

Technical Cooperation Agreement with Subnational Governments: Case Study of Plan Piauí 2030

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Abstract

The concept of sustainable development has emerged on the international agenda due to the growing awareness of the impact of human activities on the environment. In this context, the current international relations scenario presents challenges for International Environmental Law. This research analyzes the phenomenon of environmental paradiplomacy with a focus on the participation of subnational governments, using the case study of the PLAN PIAUÍ 2030 conducted in the State of Piauí. The plan was executed by the Secretary of State for Planning (SEPLAN-PI), with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), to implement the 2030 Agenda and advance the Sustainable Development Goals in Piauí's territories. This qualitative research follows an exploratory and analytical approach, conducted through by means of/via/by way of bibliographical and documentary surveys, supplemented by a case study of the Piauí 2030 Plan. Local and international legislation, agreements, and treaties were analyzed, along with official documentation related to the PLAN PIAUÍ 2030 collaboration between the State of Piauí and UNDP.

Keywords

Agenda 2030, SDGs, Global Governance, State of Piauí, UNDP, Subnational Governments, Paradiplomacy

1. Introduction

The Agenda 2030 aims to be transformative in terms of policy formulation and outcomes. The implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) highlights the need for multi-level policy-making to achieve human, sustainable, and inclusive development. The SDGs provide inspiring policy guidelines for governments and societies based on a set of internationally shared principles and values. Thus, it demonstrates the indispensability of coordinating government levels, integrating policy domains, involving various stakeholders, and monitoring developed policies.

The Agenda 2030 outlines 17 global objectives for sustainable development that countries around the world should strive to achieve. These objectives are integrated and indivisible and aim to balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental. The SDGs are universal and should be implemented by all countries worldwide over the next decade until 2030. It's important to note that local and regional governments have played a crucial role in shaping the SDGs. The agenda emphasizes the need for collaboration between governments, public institutions, and local and regional governments to ensure that these goals are met. However, a counterexample to this collaboration can be seen in the case of multinational corporations operating in developing countries. These corporations often prioritize their economic interests over social and environmental sustainability, leading to exploitation of local resources, labor, and communities without adequate accountability or consideration for the SDGs. This undermines the efforts of local and regional governments and hampers progress towards achieving the goals.

Therefore, the Agenda 2030 recognizes the fundamental role of local and regional governments in promoting sustainable development. It is an action plan that requires commitment from countries to transform the planet towards sustainable development through/by means of/via/by way of implementing the 17 sustainable development goals and their 169 targets.

Global governance mechanisms involve the participation of all stakeholders and imply the integration of actors who often do not belong to formal state structures, whether public or private, thus challenging their reception by International Law. An increasing collection of regulations, principles, and decisions has a direct effect on both private and public entities, with a particular focus on subnational governments. This allows adopting actions and policies contributing to the global effort to achieve sustainable development goals. These elements are crucial for international cooperation and socio-environmental governance. Thus, international governmental organizations, non-state actors, non-governmental organizations, corporations, other collectives, and individuals have become relevant players in national and global environmental governance (Betsill & Bulkeley, 2004).

In this context, the phenomenon known as paradiplomacy emerges. Unlike diplomacy in its original format, paradiplomacy allows subnational entities to be protagonists in the process of development exchange linked to the challenges of

the global sustainability agenda. This phenomenon of the growing role of subnational governments in international relations is not only observed in Brazil.

In these terms, the purpose of this article is to analyze the PIAUÍ 2030 PLAN (PNUD, 2017, n.p) carried out in the state of Piauí through/by means of/via/by way of the State Planning Secretariat (SEPLAN-PI) with the support of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The project that became the plan had the support of the Government of the State of Piauí in evaluating, formulating, and implementing interinstitutional and multidimensional territorial policies. It focused on the SDGs, stimulating cooperation among government, society, and social and private organizations to construct solutions influencing the development trajectory of the locality. This promotes human and sustainable development, aiming to consolidate and expand government actions to improve management and public policies.

The methodology used was exploratory with an analytical orientation, including bibliographic research and documentary analysis, complemented by a case study. Through By means of/via/by way of the exploratory study, the aim was to reflect on and support the activities of the multiple actors who developed a joint vision for advancing the Agenda 2030 in the territories of the state of Piauí. According to Zikmund (2000), exploratory studies are helpful in diagnosing situations, exploring alternatives, or discovering new ideas. These works clarify and define the nature of a problem and generate more information for future conclusive research. The project resulted in an important and strategic action plan for the state in the coming years.

The first section discusses the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adoption and significance by the UN General Assembly in 2015. It highlights the negotiation and collaboration process among various stakeholders, transitioning from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The commitment of UN member states, including Brazil, to the ambitious Post-2015 Agenda is emphasized. The UN's efforts to define the SDGs through consultations and global meetings are covered, along with the inclusion of subnational governments in the process. The text also delves into the role of subnational governments in implementing SDGs, emphasizing the need for networking and research. Localization's significance in achieving the SDGs is explored, and the characteristics of SDGs and their targets are outlined. The text emphasizes the global challenge, the importance of mobilization, and the ongoing pursuit of progress through/by means of/via/by way of international cooperation.

The second section discusses the pivotal role of subnational governments within the multi-level governance framework, emphasizing their responsibility for crisis management, social services, economic development, and public investment. Despite autonomy in formulating local policies, subnational governments in Brazil encounter challenges in aligning agendas with the national government and negotiating international agreements. The 2030 Agenda underscores partnership importance in achieving global goals, necessitating inclusive

participation and transparent governance. Recognizing the increasing influence of decentralized actors like local governments and NGOs, the text highlights the significance of networking and cooperation for mutual accountability. Subnational governments, situated between local and national levels, possess decision-making authority and play a crucial role in addressing environmental issues, enforcing international agreements, and contributing to global environmental governance. The text underscores Brazil's challenge in harmonizing public policies and adopting cooperative federalism to implement the 2030 Agenda's multidimensional goals effectively.

The third section discusses the ODS PIAUÍ project and the resulting Piauí 2030 Plan to integrate Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into the state's development plans. It describes the geographical and economic context of Piauí, highlighting its significance within sustainable territorial development policies. The project's objectives and challenges involve strengthening institutions, collaborative governance, and sustainable management. The PIAUÍ 2030 PLAN outlines development axes, and priority programs focused on environment, work, infrastructure, and inequality reduction, with a vision of achieving a high HDI by 2030. The methodological approach involves holistic planning, interdisciplinary efforts, and stakeholder engagement. Key strategic vectors for development include family farming, agribusiness, energy, mining, tourism, and services. Structural barriers like electricity quality, water access, and socioeconomic disparities hinder progress, requiring innovative solutions. The perspective emphasizes strategic planning as a guide for achieving sustainable development goals.

2. Role of Subnational Governments and Multi-Level Governance

Subnational governments, states, provinces, departments, regions, and municipalities, are responsible for essential containment measures, healthcare, social services, economic development, and public investment, placing them at the forefront of crisis management. These responsibilities are shared among different levels of government, making coordinated efforts crucial, which presents political and operational challenges in Brazil.

Several agendas become tangible precisely at the subnational level, such as energy, and transportation, and, depending on the distribution of powers in the states, can sometimes only be addressed by subnational governments. In the case of Brazil, the constitutionally adopted federalism grants states and municipalities the power to regulate local matters and competence in implementing public policies, autonomy, and self-regulation as established by Article 30 of the Federal Constitution of 1988 (Brasil, 1988, art. 30):

Art. 30. It is incumbent upon the Municipalities:

- 1) To legislate on matters of local interest.
- 2) Supplement federal and state legislation where applicable.
- 3) Establish and collect the taxes within its competence, as well as apply its

income, without prejudice to the obligation to render accounts and publish balance sheets within the deadlines established by law.

4) Create, organize and suppress Districts, in compliance with state legislation.

5) Organize and provide, directly or under concession or permission, public services of local interest, including public transport, which is essential.

6) Maintain, with the technical and financial cooperation of the Union and the State, programs for early childhood education and elementary education.

7) To provide, with the technical and financial cooperation of the Union and the State, health care services for the population.

8) Promote, where applicable, adequate territorial organization, through planning and control of the use, subdivision and occupation of urban land.

9) To promote the protection of the local historical and cultural heritage, observing the legislation and the federal and state inspection action.

Despite subnational governments in Brazil having autonomy to formulate local public policies, many of them lack funds and do not always align their agendas with the objectives of the national government. They also face difficulties negotiating international agreements, using the full range of political instruments for such purposes. Thus, in our local context, equal conditions of competition among federated entities are not observed.

The 2030 Agenda, through the United Nations system, recognizes the importance of partnerships to facilitate and expedite the implementation of internationally agreed agendas at the global, regional, and national levels. Inclusive participation in formulating and implementing development agenda goals is crucial to achieving the targets with broad international support. Therefore, international cooperation and developing governance institutions are necessary to ensure transparency, accountability, representativeness, and commitment.

The right to development must play a central role in the global partnership for sustainable development to make progress in all dimensions, including social development, environmental sustainability, economic prosperity, well-being, and peace and security. The emergence of new actors and approaches to strengthen the global partnership for development reflects efforts to address challenges with the help of existing partnerships.

In 2008, the Group of Twenty (G20) held a forum for discussion among finance ministers, including Heads of State and Government, intending to discuss formulas to jointly address the global financial crisis (United Nations, 2013). The group agreed that a broader policy response was needed, based on closer macroeconomic policy coordination and cooperation, to restore growth, avoid negative repercussions, and support the markets of emerging economies and developing countries. They also agreed to intensify their efforts to create a more favorable environment for cooperation and development to improve living conditions worldwide and protect the most vulnerable. Partnerships are essential for technology transfer and sharing knowledge in more collaborative ways, including providing structures for greater diffusion of environmentally sound

technologies, especially to developing countries.

In this context, there is also an increasingly important role for decentralized development actors, that is, local and territorial governments, who are also gaining influence and recognition. Local governments are increasingly recognized for their importance in local territories together/along with non-state entities, they form development partnerships. In addition to traditional partners, organizations such as Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) appear as actors in development cooperation. NGOs are accessing available financial resources and knowledge, and drawing attention to approaches that combine a non-profit focus with a business orientation.

The United Nations emphasizes the need to reflect on and respect these diverse roles and national circumstances. The UN reports that, in recent years, development and assistance provided by the private sector have increased substantially and have brought benefits such as greater visibility, interventions to improve program efficiency, experimental support, and innovative approaches, among others (United Nations, 2013).

States, in turn, must engage and take responsibility for fair and inclusive sustainable development in their nations. Partnerships aim to: a) increased awareness and political space to create a more robust demand for action; and accelerate action through effective engagement with diverse stakeholders; b) Mutual accountability involving all actors concerning their people as an essential factor for the development agenda.

These partnerships are preferably connected through networks based on multi-level governance, from local dialogue to national and international contacts. Key points include dialogue and recognition of new actors and the consensual nature of agreements that serve shared interests for countries and humanity, as is the case with the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.

Multi-level network approaches facilitate cooperation with information and resource sharing. Interactions between levels are facilitated if network communities contain actors operating at different levels of governance. Enhanced interactions between them can result from bottom-up policy processes with more active participation at the local level (Ingold, 2011) or through dominant network communities operating between governance levels.

In this context, alternative approaches focusing on horizontal governance structures are emerging alongside fixed territorial spaces and hierarchical scales of the global environment. According to Bulkeley (2005), actors and institutions simultaneously operate at various scales, with networks having three concepts developed concerning global environmental governance (Betsill & Bulkeley, 2004): epistemic communities (Haas, 1990), transnational advocacy coalitions (Keck & Sikkink, 1998), and global civil society (Lipschutz, 1996).

Thus, governance occurs through spheres of authority (Rosenau, 1997), which can be territorial or non-territorial networks that compete and cooperate through the exercise of formal and informal authority. In other words: “Gover-

nance takes place on a global scale through the coordination of states and the activities of a wide range of rule systems that exercise authority in pursuit of goals that function outside normal national jurisdictions (Rosenau, 2000: p. 172)”.

This reflects the belief that, although governments have the central institutions, politics as a politically relevant activity or behavior is not limited to them (Wapner, 1998: p. 7). This approach moves away from analyses focused on the State to consider the multiplicity of actors and institutions that influence global environmental issues at different scales.

This study recognizes subnational government as the coherent territorial entity between the local and national levels, with decision-making capacity and authority (Marks et al., 2008: p. 113). The term encompasses regional governments, such as states, provinces, domains, territories, etc., depending on the country, as addressing global environmental problems requires the construction of global governance, through which different forms and levels of addressing the difficulties coexist in a complementary dynamic.

Thus, progress in fulfilling Global Agendas is strengthened and fostered by initiatives developed at the infra and transnational levels and by actors not yet formally part of the international legal system. The world today is more interdependent than in the past. Environmental problems can only find satisfactory solutions if negotiated and regulated by the collective of states, without disregarding the role of new actors on the international stage. In this way, Rei & Granziera (2015: p. 151) state: “by confirming that environmental problems in general [...] can only find satisfactory solutions if negotiated and regulated by the group of States, without disregarding the role of new actors on the international scene, which articulate interests in a more efficient dynamic than diplomatic conferences”.

Therefore, in a context where environmental problems need to be addressed simultaneously at the global, national, subnational, and local levels, there are at least three reasons that justify the choice of subnational governments as the focus of this article:

1) The position of subnational governments between the local and national levels puts them in a privileged position to deal with environmental issues. Compared to the federal government, subnational governments have a comparative advantage in understanding the needs and realities of their citizens and adapting general policies to specific circumstances (Doremus & Hanemann, 2008).

2) When a nation-state enters an international agreement, subnational governments are often responsible for its implementation. The same applies to local authorities (Betsill & Bulkeley, 2004, 2007; Bulkeley, 2005). Thus, subnational governments are particularly capable of enforcing international environmental rules by implementing subnational policies and regulations (Van Den Brande et al., 2011). Depending on the distribution of powers within countries, subnational governments are the primary implementers of policies, programs, legislation, and fiscal mechanisms in energy, environment, transportation, and land use (Lutsey & Sperling, 2008).

3) Subnational governments are becoming increasingly active in global environmental governance. Other non-state actors seek to influence international environmental policy and decision-making (Van Den Brande et al., 2011).

In this scenario, one of the biggest challenges for Brazil has been aligning public policies and adopting cooperative federalism following international recommendations in implementing the goals of the 2030 Agenda, which encompasses social, economic, and environmental issues.

3. The Paradiplomatic Experience of the State of Piauí

The ODS PIAUÍ project, which resulted in the Piauí 2030 Plan, aimed to support the state, and promote sustainable development by integrating the SDGs into its plans and planning. The planning process involved studies that identified the main bottlenecks and highlighted the areas and actions needed to achieve the targets of the 2030 Agenda in the development territories (PNUD, 2023).

Piauí is one of the 27 federative units of Brazil and is located in the northwest of the Northeast Region.

Its capital and most populous city are Teresina, and its territory is divided into four mesoregions and 15 microregions, with 224 municipalities. The main economic activities in the state are industry (chemical, textile, beverages), agriculture (cotton, rice, sugarcane, cassava), and livestock.

The ODS Piauí initiative gained particular relevance in light of the efforts made by the state government in recent years to consolidate its participatory planning and sustainable territorial development policy (State Complementary Law No. 87/07 updated by State Law No. 6.967/17), combined with the desire to raise Piauí's HDI to a very high level in the next 10 years, which represents an unprecedented advance for human development in the region. The project was the result of a memorandum of understanding signed in October 2016, which establishes the framework for technical cooperation between the Government of the state of Piauí and UNDP and is based on the Basic Agreement of Technical Cooperation of 29/12/64, promulgated by Decree No. 59.308/1966, which provides for the establishment of arrangements for technical assistance between Brazil and the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies.

The focus was to meet the Sustainable Development Goals so that public policies stimulate cooperation between government, society, and social and private organizations in building solutions that influence the development trajectory of the locality in which they are inserted, to promote human and sustainable development, as well as ensuring the consolidation and expansion of government actions in improving management and public policies. This challenge is intended to be achieved through:

- Strengthening of government agencies, supporting the creation and strengthening of mechanisms for efficient planning and management, ensuring social participation in the construction of sustainable public policies.
- Strengthening collaborative governance through mechanisms of social par-

participation and strengthening the capacities of institutions and social actors.

- Strengthening sustainable municipal and territorial management so that, in light of the SDG Agenda, a development agenda for municipalities and territories (UNDP, 2017) can be built.

Through Complementary Law No. 87 of 2007, the state of Piauí established Participatory Territorial Planning to transform its administrative regions into sustainable development territories (Piauí, 2007). These territories constitute the planning units of government action, aiming at promoting the state's sustainable development, reducing inequalities, and improving the quality of life of the Piauí population through the democratization of programs, actions, and budget regionalization.

In April 2018, the UNDP Project Office was inaugurated in the state, within the scope of the State Planning Secretariat (SEPLAN). The office aims to support local representatives of governments, the private sector, and civil society in developing actions and partnerships.

In the face of this challenge, SEPLAN coordinated the elaboration of the PIAUÍ 2030 PLAN, conducting consultations with government agencies, representative organizations of the business sector, municipal managers, and civil society organizations in the Development Territories in order to build a development strategy for the state participatively. The PIAUÍ 2030 PLAN comprises four primary axes for the development of the State of Piauí until 2030: Environment and Climate Change, Work, Employment and Income; Infrastructure, and Reduction of Inequalities.

These axes are further developed into priority programs and projects for the State of Piauí to achieve levels of development that represent a better quality of life for all Piauí residents. The axes also include a set of Impact and Result indicators to monitor the progress of their programs, allowing society more excellent/better governance over the evaluation of implemented actions.

The PIAUÍ 2030 PLAN innovates by bringing a more transparent and more objective VISION OF THE FUTURE that will guide the next two cycles of the Multi-Year Plan - PPA, to achieve A HIGH HDI (0.800) BY 2030. It is also the first presented by a Federative Unit (UF) which is aligned with goals established at the global level based on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Regarding the methodological procedures adopted for elaborating the plan, they lie in the holistic nature that permeates the proposal of sustainable development. In this sense, adopting a systemic approach to phenomena is the starting point for designing development proposals, as there are interdependencies among the various subsystems that make up society. An interdisciplinary effort was necessary to appreciate them, as a systemic analysis requires understanding the interdependencies between the various systems (Pedrozo & Silva, 2000), encompassing social relations and the ecosystem, with strategic solutions to the identified problems.

A practical way to understand this debate in the context of the SDGs is to understand that the achievement of a specific goal becomes effective when other

goals are also pursued; that is, it is the set of the 17 SDGs in an integrated reading that brings the possibility of economic growth, well-being generation, and environmental conservation. However, this does not mean that achieving the goals established in the SDGs represents only gains for development.

To meet the systemic nature of a planning proposal based on the SDGs, several techniques were used and are, described in the following lines. They culminated in the design of action proposals that respond to both the state's potential and the problems encountered. In addition, the team of consultants responsible for the elaboration was interdisciplinary.

The first technique used was document analysis, based on projects and reports provided by the SEPLAN team. This research was necessary in defining the conceptual-methodological design adopted for elaborating the Plan. These documents represent the background of state planning, namely: the Integrated Development Action Plan for the Parnaíba Basin (Planap) of 2005; the Economic and Sustainable Development Plan of Piauí (PDES) of 2013; the Multi-Year Plan (PPA) of 2019; reports produced by UNDP in 2019 that show the location of the SDGs and a territorial analysis of selected indicators. In addition, the future vision and target set by the state for 2030 were considered, namely, Developed and Sustainable Piauí, with an increase in HDI to 0.80.

The Secretariat validated the conceptual-methodological definition, which was discussed with the Government Sectors. Both the document analysis and the consultation with government agencies allowed the definition of strategic vectors, sectors, and categories considered essential for the state's development:

1) Family farming: Piauí has over 80% of all agricultural establishments in the state dedicated to family production, and there are several diversified possibilities for increasing activity, as indicated in the territorial potential map produced by SEPLAN. Support for family production is essential for promoting food security in the state, and the strategic actions also contribute to reducing inequality and promoting gender equity by valuing the activities carried out by female farmers within the establishments.

2) Agribusiness: Piauí is part of the grain production expansion region in the country, Matopiba, which has been setting records in corn and soybean production along with other areas. Increasingly, international market rules guide production towards sustainable bases, requiring adaptation. Respect for the environment and labor legislation is crucial for Brazilian agribusiness's international competitiveness.

3) Energy: The state has been emerging as a significant producer of clean energy, wind and solar, and this can be a sector that brings innovation and qualified jobs to the Piauí population. However, access to energy is not universalized in the state, and there are high service interruptions that hinder both the economic sector and domestic consumption.

4) Mining: Many regions of the state have the potential for mineral exploration, but these areas can generate conflicts with existing communities. Planning this production is essential to ensure that the generation of inequalities is not

greater than the benefits that its exploitation can bring. Once again, promoting land use regulation becomes imperative to organize the state in the various activities that can be developed.

5) Tourism: Piauí has tourism potential throughout its territory. The landscape, religion, history, science, and historical and cultural heritage are some attractions that can be economically exploited throughout the state. Combining environmental and heritage preservation with valorizing regional potential, such as cuisine, is a possible combination for job creation and the preservation of the natural environment.

6) Services: The service sector and commerce have been growing significantly in the state in recent decades. Increasing the possibility of qualified jobs in this sector contributes to increasing the population's income.

These vectors represent significant potential for accelerating the achievement of the SDGs in Piauí. After the document analysis that resulted in the conceptual-methodological proposal of the Plan, the team of consultants surveyed secondary data. Indicators aligned with the SDGs for the state and, when possible, for the municipalities of Piauí were researched based on reports previously produced by UNDP. The analysis of municipal data was essential to understand the heterogeneity presents in the state.

To further understand the reality of Piauí, interviews were conducted with state managers and in the Development Territories. This stage was important to qualify the previously obtained data and represents a qualitative analysis procedure. The document analysis and the reading of secondary data indicated that the state has a series of actions focused on development. However, the positive evolution of indicators stagnated or declined after 2014. This reality led the team of consultants to question the reasons contributing to the halt of the positive effects of development strategies.

As a result of the interviews, complemented by visits to projects and entities considered strategic for sustainable development, some structural barriers were identified. As such because they permeate all initiatives aimed at development, and without/by addressing them properly, the state will hardly achieve the desired development on sustainable bases, as the barriers undermine the effectiveness of ongoing actions. They are often historical problems that require the joint mobilization of government agencies and civil society in search of innovative and long-term solutions. The following barriers were identified: quality of electricity, access to water, regulation of land use and occupation, densification of productive chains, socioeconomic inequalities, and lack of tools for managing and monitoring actions. In the methodology proposed by UNDP, these are considered the bottlenecks for accelerating the SDGs.

It is also important to highlight that The Piauí 2030 Plan is an initiative of the government of the state of Piauí aimed at establishing guidelines and goals for the sustainable development of the state by the year 2030. The plan seeks to promote economic growth, social inclusion, environmental preservation, and an improvement in the quality of life for the people of Piauí.

One of the main characteristics of the Piauí 2030 Plan is its participatory approach, which involves the participation of various sectors of society in the development and implementation of proposed actions. The state government seeks to listen to the demands and suggestions of the population, as well as representatives of civil society organizations, entrepreneurs, academics, and other actors involved in the state's development.

The plan establishes five strategic axes that guide the actions to be developed: sustainable economic development, social inclusion, and the reduction of inequalities, infrastructure and logistics, education and innovation, and efficient public management. Each axis has specific goals and strategic actions to achieve them.

For example, in the sustainable economic development axis, the plan seeks to promote the diversification of the Piauí economy by stimulating sectors such as agribusiness, tourism, renewable energy, and technology. In the social inclusion and reduction of inequalities axis, the plan aims to improve education, promote productive and social inclusion of vulnerable groups.

Regarding infrastructure and logistics, the plan aims to improve the road network, expand the supply of electricity and water, and strengthen transportation logistics in the state. In the education and innovation axis, actions are proposed to improve the quality of education, promote professional training, and stimulate research and technological innovation.

Finally, the efficient public management axis seeks to promote modernization and transparency in public administration, strengthen control and oversight mechanisms, and promote social participation in decision-making.

The Piauí 2030 Plan represents an important planning and management tool for the development of the state. By establishing clear goals and guidelines and involving society in its development, the plan seeks to ensure a more prosperous and sustainable future for Piauí, promoting the well-being and quality of life of its population.

The perspective of developing a strategic plan carries the need for a definition that guides the actions to be planned.

4. Conclusion

Establishing a vision for the future, a milestone to be achieved, represents the first step in guiding activities to be carried out, ensuring that all sectors of government and society share this ideal.

In the case of Piauí, the state government, through SEPLAN, has been working in recent years to define this vision. The first movement in this direction occurred in 2013 during the elaboration of the Economic and Sustainable Development Plan of Piauí 2050 (PNUD, 2023).

At that time, a seminar was held in which a diagnosis containing secondary data, perspectives for human development, recent trends, and the productive potential present in the state were presented. Based on this portrait, the future vision for the state and the prioritization of strategic segments were established.

It was defined in 2013 that the “Piauí we want,” with a horizon of 2050, is “developed with economic, political, cultural, environmental, social sustainability, and better structured in all aspects” (PNUD, 2023: p. 8).

In 2019, a new diagnosis was elaborated and discussed with state managers to develop a long-term strategy to guide government actions, defining a future vision for 2030 as a “developed and sustainable Piauí,” whose primary goal is to raise the state’s HDI above 0.80 (PNUD, 2023).

The Piauí 2030 Plan represents another step in this long process, seeking to innovate in the possibilities offered for state planning without disregarding all the effort made so far. Now, the SDGs are incorporated as an essential theme that will contribute to state strategies, viewing itself as developed and sustainable by 2030 through increasing the HDI-M in all municipalities.

Without prejudicing all the actions previously designed, including the PPA already aligned with the SDGs, the plan presented a proposal for planning under the structure of four axes: Environment and Climate Change, Work, Employment and Income, Infrastructure, Reduction of Inequalities. These axes consider the future vision and goals established in the state.

In light of this fact, can the state be considered a subnational paradiplomatic entity? The paradiplomatic phenomenon recognizes that cities, regions, provinces, like the state of Piauí, can adopt international actions with different meanings, such as economic, cultural, or positioning the region as a model for public policies for other countries. In this regard, by signing a technical cooperation agreement and negotiating with UNDP, the state of Piauí has adopted an action with international repercussions, an action materialized with the implementation of the Piauí 2030 Plan. It is open to dialogue, to share the challenges, failures, and successes in implementing public policies. More importantly, international investments are expected to bring improvements to the local, regional, national, and global population, contributing to sustainable development.

In conclusion, the state government of Piauí has made significant strides in developing a clear and comprehensive vision for the future, with a focus on achieving sustainable development in all aspects by 2050. The Piauí 2030 Plan, which builds on previous efforts and incorporates the SDGs as an essential theme, represents an ambitious strategy for government actions, with the goal of raising the state’s HDI above 0.80 by 2030 while addressing key areas such as environment and climate change, work, employment and income, infrastructure, and reduction of inequalities.

However, the implementation of such a plan presents various challenges, including financial support difficulties and the need for transparency and integrity in public policies. To enforce the hypothesis underlying these challenges, it is recommended that the state government takes strategic measures to address them, such as improving transparency and accountability mechanisms, establishing ethical codes of conduct, and promoting digital ruptures to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of public policies.

It is also important to highlight that the difficulty of the central government in

supporting subnational governments in paradiplomacy is a common challenge faced in many countries. Paradiplomacy refers to diplomatic activities carried out by subnational entities, such as states, provinces, or municipalities, that seek to establish international relations independent of the central government. One of the main reasons for this difficulty is the central government's concern to maintain the unity and cohesion of the country in the international arena. The central government is usually responsible for conducting foreign policy and representing the country in international relations. Therefore, there may be reluctance to allow subnational governments to act independently and establish their international relations.

Additionally, the central government may fear that the paradiplomacy of subnational governments could harm national interests or create conflicts with other countries. Coordination and coherence in international relations are considered fundamental to the effectiveness of a country's foreign policy, and the independent actions of subnational governments can hinder this coordination.

Another challenge is subnational governments' lack of resources and capabilities to conduct paradiplomacy effectively. Often, these entities do not have the financial, human, and technical resources to establish and maintain international relations effectively. This can limit their ability to seek international cooperation opportunities and promote their global interests.

However, it is essential to recognize that paradiplomacy can bring significant benefits to subnational governments and the country as a whole. Through paradiplomacy, subnational governments can promote economic development, attract foreign investments, establish international partnerships, and promote local culture and tourism. These activities can contribute to the growth and prosperity of subnational regions and strengthen the country's image and influence in the international arena.

To overcome these difficulties, closer dialogue and cooperation between the central and subnational governments are necessary. The central government can establish clear guidelines and provide institutional and financial support to empower subnational governments in conducting paradiplomacy. It is also important to promote coordination and information exchange between the central and subnational governments to ensure coherence and complementarity in the country's international actions. In summary, the difficulty of the central government in supporting subnational governments in paradiplomacy is a complex but surmountable challenge. With a collaborative approach and a strategic vision, it is possible to find solutions that allow subnational governments to effectively operate in the international arena, contributing to the development and projection of the country as a whole.

Additionally, it is suggested that the state government establishes partnerships with international organizations to attract international investments, promote cultural exchange, and benefit both local and global populations, while contributing to sustainable development. By taking these measures, the state government of Piauí can effectively implement the Piauí 2030 Plan, achieving its ambi-

tious goals and contributing to the region's sustainable development.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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