

# Revista de Administración Pública

The logo for the Instituto Nacional de Administración Pública (INAP) consists of the letters 'INAP' in a bold, stylized, black font. The letters are thick and blocky, with a slight shadow effect.

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## Territorial development: a comprehensive policy

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### 1. Introduction

Territory is conceived as space where human beings develop coexistence, economic, cultural, social, political, religious and recreational activities. It becomes a political-administrative and civil and commercial limited area; where control relationships are wield by individuals, companies or commercial societies, political organizations which are regularly upheld by legal norms –according to law- a Nation-State, state or municipality. The last three are territories controlled by an appropriate government or jurisdiction; it also refers to a place of origin or residence. This has brought on disputes, greediness and war; those who own territory can control the conditions that endanger or benefit nature and humanity.

This is why it is important to acknowledge nature can be transformed and land can be dominated, but not to the point of endangering the human species. It should be transformed for the greater good, this means respecting individual interest, but not ignoring social interest.

Subsequently, society can get organized and solve its problems and promote solutions in the form of public administration policies. It is obvious that the State (and any other control structure) exists and lives thanks to administration, which is the anchor that hold it in place. I would also mention law, any form of human control should be based on it, which works better if it is accepted voluntarily and will end up being an effective factor of social coexistence.

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Territory has been classified into areas: rural, urban, metropolitan, regional, megalopolis and State-nation; each one of these categories is related to an epistemological approach which includes development. It is true that their studies complement each other and each of them have their own subject of study; however, it is also undeniable that territory is common ground among them.

The existence of so many different categories makes way for imprecise information; consequently, there are different programs and legal rules which want to solve the territory's problems. This is why its study is disastrous and one of the reasons why government coordination is disorganized and inadequate

This is why a comprehensive concept is suggested, to reconcile urban and rural areas and systematize, articulate and give meaning to a State policy. A model of "territorial development" to analyze everything related to territory from an interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, transdisciplinary and pandisciplinary point of view like public administration studies. In this sense, government actions should be carried out in comprehensive and holistic ways. This model has been adopted by members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and is used in developed countries and some Latin American ones.

All of the abovementioned takes us to this essay's purpose: improve public administration thanks to territorial development without precluding the challenges posed by the administration of the Metropolitan Area of the Valley of Mexico (ZMVM; Spanish: Zona Metropolitana del Valle de México) which is the most complex one.

This essay uses a conceptual framework of the subject we are studying because it is related to all government actions –and public administration– (Figure I and II). To study the international scenario, conceptions and visions are developed to understand the importance of institutionalizing this approach as a comprehensive policy of all of territory's categories. This way we can address Mexico's territorial development challenges and territorial organization and deeply study our country's situation regarding territorial and metropolitan development.

The creation of the Ministry of Agrarian, Territorial and Urban Development (SEDATU; Spanish: Secretaría de Desarrollo Agrario, Territorial y Urbano) will "revive territorial organization and development planning" this is why I think it is important not to rethink administrative organization, normative and budget correspondence to achieve this rebirth. It is relevant to amend the General Law on Human Settlements (Spanish: Ley General de Asentamientos Humanos) through the elaboration of the Territorial Development Law (Spanish: Ley General de Desarrollo Territorial)

based on comprehensive territory policies that emphasize land use as development factor.

In the end, I will establish future challenges such as the need to implement comprehensive policies that deal with land use and lay the foundations for an adequate public administration that promotes territorial development.

## **2. Theoretical conceptual framework**

If we consider territorial development as space which links society's interests, actions and economic, social and political relationships that determine each geopolitical place; we can assure it is one of the main roads to manage processes to reduce poverty and exclusion.

It will then be a coherent, inclusive and harmonious process where social actors organize themselves to articulate efforts, wills and abilities to promote an improvement in collective welfare, it is "[...] society's existing ability to manage effectively strategies to eradicate or overcome poverty".

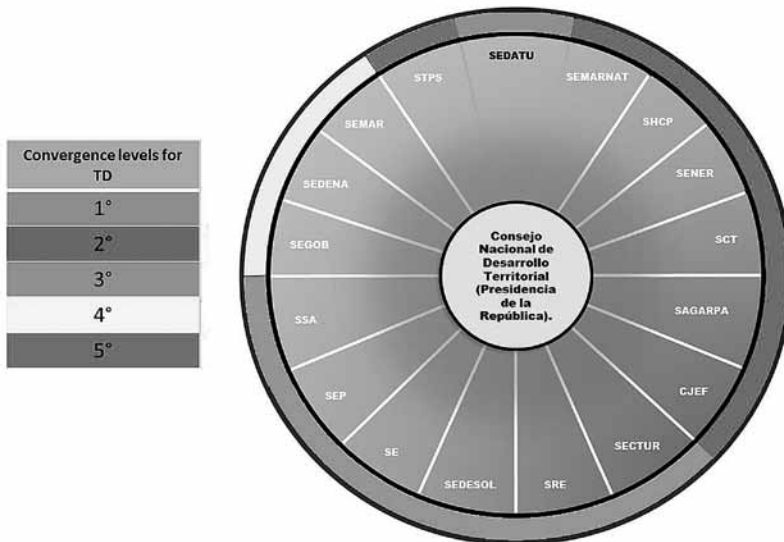
From this point of view, territorial development needs an institutional platform supported by the Social State subject to the rule of law which is constituted by citizens who participate in social relationships and are aware of being subject to rights and obligations; in other words, government-society articulation is an essential condition to promote territorial development.

Consequently, it is also a socioeconomic, political and environmental process of interrelationships, characterized by the mobilization of resources and potential geopolitical bodies which promote the exploitation of opportunities posed by the external context. It means designing public policies focused on optimal exploitation of resources and the solution of structural and current problems in order to achieve comprehensive and sustainable development.

Territorial development refers to the articulation of goals, resources and material and immaterial processes, also to the promotion of solidarity and cooperation between social and government actors, the adoption of a multidimensional approach that includes simultaneous economic, social, political, environmental and cultural goals and the recognition of multisectoriality in territorial economies. This is why territorial development studies, as public administration ones, can be carried out thanks to interdisciplinary approaches. This means thematic interest and multidisciplinary communities, collaboration under a task distribution model; transdisciplinary approach, observing something foreign with our own eyes; pandisciplinary orientation, incorporation of several synthesized or agreed-on social wisdom regarding public administration. This is the definition used by Omar Guerrero to achieve a synthesis on some area of

administrative knowledge or at least sign an agreement and participate as members of a collective research team to study territorial development and its multiple connections with knowledge and links to public administration tasks. We can see territorial development has to do with almost every area of government action (see figure I).

**Figure I. Convergence of agencies of the Federal Executive in territorial development**



Source: Developed by the author.

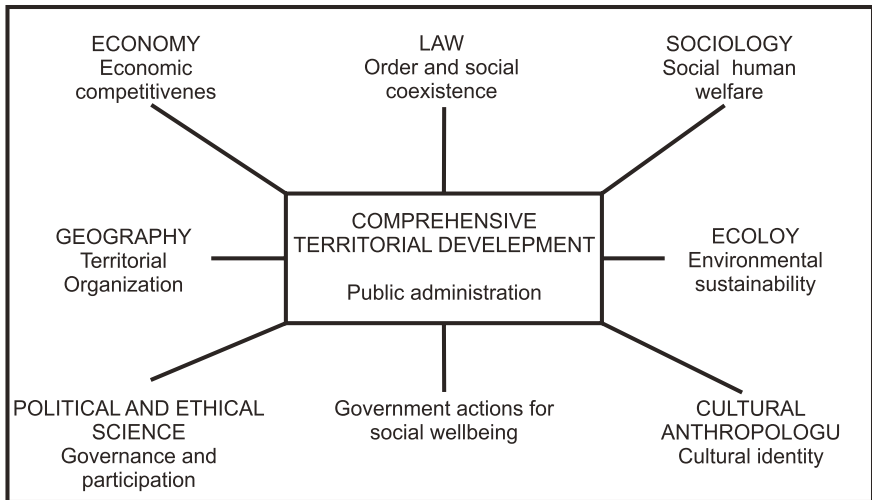
Over the last two decades the concept of territorial development consolidates itself as a complex process made up of the following components “[...] social (welfare), environmental (sustainability), political (governance and local participation), cultural (defense of identity and heritage) and geographical (territorial organization) focused on achieving a better quality of life for all of the members of society”.

Territorial development includes all of the concepts displayed in the following figure, which express the complexity of a process built from different theoretical-professional approaches.

In this sense, Ricardo Méndez, developed a scheme which, in his opinion, presents the main elements of the “comprehensive territorial development” concept. These elements, in fact, show multidisciplinary approach; however, two more are added which I find essential: law –which will have to be adjusted to the spirit of territorial development- and public administration

–related to government action to consolidate goals through strategies and actions that generate overall welfare based on a holistic approach–.

**Figure II: Main elements of the comprehensive territorial development.**



Source: Developed by the author based on Méndez (*op. cit.*)

Local development theses repeatedly emphasize the need to support development processes with knowledge and the priority use of resources. Troitiño states that “every territorial community has a series of resources (economic, human, environmental, institutional, cultural, etc.) which represent their development potential”, the latter is the quantity and quality of said resources and is complemented by finding actors and strategies capable of using them to benefit society.

Institutional context is essential and includes the interaction of different public policies, coordination among actor, solid normative framework and vision of a shared future which means territories with projects, who think of their future and learn. All of them metaphors related to the ability of local actors to process resources of a specific geographical and geopolitical region and improve their inclusion into regional or global contexts and offering the best solutions to current challenges

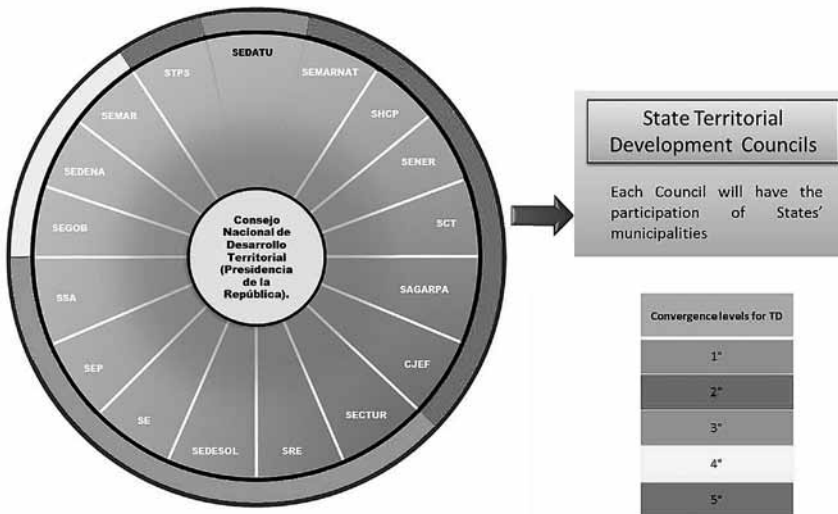
Under this scenario, territory has been historically seen as an object, it can become a collective subject if it constitutes itself thanks to a system of actors promoting it and thinking and acting in its name.

Ergo, territorial development must be built from a holistic approach, the sum of all of the parts of a society’s being and its tasks must be considered in the planning process of the expected future, as well as demographic,

economic, political, cultural and geographic-environmental conditions of the community and territory it takes up.

The multidimensional process which characterizes territorial development brings about ample social participation, comprehensive approach of the necessary process needed to promote comprehensive and sustainable development and the existence of solid and operating institutions.

**Figure III. Convergence of the three levels of government in territorial development.**



Source: Developed by the author.

Great social participation means generation of consensus and agreements regarding goals related to the expected future in a specific community. It also requires existing institutions which have been created under a specific development model to reflect the level of agreement achieved by different social actors and ensure "[...] long-term sustainability of agreed strategies and actions".<sup>1</sup>

Territorial development is then, a process which generates equity, solidarity, social justice and sense of belonging; thus, it encourages social cohesion. Consequently, it also promotes territorial cohesion because territory is seen as an entity with cultural, political and social integrity which generates social equity, environmental sustainability and economic growth.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p.7

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

### 3. Territorial development from an international point of view

International organizations think the goal of territorial development is to “[...] carry out transformations in productive, technological, social and political structures which halt or complicate the achievement of better life conditions, for example, increase productive diversification, decrease structural heterogeneity, improve income distribution, promote technical progress, etc. Consequently, it is not only a concept which describes different processes, but also a process in itself to carry out only quantitative changes, [...] including a qualitative and evolutionary dimension of development processes”.<sup>3</sup>

In the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), for example, the aforementioned description of territorial development has a functional model within the organization’s own structure, the administrative-operating unit called the Directorate for Public Governance and Territorial Development. The latter promotes policies and guidelines to promote the adaptation of administrative-territorial policies to the evolution of social needs.

Thanks to the permanent analysis and research process in subjects such as territorial development, one of OECD’s goals is to promote socioeconomic development in its member’s countries, address and promote improvements in the government-society relationships.

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and OECD’s opinions on territorial development state that every dimension of development (political, economic, social and environmental) are found in territory. The adoption of territorial approach brings on a very complex process with multidimensional and multisectorial factors inherent to it.

The great consensus is that the territorial approach makes societies strengthen high levels of efficiency, social and structural changes focused on generating equity, equality and overall prosperity.<sup>4</sup>

It is fair to say that the people responsible for territorial development policies are always facing numerous challenges; perhaps the greatest of them all is the definition of the image of territory as well as identifying and generating the much needed institutionality to achieve said image.

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<sup>3</sup> Riffo, L. (2013). *Desarrollo territorial, 50 años del ILPES: Evolución de los marcos conceptuales sobre desarrollo territorial*. Chile: Instituto Latinoamericano de Planificación Económica y Social (ILPES), CEPAL, Organización de las Naciones Unidas (ONU) p.58.

<sup>4</sup> ILPES y Ministerio Alemán de Cooperación Económica y Desarrollo. (2012). Chile: *Panorama del Desarrollo territorial en América Latina*, ILPES, CEPAL, ONU. p. 145.

One of the most common challenges in Latin American and Caribbean countries, for example, is reorienting society's behaviors and their economic development into sustainable processes which primarily promote changes in land and resource use to adapt themselves to environmental dynamics; that is, to define and plan in a sustainable and comprehensive way the use and exploitation of territory.<sup>5</sup>

European countries usually view territorial development as it has been defined by international organizations; however, there are some differences, especially instrumental ones which reflect constitutional and administrative engineering of each nation state. For example, in Germany, territorial organization is based on *Länders*. The German States are divided into this geopolitical units which are equivalent to Mexican states; these have legal regulations of their own that allow them to have a high level of autonomy in territorial organization processes in which the Federation does not have an active role.<sup>6</sup>

Switzerland is a country which has an origin and national state structure that is very similar to the German one; its regions and geopolitical entities have a high level of decentralization in territorial planning. Unlike Germany, the Federation has an active and concurrent role.

Unlike the previous examples, the United Kingdom has a high level of centralism, regions as political administrative concepts do not exist and the concept of territorial organization is generated from the central government.<sup>7</sup>

France, the birthplace of *aménagement du territoire* (regional planning), has been an example for Latin America, which means so much more comprehensibly organizing every process related to territorial occupation and exploitation. Since the 80's it organized its territory into regions; however, the central government still plays a central role.

#### **4. Territorial development challenges in Mexico**

Mexico has not institutionalized a territorial development process, but various government initiatives have been issued to affect territorial occupation and exploitation processes.

Without going way back in time, we can see occupation processes and not territorial exploitation and organization ones since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Torres, F. & Cortez H. (2008). "Una política de Desarrollo territorial para México en la perspectiva del siglo XXI", *Experiencias internacionales relevantes de ordenamiento territorial*. Mexico: Plaza y Valdés. pp. 239 -255.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*



century where policies derived from violent and ungovernable times were expected to generate equity, prosperity and continuous and permanent improvement of the quality of life of Mexicans which is a key factor in territorial development.

From the publishing of the Agrarian Act in 1915 and the institutional processes that ensued, a series of territory-related actions which were never part of a comprehensive socioeconomic development strategy or a sustainability scheme.

It wasn't until the 1970's that generated the first institutional processes focused on connecting territory with social development processes, especially urban ones; however, they were never capable of setting the real bases of occupation organization and territorial exploitation and the promotion of real territorial development processes.<sup>8</sup>

In 1976, articles 27, 73 and 115 were amended and the General Law on Human Settlements was issued. The latter had a special chapter devoted to conurbation. [...] the constitutional amendment and the General Law on Human Settlements inspired states to issue their own laws, plans, programs and other legal regulations.<sup>9</sup>

Territory in Mexico has always been conceived in a fractured manner; this is why before the 1970s comprehensible and sustainable processes had not been implemented as an important part of territorial development processes, as a result of the young age of these worldwide processes. Nonetheless, it is unacceptable for a country which considers itself as liberal, democratic and modern one to have comprehensive and sustainable development policies, especially after so many years of institutional experience in Mexico and the whole world.

During the 1982-1988 government, the Federal Government's participation in the formalization, approval and administration of territorial reserves, intervention in land tenure regularization decrease considerably. The amendment of the 115 article on February 3<sup>rd</sup> 1983 gave municipalities territorial planning powers.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Ferreira, H. "Una política de Desarrollo territorial para México en la perspectiva del siglo XXI", in Javier Delgadillo Macías (Coord.), *Política Territorial en México: Hacia un Modelo de Desarrollo Basado en el Territorio*. Mexico: Secretaría de Desarrollo Social del Gobierno Federal y el Instituto de Investigaciones Económicas de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM). pp. 595-681.

<sup>9</sup> Melgoza, D. (2012). *Gobernabilidad democrática metropolitana en un federalismo eficaz*. Mexico: Instituto Nacional de Administración Pública (INAP). pp.71-72.

<sup>10</sup> Melgoza (op. cit.) pp.73- 74.

At the beginning of the 1990's, the Secretariat for Human Settlements and Public Works (SAHOP; Spanish: Secretaría de Asentamientos Humanos y Obras Públicas) became the Ministry of Urban Development and Ecology (SEDUE; Spanish: Secretaría de Desarrollo Urbano y Ecología), later on it was called the Ministry of Social Development (SEDESOL; Spanish: Secretaría de Desarrollo Social), its main function stopped being territorial function and started to focus on poverty.

## 5. Territorial organization, territorial development strategy

Conceptual theoretical framework.

Hiernaux and Torres<sup>11</sup> define territorial organization as population and resource reorganization in any given territory to achieve constant socio-economic development and improve their quality of life; clearly referring to the French concept of *aménagement du territoire* and constructed as the policy or set of policies focused on generating future scenarios of territorial organization based on goals carried out by social actors and supported by an institutional structure; that is, focused on implementing territorial development processes.

Territorial organization means a comprehensive socioeconomic and physical planning strategy, which can promote an adequate spatial structure for an “[...] effective and equitable social, cultural, and environmental” development of society”.<sup>12</sup>

The European Regional/Spatial Planning Charter defines it as “Regional/spatial planning gives geographical expression to the economic, social, cultural and ecological policies of society. It is at the same time a scientific discipline, an administrative technique and a policy developed as an interdisciplinary and comprehensive approach directed towards a balanced regional development and the physical organization of space according to an overall strategy”.<sup>13</sup>

The Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES; Spanish: Instituto Latinoamericano y del Caribe de Planificación Económica y Social) describes Territorial Economic Development (DET; Spanish: Desarrollo Económico Territorial) as the ability local societies have to formulate collective goals of material

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<sup>11</sup> Hiernaux, D. & Torres, Rino. (n/d). “Desarrollo Territorial en México: Un Balance General” in Delgado, J. (Coordinador). pp. 97-123.

<sup>12</sup> Lira, L. (2006). *Ordenamiento del Territorio*, II Curso Internacional sobre Desarrollo Local y Competitividad Territorial. Guatemala: CEPAL/ILPES y AECI. p. 52.

<sup>13</sup> European Regional/Spatial Planning Charter. (1983). Spain: Conferencia Europea de Ministros Responsables de la Ordenación del Territorio.

progress, equity and sustainability; as a result it mobilizes the necessary local endogenous resources. Its main components are territorial productive improvement, basic economic infrastructure and territorial organization.<sup>14</sup>

On the other hand, the Colombian Ministry of Environment, Housing and Territorial Development (Spanish: Ministerio del Ambiente, Vivienda y Desarrollo territorial) defines it as “[...] development planning process that allows directing the action of the population over territory to improve development opportunities offered by the environment and the ability to prevent or mitigate risks”.<sup>15</sup>

Peru: Public policy focused on comprehensive territorial development according to goals based on resources and improvement of the quality of life of the population. It takes into account environmental, economic, sociocultural, institutional and geopolitical criteria so as to promote comprehensive development of people to ensure a good quality of life (Ecological and Economic Zoning Regulations).

Argentina: technical-political-administrative actions to carry out research, formulate proposals and adoption of specific measures regarding territorial organization to adapt them to general development policies and goals.

Europeans think there are two main characteristics related to territorial organization that define policies which have a direct effect on roads, industries, agriculture and the ones which have a more global vision that includes urban, economic and environmental aspects, this determines a more comprehensive policy.

Elements of European territorial organization is their regional structure, States are primordial in decision making process, but have no political autonomy. Spain and Italy have States with total autonomy which generate their own territorial organization plans; this limits the creation of a national-level plan.

On the other hand, the General Law on Human Settlements defines territorial organization as: “The process of balanced and sustainable distribution of population and economic activities in national territory”.

The Organic Law of the Environmental Agency and Territorial Organization of the Federal District (Spanish: Ley Orgánica de la Procuraduría Ambiental y del Ordenamiento territorial del Distrito Federal) describes it as: “[...]”

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<sup>14</sup> González, S. (2008). *Políticas e instituciones para el Desarrollo económico territorial, El caso de México*. Chile: ILPES.

<sup>15</sup> Colombian Ministry of Environment, Housing and Territorial Development. (2004). *Guía Metodológica 2. Elementos Poblacionales para el Ordenamiento Territorial*. Colombia: Serie Población, Ordenamiento y Desarrollo.

regulations aimed at establishing the relationship between use, fate and reserves of land in the Federal District and human settlements, activities and rights of their inhabitants, zoning and organization rules, as well as construction, image and urban landscape regulation, urban equipment, urban impact or urban environmental impact and advertisement”.

The Chamber of Deputies through the 56<sup>th</sup> Legislature’s Commission on Human Settlements and Public Works carried out very prolific work regarding territorial organization to generate new normative framework for territory in Mexico. Some of the products of said work are the following conceptual definitions of this term:<sup>16</sup>

“Territorial organization is the spatial translation of a political project and it should maximize territory’s economic efficiency and ensure social and political cohesion.”

“[...] it is an issue of the State and a comprehensive part of it. It is necessary and strategic for the State to promote a National Territorial Project and the renewal of Federalism.”

### **Territorial organization in México<sup>17</sup>**

There is background information in Mexico regarding territorial administration since 1915 and the creation of the Agrarian Act. Since then and until 1940 several institutions and regulations which contributed to the industrialization of the country were created (National Urban Mortgage and Public Works Bank in 1933, which is currently known as BANOBRAS; the Federal Energy Commission in 1937 and the enactment of the Federal Expropriation Law in 1936, etc.).

Ever since the 1940’s regional development policies linked to the import substitution model and the deconcentration of Mexico City, Guadalajara and Monterrey, among other goals; thus, the following were created: the Hydrological Basin Commission in 1946, the National Border Program in 1961 which became in 1972 the Interministerial Committee for Economic Development of the North Strip and Free Zones and Perimeters, Arid Zones Commission and the Ministry of Agrarian Reform in 1970, the National Plan of Communal Land Population Centers in 1971, Industrial Decentralization Decrees in 1971 and 1972, the General Population Law in 1973, the National Trust Fund for Tourism Development (FONATUR; Spanish: Fondo

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<sup>16</sup> Commission on Human Settlements and Public Works, Chamber of Deputies and National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics. (1996). *Seminario sobre la Ordenación Territorial en México*. Mexico: H. Cámara de Diputados, LVI Legislatura.

<sup>17</sup> Commission on Human Settlements and Public Works. (1996). *Ordenación del Territorio en México*. Mexico: H. Cámara de Diputados, LVI Legislatura.

Nacional para el Turismo) in 1975 and finally in 1976 the Secretariat for Human Settlements and Public Works (SAHOP) directly responsible for its implementation and predecessor of the Ministry of Agrarian Reform of the current Ministry of Agrarian, Territorial and Urban Development.

The second half of the 70's brought on the need to decentralize the Metropolitan Area of Mexico City. In 1978 the first National Urban Development Program is published and in 1979 infrastructure, energy support, provision of rural concentrated services (SERUC) programs are implemented and in 1982 SAHOP becomes SEDUE which in 1994 turns into SEDESOL reducing its territorial responsibilities with regard to their predecessors (SAHOP and SEDUE). Between 1988 and 1994 territorial priorities revolved around road infrastructure and the most prominent planning process was the National Urban and Housing Development Program 88-94 and the implementation of the Hundred-City Program.

Since the creation of the 2001-2006 National Program for Urban Development and Territorial Planning (PNDUOT; Spanish: Plan Nacional de Desarrollo Urbano y Ordenamiento del Territorio) and state programs, a territorial organization approach was implemented as a socioeconomic development strategy focused on spatial functional articulation of sectorial policies. Nonetheless, it was rapidly abandoned due to structural and operational changes in SEDESOL, reducing territorial organization works in several administrative units and funding to elaborate municipal territorial organization programs which had no legal ties and no one promoted their enforcement. These dealt with zoning proposals of non-urban areas which had land uses linked to their economic potential.

### **Territorial organization and metropolitan development**

Organizing territory requires identifying the potential and specific characteristics of national geographical space, using it and exploiting it in a sustainable way. In this sense, territorial organization accounts for policies the Mexican State has to implement to achieve balanced and sustainable socioeconomic development; the European Regional/Spatial Planning Charter (1983) states: "...spatial expression of economic, social, cultural and ecological policies of society".

Thus, organizing territory means comprehensibly planning its use, in urban and non-urban areas which should be an important part of this process that should focus on continuous improvement of quality of life through full access to infrastructure, equipment and public services, as well as natural and cultural heritage.

In this context, metropolitan development means focusing on relevant phenomena, like territorial organization which entails planning the

occupation and exploitation of territory in urban areas which have physically or functionally transcended the limits of its original geopolitical division.

The metropolization of cities is an important subject in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Mexico's metropolitan areas increased from 12 in 1960 to 59 in 2010.

Problems derived from metropolitan phenomena have not been addressed according to the needs of the metropolitan population and its growth, they have not been satisfied due to the absence of effective planning mechanisms; insufficient intergovernmental coordination among legal-political-administrative bodies which share the responsibility of managing metropolis, disarticulation of governmental policies regarding territorial organization, urban, metropolitan, housing, environmental and agrarian development which calls for a metropolitan culture to promote metropolitan-type governments and citizens capable of coexisting and improving metropolitan areas.<sup>18</sup>

In 2010, 6 out of 10 citizens lived in metropolitan areas (63.8 million inhabitants<sup>19</sup>) which substantially increases this phenomenon's challenges. Organizing metropolitan zones' territory to promote development forces legal-political-administrative bodies to coordinate themselves and plan and administer metropolis in order to promote efficient metropolitan management through effective intergovernmental relationships within an effective articulate federalism.

### **Rebirth of territorial planning, organization and development**

We have to be careful about the creation of the Ministry of Agrarian, Territorial and Urban Development and providing it with an adequate budget and administrative structure in accordance with the spirit that created it.

There is a need to have institutions dedicated to territorial subjects which are to be created and given powers to address territorial development. Nonetheless, there are some systemic and deep gaps which show this topic has been ignored and is still not part of the agenda of critical public policies.

The use of the term agrarian development afterwards known as territorial development and finally as urban development shows that it is urgent to take good care of institutional design and structure and force the Mexican State to pay attention to public problems which affect society.

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<sup>18</sup> Melgoza (op. cit.)

<sup>19</sup> Ministry of Social Development, National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics (Ed.). (2012). *Delimitación de las zonas metropolitanas 2010*. Mexico: First Edition.

While this essay is being written, national thematic forums are being organized: “New institutional legal framework for urban development” and “Territorial and housing organization” in order to obtain resources to elaborate the 2013-2018 National Urban and Housing Development Programs. It would also be important to promote the amendment of the General Law on Human Settlements because the latter and the Mexican Constitution support these programs.

Despite this, it is important to mention that the General Law on Human Settlements will change its name to General Law on Territorial Development or General Law on Territorial Development and Human Settlements which will include the following chapters: Urban Development; Conurbations; Metropolitan Development; Regional Development; Megalopolis; Population Centers; Cities and a special chapter on Comprehensive Land Use with sustainable and measurable indicators.

### **Land use. Development factor**

Territorial organization is the process to guide territorial occupation and use and improve settlements’ –population and housing- geographical location, physical structure (roads, public services, buildings) and socioeconomic activities. That is, organization means a place for everything and everything in its place.<sup>20</sup>

This has not been accomplished, disorganized urban growth has caused environmental pressure derived from an overuse of ecosystems; changes in urban land use which affects directly environmental services; invasion of ecological protection zones; “lack of articulation between housing, transportation and urban development policies”,<sup>21</sup> violation of regulations, since main avenues’ land use is changed by allowing businesses to paint the sidewalk to mark parking spaces and denaturalizing what should be a highway.

The absence of a comprehensive prevention and control land plan is obvious thanks to the number of irregular settlements, especially in communal lands, but also in private property and federal areas (edge of rivers and train tracks), thirty-nine years ago, The Federal Commission for Regularization of Land Tenure (CORETT; Spanish: Comisión para la Regularización de la Tenencia de la Tierra) was created. The latter has been in charge of regulating communal land tenure, besides, some states have institutions to regulate private land tenure, but instead of doing this they continue to promote irregularities. CORETT must become a regulating body that continues to regulate land tenure, establish limits and prevent and control irregular settlements –“no more irregular human

<sup>20</sup> Melgoza (op. cit.)

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 117



settlements”-. In sum, promote urban development in consolidated settlements as a land tenure commission or as part of a territorial development structure of a federal office.

On the other hand, many of the awarded land use permits do not have sustainability criteria; this affects the environment and in many cases “land use is not respected and owners are not punished by competent authorities in charge of regulating it”<sup>22</sup>.

The spirit of article 27 of the Mexican Constitution needs to be rescued “[...] the State will have the right to regulate property for social benefit, achieve country’s development and improve urban and rural life conditions”.

When land, its use and destiny is mentioned, it must be remembered it is the surface on which everything is built. This means there is a great responsibility to foresee the devastating consequences of natural phenomena. Organizing territory represents the greater good, wellbeing and improvement of quality of life.

Thus, the creation of the Ministry of Agrarian, Territorial and Urban Development (SEDATU; Spanish: Secretaría de Desarrollo Agrario, Territorial y Urbano) is “one of the essential conditions to ensure better environments for the country’s growth and the populations’ overall welfare and the optimal exploitation of national territory and its appropriate recognition”.<sup>23</sup>

This means implementing a comprehensive land use policy; establishing sustainability indicators and administrative and penal sanctions to those who break or violate issued regulations; an intense territorial, urban and metropolitan culture awareness campaign, use of electronic and written means of communication and analyzing the importance of basic and middle school education.

### **Organizing territory. Territorial strategy of national development.**

Public employees’ responsibility for actions or omissions carried out in different levels of government and of unscrupulous people who turn human beings, nature and sustainable land use into profit; this has been obvious

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<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 117

<sup>23</sup> Deputies of the Parliamentary Group of the Institutional Revolutionary Party and the Mexican Green Party. (2012). *Iniciativa con proyecto de decreto que reforma, adiciona y deroga diversas disposiciones de la ley orgánica de la administración pública federal que presentan diputadas y diputados integrantes de los grupos parlamentarios del partido revolucionario institucional y del partido verde ecologista de México de la Cámara de diputados*. Mexico. p. 8.



in the Ingrid and Manuel meteorological phenomena. Besides trying to repair damages, these devastations and unfortunate events need to be prevented.

There are laws, regulations and programs, although they need to be perfected and adjusted to the new spirit which gave birth to the Ministry of Agrarian, Planning and Urban Development (SEDATU). These programs have not been implemented efficiently which makes it obvious there is a lack of prevention programs and control of irregular settlements and other actions; there is a special need for a territorial organization strategy which some call territorial planning and the institutional non-burdensome strength of a Territorial Development Federal Agency with three sub-agencies: environmental, agrarian and urban development. This agency would have to be funded by the budget given to the Federal Agency of Environmental Protection, Agrarian Ministry, CORETT and SEDATU's own disperse programs. States should also have similar agencies; for example, Jalisco has the State Agency of Urban Development; the Federal District has the Environmental and Territorial Planning Agency; the State of Mexico has the Environmental Agency, etc.

Crisis are an opportunity to rethink and transform and design State policies based on Territorial Development. It is time to articulate public administration actions related to territory, implement them according to a comprehensive, multidisciplinary, transdisciplinary and holistic approach, this is precisely Territorial Development. Its implementation includes a systematized process using preexisting resources, give planning comprehensive channel which includes interdisciplinary training for public employees, especially those of SEDATU.

Methodological, structural and approach changes regarding territorial policies provide elements to achieve territorial planning which is related to territorial organization. The 2013-2018 National Development Plan states in its National Goal "Inclusive Mexico" that its objective is to: "Provide an appropriate environment for the development of a decent life", directly linked to SEDATU's *raison d'être*.

## Challenges

Rafael Martínez Monroy, minister of Environment and Renewable Natural Resources and technical secretary of the National Territorial Organization Commission of Venezuela in 1998 stated that territorial organization tasks in Latin American are huge and need appropriate state intervention.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Lira (op. cit.)

An important territorial organization challenge and therefore of territorial development, is decentralization based on federalism and institutional, economic, procedural and technical municipal strengthening.<sup>25</sup>

It is essential to accept that designing a territorial organization policy needs two approaches. The first one related to sectorial policy management which should be implemented in different territorial levels; the second one related to a territorial integration process that takes into account different political and spatial organization forms of any region.<sup>26</sup>

In other words, territorial organization must have a solid normative basis and the appropriate legal framework must enforce its observance so as to plan organized and sustainable territorial occupation and exploitation. This can only be achieved through a political conciliation and consensus-making process among social, political, economic and technical actors to appropriately distribute uses for human settlements.<sup>27</sup>

Ergo, Mexico has to establish solid bases for an appropriate comprehensive management of national territory. Establish territorial development policies with a comprehensive approach to promote associative processes between the Federation and states and between the latter and municipalities so as to manage common resources and share burdens and benefits derived from the region's development process. The implementation of a comprehensive land use policy and normative and administrative alignment in three levels of government deserves special attention.

## Conclusions and proposals

- During the studied periods “the excessive sectorial vision of this problem made Mexico not have a territorial organization approach”, let alone a territorial development one. Consequently, there is not a National Territorial Project and no strategic vision of where we want to go.
- Currently, Mexico's regions do not have economic, territorial and social plans, or intersectorial vision and national multidimensional one in all levels of government.
- Nowadays, Mexican society is not prepared to collectively conceive,

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<sup>25</sup> González (op. cit.)

<sup>26</sup> Montes, F. (2001). *El ordenamiento territorial como opción de políticas urbanas y regionales en América Latina y el Caribe*. Chile: CEPAL.

<sup>27</sup> Schneider, S. & Peyré, I. G. (2006). “Territorio y Enfoque Territorial: de las referencias cognitivas a los aportes aplicados al análisis de los procesos sociales rurales”, in Manzanal, M., Neiman, G. & Lattuada, M. *Desarrollo Rural. Organizaciones, Instituciones y Territorio*. Argentina Editorial Ciccus, Argentina. Retrieved August 13, 2013, from <http://www.ufrgs.br/pgdr/arquivos/462.pdf>. p.p. 71-102.

build and operate a social-territorial project. It is obvious there is weak cohesion among policies, but especially among institutions and actors of all government levels to build said product.

- Amend legal framework, include it in our Political Constitution which needs to be updated and adjusted to current development reality. Create the General Territorial Development Law and promote counterpart legislations in states. This law will address urban and rural areas and will focus on development for the greater good and have chapters on urban, agrarian metropolitan and regional development to achieve the ultimate goal: human development.
- A Federal legal framework which promotes the strengthening of comprehensive planning, effective intergovernmental coordination, governance-oriented citizen participation. All of which should be based on government's promotion of metropolitan culture which means territorial development in an articulated effective federalism.
- Study territorial development from a multidisciplinary and holistic approach which takes into account urban and rural areas and is based on territorial organization.
- Implementing a comprehensive land policy promoted by the federal government in charge of democratic planning and national development. This policy is a challenge to establish sustainability indicators which needs land regulation.
- Create a territorial policy's coordination and evaluation body which includes the participation of the President of the Republic, Governors and the Congress of the Union.
- Establish the National Territorial Development Council and its state counterparts.
- Ensure the convergence of the three levels of government in territorial development to promote horizontal institutional coordination and cooperation.
- Examine the importance of creating the Territorial Development Agency which will be in charge of the Environmental and Agrarian Agencies and CORETT and will emphasize land regulation. Three agencies will be created: the environmental, agrarian and urban one. States will do the same; for example, Jalisco has an Urban Development Agency.
- Promote territorial development culture to promote a Mexican policy in this area through the analysis and implementation of models based on important international experiences and create an appropriate one for our reality.
- Deepen the study and implementation of local association, cooperation and collaboration development experiences.
- Promote the training of territorial development and organization specialists and international academic excellence programs.
- SEDATU will not be able to properly achieve optimal exploitation of the national territory and its organization if it does not have the

necessary legal amendments, administrative structure and budget fit to its needs to promote and make comprehensive territorial planning policy a reality to fulfill these goals and ensure better environments for the country's growth and the wellbeing of the population.

This process change will encounter resistance from those who have been and could be benefited by the status quo; this is why it is important to promote culture and have the necessary support from the government.

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