

# Mais um desafio: governança para o desenvolvimento da Amazônia

*Another challenge: governance for the development of the Amazon*

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## Abstract

The problem of regional inequalities is historical and has structural roots in Brazil. Since the 20<sup>th</sup> century, regional development policies have alternated their space of visibility on the government agendas. In the specific case of the Amazon, the Brazilian State has acted in an experimental way, resulting in a problematic development process that, despite the existing potential, has created a socioeconomic framework marked by the exclusion of large population contingents and a very weak economy. The goal in this article is to discuss the governance for the regional development of the Amazon. The reflection started with a bibliographic review followed by an in-depth the reading of the Regional Development Plan, complemented by the collection of data and information, which allowed interpretations about the challenges faced in the governance of the Plan. It was concluded that there is a set of political, economic and social factors which, added to the institutional dimension, constitute obstacles to the achievement of the Plan.

**Keywords:** governance, regional development, Amazonia

## Resumo

A questão das desigualdades regionais é histórica e com raízes estruturais, no Brasil. As políticas de desenvolvimento regional, desde o século XX, alternam seu espaço de visibilidade na agenda dos governos. No caso da Amazônia especificamente, a atuação do Estado brasileiro se deu de forma experimental, resultando em um processo de desenvolvimento problemático que, apesar das potencialidades existentes, configurou um quadro socioeconômico, marcado pela exclusão de grandes contingentes populacionais e uma economia bastante incipiente. O presente artigo pretende fazer uma discussão sobre a governança para o desenvolvimento regional da Amazônia. A reflexão partiu da revisão bibliográfica e se deteve na leitura do Plano Regional de Desenvolvimento, complementando-se pelo levantamento de dados e informações, as quais possibilitaram interpretações sobre os desafios na governança do plano. Concluiu-se que há um conjunto de fatores de ordem política, econômica e social, que se somam à dimensão institucional, que se constituem em obstáculos à consecução do plano.

**Palavras-chave:** governança, desenvolvimento regional, Amazônia.

## 1 Introduction

Brazil's historical development model has fueled the phenomenon of social and regional inequality. This becomes clear in a set of insufficiencies ranging from social capital to infrastructure which split a divided country and put its northern portion at a clear disadvantage in relation to the South.

The Amazon, along with the Northeast, is part of this regional set marked by poverty and underdevelopment despite relevant historical records demonstrating punctual development cycles from colonial times to the present. However, what has characterized the trajectory of the region, especially in recent years, is the dilemma of balancing its development and the perspective of environmental sustainability in an integrated manner.

The aforementioned cycles had the Brazilian State as their main sponsor and produced an ambiguous vision of development perpetuated until now: on the one hand, the absence of public power to solve structural problems, and on the other hand, the appropriation of resources by large economic agents that are ally themselves with illegal networks of exploitation of natural resources.

It is evident, thus, that the central problem in the development of the Amazon is the absence of a long-term strategy and a fragile institutionality that went through moments of greater visibility, but which most of the time was completely emptied. The Superintendency for the Development of the Amazon (Sudam), the institution responsible for the planning of the region, is the main example of this.

The present article focuses on the most recent planning tool for the region, the Regional Development Plan for the Amazon (PRDA), prepared in 2019 by Sudam with the participation of state governments and civil society and sent to the National Congress, meeting the legal requirements. Thus, the objective of this discussion is to reflect on the governance proposed in the PRDA based on the categorization made by Buta and Teixeira (2020), understanding that the arrangement for implementing the plan is structured in a complex institutional environment.

It should be noted that the PRDA leaves space for the proposition of strategies of horizontal and vertical governance and recognizes the importance of this dialogue on a permanent basis. However, the document assumes the coordination for the implementation of the Plan as its own and, consequently, Sudam's responsibility. This scenario did not take into account a set of other actors which, despite not having a mandate for regional planning, end up acting, due to their attributions, for the development of the Amazon, independently and, sometimes, even concurrently.

The article starts with a conceptual theoretical debate incorporating different fields of knowledge and seeks to promote dialogue between governance and territory as fundamental elements in the process of regional development. Then, the methodological procedures that shed light on the analyses that follow are outlined, verticalizing aspects of the PRDA associated with the governance of the plan and the challenges encountered in its implementation. The information collected from official bodies points to a conjuncture of institutional conflicts and shortcomings in cooperation and management, both horizontally and vertically. The article ends with some provocations and (possible) indications for the continuity of a research agenda on the theme.

## 2 Regional policies and the necessary territorial governance

The use of spatial circumscriptions as an instrument of State intervention aimed at public policies and regional planning has been recurrent in different parts of the world and at different geographic scales.

The history of experiences that use regions as the focus of policies is vast and points to a considerable range of approaches and ways for the State to operate from the realities found in these areas, with a view to facing their problems. In this sense, Bezzi (2001) points out that the State is the subject of regional planning since it is the one that establishes the development model to be adopted together with social and economic agents.



In order to enrich this stage of the debate, which focuses on government intervention and its effects on the territory, it is also important to highlight Muller's contribution in the distinction between the forms of State action through its public policies and how they can be expressed in the space:

In general terms, public intervention is organized around two logics – the territorial logic and the sectoral logic – each with its own rationality. Through the territorial logic, the social system to be regulated by the action of the State is a spatial circumscription (a political administrative unit such as a municipality, state or region), a zone with a particular status (such as a forest) or also a territorial component of a global policy (such as the policy of decentralization). Through the sectoral logic, the State seeks to regulate the reproduction of a more abstract entity constituted by a vertically delimited domain of activity (such as the industry, health, agriculture) (1982, p. 166).

The author's contribution makes it possible to understand that the two logics frequently intertwine, since there are sectoral public policies specifically addressed to qualified spaces, based on criteria of a technical nature, which allows for different regionalizations and spatial incidences of state actions.

Still on the diversity of regional circumscriptions adopted in sectoral government actions, it is possible to find in Limonad's (2004) contribution some points that reinforce the instrumental character that geographic spaces gain in public policies, when he says that the regionalizations of policies aim to address the problems to be solved. From their instruments, there may be several regionalizations for the same space, that is, sectoral policies acting in the same region through different logics, which confirms the perspective of Muller (1982).

As a counterpoint, Araújo qualifies sectoral policies as “non-territorial” and sheds light on the case of Brazil, noting: “The essence of the public policies [in Brazil] is defined and implemented in the macroeconomic and sectoral section (both non-spatial)” (Araújo, 2000, p. 57), and comments that this fact is reinforced by the compensatory and accessory nature of policies of regional development, treated in recent years in the wake of economic policies and some specialized initiatives.

It is worth noting that, in the sectoral logic, the solution of problems occurs through specialized intervention, reaching segments and promoting changes in unfavorable conditions through the confrontation of problems based on specific demands. This logic strengthens territorial, segmented links, considering the fulfillment of the demands of specific groups and obscuring the complex and intersectoral character of some themes, also resulting in the weakening of the territorial dimension in public policies. In this regard, Bandeira highlights:

[the] territorial planning and management model must have mechanisms that promote the articulation of actions within the same level of government. That is, mechanisms that ensure a “horizontal” coordination between the actions of different bodies of the same federated instance that affect a certain portion of the territory. This articulation is hampered by the “sectoralized” structure of the Brazilian public administration and by the different operational regionalizations used by the various sectoral bodies. (2007, p. 207).

Despite the divergent points, there are aspects that bring the analyses of the authors closer in the sense of highlighting the space as a planning resource in the different strategies of government agencies and their public policies, which vary according to the size and magnitude of the issue to be addressed as well as its relevance to the policy agenda.

An additional point to consider is the visibility that such themes have in the eyes of public opinion, besides, of course, the actors that compete for space, from their positions of power.

This understanding is complemented by Lefebvre, quoted by Soja, when he says that: “[...] the space (...) has always been political and strategic” (1993, p. 145), thus making it necessary that territorial public policies encompass the complexity of the diverse agendas and interests, in a game that never ends.

The planning process is not a guarantee of development for the regions, as there is a set of internal conditions that must be satisfied, in addition to complex external economic, social, political and, above all, institutional factors, which may pose obstacles to the achievement of the proposed goals. Such factors, in the case of Brazil, place territorial governance and federative relations at the core of the debate on the regional development agenda, especially when it comes to cooperation to achieve results.

This institutional context opens space for the discussion on multilevel governance. Such governance can take different forms, as highlighted by Maggetti and Train (2018), who carried out a comprehensive review of these distinctions based on renowned authors in this theme. It should be noted that Maggetti and Train (2018) point out one of these facets of multilevel governance based on federative relations and decentralization of public policies, understanding that some problems are beyond the capacity of the central government, imposing the need for cooperation with other federated entities. This context includes regional development policies and their governance.

The debate on territorial governance is ample and, therefore, polysemic, when it provides different views and arguments that are theoretically well supported. Willi, Putz and Muller (2018) developed an investigation that systematizes the contributions of different authors who discuss territorial specificities (urban, rural, border zones) and also contextualized the emergence of the concept, understanding its complexity based on the many actors involved in disputes and use of territory. This debate is complemented by Dallabrida, Rotta and Bittenbender (2021), who point to the contradictions found in the territory and, therefore, in territorial governance.

In theory, initiatives of territorial governance can be quite interesting since they bring negotiation into practice for agreements between actors from the same or different government levels, in addition to civil society and stakeholder groups. According to Dallabrida (2020), territorial governance could be characterized as: “[...] an institutional instance of exercise of power in a symmetrical manner at the territorial level.” (p. 13); the author calls attention to the importance of this space being democratic, but he also says that, where there is governance, there is not always democracy in the decision-making process. Thus, it can be understood that the spaces for participation and negotiation have variations according to each public policy, according to the organization’s tradition of franchising this decision-making sharing, or according to the government agenda, following traits of the representatives which may be more receptive to the democratic processes or not.

Therefore, territorial governance represents, in addition to the aspects listed above, a complex architecture of institutions and a rich puzzle of strategies, depending on the stakeholder groups that will dispute the use and primacy of the development of the regions. This is evident when Brandão details the structure of actors/institutions/public policies around the territory:

[...]horizontally articulating the institutional actors of a given region and vertically integrating the different political-administrative spheres (...) implies the formal recognition of the existence of several decision centers concerning the same territorial space and the same problem (...) [and] the recognition and acceptance of supposed competences at a given territorial level (2007, p. 209).

Reality shows that the articulation between these levels of government sometimes becomes problematic due to the absence of instances that promote dialogue between the various actors. There are no strategies of coordination between the different government agencies at the federal level that, in theory, should deal with transversal themes, converge in their actions; most of the time this does not happen. Therefore, governance as a solution can also be a problem when this architecture is complex and segmented, as it is the case in regional development policies.

The view presented above is in line with the analysis of Rhodes (1996), who defines governance as self-organized networks or inter-organizational networks. For the author, such networks are a challenge to governability because they become autonomous and resist central guidelines. In a similar interpretation, Santos (1997) points out that governance involves patterns of articulation and cooperation between social and political actors and institutional arrangements, inside and outside the economic system.

It deserves to be remarked that that governance is a popular but imprecise concept, as highlighted by Rhodes (1996) and seen as a consensus among several authors. Fukuyama (2013) adds to this idea when he says that the concept is not well established, resulting in different studies with different meanings. This opinion also finds support in the words of Rose-Ackerman (2017), who understands the concept as polysemic, multidimensional and ambiguous. And, more recently, Buta & Teixeira (2020) also advocate the polysemy of the concept of governance, which, because it is based on different theoretical currents, tends to present varied definitions.

Levi-Faur (2012) considers governance as an interdisciplinary research approach or agenda aimed at analyzing the functioning of various dimensions of the State. In this aspect, governance assumes a multidimensional and interdisciplinary character. It is therefore necessary to clarify its meaning in the context in which it is used. Furthermore, it is worth noting that governance has applications in different fields of knowledge, with different meanings.

In short, public governance is the government's ability to act collaboratively in a network, in search of problem solving. In the case of policies of territorial extent structured on complex institutional architectures, governance is a challenge because it does not end with the institutions that are in charge of the theme. It often depends on other organizations with strong veto power over regional policies, although without attributions related to the subject.

This kaleidoscope has repercussions on the quality of governance and its measurement, as explored in the study by Gisselquist (2014) on several public policies based on a critical stance. The author warned that greater attention should be paid to the conceptual framework and its content and that the possibility of these indexes being valid, reliable and replicable should be verified.

In general, governance has been analyzed from a great variety of dimensions, although some of them are present in most studies that focus on its measurement. In a discussion about governance in public policies, Keping (2018) understands the centrality of legitimacy, transparency, accountability, respect for rules, responsiveness and effectiveness, as fundamental to good governance. Regarding the specific part of the object analyzed in the present article, Willi, Putz and Muller (2018) presented in their study a set of central dimensions for regional governance, namely: participation, creation of links, formalization of the arrangement, regional autonomy, and recognition of an environment marked by power relations.

This aside was necessary to underscore that the option to be made in this article is closer to Santos (1997) and Rhodes (1996), but operationalized from the categories indicated in the article by Buta & Teixeira (2020) for the definition of governance, namely: Stakeholder



coordination, Monitoring and control, Participation, Governmental capacity, and Conditions for governance, presented in the Box 1.

Box 1 - Governance, according to its categories and definitions

Category	Description
Stakeholder coordination	It covers the involvement of individuals and organizations in the coordination of goals and policies, and the cross-coordination of these actors to achieve the goals.
Participation	It is related to the institutional conditions necessary for there to be governance, since it depends on the existence of rights, guarantees, and freedoms that allow and stimulate social organization.
Governmental capacity	It is associated with government effectiveness, regulatory quality, performance of public agencies, production, and the outcome of public policies.
Monitoring and control	It covers the provision of information, presentation of justification, and accountability of public agents for their actions and omissions.
Conditions for governance	It includes the institutional requirements necessary for governance mechanisms to emerge.

Source: Adapted from Buta & Teixeira, (2020)

It is necessary to clarify that Buta and Teixeira (2020) originally present a set of indicators associated with each category, which were not used because this would make the analysis too long. Thus, the option fell on more general aspects related to the description, which can contribute to reflections about the governance of regional development in the Amazon and about the conditions under which the main regional planning instrument – the PRDA - operates in the face of the institutional complexity found.

### 3 Methodological path

This article has a qualitative approach, considering the nature of the research object: the analysis of the governance of the PRDA. As for the nature, this is an applied research, considering that it problematizes the object and leads to reflections that may subsidize decisions about it. As for the objectives, it is an explanatory research because it seeks to identify elements that are correlated to outline the scenario of adversities for the governance of the plan. And, regarding the procedures, the study is characterized as a bibliographical-documentary investigation due to the theoretical set that supports it and because it included the consultation of archives of official publications as well as of databases of governmental institutions and civil society.

It should be noted that this character of document analysis was mainly due to the fact that the object of the article is centered on the PRDA and on the governance of regional development, requiring the examination of other government references that deal with the National Policy of Regional Development (PNDR) or with the regional development of the Amazon. As for the focus on specific documentary sources, Kripka, Scheller and Bonotto (2015) point out that: “The document to be chosen for the research will depend on the problem to which answers are sought, and thus the choice is not random. It is based on the objectives and/or hypotheses about theoretical support” (p. 245), which justifies the collection referenced in the article.

Thus, the main means used in addition to bibliographic research in different fields of knowledge, particularly political sciences, public administration, economics and geography, include official documents from Sudam and other governmental institutions that directly or tangentially deal with the subject, participating in governance arrangements, such as the



Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, whose websites were consulted.

It should be noted that the main source of document referencing was the Sudam's portal, from which the PRDA was obtained, as well as the entire set of laws that guide the actions of the institution and data concerning the management of the superintendency, which allowed a more accurate analysis of the challenges imposed for the governance of the Plan. It also made sense to describe how the process of elaboration of the PRDA took place, considering that the proposal of this article is to reflect on the governance for the implementation of the Plan, which was possible through the analysis of documents that describe the trajectory of the construction of this instrument during the year 2019.

With regard to the content of the PRDA, the document analysis focused on aspects related to governance as a fundamental element for the success of the Plan, seeking to establish a correlation between what is expressed in the document and aspects that were analyzed. The analysis indicates how much still remains to be done in order to achieve a good coordination for the implementation of what is enshrined in the PRDA.

Other legislative instruments were necessary to enrich the reflections. A fundamentally important step was the consultation of the Palácio do Planalto's website. This consultation allowed the identification of the set of institutions that have complementary and sometimes competing attributions in relation to the Amazon, as well as of infralegal instruments that elucidate aspects that pose a challenge to the materialization of the intentions inscribed in the PRDA.

Still in the spectrum of state agents, reports from the Ministry of Economy, the Federal Audit Court (TCU, for its acronym in Portuguese), and the Federal Controller General's Office (CGU, for its acronym in Portuguese) were consulted. They indicate the problems related to the capacity to implement regional policies on the part of the institutional arrangement responsible for regional development at the federal level, but also the capacity of the federated entities, and point out some actions of these bodies in order to circumvent the structural issues of Brazilian federalism, to ensure good governance in regional development.

The data found on the portal of the Federation of Industries of Rio de Janeiro (Firjan, for its acronym in Portuguese) were relevant to qualify the issues of governance insufficiencies. Through the Municipal Governance Index – IGM, they pointed to the serious management problem found in most of Brazilian municipalities and, more particularly, in the Amazon, further enhancing the problem of federative cooperation in the face of fiscal and management deficits.

It is understood that this set of resources made it possible to achieve the intended objective, when discussed in the light of the reflection of Buta and Teixeira (2020), which measures and qualifies governance. In this sense, the analyses presented here seek to point out that institutional means and resources are insufficient for the governance of the PRDA and, consequently, insufficient to ensure what was set out in the document as a strategy to promote the development of the Amazon.

#### **4 Challenges to governance of the PRDA**

According to Complementary Law n° 124/2007, the PRDA represents Sudam's main planning instrument for the region. The Plan describes the objectives and development strategies, and the means to achieve them. As provided in CL n° 124/2017, the Plan adheres to the PNDR, established in 2019, in its second phase, by Decree n° 9,810, of May 30.



The analysis presented here starts with the information in the Box 1, understanding that each of the categories listed represents the necessary conditions for the effectiveness of the actions set out in the PRDA, based on the governance proposed in it, but it is also an institutional architecture strongly dependent on other government bodies and their collegiate bodies, insufficiently sensitized to the importance of the planning instrument. With respect to the governance of the PRDA, Sudam emphasizes:

Some measures must be considered in the institutional axis, for example: improving public sector governance with increased efficiency and effectiveness in government actions; consolidating multilevel governance systems; reducing the institutional deficit in order to create agreements with national and international institutions in the search for raising financial resources and partnerships, favoring the financing and sustainability of the governance system, as well as reducing the dependence of states and municipalities on the Federal Government, encouraging the promotion, articulation and cooperation between federal, state, municipal entities and society (interdisciplinary). (Sudam, 2019, p. 170)

The plan is structured around 5 Axes: economic, social, environmental, infrastructural, and institutional. This article is especially interested in the latter, considering that all the others can be impacted by the fragility of the arrangement responsible for the implementation of the PRDA in the horizontal cooperation between different federal government agencies.

On the other hand, vertical cooperation, manifested in federative relations, can also be an obstacle because many of the actions have subnational entities as protagonists, either for their structuring, in a complementary role of financing source, or for the maintenance of these structures. This is so despite the fact that Sudam acknowledges in the PRDA the major relevance of governance, emphasizing that this aims at: “[...] the collective good, in the sense of uniting local actors in an effort towards articulation, mobilization, cooperation and accountability” (Sudam, 2019, p. 163) and, therefore, envisioning an arrangement that should mobilize different actors around the project of development of the Amazon.

Based on the categories seen in Box 1, Buta and Teixeira (2020) indicate that governance is to be: “the arrangements of a public nature that allow the participation of all interested parties under the coordination of the State, seeking the solution of common problems and thus enabling the delivery of quality public services, as well as social control” (p. 389). Thus, considering the object analyzed in the article, governance is understood to be a democratic space in which state actors and civil society take part, mobilizing forces around a strategy of development for the Amazon.

When dealing with the categories of stakeholder coordination and social participation, the first major challenge emerges: to combine the interests and the effectiveness of participatory processes, considering the existence of three strategic instances that dialogue with the macro-regional development of the Amazon. They are: a) the Chamber of National Integration and Regional Development Policies (CPINDR), established by Decree n° 9,810/2019; b) Sudam’s Deliberative Council (Condel, for its acronym in Portuguese), established by CL n° 124/2007; and c) the National Council for the Legal Amazon (CNAL, for its acronym in Portuguese), transferred from the Ministry of the Environment to the Vice-presidency of the Republic by Decree n° 10,239/2020. Box 2 below illustrates the overlapping range of attributions when it comes to coordination for regional planning and participation of actors in the decision-making processes of these collegiate bodies.

Box 2 – Legal instruments associated with planning and participation in the strategic dimension





Chamber of National Integration and Regional Development Policies	Sudam's Deliberative Council	National Council of the Legal Amazon
<b>Dimension: Planning</b>		
To establish guidelines for the review of the PNDR and its operationalization in accordance with its instruments, especially with the plans of regional development and their revisions (item I, article 8, Decree 9,810/2019)	To establish the action guidelines and propose, in articulation with the Ministry of National Integration, a bill that will institute the plan and programs for regional development of the Amazon (item I, article 10, CL 124/2007)	To coordinate and integrate governmental actions related to the Legal Amazon (item I, article 3, Decree 10,239/2020)
<b>Dimension: Social Participation</b>		
Exclusively governmental (article 9, Decree 9,810/2019)	Composition with governmental predominance, in several spheres, giving space for 6 representatives of regional civil society	Exclusively governmental (article 4, Decree 10,239/2020)

Source: prepared by the author, 2021.

There is another key issue: the sub-regionalizations made by the federal government itself in the region which have resulted in planning instruments and forms of governance dissociated from the strategic instances. The best known of them is the one constituted from the construction of the Belo Monte hydroelectric power plant, in the Xingu region, the Sustainable Regional Development Plan (PDRS) of Xingu. There are others, such as the Abraço o Marajó Program, coordinated by the Ministry of Women, Family and Human Rights and, more recently, the constitution of a new planning region focused on agribusiness at the confluence of the states of Amazonas, Acre and Rondônia called Amacro, using the acronyms of these federation units, led by state governments and the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Supply (MAPA, for its acronym in Portuguese).

In addition to these programs, it is important to consider the actions proposed within the scope of the CNAL, which clearly overlap with the PRDA, as shown in its Strategic Map (Figure 1). Born out of a conjuncture – when the country saw an increase in deforestation indicators and large forest fires –, the Council ended up bringing together important government actors around a set of structural initiatives. In the arrangement proposed within the scope of the CNAL, there are Subcommittees, including one for Institutional Articulation that does not even count on the presence of Sudam.

Figure 1 - Strategic Map of CNAL





Source: <https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/conheca-a-vice-presidencia/conselho-da-amazonia>

Added to this complex institutional framework is the Interstate Consortium for Sustainable Development of the Legal Amazon, which brings together the governments of Acre, Amapá, Amazonas, Maranhão, Mato Grosso, Pará, Rondônia, Roraima, and Tocantins, and which, in clause 7 of its Protocol of Intentions, points out as its purpose to promote “[...] the economic and social development of the Legal Amazon in a harmonious and sustainable way (...) other initiatives of common interest that aim at integrated and sustainable regional development.”

In an article, Lima, Teixeira and Lamarão Neto (2020) discussed the role of the Consortium and Sudam in the context of development in the Amazon and highlighted the importance of this collegiate body forged from the governors. However, it is worth reflecting on what the authors point out when they say: “[...] that these entities can organize themselves to plan joint actions for this purpose (development)” (2020, p. 411), but on the other hand, there is always the possibility of dispute over structuring projects and the lack of definition regarding the priorities of state governments, which may not be convergent with a macro-regional development project.

This set of actors and their different governance models denounce a central problem: a reference institution is lacking, as well as the scalar issues that could guide regional planning instruments and development strategies, as highlighted by Brito, Mattedi and Souza (2017), when warning about the: “[...] understanding of scales with a more relational perspective and not a determined, fixed, rigid or preconceived perspective” (p. 21), and when they conclude that the use of this perspective contributes to: “[...] identify the best scale of analysis and political action” (p. 21).

The previous elements suggest a low level of engagement by Sudam and the appropriation of the PRDA in regional networks, which are shown to be quite dispersed when it comes to diversity of participants and synergy, that is, the dimensions that Buta and Teixeira (2020)

enumerate when dealing with coordination of stakeholders are shown to be insufficient to put the Plan's proposals into motion.

From the perspective of the proposed governance, the Plan is linked to the aforementioned PNDR, which established the CPINDR, made up of 6 ministers, 4 of them from the center of government<sup>1</sup>, as the highest instance of governance of the policy and its instruments, which includes the PRDA. The Chamber's attributions include promoting the articulation of sectoral policies and articulation of the federation, that is, establishing horizontal and vertical relationships for the governance of regional development.

Established in 2019, and with a prevision of biannual meetings, the Chamber was only officially installed at the end of 2020, with a single meeting. This creates a gap in the governance proposed by the PRDA, considering that the government's upper management is not mobilized to build the shared agenda, as required by the Plan's strategy, especially in the sense of ensuring budgetary resources for the proposed actions, as already seen.

Although Sudam has a Deliberative Council, as above mentioned, with the participation of ministers, its link with the Ministry of Regional Development (MDR) places it in a more tactical instance. Moreover, its development plans, at any scale, must be guided by the PNDR. This situation creates an environment of uncertainty, considering that the macro-regional plans, although foreseen in complementary laws, depend too much on the CPINDR, created by Decree, for political negotiations that ensure their achievement.

Thus, not only the governmental capacity would be jeopardized but also aspects associated with Deliberative Quality, pointed out by Buta and Teixeira (2020), considering that, although Condel is the highest instance of deliberation on actions concerning regional development of the Amazon and counts on relevant political players, the implementation of the proposals contained in the PRDA requires government decisions, such as the Chamber's<sup>2</sup>, already mentioned, and other bodies, such as the Budget Board and the Council for Evaluation in Public Policies of the Ministry of Economy, with entitled to determine the budget for the actions.

This, in a way, exposes a fragility of the main institution responsible for the PRDA, Sudam, and its most important instance of governance, since Condel constitutes a political space for negotiations and strategic decision-making with the participation of the federal, state and municipal governments, business segments and civil society, although considerably under-represented<sup>3</sup>.

In this aspect, the participation category highlighted by Buta and Teixeira (2020) has special relevance considering that, under the current government, social participation has been sidelined and substantially hampered either by the annulment of several participatory bodies<sup>4</sup>, or by the commands to restructuring these forums, leaving such a decision at the mercy of the discretionary power of upper management.

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<sup>1</sup>The Chamber is composed of: the Chief of Staff of the Presidency of the Republic; the Minister of Economics; the Minister of Regional Development; the Chief Minister of the General Secretariat of the Presidency of the Republic; the Chief Minister of the Government Secretariat of the Presidency of the Republic; and the Chief Minister of the Cabinet of Institutional Security of the Presidency of the Republic.

<sup>2</sup> According to item X of article 8 of Decree 9,810/2019, the Chamber is responsible for: - proposing the insertion of priority federal actions in regional and sub-regional plans in the Multiannual Plan (PPA) of the Union and in the Annual Budget Law.

<sup>3</sup> The Deliberative Council is formed by the following representations: governors of states in the area of activity of the institution, ministers of the Ministries of Regional Development, Economy and other six sectoral ministries; three mayors of municipalities in different states; three business representatives from different states; three representatives of the working class from different states; and the Bank of the Amazon.

<sup>4</sup> Decree number 9,759 of April 11, 2019.

The preparation process of the PRDA, besides complying with the CL n° 124/2007, must also observe the temporality of the Multiannual Plan (PPA, for its acronym in Portuguese) of the Federal Government, as, according to the legislation, the draft must be submitted to the National Congress concurrently with the central government's plan. The preparation of the PRDA involved Sudam's technical team in partnership with the Ministry of Regional Development.

The methodology for preparing the PRDA can be summarized as follows: a) definition of an idea-force for the Plan, which was the bioeconomy as a macro vector of development; b) mobilization of Sudam's internal staff; c) gathering of information and preparation of a first document, taking into account the structure determined in CL 124/2007; d) meetings with the governments of the states in which Sudam operates in order to collect proposals; e) public consultation with civil society and the academic community on Sudam's website in order to open space for suggestions; f) qualification and appropriation of proposals from states and civil society; and g) elaboration of the final draft of the PRDA for voting in Sudam's Deliberative Council, in May 2019. The PRDA was later delivered by the Minister of Regional Development to the President of the Republic who forwarded it to the National Congress, in November of that year.

In an attempt of simplifying the methodology, The Federal Government's PPA ended up adopting a structure that added the regional circumscription to the urban/metropolitan fact and with a single objective, embedding all the effort of the PRDA in a program that is national and has a single indicator – internalization of development –, which requires actions from multiple institutions. The strategies of the PRDA are not even included among the intermediate goals of the Regional and Territorial Development Program described in the PPA.

This is an aspect that contributes to weakening the legitimacy and recognition of the Plan as the main instrument for the development of the Amazon, considering that the legislative process is still in the initial stages, with no Special Commission to assess it. This is due to the pandemic that slowed down the pace of work and created the need to prioritize the initiatives that are indispensable for the country to face the health crisis. In this way, the PRDA not only detached itself from the federal PPA and consequently failed to ensure territorial convergence of resources in the sectoral ministries, but also failed to promote the bridge with the planning of the states, which should complement each other through their PPAs.

The elements presented corroborate the deficit of governmental capacity pointed out by Buta & Teixeira (2020), in the sense that the absence of the PRDA in the main planning instrument of the federal government for the quadrennium also eliminates the means of financing for the Plan – in this case, the Overall Federal Budget – for the years that coincide with its validity and, therefore, precludes the implementation of its proposals.

Regarding the financing for regional development, the fiscal framework of recent years must be highlighted. There is an adverse scenario in the short, medium and long term because of the approval of the Constitutional Amendment 95/2016, which imposes limitations on public spending for 20 years. The economic slowdown in the country further worsens the situation, with a strong impact on the central government's revenue at the same time that an unprecedented crisis is expected to require investments in the social area and in the resumption of productive activities, especially in regions already marked by inequality.

Also, in terms of investment sources for the development of the Amazon, it should be noted that the Constitutional Fund for Development of the North Region had R\$ 7.7 billion available for private sector projects in 2020. However, Development Funds have been the object of negative evaluations of the government's economic area, opening space for a set of proposals - which are presently in the process of evaluation in the National Congress - that promote





reformulations of the conception and redistribute the volume of resources to other units of the federation. It is noteworthy that, after analyzing the various dimensions related to the financing instruments of the PNDR, the former Ministry of Finance concluded in its report that: “they [the Constitutional Development Funds] present low effectiveness in the scope of their objective, that is, of contributing to the economic and social development of the target regions.” (MINISTÉRIO DA FAZENDA, 2018, p. 136).

Additionally to the deliberative quality, the above picture reinforces the low capacity to make deliveries, pointed out by Buta and Teixeira (2020) as one indicator of Governmental Capacity, when technical and institutional means are not available in addition to the lack of resources and autonomy to accomplish what the PRDA approved.

Another effect of this situation is the evaluations made by inspection and control bodies such as the Federal Audit Court and the Federal Controller General’s Office when they evaluate regional development plans and their instruments in a hasty way or based on efficiency-oriented management models. In this sense, the contribution given by Herbert Simon and discussed by Oliveira and Paes de Paula (2014) sheds some light on the matter when they say: “In the public sector, there is no way to precisely determine whether a result of a public policy was achieved due to a specific action” (p. 122). It is a reflection on the concept of perfect efficiency, coming from business management, widely adopted by the inspection and control system in the face of the challenges of public policies that seek to solve multidimensional problems and, thus, require intersectoral action, making it fundamental that they are evaluated based on the perspective of relative efficiency.

The PRDA, as previously mentioned, has an idea-force – the bioeconomy – that represents a guideline for all other actions despite recognizing the existence of historical and structural problems that are yet to be solved in the Amazon. In this way, innovation is considered a fundamental and structural factor to face social, economic, environmental, cultural and institutional issues, whether in the long or short term, as recommended in the document.

However, care must be taken when it comes to incorporating the bioeconomy and the discourse of sustainable development so as not to perpetuate a trap already denounced by Ferreira and Costa (2021). These authors carried out an analysis of the panoptic discourse that falls on the natural resources of the Amazon and end up giving a privileged place to large economic agents, which dominate the discourses and, therefore, start to play a leading role in the economic and social life of the region. The authors’ criticism is evident when they say:

[...] the institutionalization of the notion of sustainable development did not promote major ruptures with previous models of development based strictly on the economic aspect. It is necessary to search for new ways of conceiving development in which the principles of sustainability can actually override the idea of economic exploitation of resources in order to meet the real needs of society, without compromising the maintenance of natural resources of the regions that contain them. (Ferreira & Costa, 2021, p. 178)

On the other hand, for the bioeconomy to become an engine of development, conditions for innovation - which still do not exist in the region - are necessary. Diniz and Diniz (2018) point out some elements that characterize the Science and Technology system in the Amazon: a) few research institutions; b) fragile research networks; c) little investment from state and federal governments; d) insufficient training and qualification of researchers; e) deficient research infrastructure; f) fragmentation of research, leading to low capacity of patenting and of raising the interest of market agents. The sum of these aspects results in a concentration of knowledge around large regional urban centers and a network with few institutions of excellence. Complementing this debate, Costa and Nuñez (2016) stress:



Management and innovation processes involve geoeconomic and geopolitical scales, therefore, policies and institutions are structured according to the adopted scale (...) and sectors that go beyond the local dimension of production, as the entire production chain is involved, that is, production-distribution-circulation-consumption, even when not concatenated, as well as the related technological structure. (p. 304)

Thus, some challenges are posed to the PRDA: how to implement its main strategy if there is no mandate to act in innovation and, therefore, the governance of the ecosystem is found in another ministerial portfolio? What funding channels are available for the PRDA to act and solve the shortcomings of the S&T system of the Amazon, given its few resources? What would be the strategy for spreading the knowledge produced in the form of economic activities with potential to mobilize the regional labor force?

It is noticed that, in relation to the central strategy - bioeconomy - that guides the PRDA, the categories pointed out by Buta and Teixeira (2020), Stakeholder Coordination and Governmental Capacity, are almost non-existent because the means to encourage the strengthening of research, the dissemination of knowledge, and the appropriation of results by the private sector are beyond Sudam's institutional scope. Paradoxically, this governance is not restricted to the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, as the CNAL has among its attributions: "to support scientific research, technological development and innovation", as provided for in item VII of article 3 of Decree nº 10,239/2020.

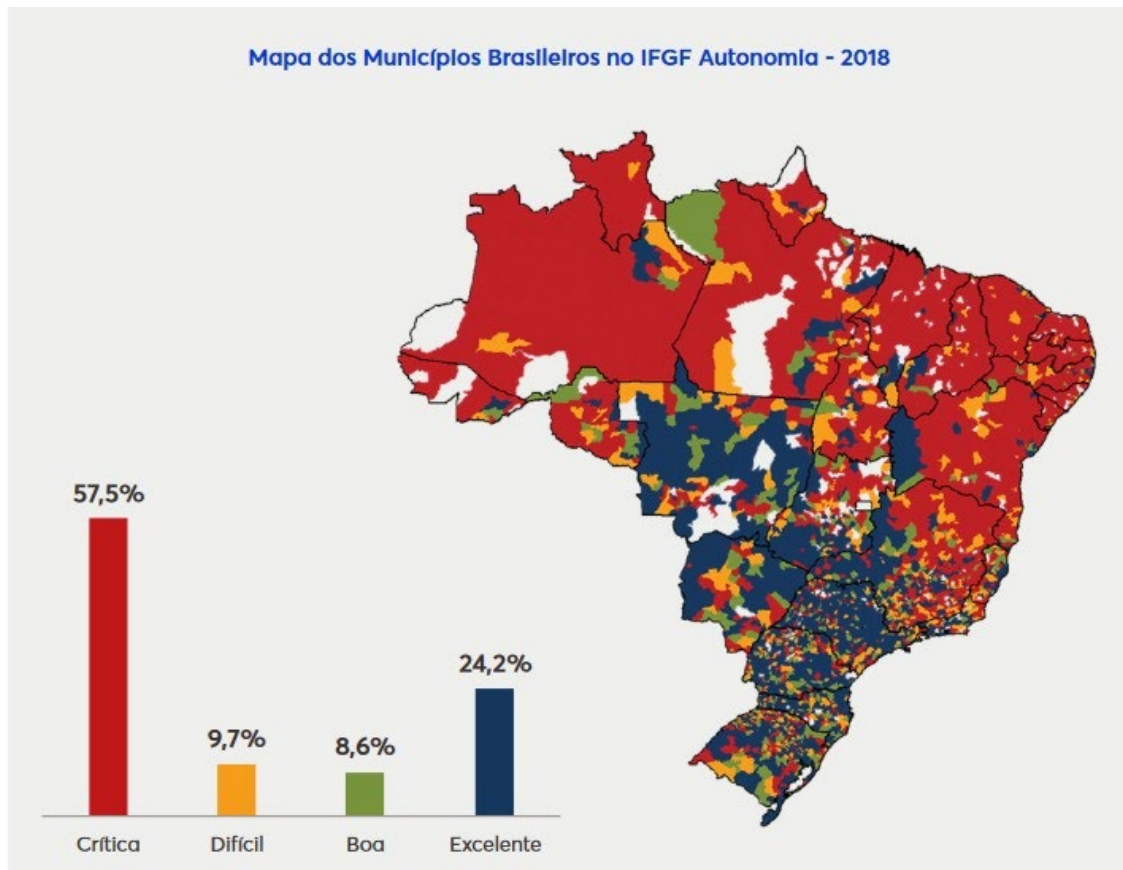
In the institutional axis, the PRDA lists relevant initiatives for its achievement: a) Consolidation of multilevel governance systems; b) Strengthening of public institutions through articulation and cooperation between federal and subnational entities and civil society; c) Support for strengthening government bodies linked to PRDA Programs; d) Fostering the promotion of public policies, based on the integration of PanAmazônia; e) Strengthening of integrated and systemic territorial plans; f) Incentive to cooperativism and associativism; and g) Support for the elaboration of municipal master plans. It is a set of intentions that denotes the complex vision of the territory and its governance, as highlighted by the Superintendency in the PRDA:

In this way, new territorial planning practices make it possible to implement public policies in a sustainable and integrated manner, considering the degree of complexity of the territory and its different scales, adopting territorial clusters based on network flows and articulations. This is because, in addition to allowing the insertion of different fractions of space in the context of public policies, they also help to ensure that the institutions do not act in a punctual and disjointed way. (Sudam, 2019, p. 165)

In this vein, fiscal issues make subnational entities extremely dependent on Federal coffers when it comes to structuring projects. In the Amazon region, 60% of the municipalities are considered to have medium or low development. Only Palmas - TO appears among the 500 municipalities with higher development level, according to Firjan data. Based on the FIRJAN Index of Fiscal Management (IFGF), 40% of the municipalities in the region have a score of 0, that is, they are in a situation of complete dependence on transfers from the Federal Government and some are almost insolvent, shown in red in Figure 1. The exceptions are Mato Grosso and small points dispersed in the other units of the Federation.

Figure 1 - Map of Brazilian municipalities - IFGF





Source: IFGF, Firjan, 2018.

The data show the low autonomy of most municipalities which, in most cases, also lack the conditions to access credit from official development institutions. In the Decision 1655/2017, the Federal Audit Court recognized the seriousness of the problem and even suggested that the federal government propose alternative forms of transfers and, therefore, of financing for small municipalities.

Efforts to train local administrations are still concentrated in the National School of Administration (Enap). More recently, the Federal Audit Court launched a training program: the Support Program for Responsible Municipal Management – TCU + Cidades. Sudam has no tradition on this front of institutional development, although it gives strong emphasis to the topic in the Axis of Strengthening Government Capacities and describes it as: “the collective effort and institutional arrangements among subnational entities to promote the effectiveness of public actions and regional and urban development”. It should be noted that, in 2019, the Ministry of Regional Development instituted the Program for Strengthening the Governmental Capacities of Subnational Entities (PFCG), which is still underused by the Ministry and its affiliates.

In the previous discussion, governmental capacity would remain impaired. Governmental capacity is pointed out by Buta and Teixeira (2020) as a condition for the propositions of the PRDA to get off the ground and become real to the population of the Amazon, ensuring the management of some of these investments by subnational governments.

Additionally, the conditions for governance pointed out by Buta and Teixeira (2020) would be the root of other aspects that impact the other categories listed by them. This is because the institutions responsible for governance lack the means, including sufficient human

resources, to fulfill this mission within the scope of the PRDA, as expected by various governmental actors and civil society.

The synthesis of the issues addressed in this article, presented in Box 3, point to constant challenges. They are not only the result of conjunctures; some of them are structural and, therefore, deserve further investigation to make it possible to draw solutions to overcome them.

Box 3 - Summary of findings on the governance of the PRDA

Category	Challenges
Stakeholder coordination	There is a set of organizations with different mandates and public policies, which do not dialogue with each other, acting at the regional level. Transversal coordination is weakened by Sudam's position as an entity linked to a ministry, in this case the MDR. Federative (vertical) cooperation is weakened by Sudam's limited capacity for mobilization and legitimacy, besides the absence of inducing instruments.
Participation	There are few instances of social participation. In the instances in which there is social participation, it is still incipient. There is no institutional culture that encourages decision sharing in regional planning policies.
Governmental capacity	There is an unfavorable scenario for the replacement of the labor force in the institutions responsible for the subject, at the federal level. In subnational entities, the topic has no place, preventing joint and synergistic actions for the implementation of planning instruments. In relation to subnational governments, there is a deficit of capacities to deal with the issue.
Monitoring and control	Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are still insufficient to qualify the implementation of the plans. In the absence of these instruments for measurement and evaluation of effectiveness, it is not possible to indicate the responsibilities of public agents in the failure to implement the plans.
Conditions for governance	In general, the framework of actors involved in the preparation, implementation and evaluation of the plan is asymmetrical in terms of technical capacity, and this has a major impact on qualified governance.

Source: the author, based on Buta and Teixeira (2020).

Thus, it is understood that governance is not just a concept that seeks to bring different interests together around common goals, in a continuous process of negotiation, but it also requires technical and political performance from bureaucracies with a view to mediating conflicts/interests and putting into effect, through public policies, the results from these negotiations.

## 5 Final Considerations

Based on the article by Buta and Teixeira (2020), a set of aspects related to the governance of the PRDA were verified. The one that drew the most attention allows for the forging of the term 'dependent governance', considering that, despite the design and effort undertaken by Sudam, the structural issues for the execution of the Plan are not under its governance, when it comes to the last decision-making instance.

The PRDA recognizes the relevance of governance to the development of the Amazon. However, the analysis shows that there are technical and political aspects that affect the institutional architecture and will certainly impact the objectives and results of the Plan, notably, the dispersion of initiatives and the overlapping of mandates, to address regional development in the strategic dimension.



This implies the enormous and constant expenditure of institutional energy by Sudam in the attempt to mobilize actors to build a convergent development strategy for the Amazon amid a scenario of budgetary restriction that affects federal policies, in addition to the poor dialogue with subnational governments.

The proceeding in the federal legislative power, still with no prospect of starting, seems to have momentarily ceased the debate on the development of the Amazon via regional planning. This fact is aggravated by the low visibility of the PRDA compared to other ministerial portfolios and public policies that are relevant to its achievement, which results in the dispersion of budgetary resources aimed at the Plan's strategies.

There is a set of internal and external, horizontal and vertical, technical and political factors that affect the governance of the PRDA and, therefore, influence the objective of promoting the development of the region based on convergences and consensuses and that, in the face of the problems mentioned, sideline its strategies and, therefore, its visibility in the public policy agenda, although the current situation points to a deepening of inequalities in all dimensions.

At the end, more than answers, this article raised, although partially, two imperative questions: a) how well-designed governance subsists to external and institutional factors for the implementation of regional development strategies? b) What space is there, in fact, to bet on a form of governance that incorporates subnational entities in regional development policies/plans, considering the management shortcomings and the fragile agenda of strengthening state capacities aimed at these levels of government?

These questions can contribute to identify the limitations of the article which, given the breadth of the central concepts, governance and regional development, certainly covered only some of the possible perspectives of analysis. Furthermore, still regarding the theoretical and methodological aspects, the research path in the phase of consultation of the documentary collections also had limitations because some important sources of information, especially institutional ones, are unavailable due to the absence of a policy that preserves the history of the public institutions in the country.

As for the discussions, the main limitation lies in the incompleteness of the formalization process of the PRDA, as formerly mentioned. This incompleteness affects the governance, although it is fair to say that the current political context is one of weakening of participation and, therefore, weakening of shared decision-making bodies. Therefore, the reflections made are not invalidated, but can be expanded in the face of the dismantling of policies and the low attention given to the topic of governance.

Finally, the scenario of public policies and institutions responsible for regional development in the country is in a crusade that places them in two possible paths: extinction or change, based on a liberal, orthodox paradigm, which does not fit the structural reality of the country nor its conjuncture marked by increasing poverty and inequality.

It is understood, therefore, that the debate on the development of the Amazon necessarily involves organic governance that encompasses the problem in its whole extension and multidimensionality, guiding its planning and financing instruments to overcome the historical problems of the region.

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