

From Imagination to Territorial Action: Lessons from Five Brazilian Mineral Territories

A comparative analysis of participatory prospective processes in mineral-based local production systems (2019–2025)

SUMMARY

Across five Brazilian mineral territories, similar participatory prospective processes generated different trajectories. The comparative analysis highlights the interaction between territorial context, local ownership, coordination and governance continuity.

Keywords: territorial foresight · participatory prospective · mineral territories · governance · productive transformation

INTRODUCTION

Five foresight processes were developed in Brazilian mineral territories between 2019 and 2025. The cases were examined comparatively to understand when participatory prospective exercises generate only a shared diagnosis and when they contribute to territorial action, governance and productive transformation.

Research question

What conditions help foresight move from collective imagination to concrete territorial action?

METHODOLOGY

- 1 **Explore** system & key variables
- 2 **Hypotheses** future alternatives
- 3 **Morphology** combinations
- 4 **Normative future** desirable & achievable
- 5 **Action** initiatives & governance

Shared prospective backbone. Drawing on Berger, Godet, Bootz and participatory foresight

INSPIRATION

Foresight methods are well established. Even when similar prospective processes are used, territorial transformations may differ substantially.

Dilemma

Why do similar prospective processes lead to different territorial trajectories?

FINDINGS

The same methodological backbone led to different trajectories because territorial context, ownership, coordination, and continuity interacted differently across the cases.

Diagnostic	shared understanding, weak implementation
Mobilizing	ownership and emerging coordination
Transformative	governance routines and concrete action

CONCLUSION

The cases suggest that transformative foresight emerges when collective imagination becomes locally owned, coordinated and sustained through governance over time.

Key learnings

- A shared methodological backbone did not produce identical outcomes.
- Context influenced interpretation, appropriation and continuity.
- Ownership and coordination differentiated territorial trajectories.
- Credible futures were rooted in history, identity and institutional capacity.
- Long-term impact required initiatives, institutions and networks.

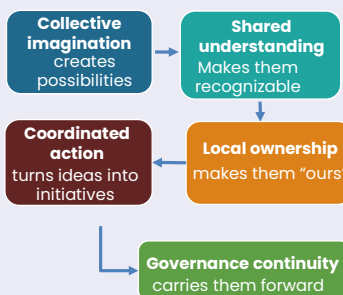
LOCATION, PROCESS AND ANALYSIS

Five territorial projects

- Cristalina (GO)**
gems, jewelry, mineral crafts and tourism
- Campos Verdes (GO)**
emerald legacy and territorial restructuring
- Seridó & Vale do Açu (RN)**
mineral transition and regional articulation
- Monte Santo (TO)**
remineralizers and emerging circular economy
- Morro da Fumaça (SC)**
red ceramics and productive upgrading



Applied Process



Comparative Analysis

Dimensions compared:

- Territorial history and productive identity
 - Actor configuration and leadership
 - Institutional capacity
 - Local ownership
 - Coordination capacity
 - Governance continuity
- ✓ Same methodological backbone.
✓ Different contexts.
✓ Different trajectories.

Observed differences

Starting conditions · actor networks · ownership · coordination · continuity

Observed pathways across the cases

The pathways are not fixed stages but a typology for interpreting how participatory prospective processes evolve after the workshops and reports.

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Photos: Workshops during projects developments at each location

