and the effective participation of traditional communities — in a process of local governance that prioritizes the coordination of actors in the decision-making process, strengthens community action and the development of the organizational capacity of the Forum of Traditional Communities of Angra, Paraty and Ubatuba — were considered.

## 6. Conclusions

Local socioenvironmental governance and territorialized agendas of sustainable development and health — in its aspects related to the participation of, the sense of belonging to and the valorization of traditional communities, to territorial and cultural preservation and to multicultural and participatory citizenry — are guidelines for actions aimed at strengthening traditional communities promoted by the Bocaina Project / OSHT.

The local governance has been promoting equity-based sustainable development, considering vulnerability, integrality and cultural diversity.

As to sustainability, the Bocaina Project / OSHT sought to involve different actors in the territory, understand their socioenvironmental dynamics and provide meaning to their actions and perspectives regarding sustainability. The Ecology of Knowledge, in the methodological design of a partnership, made it possible for a large number of organization cultures, methods, objectives and practices to come together, facilitating the exchange of experiences and the transfer of technology and knowledge, an expression of greater political and institutional support.

Intersectorality and inter scale integration demonstrated to be the most relevant requisites for governance and implementation of healthy and sustainable public policies. Communities perceived and integrated although there is a need for more engagement of the local public entities (e.g., municipalities) in this projects/processes.

Regarding equity and citizenship the implementation of a territorialized agenda that supports a better integration of this excluded territories (and communities) positively interfered in the local governance within this traditional communities. Ecological, Traditional and Cultural knowledge are to be recognized and valued in the defi-

nition of sustainable strategies and partices (eg agroecology, traditional and artisanal fisheries, and social technologies).

Autonomy is fundamental for the promotion of sustainable and healthy territories and depends on how governance is structured — ensuring the intervention of many different social actors on socioenvironmental determinants by strengthening the protagonism of traditional communities and valorizing their culture. In this project, a relative level of success was achieved regarding the Quilombola and Caiçara communities. Specific, differentiated strategies are necessary to involve Indigenous communities. Intersectoral and inter-scale approaches — prerequisites of any model of governance dedicated to the implementation of healthy and sustainable public policies — were perceived by traditional communities in the coordination of different forms of knowledge and experiences in the planning, execution and evaluation of the actions of the project. The participation of the public administrators that work on the territory was also noticed, although it is still necessary to engage the local public sphere (municipal governments) in the actions.

It should also be mentioned that, in this project, the type of governance employed was able to implement empowerment strategies that promoted the participation of traditional communities, especially the Quilombola and Caiçara communities, which contributed to greater autonomy for them and produced an impact in the management capacity and governability of the social movement, as represented by the Forum of Traditional Communities.

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#### Appendix

Supporting Information associated with this article is available online at [http://www.aprh.pt/rgci/pdf/rgci-612\\_Seti\\_Supporting-Information.pdf](http://www.aprh.pt/rgci/pdf/rgci-612_Seti_Supporting-Information.pdf)

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