

Feasibility of Sustainable Development - the local scale approach:
Jurumirim Hydrographic Basin, Angra dos Reis, RJ, Brazil.

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This research aims to apply participatory methods to attain Sustainable Development (SD). A local scale approach is imperative to facilitate community perception of problems, its engagement in scenarios analyses, and consensus decisions. The Jurumirim Hydrographic Basin was chosen because: the Atlantic Rainforest covers more than 60% of its 68km², mainly on the highest and steepest slopes, and it has the largest mangrove area of the county, still well preserved; there are small villages, some week-end rural residences, small farms, and some cattle ranches. The basin is crossed by two paved roads, many gravel-roads, one railroad and energy transmission lines, that favor local unsustainabilities.

The methodology to be tested in the basin follows four steps: 1) diagnosis of the physical aptitude of the basin, assessed by overlaying maps of geology, relief, soil types, agriculture suitability, hydrologic, mineral and scenary resources, and vulnerability to natural and man-induced hazards; 2) identification of community requests and potentialities to attain the SD of the basin; 3) definition of the geo-economic and socio-politic affinities of the basin ecosystems.

Summarizing the knowledge recently acquired in these first steps, preliminary scenarios of SD for the basin will be produced, after discussions with community leaders and local entrepreneurs. These scenarios should end up as a local consensus, through direct discussions with the communities. To dovetail the local SD basin scenario into the municipal scale, it will be submitted to broader debates with the municipal leaders and managers.