

GLOBAL, LOCAL AND COMPARATIVE CONVERSATIONS ON THE GOVERNANCE OF CITY REGIONS

Seminar One: Insights from Brazil



METHOD

- The intention is to *refract* a discussion on our own context through the histories and experiences of elsewhere
- **Separate narratives of different places** which explore broadly common themes but only comparative in a ‘permissive’ sense (no *a priori* framework)
- The **comparison is assembled through a process of mutual adjustments** over an extended period with outcomes not always reflecting initial intentions
- **Inductive** as it *begins* with the case-studies rather than the existing global literature (but becoming more iterative now)

POSITIONS

- The city region is **one of the scales at which collective action is required** but a scale which is **especially complex** given the disjuncture between its footprint and formal administrative jurisdictions
- Governance challenge is largely about **mobilising or organising connectivity between social actors** to address territory wide concerns
- For this, **formal institutions do matter (they enable and constrain) but connectivity may take multiple forms** (formal and informal), and success is shaped by multiple factors (e.g. social capital, power relations, historically conditioned local cultures, levels of trust, and the nature of embeddedness within larger systems)

BRICS

- A tactical choice of a diverse grouping of countries with different narratives across which academic networks have evolved (but outside of the global North and so supports globally polycentric scholarship)
- One enticing commonality however is the **recent histories of far-reaching transitions** in each country
- The BRICS also offer **considerable weight in terms of urban development** and city-regions
- Finally, do the global geographic starting points actually matter in terms of conclusions?

Mega Cities in 2025

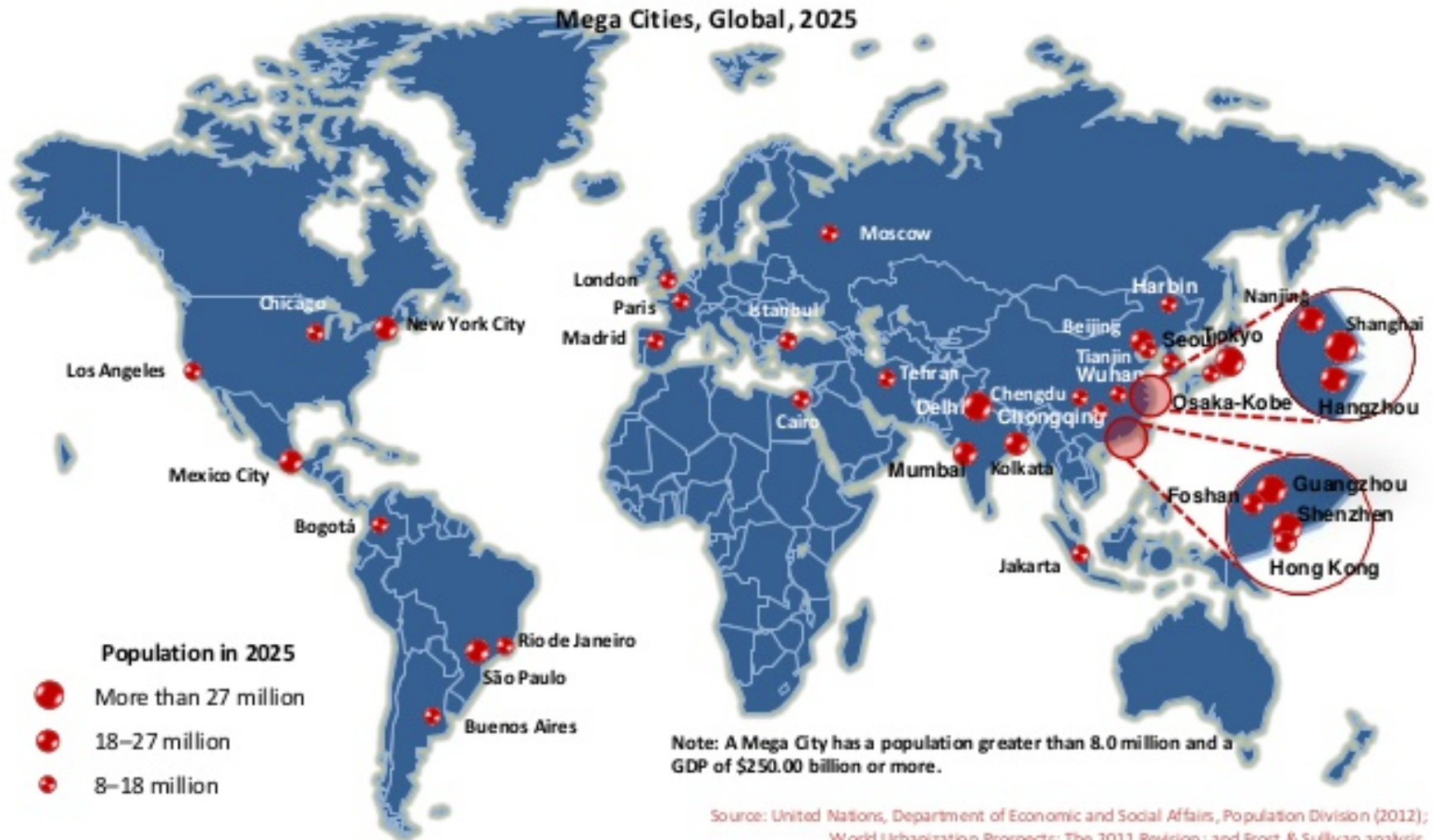
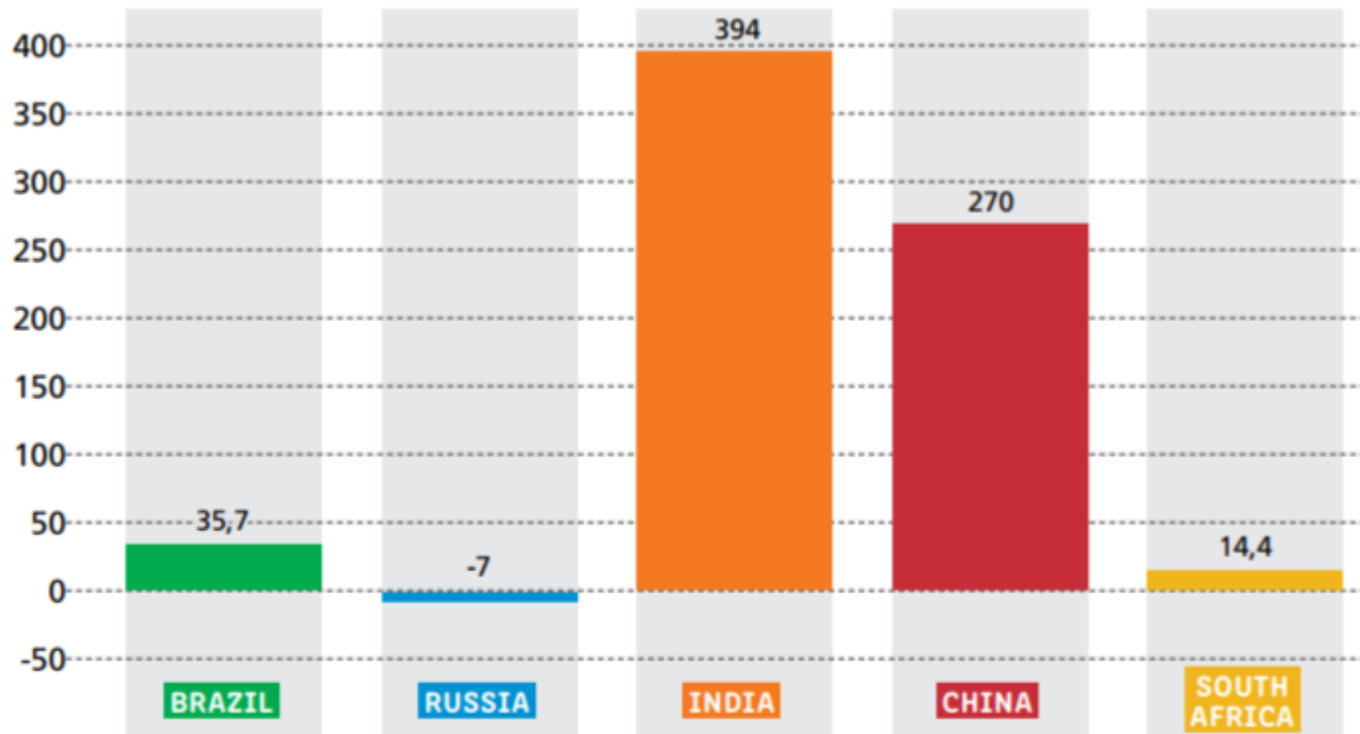


Figure 1.1: Anticipated urban population change in millions for BRICS countries, 2015-2050



Source: UN Population Division, 2016

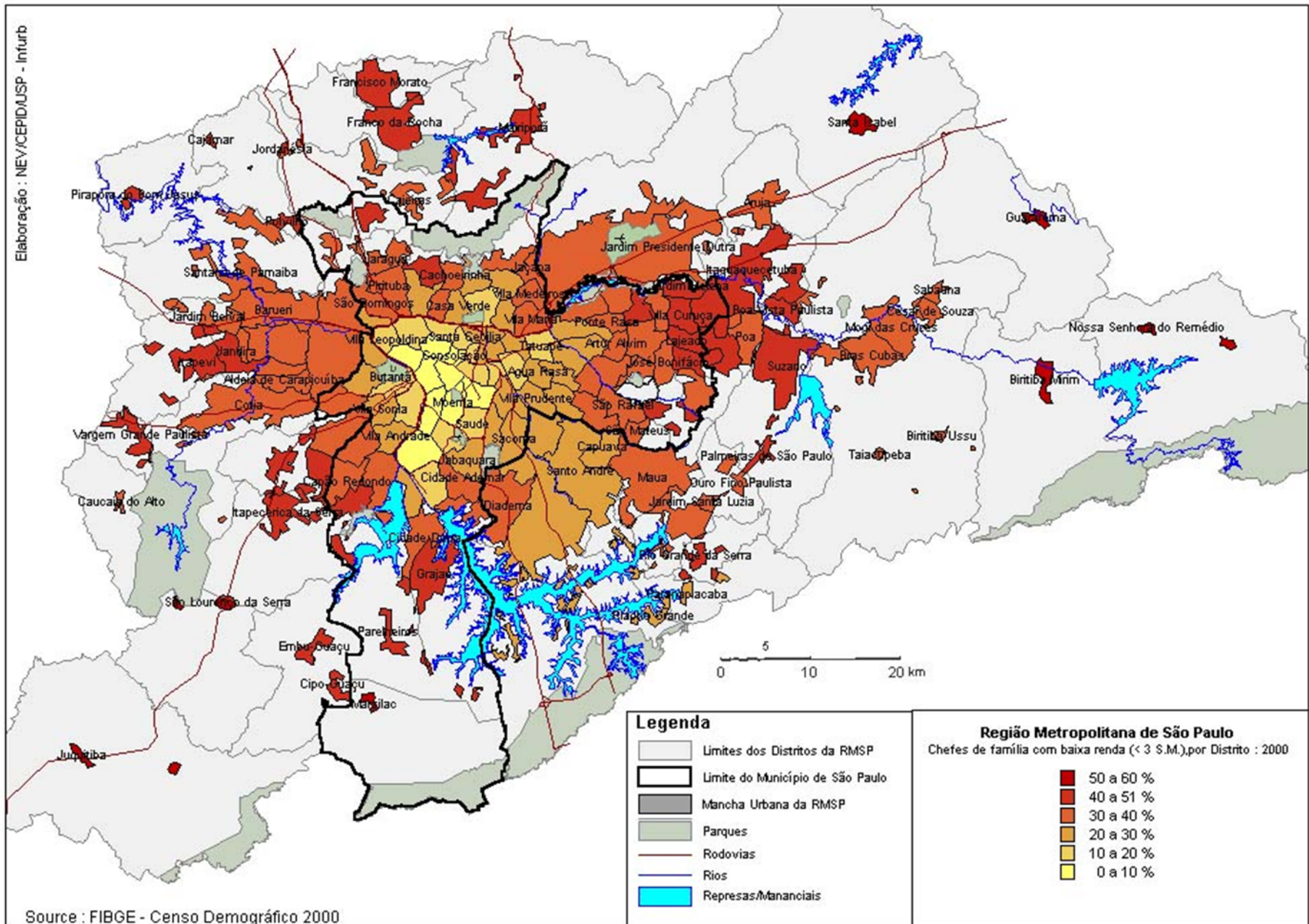
Source: SACN and Wits (2017) BRICS Cities: Facts and Analysis

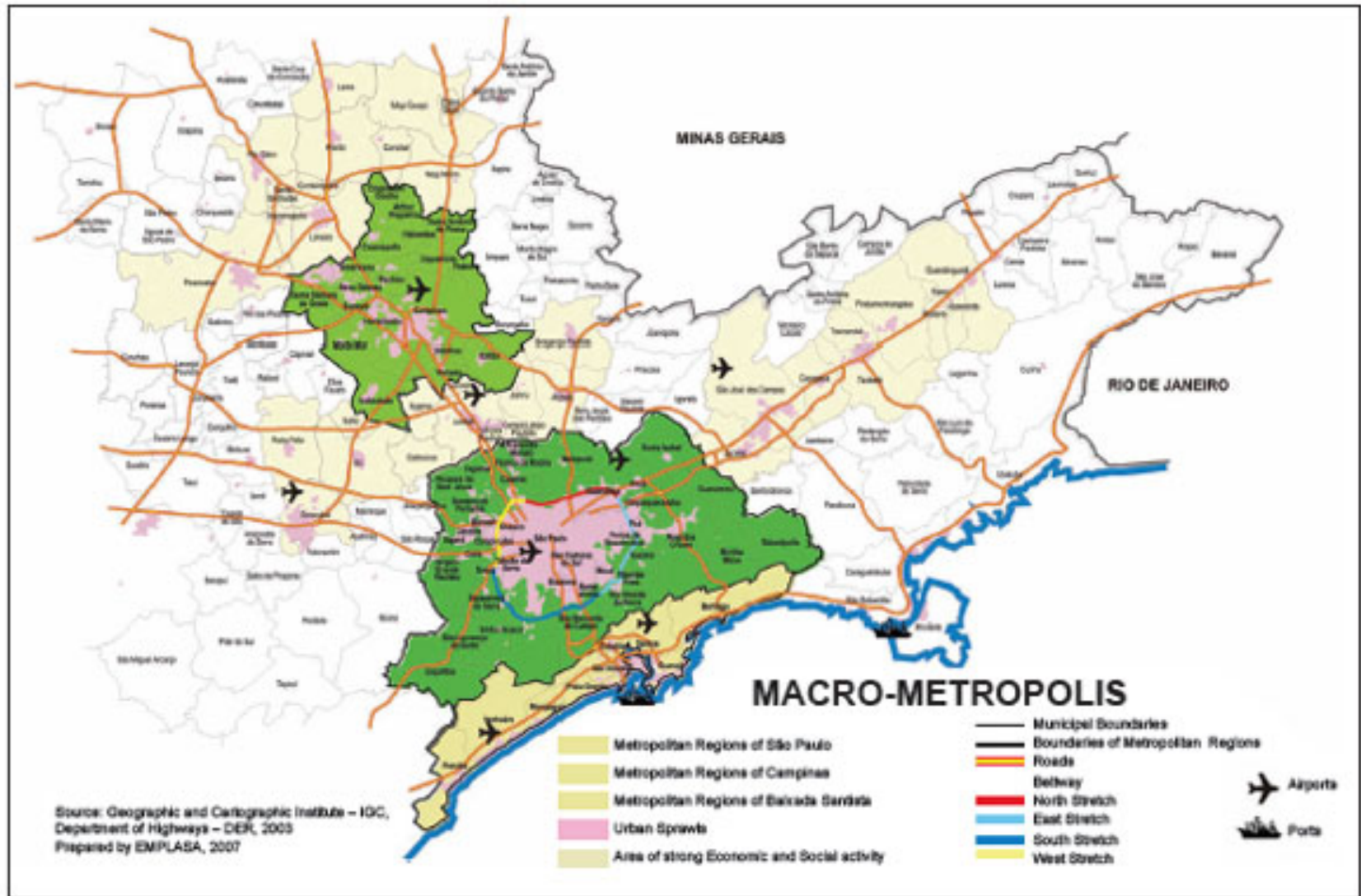
DEFINING CITY-REGIONS

“city-regions ought to be conceptualized as **contingent products of practical acts of political construction** and, therefore, as necessarily variable according to political interests and thus indeterminate territorial formations”
(Jonas & Ward, 2007)

“There is **no single, stable, and unitary understanding of what a city-region is**, but, rather, the making of city-regions needs to be performed...” (*Ibid*)

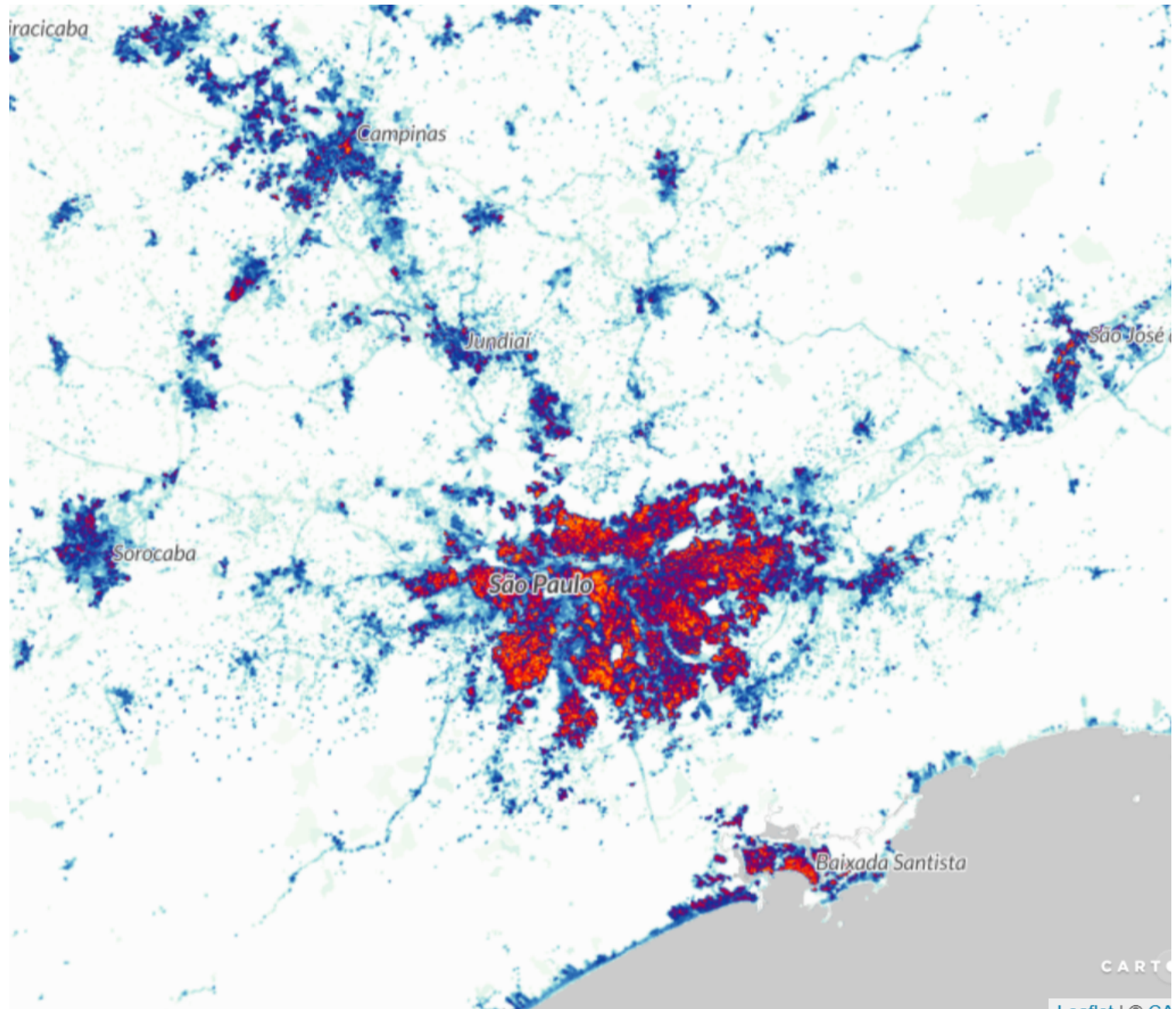
Metropolitan Agglomeration





Source: Emplasa. Available at: <<http://www.emplasa.sp.gov.br.htm>>.

Map 1 – Macro-metropolis of São Paulo



Source: <http://luminocity3d.org>

ALL TRIPS TO WORK: AFRICAN RESPONDENTS
MOBILITY PATTERNS IN THE GAUTENG CITY-REGION, SOUTH AFRICA

GCRO QUALITY OF LIFE SURVEY 2013

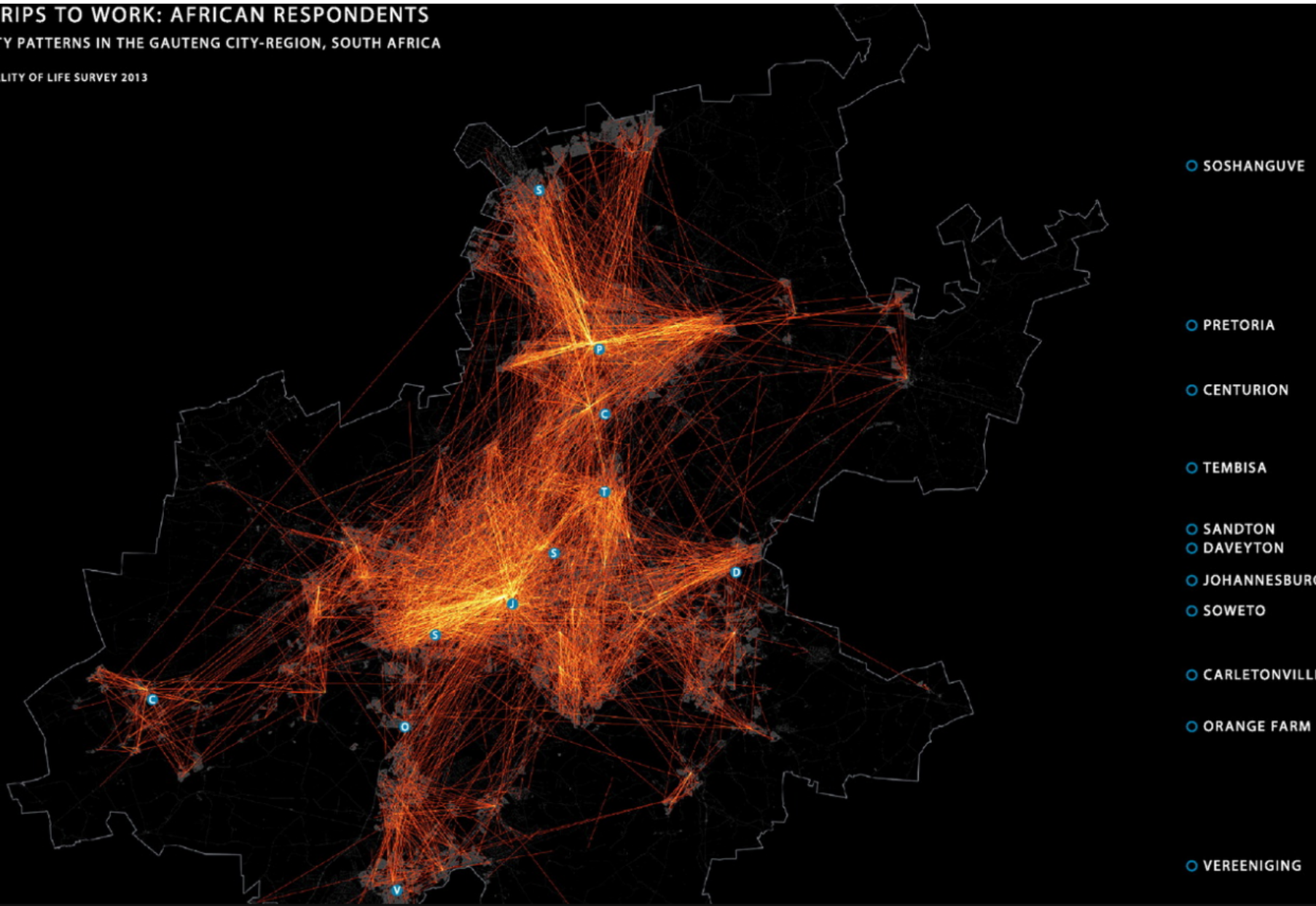


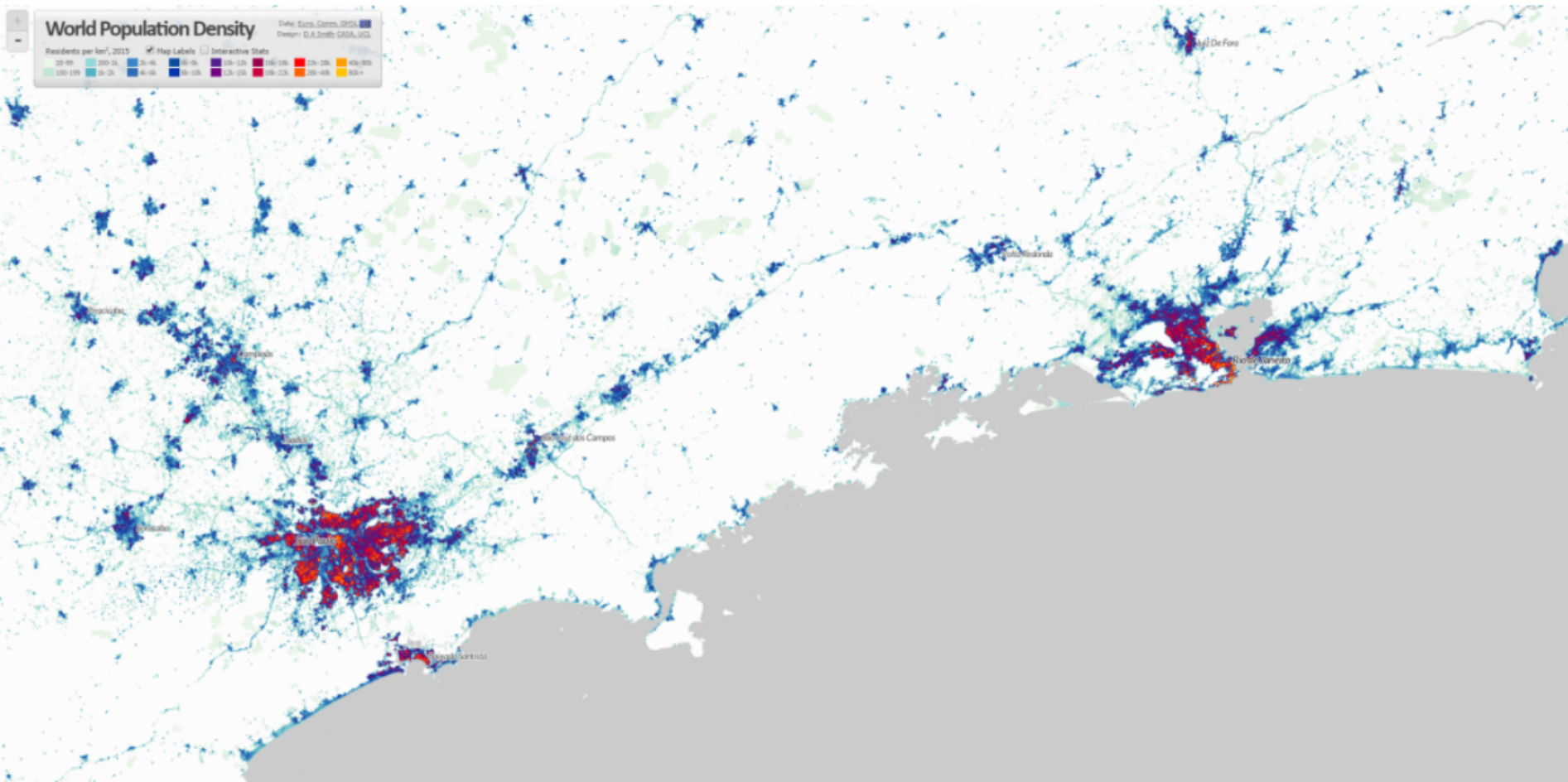
Image of Gauteng City Region produced by GCRO

SOUTH AFRICAN RESEARCH CHAIR IN SPATIAL ANALYSIS AND CITY PLANNING

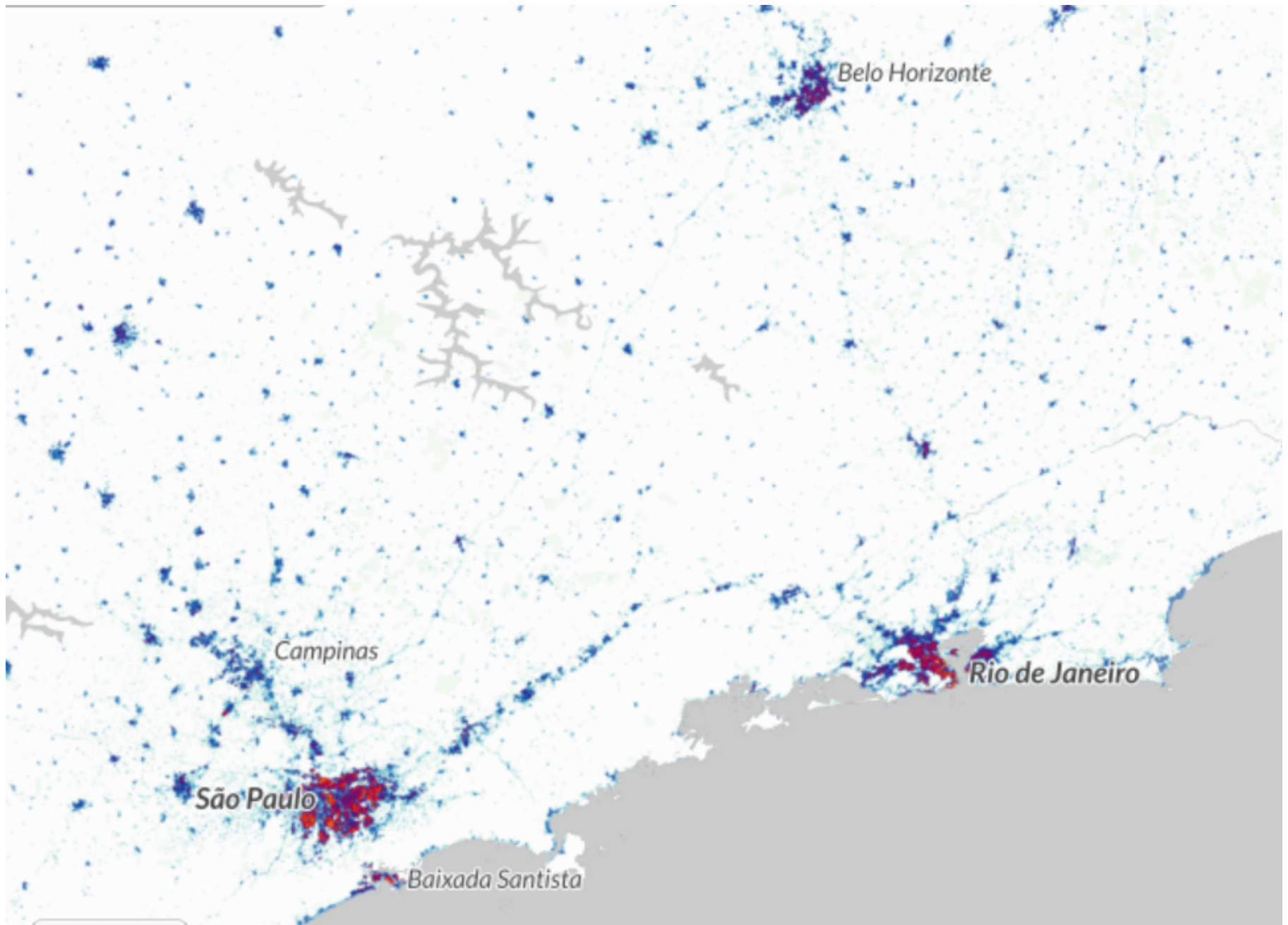
The City Cluster



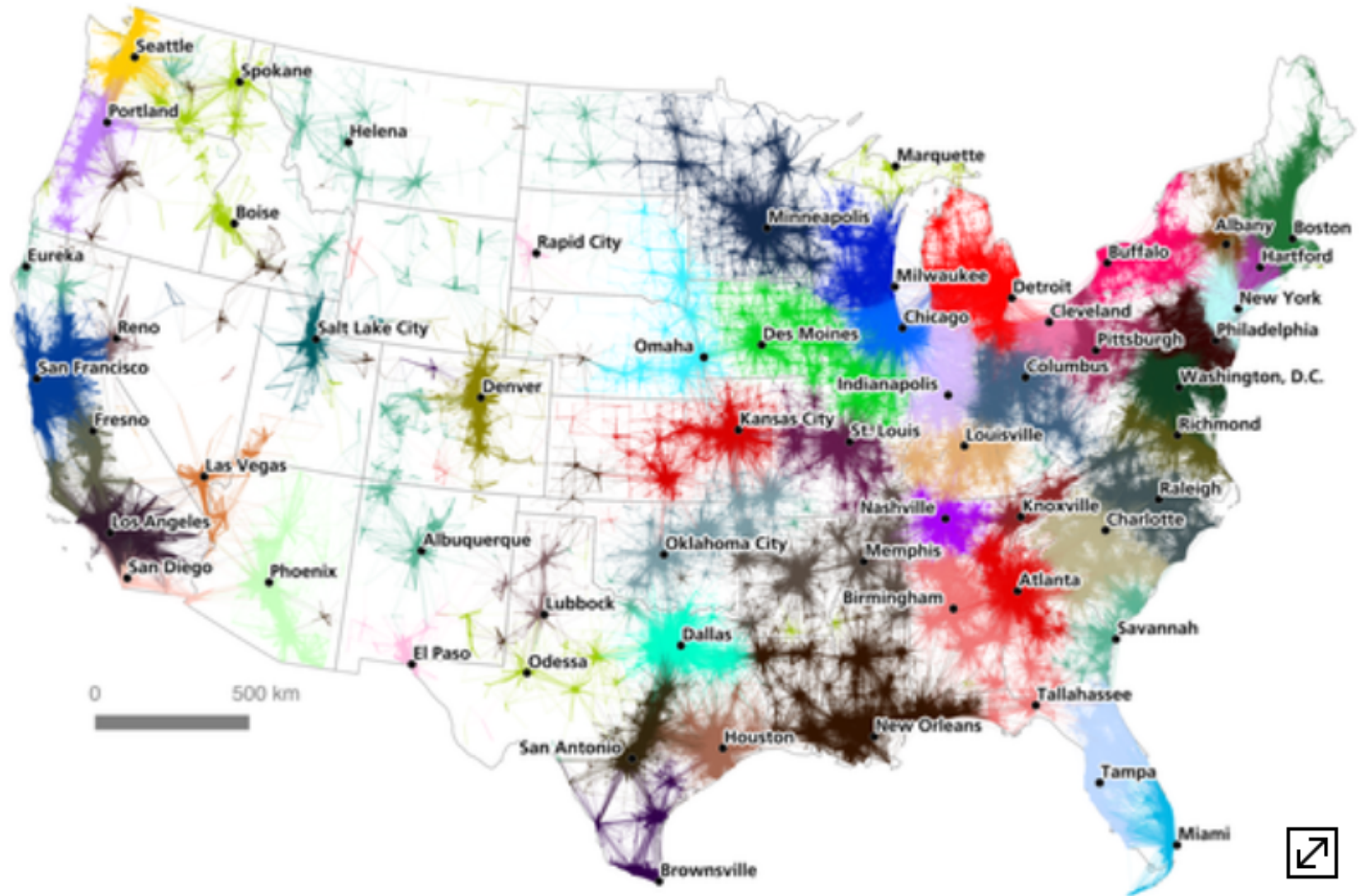
Source: National Geographic



Source: <http://luminocity3d.org>

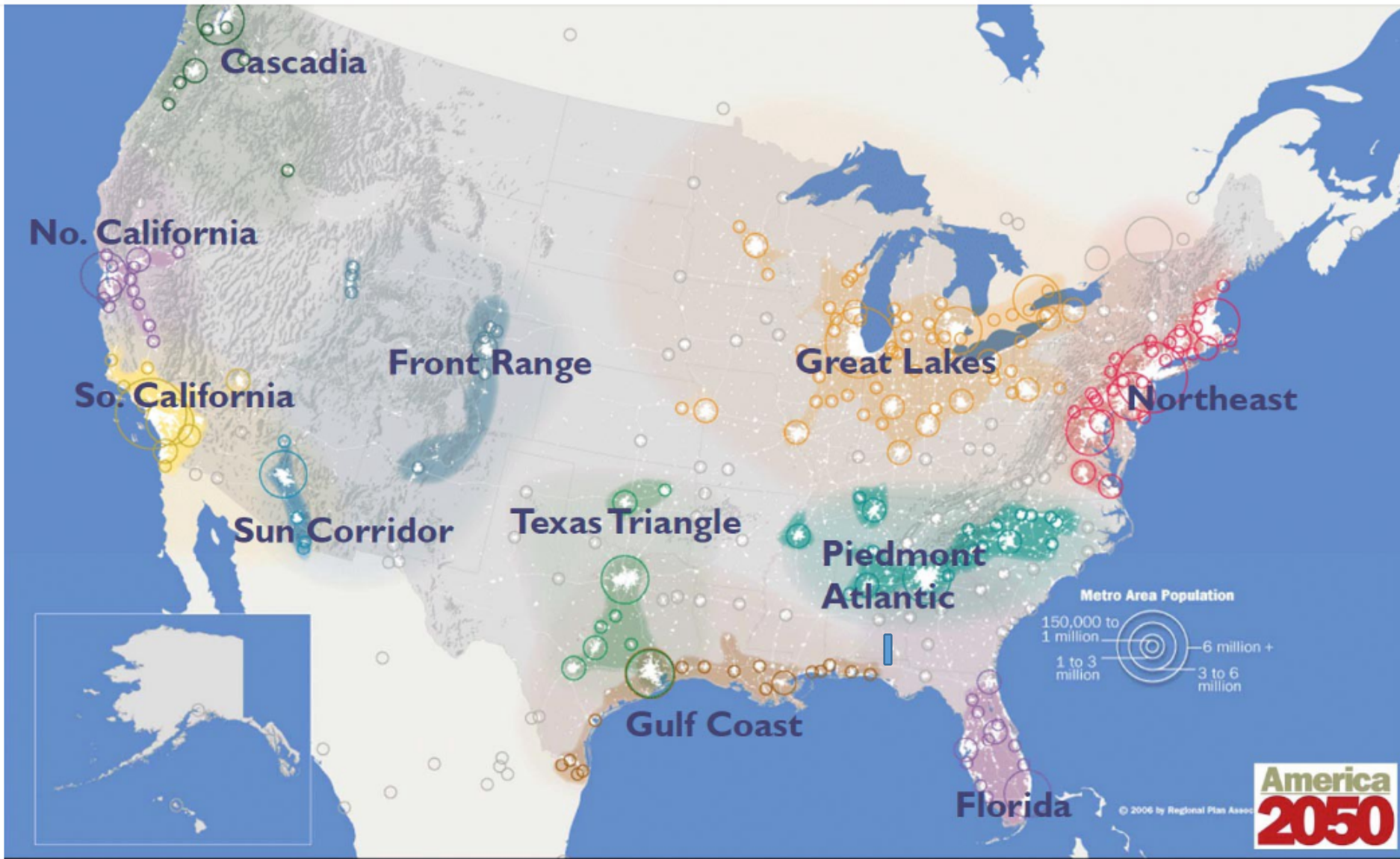


Source: <http://luminocity3d.org>



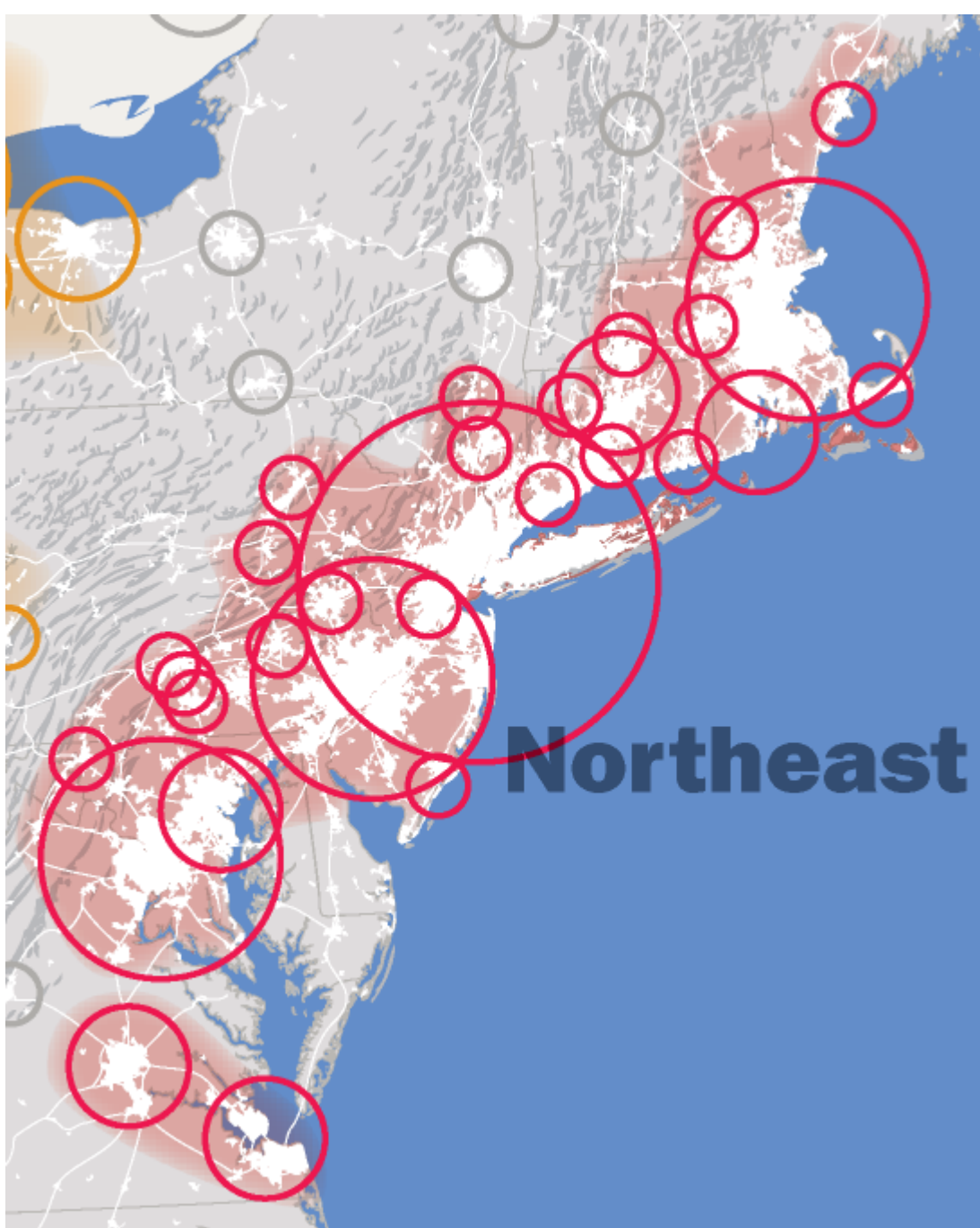
DASH NELSON G, RAE A (2016) AN ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY OF THE UNITED STATES: FROM COMMUTES TO MEGAREGIONS.

A commuter flow-based regionalization of the United States.



Source: America 2050

Source: America 2050



KNOWLEDGE INFRASTRUCTURE ON CITY-REGIONS IN BRAZIL

- Observatorio das Metrópoles
(<http://www.observatoriodasmetrolopes.net>)
- EMPLASA (www.emplasa.sp.gov.br) and other metropolitan-level structures
- Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE) has an urban portal (www.ibge.gov.br; <https://mapas.ibge.gov.br/>)
- The formal role that universities play in providing a knowledge infrastructure for regions (e.g. Federal University of ABC)

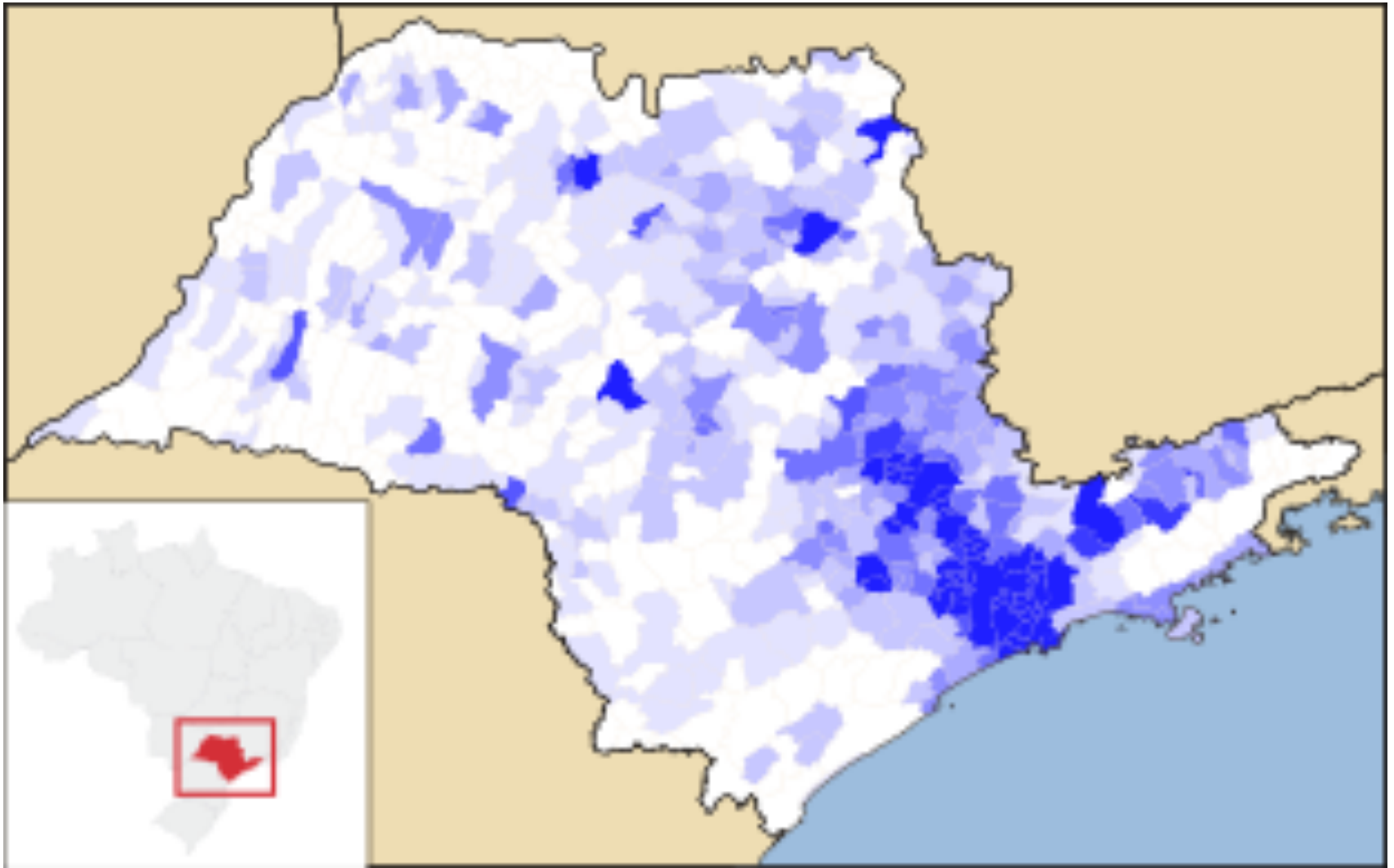
BRAZIL'S COMPLEX 'DECENTRALISED FEDERALISM'

- An **extremely complex constitutional democracy** with power divided across three levels with varying government practices across an extensive territory (27 states, 5500 municipalities)
- **Historical swings between high levels of centralism and strong localism**, with the current tendency towards the latter.
- A **curious combination** of modern constitutionalism *and* clientelism and patronage (*coronelismo*); and of legalism *and* civil society activism
- **High levels of political fragmentation**, fluid inter-party associations, corporatism, and a tendency towards personal politics

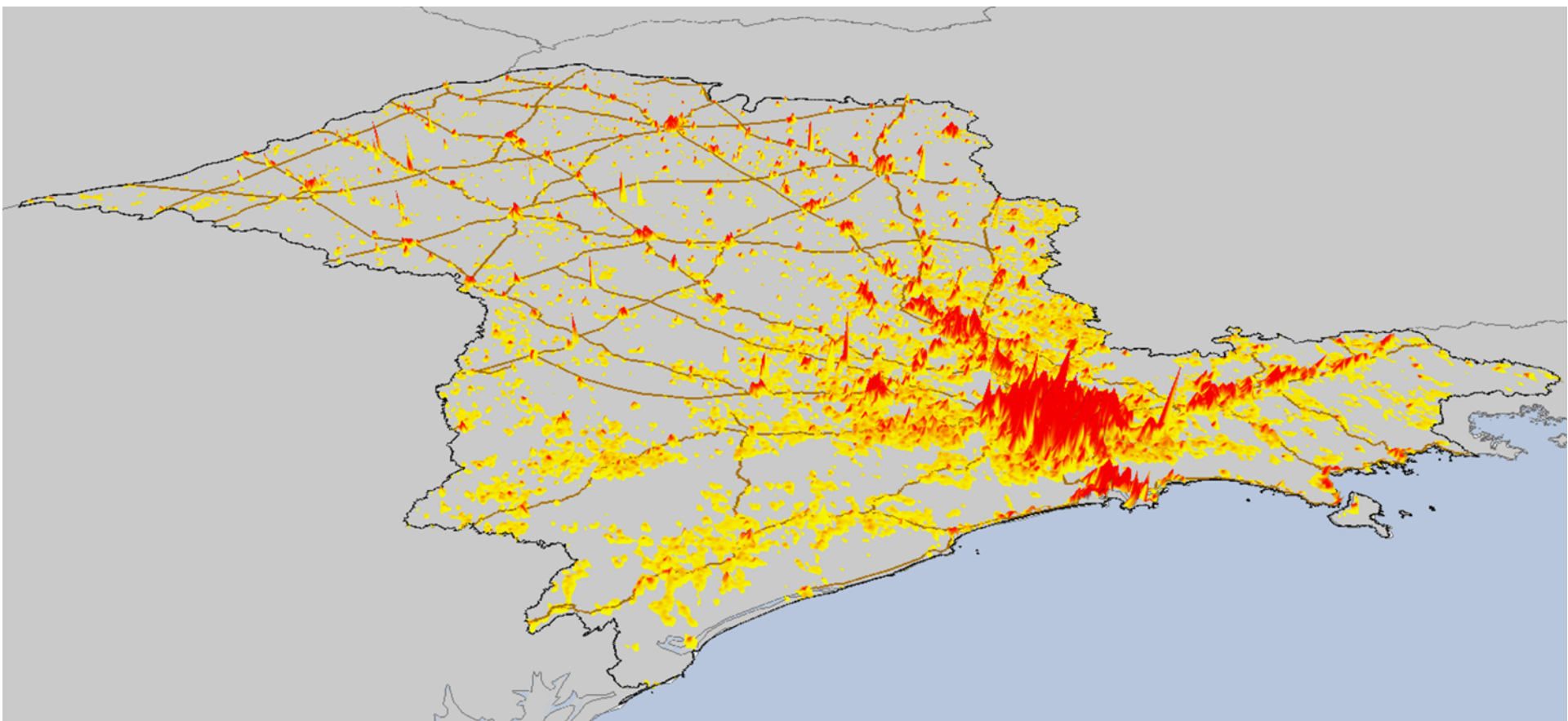


Source:
Wikipedia

Population densities in the municipalities of the State of Sao Paulo



Source: Wiki



Source: IBGE, 2016

THE MAKINGS OF BRAZIL'S 'DECENTRALISED FEDERALISM'

- The modern federation is a **historical compromise** between the conservative regional oligarchs and the modernisers in the geographic core
- 20th Century history is a shifting **history of changing balance** between these forces
- The collapse of the (coffee-based) agrarian economy in the 30s shifted power to the centre (Vargas' centralising presidency)
- During the period of democracy (1945-64) there was still a **strong modernising, nation-building drive** but the deeply embedded regional structures were accommodated

AUTHORITARIAN MODERNISATION

- A poorly managed populist left-wing government in the early 60s provoked social conflict and economic crisis
- An initially popular military coup in 1964 brought repressive, centralising rule until 1985: a **regime of “authoritarian modernisation”**
- Technocratic reforms brought system efficiencies and restored growth – **the ‘Brazilian miracle’** (1967-'73)
- But, centralising rule **lacked ‘capabilities for adaptation’** and the global crisis of '73 brought the ISI growth model to an end
- The regime tried to respond through a process of ‘controlled liberalisation’ but the regime split and the **momentum shifted to civil society**

DEMOCRACY AND LOCALISM

- Democracy was officially restored in 1985 and a progressive new national constitution was adopted in 1988 with a strong emphasis on **'local autonomy'**/**'autarkic localism'** in reaction to the history of centralising dictatorship
- **Local government became even more profuse and fragmented** in the post-constitution years (an additional 1000+ municipalities created through processes of 'emancipation')
- Notwithstanding democratic gains, there was "a **severe crisis of governance** [with] clientelistic degeneration and civic cynicism as morbid symptoms" (1985-'93) (Melo, 1995)

AN EVOLVING FEDERATION

- The emphasis on ‘local autonomy’ set **limits to coordinated action across city regions** and worked often to preserve traditional clientelist practices
- It also set the scene for the infamous ‘fiscal wars’ of the 1990s
- However, the constitution did not rigidly fix the nature of the federation, allowing for **ongoing evolution in federal arrangements**
- Selcher called for a **“more complex federation”** than the writers of the constitution imagined and this has indeed gradually evolved
- President Cardoso’s *Plano Real* brought economic stability from 1993 but austerity measures also led to greater inequality (and urban stress)

RENEWAL AND CRISIS

- The PT took power in 2002 with a model of “**administrative social redistribution**” bolstered by strong economic growth
- The PT pursued a policy of ‘**strategic moderation**’ in power but there were a range of key redistributive programmes (e.g. *Bolsa Familia*)
- The PT’s model of Brazil did in fact become “become *less* unequal and *less* precarious for the poor, with measurable declines in poverty, social vulnerability, crime, and gender inequality” (Marques, 2016)
- But **persisting logics of patronage persisted** (feeding into corrupt practice), the economy weakened, civil society remobilised, and the model faltered by 2013

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

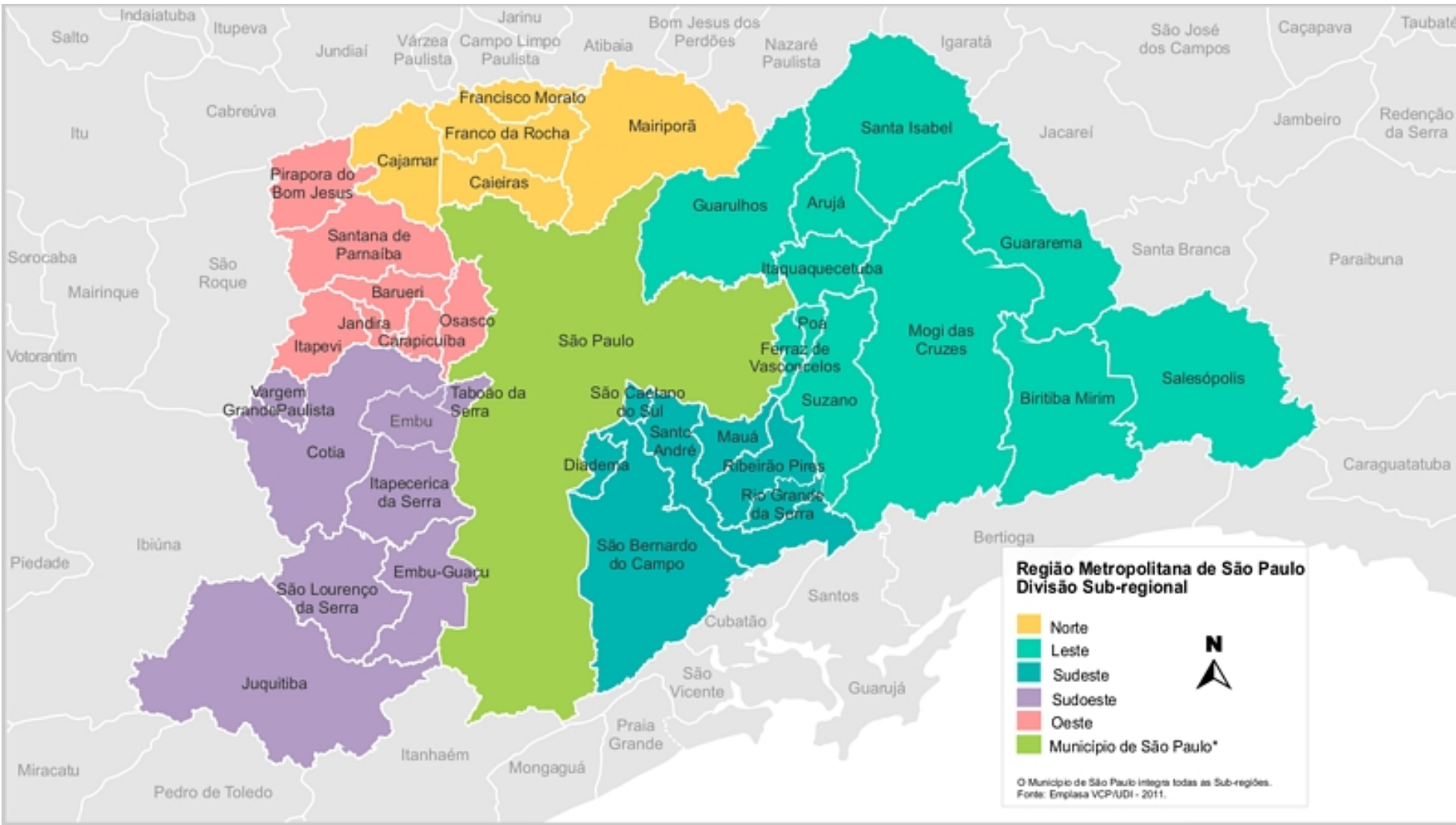
- Brazil's industrial growth path brought millions to the city it was a **low cost model of urbanisation** with migrants having to find their own way in the city (often in *favelas*)
- Mega cities emerged with a dysfunctional urban form and function, without a workable institutional frame
- There was historically a **comprehensive neglect of local government** as regional oligarchs jealously held power, with municipalities often functioning as an urbanised form of “*rural coronelismo*”.
- Democratic era localism has empowered local government (with extremely uneven capacity) but has entrenched traditional practices in many places

DIFFERENT LOCAL POLITICAL OUTCOMES

- **Sao Paulo** is a dynamic, complex, heterogeneous city with a finely tuned balance of interests with power oscillating between 'left' and 'right'
- **Rio de Janeiro** suffered the enormous trauma of losing capital city status in the 60s and only recovered from the 2000s – old style leftist politics morphed into technocratic management (smart cities) and a focus on symbolic projects
- **Belo Horizonte** is a city known for *avant garde* modernism in a city notorious for the rule of conservative oligarchs – compromises are struck and coalition politics has become the dominant mode
- Recent convergence with **right wing populists now in power in all three cities**

THE PREDICAMENT OF THE CITY-REGION

- City-region governance is a key predicament of Brazil's 'decentralised federalism': Autarkic localism militates against joint action to address problems that are experienced at regional scale
- While the city-regions have **large core municipalities**, they are **surrounded by many small municipalities** and have complex arrangements for sharing power with the states and federal agencies (often with different parties controlling the three levels)
- Souza (2003) asks the question differently: *“how can we manage a political system where power is at the same time divided and shared within the same territorial space?”*



Source: EMLASA

Região Metropolitana



LEGENDA

LOCALIDADES	VIAS DE CIRCULAÇÃO	PONTOS DE REFERÊNCIA	LIMITES
● Capital	— Rodovia Pavimentada (Pista Dupla)	⚓ Porto, Terminal	▭ Regiões de Governo
○ Sede de município	— Rodovia Pavimentada (Pista Simples)	✈ Aeroporto, Campo de Pouso	HIDROGRAFIA
○ Sede de distrito	— Rodovia Não Pavimentada	⚓ Estação de Ferro	— Curso d'água
○ Outras localidades	— Estradas de Ferro	⚓ Favela	● Lago, Laguna
	--- Metropolitano	⚓ Usina Hidroelétrica, Termelétrica, Nuclear	— Alagado
	— Barcas e Aerobarcos		

“The political elites appear incapable of mobilizing themselves around an institution-building project that takes advantage of the productive forces and the potential concentrated in the Brazilian complex, rich and diversified metropolitan system, a project that could avoid the environmental and social disasters seen today in most of Brazil’s metropolitan regions” (Ribeiro and dos Santos Junior, 2010)

ORIGINS

- Mega cities began to emerge from the 1950s and as these spilled over administrative boundaries, the concept of a metropolitan agglomeration gradually evolved
- Economic crisis from the 1970s provokes metropolitan restructuring with the decentralisation of industry to low cost spatial margins
- The metropolitan core upgraded to high end tertiary activities with industry-led growth in smaller cities – “metropolitan involution”



Image – 1953 as reproduced in Tavares 2012

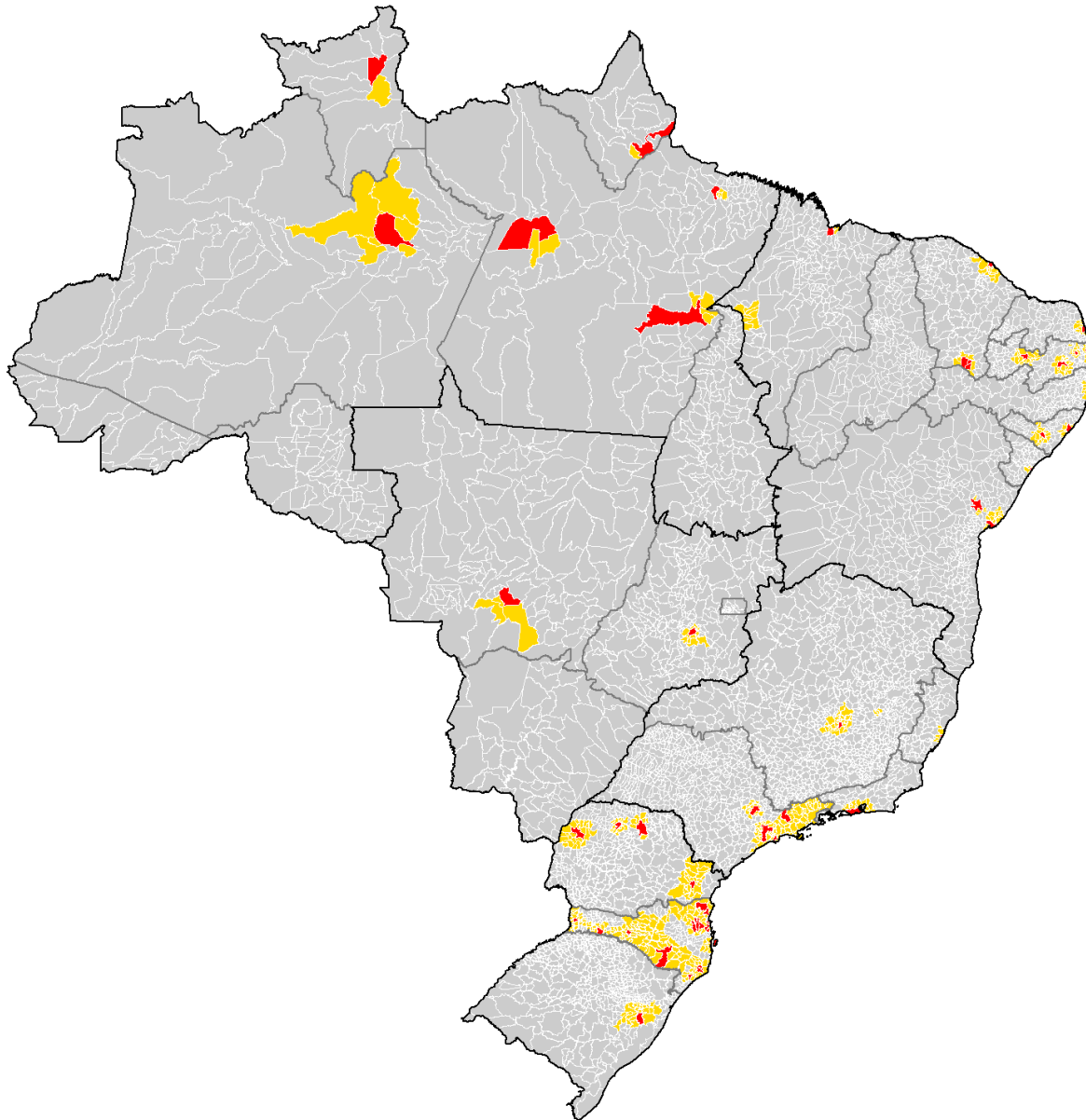
A 'TECHNICAL FIX' UNDER MILITARY RULE

- In the 1970s , **8 metropolitan regions were designated** under the management of State Governors
- A broad **institutional framing** was set up– Deliberative Board, Consultation Board and Planning Agency (authoritarian practice undermining local government with the Governor appointing Boards)
- There was however some support for metropolitan structures as metro **designation was linked to financial flows** from the National Housing Bank and other Federal Agencies ('authoritarian developmentalism')

LOCALISM AND THE 'HOLLOWING OUT' OF METROPOLITAN GOVERNANCE

- Metropolitan government became associated in the popular mind with authoritarian rule with ideas of 'democracy' and 'localism' closely intertwined
- States were given the power to designate metropolitan regions and did so 'willy nilly' for reasons of status, and the vague hope of future funding flows (from 9 to 43 regions)
- However, metropolitan planning structures (surviving from the military era) were either shut down or downgraded
- Metropolitan regions and their governance described as "dead letters" (Souza, 2003)
- The famous *Statute of the City* (2002) made no reference to metro regions

49 DESIGNATED 'METRO REGIONS'



Source: Wikipedia commons free media repository

TENTATIVE RE-EMERGENCE OF A METRO AGENDA

- An increasing **recognition of the limits to autonomous localism** (fiscal wars, need to coordinate water, transport, energy etc.)
- A **timid re-appearance of the metropolitan agenda** in the 2000s with some state legislation for metro structures
- The sudden arrival of the **Statute of the Metropolis (2015)** hopes of new “inter-federative” arrangements but also new fears from municipalities
- The Statute requires that States legislate for **new deliberative and technical metropolitan structures** which includes civil society, and gives three years for the preparation of Metropolitan Plans

THREE APPROACHES (WITH HYBRIDS)

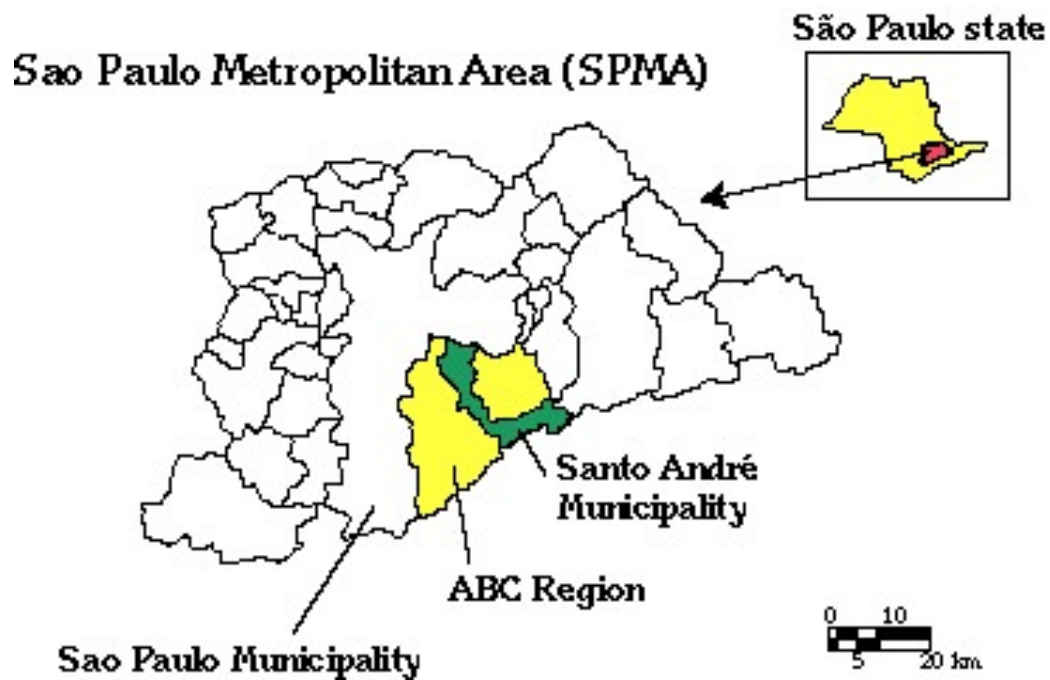
While metropolitan governance in Brazil is still fragile and contested, there are at least two significant emergent approaches:

- 1) **Voluntary cooperation between fragmented municipalities** (e.g. ABC Region of Greater Sao Paulo)
- 2) **Democratisation and reworking of historical structures** of governance through institutional reforms (with a focus on deliberative action between municipalities, state governments and civil society) (e.g. Belo Horizonte Metropolitan Region)
- 3) **Coordination when required** (ad hoc, sectoral and special purpose initiatives)

VOLUNTARY COOPERATION

- In the 1980s the Governor of SP promoted inter-municipal collaboration as a way of **financial pooling** at a time when federal and state resources were sparse.
- By 2001, **almost one-half of Brazil's 5500+ municipalities were involved in some form of inter-municipal collaboration** (health and education services, waste management, housing, sanitation)
- However, there were **very few examples of inter-sectoral collaboration** (the ABC Region of Greater SP being the famous example)

THE CASE OF THE ABC (SUB) REGION



Source: Wikimedia commons

ABC REGION

- 2.7 million people in 7 municipalities (within a region of 22 million in 39 municipalities)
- From the 1950s, the sub-region developed as **strong (working-class) identity** as the centre of Brazil's motor manufacturing industry
- A **labour struggle** emerged from the 70s with the region giving birth to Brazil's labour federation and to the PT
- **Industrial decline in the 80s brought the municipalities together in collective action** which was formalised in the ABC Inter-municipal Cooperation Agreement in 1990

THE INTER-MUNICIPAL CONSORTIUM

- The Consortium had a **champion in an “organic intellectual”** – the Mayor of Santo André, Celso Daniel (but a fragile legal basis)
- **Seven municipalities having equal voting rights**, but financial contributions proportional to tax income
- Initial focus on the economic crisis with the Consortium brokering three way deals between government, labour and business
- Political tensions between Mayors after 1993 and antagonism from Federal government left **informal channels and civil society to sustain the initiative**
- **Restoration after the 1997 local elections** and strong support from new State Governor

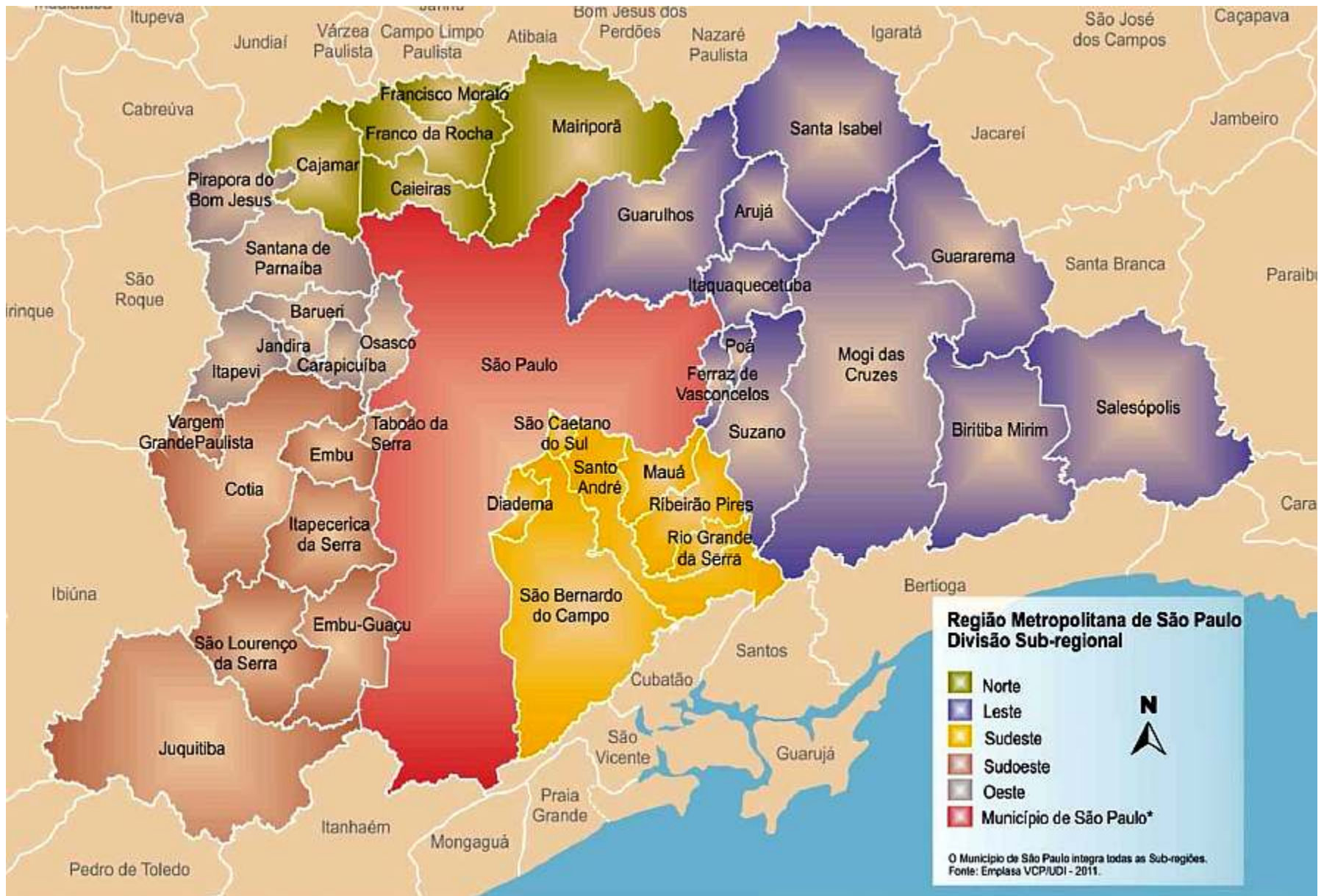
THE CONSORTIUM'S UNEVEN HISTORY CONTINUED

- In 1997 a **Regional Chamber** was set up to support the Consortium with state government, universities, business and social movements
- The Chamber negotiated “**regional agreements**” ratified by the Consortium
- **Crisis in the early 2000s** with the assassination of Celso and the death of the Governor but supportive Federal government under Lula
- PT government gave formal recognition with **2005 Law on Inter-Municipal Consortia** but local weakness

CONSORTIUM REVIVES

- A **new champion** in Mayor of São Bernardo do Campo, Luiz Marinho who plays the role of inter-governmental broker (brings and aerospace cluster, new airport, and federal university to ABC)
- Consortium expands **into a range of sectoral and inter-sectoral initiatives** but its main role is to articulate a sub-regional voice within processes underway at federal, state and metropolitan level.
- The Consortium receives national and international attention and is **replicated in other parts of the Greater Sao Paulo Region**

Life brings experience and contacts, and for many years I was the union president responsible for coordinating the workers' negotiation board with the companies and the government. I was also president of the Unified Workers' Central (CUT), then labour minister and social security minister during the Lula administrations. President Lula lives in Sao Bernardo, too, which helps the process, and President Dilma Rousseff was the chief of staff while I was minister of social security. We establish a network of relationships throughout life and I believe I have built up strong credibility over time. That has helped me maintain stronger relationships based on mutual trust (Marinho in 2015 interview with *The Guardian*)



Source: EMLASA

ASSESSING THE APPROACH

STRENGTHS

- The rules of the game are pre-established and respected with long term stability in the arrangements
- The ABC consortium works because the municipalities need each other (collective voice)
- Dedicated professional/admin support and sustained financial basis
- Knowledge base provided by Federal University of the ABC

LIMITATIONS

- Core municipality of SP is not part of the consortium with no obvious gains for SP to be had in collaborating
- Uneven collaborations in different sectors across the municipalities
- Successful replication may be difficult given the specific identity and history of ABC
- With the transaction costs of coordination it is difficult to move beyond a sub-regional level

APPROACH TWO: REWORKING AND DEMOCRATISATION OF HISTORICAL STRUCTURES

- The military regime had created a framework for metropolitan **governance** which was undemocratic and faced a legitimacy crisis
- Some structures nevertheless survived as residues of the past (e.g. EMPLASA)
- In the 2000s a few states/ municipalities **negotiated to democratise and rework these structure** (esp. Minas Gerais and Sao Paulo)
- **The Statute of the Metropolis, 2015**, provides a nationwide framework for doing this but legal challenges expected

THE CASE OF BELO HORIZONTE

- The previous metropolitan agency, PLAMBEL, was not entirely discredited as it provided “some room [in the 1980s] for alternative thinking” (Costa)
- **In 2004 the State Constitution was amended** to allow for representation of municipal government and civil society in metropolitan structures and a participatory process to debate the new form of metropolitan governance
- **A new collaboratively produced State Law in 2006** a *Metropolitan Assembly*, a *Deliberative Council* and an *Agency for Metropolitan Development*
- **State and municipalities are equal partners in the metro structures** with civil society holding the balance of power

SHAPING THE METROPOLITAN VISION

- In 2009, a **participatory plan-making process** was initiated by these new/reworked structures
- Notable was the notion of *cidadão metropolitano* (“metropolitan citizens”), with the plan concerned with creating a sense of rights and obligations of citizenship at the metropolitan scale.
- Various **coalitions of participants** were formed to articulate positions in the planning process such as the *Frente pela Cidadania Metropolitana* (‘Metropolitan Citizen Front’).
- The process involved around 3000 registered participants, and 600 institutions of which over 300 were from civil society.

ASSESSMENT

STRENGTHS

- A mechanism that structures a partnership between state and municipal government
- A formal mechanism to sustain participation from civil society
- A local culture that supports both collaboration and innovation
- A knowledge infrastructure provided by a consortium of universities

LIMITATIONS

- A continued association with the past still raising legitimacy questions
- Question of replicability in lower trust and more conflictual environments (collaborative culture in the region)
- Difficulties in defining the respective leadership roles of the state government and the BH municipality, and caution from other mayors

“CO-ORDINATION WHEN NEEDED”

- Although metropolitan structures were ‘hollowed out’ from the 1980s, **coordination happened where there were clear practical demands** (e.g. transport authorities, water management committees, waste management authorities)
- In places these forms of coordination are **gradually broadening** into something more systematic and multi-sectoral
- Where **urgent imperatives** are faced (e.g. the World Cup and Olympic Games) **special coordination structures are set up** and empowered but the question of subsequent maintenance is unresolved

THE CASE OF RIO

- The Rio story is marked more by **the lack of metropolitan-scale initiative** than examples of good practice (intensely variant interests)
- The metropolitan planning agency was disbanded in 1990 with only *ad hoc* collaborations between municipalities remaining
- Without regional frameworks, environmental conditions deteriorated, infrastructural logistics were massively complicated and spatial disjunctures intensified
- The **large economic and infrastructural investments** that poured into the region after 2007 intensified the problems of poor spatial coordination, but also **catylased some effort to address the issues.**

SLOUCHING TOWARDS COORDINATION

- The urgency of delivering the World Cup and Olympic Games did focus minds, and special purpose coordination vehicles were set up (e.g. the Olympic Authority)
- There were nevertheless multiple challenges of inter-jurisdictional coordination in the delivery *and subsequent maintenance* of mega projects.
- Major infrastructure funders pushed local actors for metropolitan structures
- Diverse interests -*Arco Metropolitano* was supported by the state government to physically integrate across municipalities on the edge without linking back to the core metro
- Finally, in 2014, the Metropolitan Chamber for Government Integration to negotiate possible models of coordination

*ARCO METROPOLITANO – INTEGRATING THE
EDGE, BYPASSING THE CORE*



Source: Globo.com

CONCLUSION

- Brazil shows clearly how **historical conditioning shapes current action and framings**
- It also places in sharp relief **the dilemma of collective action within a complex inter-governmental framing** and the requirement of sustaining social legitimacy in governance
- It directs us towards pragmatic response which recognises that there may **be no 'big solution' to the dilemma of collaborative action but rather a progressive strengthening along different lines** (adaption of what is there, new forums for deliberative action, voluntary associations from below, hybridised solutions)

CONCLUSION CONT...

- The **downside** of the Brazilian system is the limitations that the inter-governmental system and the developmental ideology create for collective action
- The **upside** is the strength of local democracy (and the role of civil society in protecting democracy), the adaptive and innovative capacities in the decentralised system, and the flexibility of the system to evolve
- **Brazil offers “a slower and more strategic learning-oriented path”** (de Souza Briggs) than some of the other more rationally planned and hierarchically structures instances in the BRICS