

The Latin American Integration Route (RILA), in the face of the UN 2030 Agenda

A Rota de Integração Latino Americana (RILA), em face da Agenda 2030 da ONU

La Ruta de la Integración Latinoamericana (RILA), ante la Agenda 2030 de la ONU

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Received on August 14th, 2023; accepted on August 23th, 2023
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.20435/inter.v24i4.4256>

Abstract: The Latin American Integration Route (RILA), or bioceanic corridor, is a project aiming to integrate Mato Grosso do Sul (MS) with the Ports of Northern Chile. The city of Porto Murtinho (MS), located on the banks of the Paraguay River, is where a bridge is being built to connect this city to the municipality of Carmelo Peralta, in Paraguay. The challenge is that this corridor is not only a catalyst for development, expanding its benefits beyond the already consolidated export sectors, but that it also opens up opportunities for the promotion of intra-regional trade, tourism, culture, education, in line with the objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals, SDG. This article aims to discuss the RILA in view of the UN 2030 Agenda, from a debate on the concept of development. This is a qualitative study, conducted in the SciELO database and in documents from ECLAC, IPEA, among others. Bardin's content analysis methodology was adopted for data discussion. It is concluded that the development promised by Brazilian governments with RILA must be an inclusive and sustainable development to bring prosperity and peace to everyone and not just to grain, cellulose, and meat exporters. And that the authorities of Porto Murtinho, through their public policy agendas, in line with the UN 2030 Agenda, develop programs aimed at workers, so that they can work in the jobs that will emerge.

Keywords: RILA; SDG; sustainable development; work; Income.

Resumo: A Rota de Integração Latino Americana (RILA), ou rota bioceânica, é um projeto, que visa a integração do Mato Grosso do Sul com os Portos do Norte do Chile. A cidade de Porto Murtinho (MS), que está localizado às margens do Rio Paraguai é onde está-se construindo uma ponte, que ligará esta cidade ao município de Carmelo Peralta, no Paraguai. O desafio é que esse corredor seja um catalisador de desenvolvimento, que amplie seus benefícios para além dos setores exportadores já consolidados, mas que abra oportunidades para o fomento do comércio intrarregional, do turismo, da cultura, da educação, conforme prevê os Objetivos do Desenvolvimento Sustentável, ODS. Este artigo tem como objetivo discutir a RILA em face da Agenda 2030 da Organização das Nações Unidas, ONU, a partir de um debate sobre o conceito de desenvolvimento. Trata-se de uma pesquisa qualitativa, realizada na base de dados do Scielo e em documentos do CEPAL, do IPEA, entre outros, com a adoção da metodologia da análise de conteúdo de Bardin para discussão dos dados. Conclui-se que o desenvolvimento prometido pelos governos brasileiros com a RILA deve ser um desenvolvimento inclusivo e sustentável para que de fato traga prosperidade e paz para todos e não apenas para os exportadores de grão, celulose e carne, e que as autoridades de Porto Murtinho, por meio de suas agendas de políticas públicas, em sintonia com a Agenda 2030 da ONU, elaborem programas voltados para os trabalhadores, de modo que estes possam trabalhar nos empregos que vão surgir.

Palavras-chave: RILA; ODS; desenvolvimento sustentável; trabalho; renda.

Resumen: La Ruta de la Integración Latinoamericana (RILA), o ruta bioceánica, es un proyecto que tiene como objetivo la integración de Mato Grosso do Sul con los puertos del norte de Chile. La ciudad de Porto Murtinho (MS), que se encuentra a orillas del río Paraguay, es donde se está construyendo un puente que conectará esta ciudad con el municipio de Carmelo Peralta, en Paraguay. El desafío es que este corredor sea un catalizador del desarrollo, que extienda sus beneficios más allá de los sectores exportadores ya consolidados, pero que abra oportunidades para la promoción del comercio intrarregional, el turismo, la cultura, la educación, tal como está previsto en los Objetivos de Desarrollo. Sostenible, ODS. Este artículo tiene como objetivo discutir la RILA de cara a la Agenda 2030 de las Naciones Unidas, ONU, a partir de un debate sobre el concepto de

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desarrollo. Se trata de una investigación cualitativa, realizada en la base de datos Scielo y en documentos de CEPAL, IPEA, entre otros, con la adopción de la metodología de análisis de contenido de Bardin para la discusión de datos. Se concluye que el desarrollo prometido por los gobiernos brasileños con la RILA debe ser un desarrollo inclusivo y sostenible para que realmente traiga prosperidad y paz a todos y no solo a los exportadores de granos, celulosa y carne, y que las autoridades de Porto Murinho, a través de sus agendas de política pública, en línea con la Agenda 2030 de la ONU, desarrollar programas dirigidos a los trabajadores, para que puedan desempeñarse en los puestos de trabajo que se les presenten.

Palabras clave: RILA; ODS; desarrollo sostenible; trabajo; renta.

1 INTRODUCTION

As Bresser-Pereira (2014) states, “progress is an idea and an aspiration of the 18th century; development, an idea and a project of the 20th century that continues into the 21st century.” But it turns out that the progress and development of the 19th and 20th centuries, if, on the one hand, was significant and provided qualitative changes in the *modus vivendi* and *modus operandi* of societies, on the other, caused major environmental problems; and in recent years, the models of globalized production and profit management led to an increase in poverty and social inequalities, as it is a highly income-concentrating model.

These serious problems generated by the predominant models of society from the 20th century, led the United Nations (UN), in 2000, at the dawn of the 21st century, to set the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), through the Millennium Declaration, adopted by the 191 member countries, including Brazil. The MDGs set targets to 1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; 2.

Achieve universal primary education; 3. Promote gender equality and empower women; 4. Reduce infant mortality; 5. Improve maternal health; 6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases; 7. Ensure environmental sustainability; 8. Global partnership for development was an international effort to achieve development in sectors and themes like environment, human rights and women, social and racial equality. Twenty-one (21) targets, measured and compared across countries using 60 indicators, were also set (ODM-Brazil, 2000).

The results arising from working towards the MDGs were quite positive, especially in relation to some targets however² they only meant the beginning of the UN's concerns with the serious problems experienced on planet. Thus, from 2015, dialogues and negotiations emerged that culminated in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), named the 2030 Agenda (from 2015 to 2030). The Agenda consists of 17 Goals and 169 objectives, signed by 193 UN member countries in September 2015.

So, when we talk about development today in Brazil, we mean sustainable development, since Brazil is a signatory to the 2030 Agenda. This means that public managers, entrepreneurs, universities and schools, among others, need to know and adhere to the 17 SDGs: 1. No poverty; 2. Zero hunger and sustainable agriculture; 3. Good health and well-being; 4. Quality education; 5. Gender equality; 6. Clean water and sanitation; 7. Affordable and clean energy; 8. Decent work and economic growth; 9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure; 10. Reduced inequalities; 11. Sustainable cities & communities; 12. Responsible consumption and production; 13. Climate

² MDG # 2 had a single objective, which was "By 2015, ensure that both boys and girls have the opportunity to finish primary school". To assess whether universal schooling has been achieved, a cut-off value of at least 97% of schooling is considered. According to this criterion, the UN's 2015 MDG Report indicates that the world has not reached, by 2015, the goal of ensuring that all boys and girls could finish primary education. However, significant progress has been made in expanding primary education, particularly since the adoption of the MDGs in 2000 (Roma, 2019).

action; 14. Life below water; 15. Life on land; 16. Peace, justice and strong institutions; 17. Partnerships for the goals.

The Latin American Integration Route (RILA), whose corridor connects the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, begins in Porto Murtinho, and goes to the ports of Antofagasta/Iquique, Chile, passing through Mato Grosso do Sul, northern Paraguay, and Argentina. Undoubtedly, RILA is a great development project for Brazil as well as all the countries that are in its path. Mato Grosso do Sul State and the Midwest region, as might be expected, will benefit from it – they will be exporting grains and meat to promising markets in Asia, the West Coast of the Americas and Oceania at cheaper transport costs.

The question addressed in this study is towards the need for project managers, exports of grain, cellulose and meat, entrepreneurs, among other players in Brazil (Mato Grosso do Sul, in Porto Murtinho) to place the issue of environmental and social sustainability in their strategic plans. The development promised by Brazilian governments regarding RILA must be sustainable so that it actually brings prosperity to everyone and not just to the exporters, and the Pantanal biome, already so damaged by pesticides and fires, can be preserved.

Thus, this article aims to discuss the RILA in the face of the UN 2030 Agenda – from a debate on the concept of development. This is a qualitative, bibliographical and documental research, based on the methodology of content analysis by Bardin (2011), on the discussion of data, understood as a set of techniques, aiming to obtain (through systematic procedures and objectives of the content description related to the messages) the indicators (quantitative or not) that allow the inferences of relative knowledge of production/reception conditions (inferred variables) of these messages” (Bardin, 2011, p. 41).

In this way, the research, whose result is the present article, consists of three phases: 1) pre-analysis; 2) exploration of the material, categorization, or coding; 3) discussion of the results, inferences, and interpretation.

2 SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

The word “development” has undergone several changes over time. What was previously understood as something strictly linked to the economic aspect, related to the increase in production and consumption, began to incorporate the social and environmental issue into its composition. These changes in perspectives ended up culminating in the most recent concept, which is now guided by the notion of sustainability. Thus, from the 1980s, the term “sustainable development” began to be used and the term “economic growth” ceased to be synonymous with development, becoming one of its elements (De Oliveira, 2019).

The concept of development is used as an indicator of the well-being of a nation's population, in various dimensions. These dimensions have evolved over time in order to make more accurate assessments of reality and, with the greatest possible precision from the extraction of information from economic, social, political-institutional, and environmental data available in the statistical databases of each country (Renzi; Hen; Rippel, 2019, p. 67).

Development has a multidimensionality, which encompasses several aspects: environmental, economic, social, cultural, religious, gastronomic among others. It is a material and immaterial construction that involves collective forces and predominant values in a given place. Observing the relationships that emerge between development and the region can be particularly useful for public managers and development agents in general.

Development, in line with Amartya Sen (2010), does not only include economic growth, measured by the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) indicator, or by unlimited material progress, but rather in guaranteeing towards what he calls the “substantive freedoms” of the individual, which are the certainty that the basic needs of every being will be met. These needs are food, health, and education. Once these three needs have not been met, the individual cannot reach their “subjective freedoms,” that is, they cannot exercise their citizenship. For the author, the concept of development is inclusive, that is, if the income generated in a nation from its economic enterprises does not serve to improve the lives of all, there may even be economic growth in a given region, but that in itself is not development. Development is, in fact, the result of economic growth, people's income, education and the longevity of the local population, which includes a healthy environment and good public management, according to SDG 17 of the UN 2030 Agenda.

Among the endogenous factors related to development is social capital³, which according to Miranda, Avelar e Friede (2019) and Santos (2018), is an important asset, one of the variables that can contribute to the difference between the development conditions of different locations and regions, without ignoring, of course, the exogenous factors such as State action and the dynamics produced with the international division of labour.

The concept of sustainable development is an attempt to combine growing concerns with environmental problems as well as social and economic inequalities. "The widespread increase in interest and support towards the concept of sustainable development is an important change in the way the relationship of these three spheres is seen, contrasting with the previously dominant perspective on the predominance of economic issues and the separation of environmental and socioeconomic aspects (De Oliveira, 2019, p. 104).

Yet, according to the author, although there is a consensus regarding the importance of sustainable development, we cannot talk about a consensus on this concept. Hence, the importance of understanding the conceptions of sustainable development adopted by the UN 2030 Agenda, since it is the guide for commitments and public policies.

The construction of the binational bridge can bring development to Porto Murtinho, since, in addition to exporting products, it can be a facilitator in creating demand for road tourism in the attractions of Mato Grosso do Sul – for foreign tourists, as well as a gateway for Brazilian tourists to other countries, not to mention the cultural integration and strengthening of the union among peoples. (Asato, Gonçalves; Wilke, 2019, p. 150)

From Schumpeter, Abares, Bach e Walter (2023) argue that entrepreneurs are the driving force of economic growth, as they introduce innovative products and services into the market that make existing ones obsolete, in addition to generating jobs, making the economy develop and being competitive. To meet the demands of population growth in cities, it is necessary that they become intelligent and combine technology and urban development, associating them with entrepreneurship, since one of the reasons for improving the quality of life is the link between the locality and entrepreneurial activities (Abares; Bach; Walter, 2023).

³ Putnam conceptualizes social capital as the social practices, norms, and relationships of trust present among citizens of a given society. The basic and primordial element for the author is trust, precisely because it can promote cooperation. “The higher the level of trust in a community, the more likely there is to be cooperation. And cooperation itself generates trust” (Putnam, 2006, p. 180).

3 RILA AND ITS PROMISE OF DEVELOPMENT

The Latin American Integration Route is a road corridor with a length of 2,396 kilometres, which will connect the Atlantic Ocean to the ports of Antofagasta and Iquique, in Chile, passing through Paraguay and Argentina. Its supporters argue that it would be an alternative to the Port of Santos (SP), since it will shorten the distance and time for Brazilian exports and imports between potential markets in Asia, Oceania, and the West Coast of the United States (Campos, 2022).

Figure 1 – UNIRILA Route



Source: Campos (2022).

The RILA, whose route connects the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, begins in Porto Murtinho. Undoubtedly, RILA is a great development project for Brazil as well as all the countries that are in its path; Mato Grosso do Sul State and the Midwest region, as might be expected, will benefit from it, they will be exporting grains and meat to promising markets in Asia, the West Coast of the Americas and Oceania at cheaper transport costs.

Figure 2 – Asia, Oceania, and the American West Coast



Source: Centro Oeste Accounting Connection (2022).

Since its emancipation in 1977, Mato Grosso do Sul has experienced significant growth, especially in relation to the mechanization of agriculture and the modernization of livestock and, consequently, with the implementation of agribusiness. In 2014, the state's Gross Domestic Product was R\$78.9 billion, representing 1.2% of the share in national GDP, with accumulated real growth of 530% in the period from 2000 to 2014 (IBGE, 2017).

According to IPEA, "Mato Grosso do Sul has a strategic position both for projection in South America (bordering Bolivia and Paraguay), and for access to the Plate Basin and the Pacific coast, through the Paraguay-Paraná and Plate waterways, and for the proximity of crossing points through the mountain ranges" (Barros et al., 2020, p. 39)

And with its proximity to national centres and other Mediterranean regions in South America and access to Argentina and Uruguay through waterways and railways, it favours the development of Mato Grosso do Sul as the planning centre of the Bioceanic Road Corridor, not just the beginning or the end of the regional planning chain (Barros *et al.*, 2020).

The GDP of Mato Grosso do Sul State is, in general, higher than the national average, which allows to place the state in a significant position in the *ranking* of economic development – its HDI is 0.729 (considered high), compared to other states in the country; it occupies 10th position (IBGE, 2010). The three municipalities of Mato Grosso do Sul with the best MHD are, respectively, Campo Grande (0.784), Chapadão do Sul (0.754) and Dourados (0.747) IBGE (2017).

With RILA, the trend is for the Brazilian Midwest to further increase exports, since it is already the largest producer and exporter of beef and soybean, positioning Brazil as first in the world ranking. Brazil is the most competitive country in the cellulose sector, representing more than 46% of world exports, and Mato Grosso do Sul State is the largest producer and exporter

in Brazil – 20 of the 40 cities that export the most cotton are in Mato Grosso. In 2010, the Netherlands ceased to be the main destination for exports from Mato Grosso and Mato Grosso do Sul. Currently, China occupies that place (Cepal, 2022).

Figure 3 – map of the evolution of the main destinations of Brazilian exports (2020-2021)



Source: CEPAL (2022).

Porto Murtinho will receive the bridge between Brazil and Paraguay. According to IBGE data (2017), it is the municipality with the lowest percentage variation ($\Delta\%$) of the per capita GDP of the cities evaluated, since it grew only 17.89% between 2010 and 2015. When compared to the other municipalities, in the same five-year period, the growth of the Porto Murtinho index is low – the municipality of Bonito had an increase of 90.17%, Anastácio, 86.10%, Guia Lopes, 80.47%, among others. (Constantino *et al.*, 2019, p. 183). Porto Murtinho's MHDÍ, which is 0.698, is also low. It is in position 153 of the Mato Grosso do Sul MHDÍ ratio IBGE (2017).

Figure 4 – Bridge over the Paraguay River that will connect Porto Murtinho to Carmelo Peralta, Paraguay



Source: Modena (2023).

Porto Murtinho, the city where the bridge connecting Brazil to the city of Carmelo Peralta in Paraguay is being built, is located in the southern part of the Pantanal, on the banks of Paraguay river, on the border of Brazil with that country. It is home to a little more than 15 thousand inhabitants, in which 80% of the population practically live from tourism and fishing. "The work, budgeted at 75 million, is expected to end in 2023" (Gamarra, 2022).

The central span of the bridge (cable-stayed part) will be 350 meters supported by four 120-meter-high pillars, 30 meters from the river level. The bridge will be 361 meters on the Brazilian side and 300 meters on the Paraguay side. Its length was resized to 1,310 meters and will have a width of 20.10 meters and four lanes, with the capacity to absorb the expected flow of daytime cargo handling and traffic of articulated vehicles. On the sides, pedestrian walkways and a bike path will be built (G1, 2022).

Porto Murtinho is 439 kilometres from the state capital, Campo Grande. It will attract an investment of more than R\$400 million, its most advanced project is the Murtinho River Docks, authorized by Antaq (National Waterway Transport Agency), where about R\$100 million will be invested in the construction of a solid bulk terminal for agricultural products, fertilizers, and inputs, with the capacity to handle more than 2.2 million tons per year. There is also the Porto Saladero project, which is still in its early stages. The initial forecast is to generate 450 direct and indirect jobs. The company has an area of five hectares on the Paraguay riverbanks, where the loading lines, three silos of 15 thousand tons each and a warehouse for 35 thousand tons of fertilizers will be built. The group already operates 3 other ports, 2 in Uruguay and 1 in Paraguay (Gamarra, 2022).

In an interview with G1 (2019), the mayor of Porto Murtinho said that the Bioceanic Route is already transforming the city. It has been attracting the interest of entrepreneurs to invest in the municipality. According to him, the Route is a complete transformation since the industries are arriving and along with them the development. "It is like we have won the lottery, because Porto Murtinho was a totally isolated, forgotten city and, suddenly, we are in the middle of a very important route that will transform world trade, and I am sure that in the coming years we will benefit from this award" (Interview of the mayor of Porto Murtinho With G1, 2019).

The corridor will have the potential to move US\$1.5 billion a year in exports of meat, sugar, soybean meal and leather to the Asian market and other countries through which the corridor will pass. This volume of resources represents more than a quarter of the total revenue from the state's exports last year, which was R\$5.6 billion (Interview of a member of the federation of industries of Mato Grosso do Sul with G1, 2019).

4 DISCUSSION

When considering the dividends of the implementation of the Bioceanic Route, Oliveira (2010), evidences the contradiction that, on the one hand, these projects of expansion of markets are considered factors of wealth, on the other hand, they generate poverty and exclusion wherever they take place, since not all people and social ranks are thought of or benefited from. "Several men and women are on the margins of development, and often do not even understand it" (Oliveira, 2010, p. 32).

Based on Oliveira (2010), one starts to wonder whether it is possible that the RILA is not just a route for expanding markets, but that it can favour all the populations involved, also including

the poorest and most vulnerable ones, in line with the UN 2030 Agenda, with regard mainly to SDGs #1, #3 and #4.

Reading the estimates made by bodies such as the Institute for Applied Research, IPEA (Barros et al., 2020) and the Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, ECLAC (2022), it is certain that agribusiness will benefit and profit from this venture. Today, about 60% of Mato Grosso do Sul's cargo is exported through Santos and Paranaguá ports; 70% of Mato do Grosso do Sul's exports are made by maritime modal and 30% by road. But when the meat from Mato Grosso do Sul arrives in Santos, to be exported to countries as Ecuador, Peru, and Colombia, it is subject to the availability of ships, which is exceptionally low for these destinations, generating a bottleneck for Brazilian exports. If the meat goes to Iquique, through the Road Corridor, it solves the problem, because there are ships available in the port and the reduction in costs by up to 40%. The export of Mato Grosso do Sul to China, Peru, Ecuador, and Chile/year is US\$300 million (CEPAL, 2022).

When you look at the figures, you see the importance of the RILA for this sector of Brazil's economy, since it streamlines and saves trade with Asian countries, Oceania, and the West Coast of the Americans. It may also be important for tourism, cultural integration, art, and crafts – provided that public authorities bring their municipal agendas in line with the UN Agenda.

What is discussed here is the need for this grandiose enterprise and all those who will profit from it to accomplish the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), otherwise it may even generate more economic growth for Mato Grosso and Mato Grosso do Sul States and further enrich the agribusiness owners, but it will be harmful to the environment and cause more social exclusion.

Investments in Porto Murtinho are important. The construction of Porto Saladero, which is still in its initial phase, will generate 450 direct and indirect jobs. The company has an area of five hectares on the Paraguay riverbanks, where the loading lines, three silos of 15 thousand tons each and a warehouse for 35 thousand tons of fertilizers will be built (Gamarra, 2022).

But one has to look at the negative externalities to try to overcome them. Starting with the installation site of the bridge, a place for fishing and tourism, with the aggravating factor that the population has low income and low education – reason the HDI of Porto Murtinho is low, since this indicator is formed by the composition of 3 other indicators: income, longevity, and education. One has to think about how to address some issues such as the problem brought to fishers, who will certainly not be able to carry out their jobs due to the construction work on the bridge on both banks of the Paraguay River; the CO₂ pollution, since there will be thousands of cars passing in both directions and the noise caused by cars, buses, and large trucks. The construction of Porto Saladero is another concern: "the company already has an area of five hectares in the Paraguay riverbanks, where the loading lines, three silos of 15 thousand tons each and a warehouse for 35 thousand tons of fertilizers will be built" (Gamarra, 2022).

It is necessary to train people and local workers, enabling them to take the jobs that will emerge in Porto Murtinho. If this training does not occur, the jobs (or at least the best ones) will be taken by professionals outside the municipality, not generate, in this way, local development. In this sense, schools, and universities, together with the city hall, need to develop public policies to train people in view of the new jobs.

RILA will allow exchanges with the neighbouring city of Carmelo Peralta and with other ones, bringing new meanings to local communities. However, the transit of people from various locations can bring other problems: the increase in prostitution, cargo theft, burglaries, not to

mention that there can be a “disorderly” migration to the City of Porto Murtinho, which usually happens to prosperous cities. The municipality is responsible for updating the comprehensive plan and solving the problem of basic sanitation, otherwise the river will become even more polluted. In this sense, municipal councils need to act, and the local population, active and vigilant, especially regarding the environmental issue. This means that training people also in Environmental Education help other sectors of the economy such as Tourism to develop. A polluted river and the destroyed Pantanal biome will not attract tourists.

With the construction of the bridge, it is estimated a growth in both transport (which is also one of the businesses linked to tourism) and other sectors, such as travel agency, accommodation, and tourist attractions. The bridge can be a facilitator in creating demand for road tourism in the attractions of Mato Grosso do Sul – for foreign tourists, as well as a gateway for Brazilian tourists to the other countries of the corridor (Asato; Gonçalves; Wilke, 2019).

For Asato, Gonçalves e Wilke (2019), the tourist commercialization of the route should benefit from generation Y – young people, single (individual) tourism – to senior tourism (the elderly), still with encouragement to other modalities: adventure tourism, for example. Event increments can also provide an increase in tourism towards the cities of the corridor, which will require the dissemination of a calendar of events within the route: gastronomic festivals, ecotourism and wine tourism packages, cultural tourism, contemplative tourism, and business.

The ideas of Asato; Gonçalves; Wilke (2019) are remarkably interesting, but if the environment is not well taken care of, the tourist will not come. Part of the population of Porto Murtinho, including small business owners, see the arrival of the project as a new factor of environmental degradation. The Bioceanic will bring with it new works linked to the Paraná Paraguay Waterway, affecting the health of the Paraguay River and its tributaries and, consequently, the activity that most generates the work and income in the region: tourist fishing. There is also the problem of the low level of education of artisanal fishers and “pilots” (outboard boat pilots who are great connoisseurs of rivers). “Our people are not qualified to participate in the construction of these ports, which I believe today is all mechanized, automated, with all the technology. How that pilot who has always lived fishing is going to make a living?” (Interview of tourism businessperson aguillera with Gamarra, 2022).

There should also be concerns about the Pantanal biome, which affects tourism activity. With only 0.01% of its area destined for soybean production, the Pantanal became a huge deposit of pesticide residues used in the crops to the north, in the Mato Grosso Plateau. The Pantanal is vulnerable precisely because of the condition that makes it unique: the waters that flood it annually carry pesticide residues from the region that uses the most pesticides in Brazil (Wenzel; Hofmeister; Papini, 2021).

The increase in soybean exports pushed the plantations even into preservation areas and made the crops come close to the springs that form the Pantanal. Cáceres, located in the southwest of Mato Grosso, is the gateway to the biome (a natural treasure considered a world heritage site by UNESCO). The rains that fall to the north make the sources of Paraguay, Sepotuba, and Cabaçal rivers swell. “Under natural conditions, this water would carry only the organic matter that serves as food for fish and fertilizer for plants. Currently, it also brings the poison used in soybean” (Wenzel; Hofmeister; Papini, 2021). It is not republican to profit from an economic activity, whose negative externalities when reaching the environment, in this case the waters of the Pantanal, cause collective damage. This goes against the SDGs and Brazilian legislation.

The attacks on nature are part of the same logic of not prioritizing life, with vulnerable populations being the most severely affected by environmental problems, the fishers of Porto Murtinho will be facing serious problems. Once they can no longer fish, they will be part of an even larger chain of unemployed and unskilled workers, exactly as it happened to rural workers, replaced by sophisticated agribusiness machines.

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is known that the impacts caused by CO₂ are harmful to the environment, which allows the authors to inquire even whether the road modal would be the most appropriate for RILA. But as it is already underway, this question would remain in the void. What matters is to adjust this project to the Sustainable Development Goals – to ensure that the only beneficiaries are not exactly the same ones. The agribusiness, which already has so many negative externalities, precisely because of deforestation practices and the use of poisons, can contribute to the improvement of the lives of the population of Porto Murtinho, by seeking to deter the attacks to the environment, and helping to preserve the Paraguay River.

The challenge is for this bioceanic corridor to be a catalyst for inclusive and environmentally sustainable development, understood in its various aspects discussed at the beginning of this study, and that the authorities, through their public policy agendas, in line with the UN 2030 Agenda, implement training programs for workers, so that they can work in the jobs that will emerge. The challenge for authorities and entrepreneurs is to extend the benefits of the RILA beyond the already consolidated export sectors: soybean, cellulose, and traditional meat; allowing greater competitiveness for exports – creating opportunities to promote intra-regional trade (which has been declining in recent years), developing value-added regional production chains, so that Brazil stops exporting only commodities. It is hoped that the Bioceanic Corridor can also foster art and culture, and harmony among the peoples of South America.

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