

# **Vale do Rio Pardo Strategic Development Plan (Rio Grande do Sul, Brasil): Methodological and Conceptual Considerations<sup>1</sup>**

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This work aims to present the main results achieved from the process of the Strategic Plan for the Vale do Rio Pardo (Rio Grande do Sul, Brasil), established along 2009. The region under consideration is situated on Central portion of the Rio Grande do Sul State, in South of Brazil; with a territorial area of 13.255,7 km<sup>2</sup> and a total population of 416.121 inhabitants (FEE) allocated in 23 counties. As the main source of the economy we point out to the production and manufacture of tobacco leaf under the control of some multinational companies linked to tobacco business. The elaboration of this Plan is part of a wider project of the Forum of Development Regional Board (COREDEs), private rights entities organized and run as “pro bono” civil associations with political representation for regional communities of Rio Grande do Sul. The proposal of the 28 States COREDEs Forum to carry out a technical and participative analysis of the varied regional realities was financially supported by the State Government with the National Integration Department support as well. So, this is not a plan strictly linked to initiatives that favors one specific region; better yet, covers unprecedented interests in Rio Grande do Sul. The elaboration of this Strategic Plan had three converging methodological conditions resulting from distinct experiences as the start off point. The first one was the proposal presented in the Strategic Management Course in Local and Regional Development, promoted by the National Integration Department and supported by the Latin-American Institute and the Caribbean Social and Economical Planning – ILPES, linked to the Economic Group for the Caribbean and Latin-America – CEPAL and the Inter-American Cooperation Institute for Agriculture – IICA in Brazil. This course in particular allowed for a discussion carried out by different representatives from the state regions around methodologies and ways to approach the many regional realities. The second proposition resulted from the efforts of the COREDEs Forum, to come up with an approach good enough to make viable a common methodology to elaborate strategic regional plans in 2009. The third and last proposal was similar experiences developed by the Vale do Rio Pardo Development Regional Board (COREDE/VRP) in previous periods, in a partnership with the University of Santa Cruz do Sul (UNISC) resulting in the elaboration of the Strategic Development Plan for the region (1998) plus the realization of the Regional Agenda 21 (2002).

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The realization of a strategic plan is a form of discussion surrounding the complex composition (economic, political and social) that defines a region. Such opportunity generates conditions for a survey and analysis which make possible, amongst other aspects, the definition of important projects and the identification of activity areas for different sectors of the society. At the same time, it is important that participative processes make viable an open discussion amongst the community during different moments of its realization, aiming to establish a dialogue between the technical team and region representatives, and so, point out adequate proposals to meet existing needs and interests.

The proposal of a Strategic Development Plan for the Vale do Rio Pardo is justified, firstly, by the ability of political articulations and the willingness to a cooperation that the regional community has shown historically, and materialized, especially through the Constitution in December 1991 of the Region Board of Development of Vale do Rio Pardo - COREDE/VRP, and in 1993 of the University of Santa Cruz do Sul.

This objective of this work is to present an overall picture of the elaboration process of the Strategic Development Plan for the Vale do Rio Pardo, according to the methodology established through the reference term presented by the Rio Grande do Sul Government, in accordance with the integration proposal defined by the COREDEs Forum.

### **1. MAPPING THE STUDY AREA AND POSITIONING THE REGIONAL PLANNING EXPERIENCE**

The Rio Grande do Sul State is subdivided into 28 Regional Development Boards. COREDE/VRP is a political representation entity for many different organized social segments of the regional community, with a territorial area corresponding to the 23 existing counties in the region. It is a private rights entities organized and run as “pro bono” civil associations with unlimited duration period (see Picture 3). This region is located at central portion of the Rio Grande do Sul State and can be considered according to its distribution in micro-regions (see Picture 4), as shown in the Table below:

**TABLE 1 - Counties of Vale do Rio Pardo Region, according to its micro-regions**

<b>Northern Micro-region – 9 counties</b>		
- Arroio do Tigre	- Ibarama	- Segredo
- Boqueirão do Leão	- Lagoa Bonita do Sul	- Sobradinho
- Estrela Velha	- Passa Sete	- Tunas
<b>Central Micro-regions– 7 counties</b>		
- Herveiras	- Sinimbu	- Venâncio Aires
- Santa Cruz do Sul	- Vale do Sol	- Vera Cruz
- Mato Leitão		
<b>Southern Micro-regions– 7 counties</b>		
- Candelária	- Pantano Grande	- Rio Pardo
- Encruzilhada do Sul	- Passo do Sobrado	- Vale Verde
- General Câmara		

Such micro-regions subdivision is due to many distinctions in regards to a diversity of aspects; economic, environmental, institutional-political and even diverging social-cultural ones that characterize the organization of the regional space. The **northern micro-region**, for instance, is influenced by German and Italian settlers and has strong articulations with activities in the Mountain region. The very uneven terrain and high altitude favors a variety of fruit cultures, and the manufacture of tobacco leaf due to its economic integration with the Vale do Rio Pardo activities. The counties are small when compared to the other two micro-regions.

The **central micro-region** is basically characterized by a strong presence of the tobacco leaf agro industry which influences directly the organization of rural and urban spaces. Santa Cruz do Sul is the most important county of this region, concentrating in its urban area two polarizing activities that generate the regional dynamics: in first place, the presence of the most important industries headquarters (since 1917 the tobacco activity has been developed there), such as Souza Cruz, Philip Morris, Universal Leaf Tabacos Ltd. amongst others (see attachment II); in second place comes the University of Santa Cruz do Sul (started off as university in 1992) that constitutes a strong and attractive element of social and economical impact for the region. Venancio Aires and Vera Cruz articulate in chain to those activities, becoming spaces of economic and administrative expansion of these activities and also as dorms-cities<sup>2</sup>. The traces inherited from the influence of the German migrant descendants are still strong and can be identified in an evident form on the social-spatial practices as well as on the local ones, at the building segment and organization of urban and rural spaces. They are small size counties too, with small rural family run properties (like in the northern micro-region).

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<sup>2</sup> In Venancio Aires, there is still the influence of the production of yerba mate.

As for the **southern micro-region** more diverse characteristics are observed apart from the other micro-regions; maybe for its space occupation process been done earlier on (Rio Pardo became one of the first primordial counties, founded in 1809 and the settler of many others); or due to its link with the social-cultural and economical dynamic from the southern half of the state, thus the manufacture of tobacco leaf, common in the region in its totality. Besides the German migrants influence, a larger cultural diversity can be observed here; linked, above all, to the Portuguese-Brazilian culture which may be observed in the formation of the cities as such – Rio Pardo for example – and in the social manifestations, alas the festivities, for instance. The predomination of the rice culture stands out in this micro-region, as for being the counties with the largest surfaces. Aside from the economic integration of the counties surrounding the tobacco production, a diversity of cultures and social-spatial practices is revealed by rich forms of manifestations coming from its population. The predominance of culture of rice is a standout in this micro-region and counties.

These territorial and institutional characteristics credit the Regional Development Board of Vale do Rio Pardo on its intention to support the project in question. The same way the University of Santa Cruz do Sul – UNISC, while a community institution, free of profit offering outsourcing services to the general public; since its existence as individual Faculties has been developing a series of actions and teaching, research and distance projects deeply connected to the regional community with the core objective to contribute for the sustainable regional development of Vale do Rio Pardo.

In second place, the Project equally justifies itself by the fact that the Vale do Rio Pardo region has presented countless environmental problems over the last decades, on the rural areas as well as the urban ones. In the rural space the predominance of tobacco and rice monocultures has prompted a number of environmental problems such as soil and hydro resources contamination due to the intense load of fertilizers used; the redirection of water cursor, deforestation and the soil erosion from inadequate handling as well as the loss of an environmental biodiversity through the expansion of monoculture crops. Yet in the regional urban space the main problems have been generated from the fast urban process the region has experienced: floods and frequent flash floods, inadequate disposal of solid urban waste (domestic, industrial and health sector), illegal and irregular housing states, contamination of the water cursors via industrial and domestic sewerage amongst other environmental impacts.

The unequal regional development process impose a need to think about the planning as a strategy for a reduction of the existing disparities, as well as a valorization and good use of such economic and social differences, contingencies and individualities. This way, COREDE-VRP since its beginning has given incentive and participated in defining strategies for the regional development. Overall two important actions have stood out as they consist of two substantial documents drawn up with the community participation: The Strategic Plan for Regional Development and the Regional Agenda 21.

The first Strategic Plan for Regional Development of Vale do Rio Pardo was made between 1997 and 1998 reaching its peak in the period from 1998 to 2002. Its proposal resulted from discussions and debates carried out in three seminars that took place in the headquarter counties for the micro-regions -- Rio Pardo, Santa Cruz do Sul and Sobradinho – having as a main goal analyze and suggest alternatives for the overcoming of the difficulties and actions to value the regional potentialities identified on a previous survey.

During its development the Strategic Plan was drawn up with objectives, goals and action strategies; result from the cooperation and involvement of the regional civil society. The work teams originally from the six theme commission of COREDE–VRP organized a meeting in 1997 with the purpose to debate over the needs and possibilities appointed at the regional seminars and elaborate proposal in the areas as such: farming; culture and education; industry, trade and tourism; infra-structure and public safety; health and environment.

The set proposals aimed to increase the region's competitiveness to guarantee a sustainable regional development process through the permanent search for alternatives and solutions to produce a standard regional development focused on the improvement in the quality of life for the population of Vale do Rio Pardo. The articulation of these segments and their participation along COREDE made possible the development of projects for regional interests which started to be implemented through articulated actions amongst counties, university and class entities; and also through the process of definition for the regional priorities to be sent in, annually, to the state's budget. Some of these projects have turned into reality, for instance, the training and qualification of municipal teachers, the improvement in the basic sewerage system and the reduction of infant death rate, the consolidation of the Committee for the

Management of the Rio Pardo Hydrographic Basin, the Regional Culture Lobby in Rio Pardo and the Regional Ceasa in Santa Cruz do Sul.

As for the elaboration of the Regional Agenda 21 for the Vale do Rio Pardo, it's come into place due to the need to update the Strategic Development Plano of 1998. The building of the Regional Agenda 21 is a planning process based on two basic premises, the sustainable development and the democratic participation of society.. Its objective is the promotion of changes in the standard regional development to preserve, protect and recover the environment at the same time that it guarantees the quality of life for the population. The proposal as such is an initiative reasoned, globally, in the international pact established by the countries which took part of ECO-92, realized in Rio de Janeiro and, nationally, in the recently published guidelines of the Brazilian Agenda 21 (2002).

In 2001 COREDE-VRP in partnership with UNISC, started the construction of the Regional Agenda 21 using the methodology applied on the elaboration of the Brazilian Agenda 21 including the six theme areas there proposed<sup>1</sup>, as they also fit the development principles for the region; which presents a large diversity of social-cultural, environmental and economic aspects. The support and counter-initiative from UNISC as well the commitment from the regional community made its realization viable.

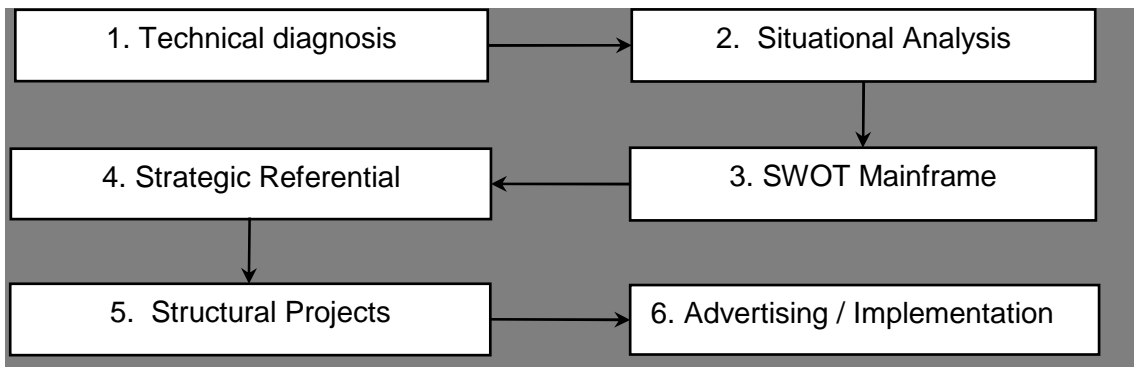
During the first semester of 2002 a data survey was carried out under the responsibility of researchers from the Post-Graduation Program in Regional Development offered by UNISC. This Stage aggregated a number of updated information on social-cultural, organizational-economical, institutional-political and environmental aspects, serving as a subsidy for the elaboration of a regional diagnosis and used as reference to discussions and evaluations along the regional community. The diversity of existing situations in the region asked for the micro regions where the polo headquarters cities of Rio Pardo, Santa Cruz do Sul and Sobradinho to be considered, as that's where the workshops were carried out to exhibit and discuss the technical diagnosis with the local communities from the entire region. Such meetings brought up a number of key problems and systematized potentialities by theme area. Since 2003 those elements have become action points for the process of planning the Regional Agenda 21 which systematization involved definitions on objectives, goals, strategies, partnership and deadlines to be observed by the COREDEs Theme Commissions. The realization of the Regional Agenda 21 has been a challenge for the regional community given the

difficulty to mobilize the necessary resources and the not always easy articulation from the distinct interests and priorities of each municipal government towards the strategic demands of the region. Therefore, through a voluntary and cooperative action from many of the representatives of organized segments of the civil society; as well as the important participation and engagement of few mayors and municipal secretaries, of COMUDES, and the regional boards of state's departments and autarchies; many of these structural projects were or have been developed with great results for the region. In this aspect, the participation and decisive effort of UNISC to make this viable also deserves equal commandment.

## **2. METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF THE CURRENT STRATEGIC PLAN**

The elaboration of the Strategic Development Plan had as a start off point two converging methodological proposals resulting from distinct experiences of the groups involved in the Project. The first one is the proposal presented in the Strategic Management Course in Local and Regional Development, taken in Santa Maria and promoted by the National Integration Department and supported by the Latin-American Institute and the Caribbean Social and Economical Planning – ILPES, linked to the Economic Group for the Caribbean and Latin-America – CEPAL and the Inter-American Cooperation Institute for Agriculture – IICA in Brazil. This course allowed for a common discussion carried out by a number of different representatives from the state regions around methodologies and ways to approach the many regional realities. The second proposition is the result from efforts of COREDEs Forums, with support from representatives from UNIJUI to come up with an approach good enough to make viable a common methodology to be shared amongst the 28 COREDES of Rio Grande do Sul. The proposal to be followed up on this Strategic Plan aims to work alongside with the methodological chart agreed upon by the COREDEs Forum, made up of different stages: technical diagnosis, situation analysis, strategic referential, elaboration of the SWOT mainframe, definition of structural projects and advertising of the final plan (see Picture 1).

### **PICTURE 1 – Stages of the Strategic Development Plan**



Source: SIEDENBERG, 2009.

It's relevant to point out that the entire process tried to alert and mobilize the representatives of the regional community, through COREDE-VRP, to take part in the meetings and to commit to the various stages carried out. Although the preparatory meetings with the technical team had been taken place since May 2009, it was only in August that the official kick start for the activities took place amongst the community at the time when the reference term between State Government and COREDE-VRP was signed. The closure happened on March 3, 2010 when the set of structural projects was presented at an official COREDE-CRP meeting.

The process at Vale do Rio Pardo region was divided into two main stages. In the first one, the Technical and Participative Diagnosis (Situational Analysis) was drawn up with Strategic Referential propositions for the region, such ones that allowed for the construction of the Regional SWOT Mainframe. In the second stage the structural projects for the region were elaborated.

### **3. STAGE 1: FROM THE TECHNICAL DIAGNOSYS TO THE BUILDING OF A REGIONAL SWOT MAINFRAME**

#### **3.1. Technical Diagnosis and Situational Analysis**

The elaboration of the diagnosis was started at the moment of the partnership signature, being supported by UNISC researchers, particularly from three sectors: Post-Graduation Program in Regional Development (PPGDR), Territorial Planning and Management Core (NPGT) and the Social and Economic Research Core (NUPES). PPGDR doctors and professors also took part of the data survey and systematization thus scientific beginner's students under scholarship.

Technical meetings and secondary data collection under the responsibility of the technical team allowed for a diagnosis based on the reality. At this stage, for the purpose of research and data analysis as well as the presentation of such data to the regional community; there was a quest to bring up the aspects proposed in the general methodology by COREDEs Forum; demographic and physic-natural information to support the territorial analysis, as well as the structural, social and economic Institutional Management.

The research regarding the **institutional management** was carried out during the period of August and September, 2009 and aims to present information concerning the organized civil society representation form; as well as the distinct institutions which act in the region, autarchic or private. The methodology focused specifically on the research of secondary data through searches in autarchic sites (DAER, DETRAN, IPERGS and IRGA), federal departments (TRE) and even through information given out by the actual region Municipal Town Hall. The data referring to the banking institutions and commercial and industrial associations are a result of the research under the supervision of Professor Rogerio Silveira.

The **economic aspects** refer to the information related to the economic activity data existing in the region composed by these municipalities. Data on the agriculture, industry, trade and services and also on the public sector are presented on tables and charts throughout this report.

On the other hand the **social management** regards aspects related to education, health, safety and justice plus social care. The intention here is, based on the full set of data collected, to systemize the information that can offer subsidies to the planning and management of the municipalities in the social area;

The data related to the **structural aspects** concern the whole infrastructure that covers the Vale do Rio Pardo region, taken into consideration different components: in first place the sewerage which incorporates the water supply system, the sanitary waste, the handling of rain water and the urban drainage as well as the solid residues; in second place the road system considering the different transport and circulation logistics; and finally the energy and communication systems.

During the development of the diagnosis the hardship to access some data was observed, either by the lack of information offered by the municipalities – in particular

the smaller ones – or by the contents in sites and at state and federal departments and institutions that act in such areas, and the work team. This happens usually due to the scarce technical team and infrastructure of the municipal public powers. Other difficulties encountered were the slow return from some public sectors towards the enquiries made by the technical team in charge of this work. The existing distance between the available periods referring to the enquiries made (almost always linked to data related to the year 2000 - year of the last demographic Census) and the current reality the region is inserted in. Therefore, the meetings with municipal representatives helped in the solving of some of the gaps, but yet very superficially.

The situation analysis relates to the qualitative and interpretative description of the COREDEs social economic data along the community representatives based on the rough data from the diagnosis realized. Such task allows for a transformation of the information obtained by the technicians into understanding and interpreting of the different narrators of the planning process through illustrative graphics exemplifying relations with other spatial dimensions and region tendencies. This is the qualitative and interpretative description of the COREDE-VRP social economic data.

The beginning of the Situational Analysis took place at the ending of the Technical Diagnosis when the information obtained was organized to be presented and discussed at meetings in the three micro regions (north, central and south) defined by COREDE-VRP. These activities were of great relevance to the complementation of the data and to the identification of the priorities of the communities themselves in their different territorial realities.

### **3.2. The Elaboration of the SWOT Mainframe**

The mainframe SWOT came as a regional community representation along the junction of **Strengths and Opportunities** (which are configured as regional potentialities); also the combination of **Weaknesses and Threats** (while regional limitations); and the combination of **Weaknesses and Opportunities** (that represent regional challenges).

The construction of this mainframe aims to collectively build an appropriate notion of the main potentialities, limitations, dangers and regional challenges, all based in the technical diagnosis and situational analysis as well as a correct reading of the external scenario.

The objective of this stage is to collectively build, based in the technical diagnosis and situational analysis, and a correct reading of the external scenario; an appropriate notion of the main potentialities, limitations, dangers and regional challenges. For such it is essential to identify very clearly if the SWOT factors have its origin internal or externally considering that some external factors may represent either threats or opportunities.

**PICTURE 2: Graphic Representation of SWOT Mainframe**

<b>SWOT Mainframe</b>		<b>Internal origin factors</b>	
		<b>Strengths</b> ▼	<b>Weaknesses</b> ▼
<b>External factors</b>	<b>origin</b>	<b>Opportunities</b> ➤	<b>Potentialities</b> [++]
		<b>Threats</b> ➤	<b>Dangers</b> [+-]
			<b>Challenges</b> [-+]
			<b>Limitations</b> [--]

The elaboration of the final Regional SWOT mainframe started off from the link of many variables that were made available throughout the technical and participative diagnosis. This way the following links were put together:

- a) Opportunities + strengths = potentialities (aspects we should take advantage of);
- b) Opportunities + weaknesses = challenges (aspects to overcome);
- c) Threats + strengths = dangers (aspects to overcome);
- d) Threats + weaknesses = limitations (aspects to be neutralized);

The most important objectives obtained from the meetings with the community are the following:

**a) Institutional Management:** Strengthen the public and private institutions as well as the many different organizations forms of the civil society in the region to make viable new social, cultural and economical ventures.

**b) Economic Management:** Promote economic diversification based on the regional potentialities coming from the agro industry and regional tourism, stimulating the population to stay in the rural area; and also the development of new investments.

**c) Social Management:** promote activities and social policies that qualify the conditions for a better education, health and public safety in the region, from the incentive to get the society's participation.

**d) Structural Management:** qualify the Vale do rio Pardo region's infrastructure taken into consideration the inter municipal road aspects and also water supply; aiming to give support to the development of other regional activities and dynamics

### **3.3. The Definition of Strategic Referential**

The Definition of Strategic Referential consists of a presentation of strategic norms and referential related to a vision of a region in sight, the vocations to be developed and the values to be cultivated. As a result from this collective activity the intention here is to obtain the expression of a regional syntax over the following referential:

**a) Vision:** It's the description, in short (a sentence) a future Outlook for a region. It involves citizen's dreams, that is, the identification of the main characteristics the region and its citizens would like to be recognized for in the future.

**Vision of Vale do Rio Pardo: Promote an integrated regional development of Vale do Rio Pardo from some strategic investments on knowledge, services and infrastructure towards a boost on the cultural qualification of its society, aiming to broaden municipal leaders minds to the importance of combined actions.**

**b) Vocations:** Define, validate or bring up their municipalities' main potentials. They can also be understood as skills, abilities or hidden talents to be developed by the counties and its institutions.

**Vocation of Vale do Rio Pardo: The Vale do Rio Pardo Region has a diversity of natural resources and a tradition in agro industrial activities, with great potential in the task force, especially in the use and construction of scientific, technological and vernacular knowledge as well as in investments towards the touristic sector; which are aspects that could boost the development.**

**c) Values or Leading Principles:** They are related with social standards known, accepted and maintained by the people and the society.

The values and leading principles indicated by the Regional Community of Vale do Rio Pardo: **Work, Education, Culture, Entrepreneurship, Leadership, Technical Cooperation, and Environmental Sustainability.**

#### **4. STAGE 2: THE STRUCTURING PROJECTS AND THE PLAN'S MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

The elaboration of the structuring projects was the final stage of the strategic plan process of construction. The objective of this activity is to define strategic projects for the Vale do Rio Pardo region according to the theme groups which led the Strategic Plan (institutional, economic, social and structural management); and also following the priorities pointed by the regional community representatives. Another relevant purpose is to define a management and maintenance proposal for the Vale do Rio Pardo Strategic Plan with some names appointed to compose a follow-up and evaluation Committee.

The hardship encountered during this stage of the work was the community participation. The meetings set over this period had a small number of participants, summing up only fourteen members and while some of the municipalities were represented with more than one person others had no representation at all. Such situation led the technical coordinating team to postpone the delivery of the results to a later time when it would be possible to present the results obtained to a larger and more balanced number of representatives.

The list with structuring projects from each of the theme groups is as followed:

##### **a) Institutional Management:**

- 1) Inventory of the Natural and Cultural Assets of the Vale do Rio Pardo Region;
- 2) Creation of the Regional Cultural Agenda;
- 3) Articulation of institutional projects in the region;
- 4) Program of ongoing training to public managers, community leaders and municipal technicians;
- 5) Patrimonial education to teachers from the Primary and High School levels;
- 6) Sustainable Eco tourism;
- 7) Elaboration of an information system for the public management.

**b) Economic Management:**

- 1) Constitution of the Regional Development Agency;
- 2) Qualification in agro industrialization and support to family agriculture;
- 3) Program of economic alternatives to the tobacco culture;
- 4) Qualification and professional support to economic activities;
- 5) Development of self-sustainable activities;
- 6) Support to the trade of regional products;
- 7) Economic alternatives to the southern half of the region.

**c) Social Management:**

- 1) Incentive to the Regional Technical Schools ongoing programs;
- 2) Combined education (Fundamental and Professional) to the youth in the rural area;
- 3) Illiteracy reduction;
- 4) Consolidation of Preventive Health Programs in the region;
- 5) Improvement in Regular and High Complexity service in the region Public Health System;
- 6) Program to Prevent Drug Addiction (chemic and alcohol dependence);
- 7) Social Assistance Regional Reference Center;
- 8) Qualification of the Public Safety Organizations (Fire Brigade, Local and Civil Police Force);
- 9) Program to bring back inmates into society.

**d) Structural Management:**

- 1) Implementation of the Bio Energy Regional Polo (bio fuel);
- 2) Ecological and Economical zoning for the region;
- 3) Qualification in environmental management;
- 4). Improvement in the conditions of generation and distribution of energy;
- 5) Qualification of inter municipal road system in the region;
- 6) Creation of municipal sewerage plans of the region municipalities;
- 7) Program of regional basic sewerage system;
- 8) Improvements in the logic net – internet.

One of the most relevant aspects in this final stage was the creation of a Management and Monitoring System of the Strategic Plan, which shall be achieved through the constitution of a management board with regional representation and own norms, to take place from the first year the Plan starts off to manage and monitor the actions and projects foreseen. This board shall set meetings with the entities responsible for the

projects execution and with the benefitted communities to monitor the actions and projects foreseen in the plan; evaluate the achieved results aiming to check any impact the strategic plan may have in the region; promote the update of the strategic plan every four years; implement and update permanently the regional data system on VRP; and create evaluation centers from COREDE' s sectors committees to follow up the ongoing projects, indicate new ones and establish inter sector articulations.

## **5. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The elaboration of the Strategic Plan of Vale do Rio Pardo allowed for continuity in the of similar actions developed in the region as a form of integration amongst regional representation through COREDE-VRP, and the technical-scientific community of the region able to help with reflections over the existing reality.

The small amount of time allocated for many and complex activities involving society's representation justifies in part the difficulties encountered to effectively mobilize the social groups towards elaborating a more effective diagnosis and committing to identify the priority areas to take action. Such situation by no means disqualifies the current process, but points out to a real challenge to overcome in the next participative experiences.

The creation of a management board for the Plan points to the permanent evaluation by its own regional representation, what can be possible an implementation with more social justice, in a continuous and conscious way. For that, it's necessary to expand the group of participation in the society, since a more qualified technical team to more discussion forums.

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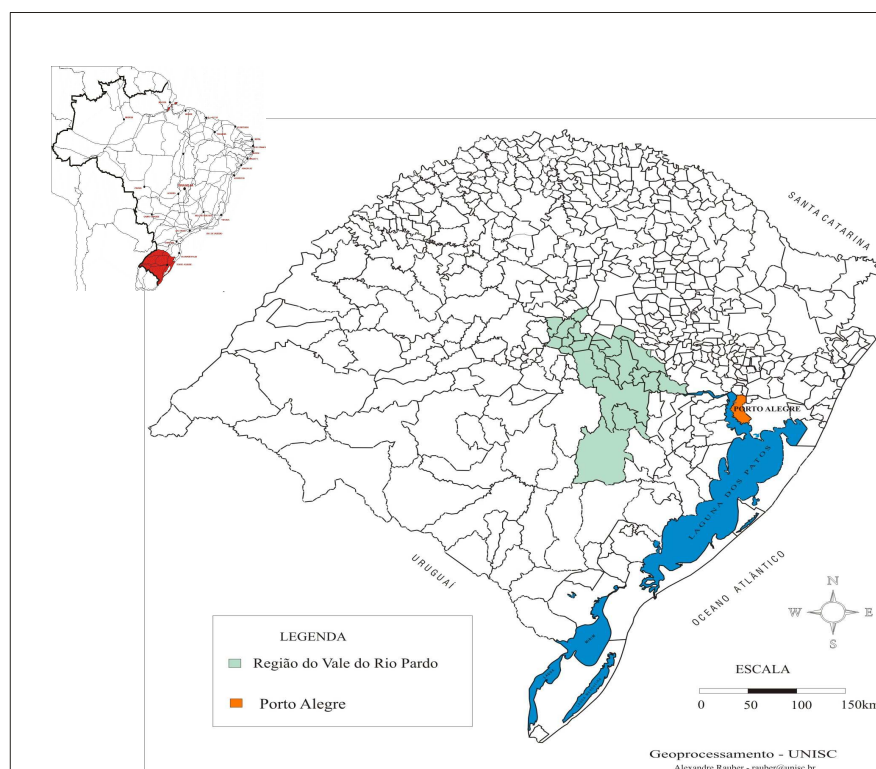
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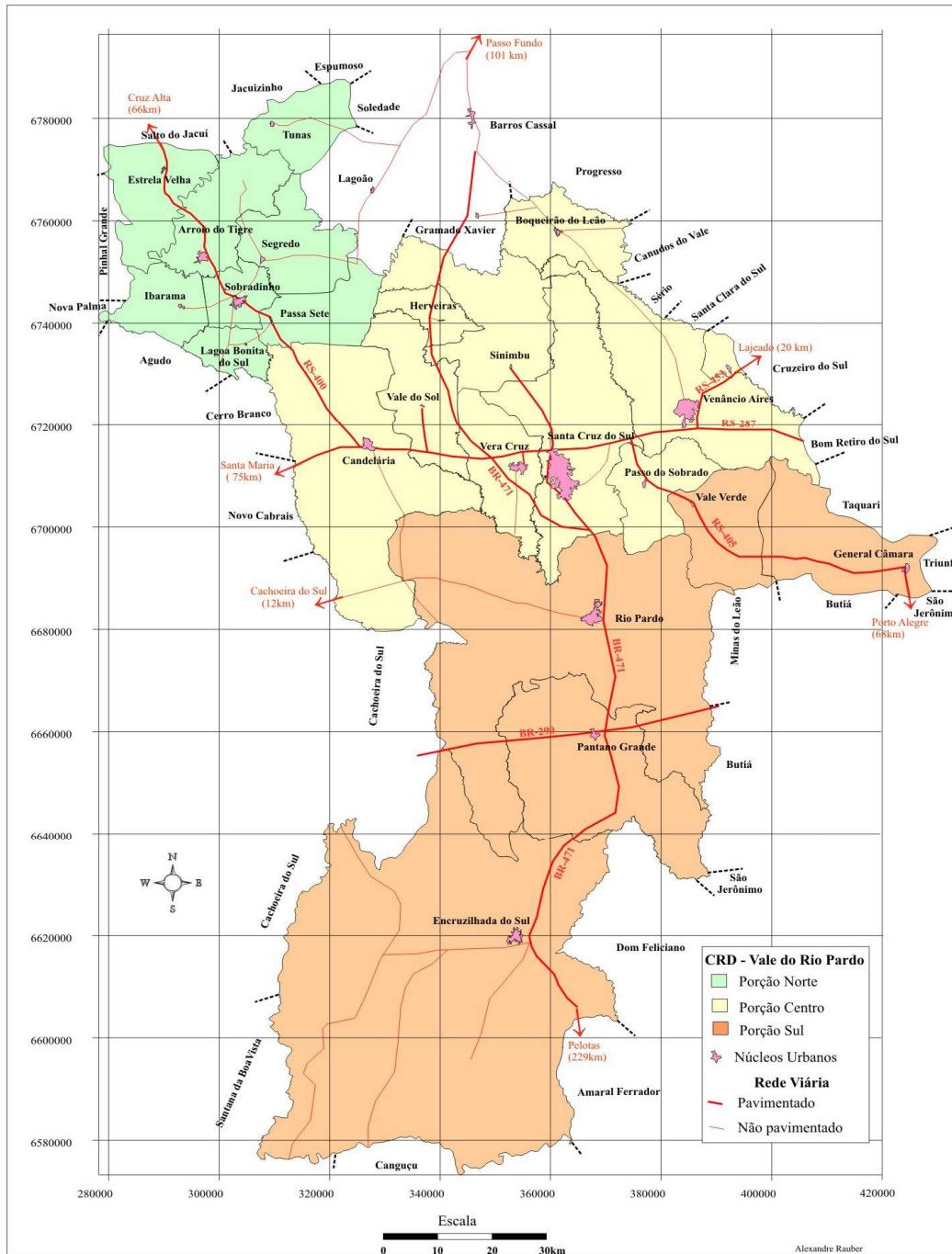
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**PICTURE 3: Rio Grande do Sul State and COREDE Vale do Rio Pardo location.**

Source: IBGE, 2003.



PICTURE 4: Micro-regions of Vale do Rio Pardo.

Source: Geoprocessamento da UNISC, 2009.