

# **Legal Frame for Indicators of Sustainable Regional Development. A Case Study**

José Francisco de Carvalho Rezende<sup>1</sup> and Maria Cristina Fogliatti de Sinay<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Universidade do Grande Rio. Graduate Business School- Rio de Janeiro. Brazil

<sup>2</sup>Universidade do Grande Rio. Graduate Business School- Rio de Janeiro, Brazil  
email corresponding author: cristinasinay@gmail.com

## **Abstract**

Following a world-wide tendency, initiated with the publication of the document known as “ Our Common Future” in 1987, the Federal Brazilian Government formulated and implemented the National Policy for Regional Development in February 2007 with the purposes of reducing regional inequalities, strong Brazilian peculiarity, and to support the including and sustainable development of regions, understanding as regional development the group of actions meant to promote and to respect regional diversities, taking into account competitiveness, productive expression and social-cultural and environmental values capable of reducing inequalities of accesses to public services of quality.

Several studies developed specially during the 90’s presented indexes and indicators related to the sustainability of regions. Among them, there can be mentioned the Index for Sustainable Economic Welfare-ISEW, the Human Development Index –HDI, the Genuine Progress Indicator-GPI, the Index of Economic Well-Being and the Human Well-Being Index-HWI.

The mentioned indexes represent different indicators, such as: household work, weighted personal consumption, costs of environmental deterioration, long-term environmental damage, depreciation of natural capital, life expectative at birth, level of education, standard of life, cost of resource depletion, pollution, costs of crime, of family breakdown, of automobile accidents, of ozone depletion, loss of farmlands, of wetlands, of forest areas and of leisure time, increase of capital stock and balance of international trade, value of voluntary work, net capital investment,

net foreign burrowing, services of highways, mobility, consumption of non-renewable and / or cultural resources, economic inequalities and poverty, communication means, political and civil rights attended and basic needs level of satisfaction and others. Since the indicators have different natures, the process to measure indexes is difficult as they should represent all of them through weights or using analytic methods.

One of the Brazilian regions whose sustainable development is questioned is the *Baixada Fluminense* which comprehends 13 districts, with an area of 2800 km<sup>2</sup> and a population close to 4 millions of inhabitants. This region, located in the Rio de Janeiro State, close to Rio de Janeiro City, was irregularly occupied thus affecting the environment and degrading areas where a violent parallel power was established with the purpose of solving local conflicts (Nascimento, 2011).

Nowadays this region was transformed in a dormitory town, providing the City of Rio de Janeiro with man power, especially that of lesser qualification and is poorly provided with policies, practices and tools of governance capable of inducing sustainable regional development (Lago, 2007). Most of the districts that compose the region under study is depicted by press, public opinion and statistic studies as violent and abandoned (Enne, 2004).

The present study is a first initiative to measure the stages of the region sustainable development with the definition of indicators and with their relation to the existing legal frame. To achieve this purpose, data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics-IBGE that produced the study "Profile of Brazilian Municipalities", was consulted (<http://www.ibge.gov.br/home/estatistica/economia/perfilmunic/2009/default.shtm>).

After analyzing the mentioned data that comprehend 738 variables that portrays existence and nature of policies, equipment and public management practices, and using an aggregated pattern (Jannuzzi, 2009), the chosen indicators, namely, city planning, municipal management and information and communication technologies, citizenship education, housing and transport, health and welfare, security and justice access, human and gender rights and environment, were meant to represent the sustainability of the development of the chosen Brazilian region, namely, *Baixada Fluminense*.

Once the indicators were defined, the existing legal frame that supports each of them was listed and compounded.

The next step consists in verifying the effectiveness of governmental control since the existence of a strong legal frame by itself does not support necessarily the sustainability of the city. It is necessary to apply each one of the mentioned legal prescriptions and to control the construction and the operation of all urban equipments as well as all urban services. After measuring the government behavior

in this direction and the existing legal frame actually applied these two aspects are to be compounded to get an answer about the urban region sustainability.

## **Acknowledgement**

The authors thanks FAPERJ for partially financing this research

## **References**

- Enne, Ana L. S., 2004 Imprensa e Baixada Fluminense: múltiplas representações. Ciberlegenda – Revista do Programa de Pós-Graduação em Comunicação da Universidade Federal Fluminense nº 14.
- Jannuzzi, Paulo M.; Miranda, Wilmer L.; Silva, Daniela S. G., 2009 Análise Multicritério e Tomada de Decisão em Políticas Públicas: Aspectos Metodológicos, Aplicativo Operacional e Aplicações. Informática Pública ano 11 (1) 69 – 87.
- Lago, Luciana, C. 2007 Trabalho, moradia e (i)mobilidade espacial na metrópole do Rio de Janeiro. Cadernos Metrópole, nº 18, ISSN 2236-9996.
- Nascimento, Álvaro P., 2011 Caminhos de negros: vida, trabalho e desenvolvimento urbano no pós abolição (Nova Iguaçu, 1880-1980) Anais do XXVI Simpósio Nacional de História – ANPUH - São Paulo.