

Environmental Issue: peripheral dimension in a tourism policy?

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Abstract

In the twentieth century, tourism was the object of attention in public policies of central governments in different countries. In the 21st century, due to the decentralization process, tourism has also become a sector of interest for subnational governments in favor of local and regional development. This article aims to analyze the environmental issue in the tourism policy planned by a subnational government in a federated state. For this, the documentary method was applied, whose collected data were compared in light of specialized literature. As a result, the priorities and issues considered important by government in a tourism policy were identified based on an analytical framework of 15 types of objectives and 22 forms of governmental action. In the analyzed situation, it was observed that the environmental issue is not something central in the current policy, which can cause concern for the sustainability of tourism beyond the economic dimension. Finally, the analytical framework employed makes it possible to understand the intentionality and comprehensiveness of a tourism policy.

Keywords: Touristic development, federalism, public management, São Paulo, Brazil.

Resumo

Questão ambiental: dimensão periférica em política pública de turismo?

No século XX, o turismo foi objeto de atenção em políticas públicas de governos centrais de diferentes países. No século XXI, devido ao processo de descentralização, o turismo passou a ser também um setor de interesse de governos subnacionais em prol do desenvolvimento local e regional. O objetivo deste artigo é analisar a questão ambiental na política pública de turismo planejada por um governo subnacional em um estado federativo. Para tanto, foram aplicados o método documental cujos dados coletados foram cotejados a luz da literatura especializada. Como resultados, identificou-se as prioridades e as questões consideradas importantes por um governo em uma política pública de turismo a partir de um esquema analítico de 15 tipos de objetivos e 22 formas de atuação governamental. Na situação analisada, observou-se que a questão ambiental não é algo

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central na política vigente, o que pode tornar preocupante a sustentabilidade do turismo para além da dimensão econômica. Por fim, o esquema analítico empregado possibilita compreender a intencionalidade e a abrangência de uma política pública de turismo.

Palavras-chave: desenvolvimento turístico, federalismo, gestão pública, São Paulo, Brasil.

Resumen

Cuestión ambiental: ¿dimensión periférica en política pública de turismo?

En el siglo XX, el turismo fue objeto de atención en políticas públicas de gobiernos centrales de diferentes países. En el siglo XXI, debido al proceso de descentralización, el turismo pasó a ser también un sector de interés de gobiernos subnacionales a favor del desarrollo local y regional. El objetivo de este artículo es analizar la cuestión ambiental en la política pública de turismo planeada por un gobierno subnacional en un Estado federativo. Para eso, fue aplicado el método documental cuyos datos colectados fueron cotejados a la luz de la literatura especializada. Como resultados, se identificó las prioridades y las cuestiones consideradas importantes por un gobierno en una política pública de turismo a partir de un esquema analítico de 15 tipos de objetivos y de 22 formas de actuación gubernamental. En la situación analizada, se observó que la cuestión ambiental no es algo central en la política vigente, lo que puede volver preocupante la sustentabilidad del turismo más allá de la dimensión económica. Por fin, el esquema analítico aplicado possibilita comprender la intencionalidad y la amplitud de una política pública de turismo.

Palabras clave: Desarrollo turístico, federalismo, gestión pública, São Paulo, Brasil.

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades tourism has excelled as a productive activity and has gradually become object of interest in various countries around the world. Tourism activities can bring many benefits (and risks) from the economic growth that can be observed in certain countries based on studies by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2003).

Dwyer and Spurr (2012) mention that governments are increasingly attentive to the opportunities for income generation and job growth as a result of tourism, which helps to understand the state efforts to propagate the image of destinations, in wide and reduced circles, in geographical and political, public and private terms, and that would encourage the socioeconomic development in continents, countries, regions and municipalities (JAFARI, 1994).

Beni (2003), Bezerra (2003) and Guedes (2003) share the concept of tourism as an activity of multiple services with intersectoral scope and ability to be flexible to changes and demands of humanity, both in time and in space. However, Ruschmann (2010) and Oliveira, Minasse and Marques (2016) mention that due to its often unplanned and unmonitored growth, tourism can negatively impact localities, leading to the need to think about it, not only as a activity that promotes economic growth, but also as a multidimensional development activity.

In this sense, the environmental impacts of tourism are not only bound to their execution, but also to their implementation with regard to their infrastructure, the local population and the culture of tourists that visit the destinations (Feitosa & Gómez, 2013). To the authors, if not well planned, the elements that make up the

tourist infrastructure, such as transport services, hospitality, food and even water and energy supply services, may contribute to cause environmental impacts.

Tourism has a considerable dependence on the natural environment for its development (Feitosa & Gómez, 2013) and that is why it is necessary to develop tourism in a sustainable manner by formulating policies that contemplate the multiplicity of forces that interfere in tourist activity (Goldner *et al.*, 2002), especially regarding environmental issues.

However, for tourism to happen in a sustainable manner, all parties involved in the planning process must commit to the principles of sustainable development in order to achieve the integration of social, environmental and economic objectives of tourism in the long term (Hall, 2000).

From this, it is observed that the natural, cultural and social assets of the localities, material and immaterial, are increasingly becoming object of value and collective interest to be included in the planning of touristic actions. And this requires closer and more efficient action of the state through governments in the planning of tourist activities, since the localities and their residents are mainly affected by success and damages of tourism practice. But, how does this occur in federal or federative countries? Is the environmental issue a priority objective in tourism policies?

Those concerns bring out the debate on federalism and the action of governments in relation to tourism as a development instrument. In the world, according to the Forum of Federations (2016) there are 26 countries that adopt federalism as an internal political system. According to Young (2015), this system serves as a guideline for governments (national and subnational) to exercise their powers over society, through the congregation of the diversity of smaller territorial units within a larger territory, with internationally recognized sovereignty for reaching the common good through public policies.

The discussion about federalism in the context of public policies of tourism and touristic development can assist in the understanding of elements that the public administrators (in countries organized as a federation) deal and prioritize in their choices of development policies, both in the central and federal government, as in other state and/or local ones, in their respective subnational governments.

When we consider the federalism and public policy studies on tourism, it is possible to observe the role and choices of subnational governments, in order to understand the priorities and the range, as well as the topics of interest about tourism as an instrument of territorial development (Alvarez & Cooper, 2014; Airey, 2015). These studies enable to bring new knowledge and insights into public policies and administration of tourism in regional and municipal levels, shifting the axis of the center of attention from national governments' policies to subnational governments' in a singular manner or in comparative perspective.

In this regard, the principle of autonomy, highlighted by Rua and Romanini (2013), endow subnational units of a country- that is, the states of a Federal Republic - with autonomy needed to make decisions and solve certain problems, such as generation of values and impacts from tourism practices. Thus, public policies can be examples of actions of federal entities that enable social, cultural and economic development of certain localities, giving them the opportunity to

develop their touristic potentials in an orderly manner, in addition to access to employment and income generation to the population. In this sense, **how is the environmental issue presented in the objectives and forms of subnational government action in favor of tourism development?**

A similar question served as a guide to the study by Scott (2011) who, when analyzing public policies in many countries, has identified different objectives and forms of government action. However, the study by Scott (2011) focused on national tourism policies, without considering the subnational governments and the centrality of environmental issues in public policies, the object of interest in this article.

The guiding question of this article is important because knowing the objectives, priorities and scope of governmental actions contemplated in a tourism policy allows to understand how this sectoral activity - in relation to the environmental issue - can enable local and regional development, as well as strengthen and expand the studies of tourism policies in a multidisciplinary approach. This enables to minimize the still latent insipience in the studies and analyses on “public policies in specialized tourism journals in Brazil” (Lopes, Tinôco, Souza, 2011, p. 628), seeking affinity with the analysis of public policies (plans, programs and projects) of the tourism sector at various levels of action - federal, state and municipal levels.

IMPACTS OF TOURISM AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE IN PUBLIC POLICIES

Tourism is an activity of great socioeconomic impact that considerably affects the dynamics of society and organizations, causing governments to create legal rules to minimize risks in these transactions. However, these regulatory instruments produce many distributional effects, including environmental ones, unevenly allocating the costs and benefits among segments and organizations that operate in the sector, making possible the understanding of tensions and limits for the action of the established government.

The multidisciplinary nature of tourism is important “to formulate policies that deal with or address these multiple forces; those involved should consider the complexities of each discipline and their interactions in a given situation” (Goeldner *et al.*, 2002, p.298). The multiple impacts of tourism activities on society, through three types of effects – direct, indirect and induced-, show that the tourism policies must be sensible. Therefore, interdisciplinarity appears as another requirement of public policies, essential element to treat environmental issues in the tourism development perspective.

Taking into consideration that the specialized literature on tourism values the importance of the sustainable development of this activity, it must not be forgotten that the concept of sustainability has an economic dimension alongside its social and environmental dimensions (Dwyer & Spurr, 2012). This type of application to the study of tourism is related to the fact that:

in order to reduce poverty, improve equality and generate jobs, economic growth must be inclusive, aimed at sustainable development to protect present resources for future generations, and tourist activity has shown to have potential for that in some regions. UNWTO plays an important role as a diffuser of this approach because it fosters programs and projects in order to introduce studies and practices devoted to sustainable tourism in some underdeveloped regions (Knupp, 2015, p. 34)

The sustainability requirement in tourism means that policies in this sector need to ensure that present consumer relationships do not affect future consumer possibilities. At the heart of this concept is the environmental issue that has become the center of many discussions in a world marked by the incessant search for development, and the tourism phenomenon, treated as an activity that can bring development to various regions, also enters on the agenda of this discussion.

The 1970s was a time of several significant meetings among experts for the discussion of the environmental issue. The concern with the environment created conferences that made history and redrew a profile within the global community: people who care about and discuss about the environment preservation. In this way, there is the mergence of the concept of sustainable development that comes as opposed to disordered growth of the world's population.

In this context, two events delimited currents in 1972 – the Club of Rome and the Stockholm Conference. The difference is that the work of the Club of Rome follows the idea of freezing the global population and industrial capital growth, where the limits of resources for the amount of people were shown, whereas the Stockholm Conference has an environmental critique regarding the contemporary way of life, presenting an educational approach to the environment; but the two have demonstrated a common purpose that is the need to combine the quality of life of the population and the environmental preservation.

Other events considered important are the International Conference and the publication of the Brundtland Report, both in 1987. The former was also promoted by UNESCO and UNEP, that focuses on environmental education, reviewing advances and proposing future strategies in the international level. The report was prepared by the United Nations Commission on Environment and Development (UNCED), created by the United Nations, which advocates sustainable development and the importance of environmental education is once again highlighted.

Later, in 1992, the Treaty on environmental education for sustainable societies and Global responsibility took place at Rio 92, where principles and an action plan were exposed for environmental educators, establishing a relationship between public policies of environmental education and the sustainability that has been used as a reference to political actions and theoretical studies (Lima, 1999; Jacobi, 2003), including in the tourism field.

According to Torres-Delgado and Palomeque (2014), the relationship between tourism and sustainability has always existed, but it was only recognized later when the paradigm of sustainable tourism was defined by official institutions, on the focus of environmental dimension. In this sense, the concept of sustainable tourism appeared in close connection with the notion of sustainable

development, thus, it approached new needs of the tourism sector in a changing socio-economic context, by calling attention to a new model (Torres-Delgado & Palomeque, 2014).

For tourism to happen in a sustainable manner, all parties involved in the planning process must commit to the principles of sustainable development in order to achieve the integration of social, environmental and economic - as well as political and cultural - objectives of tourism in the long term (Hall, 2000).

However, we should draw attention, “although it is recognized that the principles for sustainable tourism are, in fact, an appropriate starting point, the vague nature of guidelines does little to encourage the enthusiasm or understanding of the development of sustainable tourism” (Berry & Lakedin, 1997, p.435).

We can consider sustainability as a significant element in touristic performance measurement, that is, as one of the existing parameters of analysis and the consequent improvement of tourist activity, which also passes by the need to incorporate such innovations in the formulation and implementation of tourism policies. Therefore, tourism is a field that is directly related to environmental issues, since the understanding we currently have is that we must work the tourist activity on the molds of sustainable tourism; that is, not as a segment of tourism, but as a general line of development of all activities.

TOURISM POLICIES AND FOR TOURISTIC DEVELOPMENT

In a Federal Republic such as Brazil, its political-administrative organization has three federal entities: the Union, the states and the municipalities. In this system, all three entities are endowed with autonomy, constituting a complete political system. When addressing this issue, Rua and Romanini (2013) highlight two major principles that integrate this form of state: the principles of autonomy and of participation. By emphasizing the principle of autonomy we can see that, according to the authors, it is presented through a trine capacity of member states to:

- self-organize: With regard to the exercise of their constituent power and their right to elaborate their state constitutions, always respecting the Federal Constitution;
- self-govern: linked to the election of their state representatives through direct voting;
- self-administer: related to the determination of administrative, legislative and tax activities.

From this, we verify that the subnational units of Federal States are autonomous and complete political systems, that is, they have three powers: executive, legislative and judicial branches, which allow them the decision-making and resolution of problems existing within their proper public territories, these actions being through public policies.

In this sense, public policy may be “[...] a guideline crafted to address [this problem, which] should have implications for a notable quantity or quality of people” (Secchi, 2013, p. 10). In the face of this, we observe that public policy is one of the ways of the state to solve or at least mitigate issues that reach a large number of people.

Secchi (2013) also contributes stating that a public policy life cycle can be summed up in seven phases, although many policies do not follow the order of the phases or not even complete them. This happens because the public policies cycle infrequently reflect real life, activity and dynamics of a public policy. The seven phases of the life cycle of public policies are: 1. Problem identification; 2. Agenda formation; 3. Formulation of alternatives; 4. Decision-making; 5. Implementation; 6. Assessment; 7. Extinction.

Public policies in Brazil have been organized and prepared in a decentralized manner, in which their actions and obligations differ between the three federal entities, resulting in the possibility of states formulating their own public policies in order to benefit and develop regions that need the most or have the greatest potential (Henz& Anjos, 2014).

That is because in countries of great territorial extension there is greater complexity to perform the national territory management, especially in the context of tourism (Solha, 2004). For this author, intermediate administrative structures are created for purposes of implementation and monitoring of actions and policies, since they are closest to the day-to-day life of sectors that will suffer the interventions. Heinz and Anjos (2014) corroborate this argument by affirming that with decentralization, administrative roles end up being distributed among the levels of government, forwarding the transference of resources and delegation of functions to the states and municipalities, and thus increasing their degree of autonomy against the Federation itself.

Within the tourism field and based on the national tourism policy, expressed in Law No. 11,771/2008, Pimentel and Vidal (2017) claim that Brazil, through its federal government, intends to stimulate the tourism planning in the country by means of exercising power through states and municipalities, thus stimulating the links between them.

Tourism policies are a way to promote local and regional development and can be treated, in line with Carvalho (2000), as a set of decisions on the allocation of values that are joined and legally supported in programs, projects, plans and other actions of the state in its three federal entities: Union, states and municipalities, as regards tourism. For Henz and Anjos (2014, p. 14), the tourism policies are aimed at:

the planning and control of the activity in order to totally reuse tourism resources, managed in such a way as to attract as many visitors as possible, benefitting both the agents and middlemen, as tourists and residents, seeking balance and sustainability above all.

Since the majority of tourism policies, are created to promote tourism in the regions that have potential or established tourist activities, the policies enable these regions to develop tourism and boost their activities, as well as increase the quality of life of the people who depend on such activities with regard to employment and income generation (Emmendoerfer, Tomazzoni, Pimentel, 2014).

Scott (2011) sought to identify the main objectives of tourism policies and the action of governments in various parts of the world. Through his study, the author could identify 15 objectives and 22 actions, as displayed in table 1:

Table 1 – Tourism policy objectives and forms of government action

Tourism Policy Objectives	Forms of Government Action
1. Economic Development	1. Research and dissemination of information on future market trends
	2. Strengthening of the destination image
	3. To ensure effective access to the market and provide consultancy and support to business
2. Competitiveness	4. Mandatory Quality and Classification Systems could become volunteers and be placed in the hands of the private or third sector
3. Local Prosperity	5. Creation of jobs in tourism
	6. Contribution to the infrastructure development
4. Employment Quality	7. To strengthen the activities that ensure full-time jobs throughout the year to encourage the training and career development opportunities
5. Social Equity	8. To channel expenditures and income for the disadvantaged and the poor
	9. To help the poor to participate in the tourist offer and to support the establishment of enterprises in poor communities
	10. Stimulus to social tourism
6. Visitor fulfillment	11. To provide people - including the national population - a quality, educational and playful travel experience;
	12. To promote tourism as an end in itself, that is, a future right available of tourism in its area by consulting other interested parties
7. Local control	13. To ensure good information and empowerment to make decisions on the development of tourism that may affect its future
8. Community wellbeing	14. To perform a careful planning to ensure that the local community does not suffer from the tourism, such as through traffic congestion, noise, disrespectful behavior, and competition for vital resources like water
9. Cultural richness	15. To support the conservation of culture; the world heritage sites and historic traditions, controlling the development of tourism and visitor behavior to ensure that the cultural richness and authenticity are not lost
10. Physical integrity	16. Implementation and design of new structures of all kinds
	17. Good maintenance of open spaces and waste reduction

(continues...)

Table 1 – Continuation

Tourism Policy Objectives	Forms of Government Action
11. Biological Diversity	18. Management for conservation and maintenance of tourism as an income generator activity for conservation
12. Resource efficiency	19. To encourage forms of tourism and management systems that are efficient, promoting alternative sources and encouraging the reduction, reuse and recycling
13. Environmental purity	20. Promotion of less polluting forms of transport and minimizing and controlling sewage discharges into sensitive environments
14. Sustainability	21. Direct or indirect investments in the development of tourism and environmental management strategies
15. International policy of goodwill and peace	22. Search and culture of peace

Source – Adapted from Scott (2011)

It is possible to identify that among the 15 objectives identified by Scott (2011), three of them are: resource efficiency, environmental purity and sustainability, demonstrating that tourism policies can also have objectives aimed at the environmental issue. For Henz and Anjos (2014) tourism policies need to create criteria that cover social and environmental issues, becoming advocates of tourist localities and mediating their interests and needs.

In this line, theorists have recently focused their studies to the concept of sustainability, following the global trend, including definitions of sustainable tourism development which are directed to a more holistic vision of reality that values environmental issues (Tulik, 2003, Beni, 1999, Hall, 2004; Barretto, 2005; Ruschmann, 2010). However, considering the multidimensionality of the concept of development, it is also important to consider the formulation of public policies that prioritize sustainable development where it creates criteria aimed at social and environmental issues (Henz & Anjos, 2014).

According to Bezerra (2003, p. 53) sustainable development is “a process that allows development without degrading or depleting the resources that make development possible.” In this way, tourism development with sustainability considers the benefits for hosts and visitors while protecting and improving the resources available for the future. Ruschmann (2010) states that the installation and use of equipment and services for the mass tourism provoke numerous negative effects on the environment. Such impacts are linked to numerous modifications, or to the sequence of events from the touristic development process in the receiver localities.

From this, we can consider that the tourist development with sustainability would be “the one that meets the needs of present tourists, without compromising the possibility of resources use by future generations” (Bezerra, 2003, p. 53). According to Oliveira, Minasse and Marques (2016), this form of tourism development can be

seen as an opportunity to promote the socioeconomic development of the localities, as well as the environment preservation and the social inclusion.

In this sense, one of the objectives pursued in the public policies of contemporary tourism is precisely sustainability, defined by the UNWTO (2003) in the following terms:

Sustainable tourism development meets the needs of today's tourists and of receiving regions, while protecting and expanding opportunities for the future. It is seen as a driver of management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled, without disregarding the maintenance of cultural integrity, of essential ecological processes, and of diversity and biological systems that guarantee the life (UNWTO, 2003, p. 24)

Still, the General Law of Tourism of Brazil (Art. 4 Sole paragraph of Law No. 11,771/08, September 17, 2008) establishes as a principle for the National Policy on Tourism that:

The National Policy on Tourism shall obey the constitutional principles of free enterprise, of decentralization, of regionalization and of sustainable and fair socioeconomic development.

In this regard, the National Tourism Plan (2013-2016), the main reference instrument for tourism policy in Brazil, has within its guidelines a perspective of "a sustainable, environmentally balanced and socially inclusive economic development and offers the opportunity and the challenge to the execution of actions capable of balancing protection of the environment to its economically sustainable use"(Ministry of Tourism, 2013, p. 52), which aims at the respect for regional customs, social inclusion and distribution of wealth. And one of its actions is "to stimulate the sustainable development of tourism activities" (Ministry of Tourism, 2013, p. 98).

The understanding of tourism development in this article is related to tourist destinations. Thus, the concept adopted for tourist destination is a location, usually a town, where visitors overnight and find conditions for staying and experiencing the cuisine, as well as doing one-day recreational activities. Tourist destinations have physical and administrative limits that define their management, images and perceptions that determine their market competitiveness (UNWTO, 2005). According to this view, a tourist destination is a territory (country, region, state, city) that receives tourists (Hall, 2004), and where these people are seen and understood as a tourism product (Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert, Wanhill, 2007; Wallingre, 2009).

Thus, it is necessary to plan tourism in a way that respects the established culture and the environment of the locality that holds the tourist activity, as well as to provide for the use of a proper and correct way of the natural and social environment of the localities. In addition, the tourist attraction must be thought out and planned by observing environmental aspects in their entirety, extrapolating this review to its surroundings, aiming to maximize the marketing potential of

these actions of the place, and ensuring the economic viability of the enterprise (Oliveira; Minasse; Marques, 2016).

In this way, we can consider the environmental issue in the midst of discussions on sustainability as a significant element for understanding the tourist performance measurement - that is, as one of the existing parameters of analysis - and the consequent improvement of tourist activity, which also includes the need to incorporate such innovations in the formulation and implementation of tourism policies.

For the purposes of this study, it was observed that the environmental issue has been currently mentioned in public policy objectives and in actions of national (such as Brazil) and supranational governments, as UNWTO. Therefore, the environmental issue is considered an important aspect because it can compromise the own continuity in the development of tourism in the destinations. However, how are this and other issues being empirically addressed in tourism policies in subnational governments?

METHODS

For the empirical study, we opted for a qualitative approach through the documentary method in order to analyze tourism policies of a subnational government. The collection and analysis of data were carried out based on Scott's works (2011), which present an analytical scheme with 15 objectives of tourism policies and 22 forms of government action on the tourist sector. This analytical scheme was applied in the stage/phase of decision-making of the public policy cycle, a moment in which, according to Secchi (2013), is possible to verify in the regulatory frameworks that direct the governments the objectives and planned actions to deal with a problem or with the public sector, in this case, tourism.

Consequently, the state of São Paulo in Brazil (Figure 1) was the tourist destination chosen to be the empirical locus of this study. The São Paulo State created a state public policy through the public administration of its subnational government (in the last 5 years) to guide the focusing and the decentralization of resources to the local and regional tourism development, which includes innovations both in the definition of municipalities as being of "touristic interest" or as "resort town", and the conditions for the maintenance of this situation over time (Araújo, 2016, p. 66). This country was chosen because it is a *sui generis* case in the world because it is currently the only federal country with a trine organization of government entities (Union - federal government; States - state governments; and municipalities - municipal governments). Although there are studies on tourism policies in subnational governments in Brazil, with emphasis on studies about Minas Gerais (Emmendoerfer, Tomazzoni, Pimentel, 2014; Silva & Passador 2016), research on this object and with an emphasis on environmental issues in the state of São Paulo - which is considered the greatest Brazilian tourist destination - have not yet been published by the scientific community in specialized journals.

After defining the locus of studies, the documentary research began based in the laws of the state of São Paulo for tourism, specifically: Complementary law No. 1,261/2015 that establishes conditions for the classification of municipalities in Resort Town or Tourist Interest; Resolution ST-14/2016 that establishes guidelines

for the preparation of the municipal tourism master plan; and, the Bill 1,369/2015 which provides for the Fund of Improvement of Tourist Municipalities.

The documentary data were also extracted from internet websites, projects, technical reports, booklets and maps available online from state (Government of the state of São Paulo), national (Ministry of Tourism) and international organizations, such as the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). All documents used were listed in the references at the end of this study.

Thus, the collected data were collated based on the specialized literature expressed in section 2 of this paper. These data allowed to present the public policies in study in the subsequent sections, as well as their configuration in terms of objectives and forms of government action based on Table 1, which synthesized Scott's work (2011). It was also possible to identify and select the data presented in Table 2 in the results section, which reveal the objectives and forms of government actions in the state of São Paulo in terms of priorities and scope.

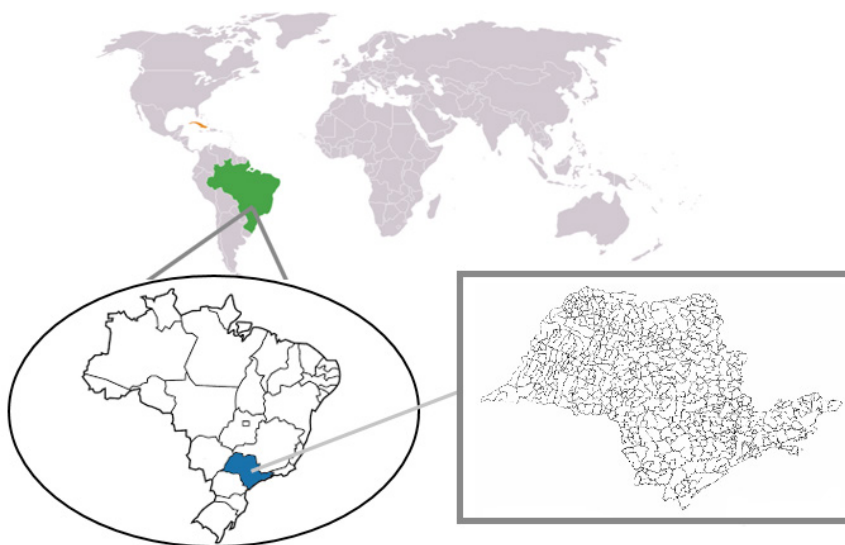
TOURISM AS AN OBJECT OF PUBLIC INTEREST IN THE STATE OF SÃO PAULO

The State of São Paulo is one of the 27 federative units of Brazil, located in the country's southeast, as shown in Figure 1, whose capital is a municipality with the same name.

The Yearbook of Tourism Statistics of Brazil indicated that the state of São Paulo is the largest state economy of the country, being the main gateway for foreign tourists, with the entrance of more than 2.2 million visitors in the past two years (Ministry of Tourism, 2016).

According to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 2016) in the state of São Paulo there are 645 municipalities, an estimated population of 44,396,484 people and an area of 248,222.362 km². Of these municipalities, 300 are classified as with potential for tourism, according to the State Government (2016).

Figure 1 – Map of the localization of São Paulo State, Brazil



Source – Prepared by us

Regarding tourism, there are 70 municipalities in the state of São Paulo classified as resort towns, divided into 15 tourist macroregions and subdivided into 34 regions. According to the Government of São Paulo, the state was divided in such a way in order to organize it "... from the point of view of geographical proximity and similarities between the tourism products" (São Paulo 2016).

The São Paulo State, according to Brocchi and Solha (2008), was one of the first Brazilian states to implement a tourism agency in its administrative structure. This happened in 1965 with the creation of the Secretariat of Tourism Business. Over the years, the Secretariat underwent several administrative reforms and is currently named Department of Tourism, through the Decree 56,635/2011 which addresses the changes of name and organization of the direct administration of the state of São Paulo. According to the authors, such constant and discontinuous changes of the tourism agencies reveal the low priority and frailty of the sector, which hindered the continuity of consistent and long-term projects (Brocchi & Solha, 2008).

During the 1980s, the state of São Paulo aimed its actions at social and leisure tourism. However, in 1990, the state government was concerned about the formation and training of professionals of the tourism sector, developing actions for them (Brocchi & Solha, 2008)

Currently, the government of the state of São Paulo has focused its efforts for investment and promotion of tourism in its territory. There are 7 programs and actions listed by the Department of Tourism of the state of São Paulo (2017) whose names and objectives are:

- *Melhor viagem*: it aims at facilitating trips of groups of senior citizens (people over 60) to tourist destinations in the state;
- *Roda São Paulo*: it seeks to offer a bus tour by tourist attractions of the state;
- *Turismo do Saber*: it aims at providing a new experience to children from public state schools, leading them to be in contact with different cultures and landscapes;
- *Caminha São Paulo*: it consists of contemplative routes that allow the tourist to walk or ride a bike in cities with natural and monumental tourist potential;
- *Festival Gastronômico Sabor de São Paulo*: it seeks to highlight the culinary creations of the São Paulo municipalities; and
- *Municípios de Interesse Turístico e Estâncias Turísticas*: it allocates resources to municipalities already awarded the title of resort town and to cities with tourist potential classified as of tourist interest.

It may be noted that the state of São Paulo has invested in tourism and also has great potential to generate a range of benefits for the tourist destinations and for the surrounding municipalities through their tourist attractions in several segments (business tourism, sun and beach tourism, adventure tourism, historical heritage, health, and others).

In order to further stimulate tourism activities inside the state limits, giving municipalities the opportunity to develop their tourist potential. The state

government created a Complementary Bill 32/2012, which later gave rise to Complementary Law No. 1,261, of April 29, 2015 - which aims to establish “conditions and requirements for the classification of Resort Towns and Municipalities of tourist interest [...]” (São Paulo, 2015).

In addition to establishing the minimum conditions for the classification of municipalities, the Complementary Law 1,261/2015 generates 140 new vacancies for the municipalities in the state to compete for the title of the cities of tourist interest and gives them the right to receive part of the money provided by the Fund for the Improvement of Touristic Municipalities, besides other benefits.

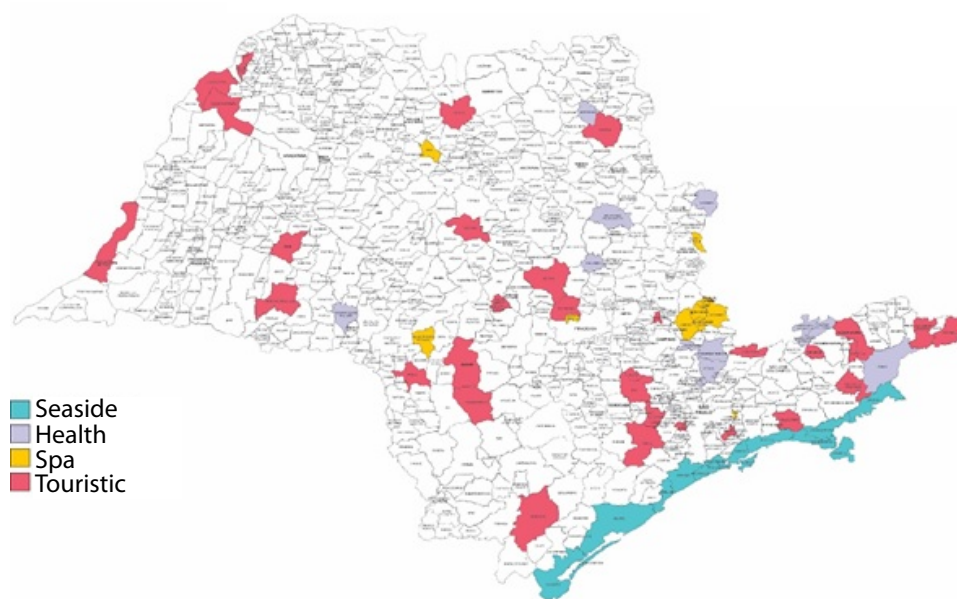
RESORT TOWNS AND MUNICIPALITIES OF TOURIST INTEREST IN THE STATE OF SÃO PAULO

Resort towns are consolidated destinations that have one or more tourist attractions and that, due to these attractions, maintain a permanent flow of visitors. Furthermore, the resort towns have infrastructure composed of tourist equipment and services that enable the easy access for tourists. Thus, they can be defined as:

Localities that benefit from natural, landscape, historical, artistic, or medical resources, among others, and that can bring a stream of tourists, characterized by a long stay in the locality (FINO, 2009, p. 48)

According to the Department of Tourism of the State of São Paulo, 70 municipalities are currently considered resort towns, as seen in Figure 2. It is from the definition of resort town that we can explore the title of municipality of touristic interest, created in 2015, as of the approval of Complementary Law 1,261/2015 in this subnational government in Brazil.

Figure 2 – Resort towns in the state of São Paulo



Source – São Paulo (2016)

Municipality of tourist interest is a title granted to 140 cities that, although not consolidated and developed as resort towns, have “significant tourist attractions of public use and permanent character, natural, cultural or artificial” (São Paulo, 2015) and have a basic infrastructure for tourism activities to happen.

In light of this, we understand that the classification of municipality of tourist interest, proposed by Law 1,261/2015, is an action of the Government of the state of São Paulo that provides opportunities for municipalities with tourism potential for them to develop this sector.

To compete for the title, Law 1,261/2015 defines that the cities of tourist interest, as well as resort towns, must have their tourist attractions fit in one or more of the 13 segments listed. In addition, to compete for the title, the municipality shall at least have a tourist potential, equipment and services such as food, tourist information, means of lodging in the region and basic infrastructure as water supply and solid waste collection. The municipality must also have an active Municipal Tourism Council and an updated tourism master plan, following the norms established by Resolution ST-14, of June 21, 2016.

From that, if framed in such criteria, the municipality represented by a deputy must have documents as the demand of the year preceding the year of application, inventory containing the equipment and tourist services available in the city, updated tourism master plan and the last six minutes of the Municipal Tourism Council - COMTUR.

RESULTS

When performing the comparison between the action of governments in various parts of the world and the actions of the government of the state of São Paulo, we can observe that from the 15 objectives identified by Scott (2011), only 8 were found; and that from the 22 performances described by the author, only 9 were identified in the government action, as seen in Table 2.

Table 2 - Objectives and actions identified in the action of the government of São Paulo

Tourism Policy Objectives	Action of Governments in various parts of the World	Government of the state of São Paulo
Economic Development	Strengthening of the destination image	Through the titles of Resort Town and Municipality of tourist interest recognized by the state
Competitiveness	Mandatory Quality and Classification Systems could become volunteers and be placed in the hands of the private or third sector	Establishment of a ranking every three years for state control, as provided for in the Complementary Law 1,261/2016.
Local Prosperity	Creation of jobs in tourism	Allocation of funds for the development of tourist potential and infrastructure of the cities of tourist interest, resulting in promotion of jobs.
	Contribution to the infrastructure development	

(continues...)

Table 2 – Continuação

Tourism Policy Objectives	Action of Governments in various parts of the World	Government of the state of São Paulo
Community wellbeing	To perform a careful planning to ensure that the local community does not suffer from the tourism, such as through traffic congestion, noise, disrespectful behavior, and competition for vital resources like water	Creation of a resolution (ST-14/2016) establishing conditions for the elaboration of the tourism master plan in the municipalities.
Cultural richness	To support the conservation of culture; the world heritage sites and historic traditions, controlling the development of tourism and visitor behavior to ensure that the cultural richness and authenticity are not lost	Identified in article 2, item 4 of resolution ST-14/2016, it establishes: "To consider the environmental, cultural, social and preservation aspects of tangible and intangible heritage and their sustainable interaction with the tourist activity".
Physical integrity	Good maintenance of open spaces and waste reduction	Establishment of a standard (complementary law 1,261/2015, chapters II and III) which causes the cities of tourist interest and resort towns to have at least one solid waste collection structure.
Resource efficiency	To encourage forms of tourism and management systems that are efficient, promoting alternative sources and encouraging the reduction, reuse and recycling	Identified in article 2, item IV of resolution ST-14, regarding "sustainable interaction with tourism activities".
Sustainability	Direct or indirect investments in the development of tourism and environmental management strategies	Identified in the Law 1,261/2015, in the investment proposal in the municipalities that fit the requirements.

Source – Original compilation based on research data

As regards the provision of research and dissemination of information on future market trends, no action has been identified by the Government of the State of São Paulo in the documents consulted for analysis. However, regarding the strengthening of the destination image, we identify an action of the Government of São Paulo, since it creates a public policy to encourage tourism and provides to the municipalities the opportunity to acquire the title of resort town or the title of municipality of tourist interest. Thus, from the conquest of the title, the municipalities can obtain greater recognition and greater government attention compared to other municipalities.

The item of guarantee to effective access in the market and provision of consulting services, in addition to support to businesses was also not found. It is assumed that the non-provision of a forecast and indication by the Government of the State can result in difficulty of public and private organizations at the local level to achieve a deeper and common knowledge and to interact with each other. This can result in the non-alignment of objectives expected of each municipality and in the difficulty of organization as a municipality of tourist interest or resort town.

Law 1,261/2015, section II, establishes that every three years the Executive branch must forward to the Legislative Council of the State of São Paulo a Revisional Bill of Tourist municipalities. The Revisional Bill will allow the creation of a ranking in which all three less punctuated resorts lose their title and will be considered the cities of tourist interest, while the three top-ranked cities of tourist interest will be classified as resort towns. It is worth mentioning that the resort towns that lose their titles cannot win them back. It is assumed that the establishment of the ranking provide a constant maintenance of tourist attractions by some municipalities, since a competitive environment is created in which the municipality classified last will lose its title and consequently its benefits.

Regarding the objective “quality of employment”, it was observed that although fomenting jobs to respond to the tourist market, this policy is not concerned with the professionalization of public organizations for the management of tourism policies.

As for the visitor’s service, in relation to providing tourists a quality travel experience, it was found that the resort towns already have an infrastructure able to provide that, as it is a feature required by law. However, there is a limitation in the cities of tourist interest, since this structure is not required for them by law 1,261/2015. This limitation is shown in real life at tourist information points, and virtually, by providing web sites and booklets of guidance to tourists, showing its main tourist attractions, maps, tips, among other information.

Although Complementary Law 1,261/2015 establishes a Municipal Tourism Council ensuring the municipalities the opportunity to decide on the development of tourism in their localities, we should note that in order to ensure a more significant empowerment of the residents is necessary to create more deliberative and accessible spaces and instruments of local control with training perspective of citizens concerned about the tourist development with sustainability. This aspect refers to the principle of participation, which is important for the integration of federalism (Rua; Romanini, 2013) where there are national subgovernments as the state of São Paulo that seeks to articulate plans and tourism actions between the state and the municipalities.

It is observed that the tourism policy of the government of São Paulo reveals the concern with the community well-being as it creates a resolution (ST-14/2016) establishing conditions for preparing the Master Plan of Tourism in the municipalities so that the local community does not suffer as a result of tourism activities. However, the plan alone does not guarantee this objective, making it necessary to request legal boundaries for the protection and monitoring of tourist flows and enterprises, so that the load capacity of the city is not exceeded, which generates occasional or constant individual or social problems.

Also in regard to this resolution, in article 2 of item IV, there is the consideration of environmental, cultural, and social aspects of preserving the heritage of the cities, however, there has been a limitation to indicate and clarify them. It does not deepen in the mechanisms of support for conservation, but only provides for a consideration about the theme. In view of this, it is noteworthy that from this gap comes an opportunity to the state and cities to consider policies integrated with the culture and local heritage, since the scope and intersectoral approach of the tourism activity must be taken into consideration, as Beni (2003), Bezerra (2003) and Guedes (2003) stated.

In respect to the good maintenance of open spaces and garbage reduction, the public policy in study has legal mechanisms that grant minimum structure of solid waste collection and management to the resort towns and cities of tourist interest. However, in relation to biodiversity and efficient use of resources, there are no aspects in this public policy that discuss the fauna, flora, biodiversity and protected areas.

Therefore the importance of the commitment of public policies with the principles of sustainable development for achieving the integration of social, environmental and economic goals, as stated by Hall (2000). Furthermore, Oliveira, Minasse and Marques's argument (2016) stands out when affirming that a tourist attraction must be thought out and planned by observing environmental aspects in their entirety and extrapolating this review to the attraction's surroundings, which is not fully seen in this policy.

In this way, the data analysis revealed that this subnational government tourism policy does not include the 15 actions and forms of action of governments in other countries and places in the world as studied by Scott (2011). We observe the predominance in the locus studied of economic sustainability and low presence of public actions aimed at environmental issues in the tourism sector, which denotes a peripheral state concern in this regard. Evidence of this is the innocuous requirement of the state government in requiring something that exists and which does not allow itself to differentiate the applicant municipalities of tourist interest in relation to environmental issues. The state requirement refers to the collection and treatment of solid waste, whose basic sanitation are already offered by the state government that serves all 645 municipalities in São Paulo, according to data provided in 2008 by IBGE (2016), last year in which the study on the subject was elaborated.

This study implies that the lack of a sustainable vision or details that advocate environmental and social issues in the public policy of the government of São Paulo is the fact that public policy is at the stage of implementation of the public policies' cycle.

The stage of implementation, according to Secchi (2013) is the one that succeeds the decision-making stage and precedes the assessment step. The author highlights the importance of studying the definitions from the decision-making phase is an opportunity to show the proposed scope and limits present in public policy that will impact what the resident population will perceive and assess. Furthermore, this author states that studying the result of the decision-making stage helps to "detect ill formulated problems and poorly outlined goals,

exaggerated optimism”. It appears from this that aspects which may be clarified and enhanced in the public policy of the Government of the State of São Paulo, mainly with regard to environmental issues. And such question associated with sustainability multidimensionality could be more central to the tourism policy in the territory and in the subnational government studied if it incorporated actions related to environmental and patrimonial education, instruments of control of the daily flow of tourists for monitoring the noise, visual and air pollution.

In addition, it was also observed that the legislation analyzed here focuses mainly on the conditions for the classification of municipalities in resort towns or Cities of tourist interest, but one of the conditions established by law is not identified - the environmental issue - in an expressive way for purposes of orientation and establishment of a sustainable social and economic development of localities through tourism.

Knowing that the public policy is aimed at investment by funds made available by the Fund for the Improvement of Cities of Tourist Interest, we reinforce the idea that there is a need of tourism policies to incorporate the notion of sustainability more broadly, beyond the economic dimension, so that the environmental dimension is also treated equally. This would be approaching to principles, guidelines and objectives that address important national instruments (National Tourism Policy and Plan), as it is said by actions promoted and disseminated internationally by the United Nations (UN) and by the world agency in the sector (UNWTO).

CONCLUSIONS

The contribution of this study was to demonstrate that the proposal and the scope of a tourism policy - especially in terms of intent and direction - can be analyzed by means of objectives and forms of government action on a territory considered as tourist destination. This analysis allows to observe the priorities and issues considered important in a tourism policy in federative countries as Brazil. It also reveals government efforts seeking to be more inclusive and integrator in the treatment of important issues, such as the environment one, through tourism policies.

It should be noted that the presence of all the objectives and forms of actions of the Government treated by Scott (2011) need to be observed by tourism policy analysts as an ideal way of conceiving them, which requires reflection on the potential and reach of their proposal, as well as of their ownership in different subnational contexts, as in the effort undertaken in this research in the state of São Paulo in Brazil. Thus, the use of Scott’s approach (2011) can unfold differently in subnational governments and in other states and, mainly, in municipalities that have environmental singularities and in the institutional capacity of the Government to intervene in the tourism sector. In this way, it was observed that certain tourism policy objectives of national Governments, such as those identified by Scott (2011) may not be relevant for subnational governments, as well as different in comparative perspective. Furthermore, objectives and forms of action not identified in the study about the state of São Paulo are not necessarily absent because this may depend on the research methods employed.

In this sense, one of the limitations of this research was the exclusive use of the documentary method, which allowed to observe the partially chosen reality, whose public policy analysis was based on legal and regulatory aspects, in light of the specialized literature. It is understood that future studies could advance in this regard to involve other sources of research with techniques such as *in loco* interviews, questionnaires or even the documentary analysis of the financial implementation of the state. It should be noted that at the time of research, the analyzed policy was in transition from decision-making and implementation phase (Secchi, 2013), which does not prevent from conducting studies on previous steps or phases such as the formation of the agenda, in order to understand the political process of integration and prioritization of certain topics and issues on the public policy agenda (Kingdon, 2003).

In this study, the environmental issue was identified as still a peripheral dimension in tourism policy. This is something surprising if we consider the arguments of the specialized literature, which believe this issue is one that most suffer negative impacts because of the tourist activity. In this sense, it is understood that for a city to be indeed considered of tourist interest, not only by the definition of a public policy, the different governmental entities of this country need to foster and promote broader and more diversified conditions for the spotlight to include essential issues that are on the periphery of the Government priorities in the context of tourism, as the environmental issue discussed in this study.

Thus, this study also reinforces the need of rescuing the centrality of environmental issues, or more broadly, of sustainability, especially on how these issues have been mentioned and enforced in tourism policies. In natural and modified environments, tourism policies have one of the main bases to attract and encourage regular flows of tourists, in a healthy and satisfactory way for residents and for those who work with tourism directly or indirectly in the municipalities.

The decentralization of resources that a federalist context - as Brazil - requires is that subnational governments provide state resources so that the municipalities have the institutional capacity to develop tourism activities, since the mechanisms for collection of municipal financial resources are limited and dependent on the federal and state governments. However, objectives and public actions induced by means of tourism policies can promote intersectoral projects where environmental issues can be articulated with education and health for a quality environment that favors both resident and tourist.

Therefore, the topic “federalism” indicated in this study may serve as a starting point for new intellectual contracts in studies of tourism management and public policies, inducing the generation of new research and the formation of an agenda of network research and in comparative perspective involving other subnational governments, at the state level in Brazil, and municipal level with other federative countries.

In empirical terms, awareness and training practices of employees and public managers regarding the theme “sustainability” should be applied to tourism policies, as well as the proposal and validation of indicators to follow and monitor the performance of the objectives and forms of government action, in partnership with the society or not.

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