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## Land rent in the Metropolitan Region of Vitória - ES – Brazil

Doutor Cláudio Luiz Zanotelli

Professor do Departamento e do Programa de Pós-Graduação em Geografia da Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo. Bolsista Pesquisador Capixaba da FAPES - Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa e Inovação do Espírito Santo. Av. Fernando Ferrari, 514 – Campus Goiabeiras. CEP29060-900 Vitória – ES. E-mail: clzanotelli@yahoo.com.br

Mestrando Francismar Cunha Ferreira

Programa de Pós-Graduação em Geografia da Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo. Av. Fernando Ferrari, 514 – Campus Goiabeiras. CEP29060-900, Vitória – ES. E-mail: francismar.cunha@gmail.com

Graduanda Larissa Marques de Antônio

Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo. Av. Fernando Ferrari, 514 – Campus Goiabeiras. CEP29060-900 Vitória – ES. E-mail: larissamarquesantonio@gmail.com

Mestrando Rodrigo Betim Bergamashi

Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo. Av. Fernando Ferrari, 514 – Campus Goiabeiras. CEP29060-900 Vitória – ES. E-mail: rodrigo.siges@gmail.com

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### RESUMO

#### ARTICLE HISTORY

Received: 03 December 2013  
Accepted: 20 February 2014

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#### PALAVRAS-CHAVE:

Renda da terra  
Concentração fundiária  
Expansão metropolitana

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O texto apresenta os resultados preliminares de uma pesquisa em curso sobre o "Nó da terra"; problematiza a apropriação da renda da terra na Região Metropolitana da Grande Vitória, no Espírito Santo, Brasil, a partir de Karl Marx e de David Harvey. Descreve a concentração fundiária, os usos e ocupações da Terra, os vazios

urbanos e os domicílios vagos contrapondo-os ao déficit habitacional e aos programas de construção imobiliária e projetos de “desenvolvimento” e de construção de infraestrutura e equipamentos. Conclui pela existência de rendas de monopólio, absoluta e diferencial exponenciais na região. A estratégia para realiza-las está intimamente associada às relações e cooperações cruzadas dos agentes do Estado, dos agentes imobiliários e dos proprietários fundiários.

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KEY-WORDS:

Land rent  
Land concentration  
Metropolitan expansion

ABSTRACT: LAND RENT IN THE METROPOLITAN REGION OF VITÓRIA - ES – BRAZIL. The text presents preliminary results of a survey in progress on the “land knot” and problematizes the appropriation of land rent in the metropolitan region of Grande Vitória in Espírito Santo, Brazil based on Karl Marx and David Harvey. Land concentration, uses and occupancies of the land and empty urban spaces and vacant domiciles are described, contrasting them to housing deficit and programmes for real estate construction and projects for “development” and construction of infrastructure and equipment. The text concludes by discussing the existence of exponential monopoly rents, absolute and differential, in the region. The strategy to achieve these monopoly rents is closely associated with relationships and crossed cooperation between state agents, real estate agents and landowners.

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RESÚMEN:

Renta de la tierra  
La concentración de tierras  
La expansión metropolitana

RESÚMEN. LA RENTA DE LA TIERRA EN LA REGIÓN METROPOLITANA DE VITÓRIA – ES – BRASIL. El texto presenta los resultados preliminares de una investigación en curso sobre el “nudo de la tierra”; problematiza la apropiación de la renta de la tierra en la Región Metropolitana de la ciudad de Vitória, en la provincia de Espírito Santo, Brasil, a partir de Karl Marx y de David Harvey. Describe la concentración de tierras, el uso y ocupación del suelo, los vacíos urbanos y los domicilios vagos contraponiéndolos a la escasez habitacional y a los programas de construcción inmobiliaria y proyectos de “desarrollo” y de construcción de infraestructura y equipamientos. Concluye por la existencia de rentas de monopolio, absoluta y diferencial exponenciales en la región. La estrategia para llevarlas a cabo está estrechamente vinculada a las relaciones y cooperaciones cruzadas de los agentes del Estado, de los agentes inmobiliarios y de los propietarios de la tierra.

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## Introduction

This article aims to discuss the processes of urban expansion in the metropolitan region of Grande Vitória (MRGV), whose centre is the municipality

of Vitória, capital of the State of Espírito Santo, Brazil's southeast region. MRGV covers 2,311 km<sup>2</sup>, contains 730 inhabitants/km<sup>2</sup> and is composed of 7 municipalities, 4 of which form a conurbation that is the centre of the region (Vitória, Serra, Vila Velha and Cariacica), in addition to the municipalities of Viana, Guarapari and Fundão. What we call the expanded metropolitan region of Grande Vitória (EMRGV) includes the municipalities of Aracruz and Anchieta, where two important wood pulp and steel industries are located, respectively; the expanded region covers an area of 4,140 km<sup>2</sup> and contains 433 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup> (Box 1 and 2). The latter municipalities display integration and interdependence in terms of industries and habitat-work migration with the municipalities in the official metropolitan region; therefore, these municipalities have been included in our analysis.

In recent decades, the actual metropolitan region has experienced an accelerated expansion process. From 1980 to present day, its population has grown by 127%, from 744,744 inhabitants to the current 1,687,704 inhabitants (IBGE, 1980, 2010), which now represent 48% of the population of Espírito Santo.

The majority of the industrial, service and business activities of the state are concentrated in the capital region and its area of immediate influence. The gross domestic product (GDP) of MRGV, including that of the two municipalities that are industrial centres under its direct area of influence (Aracruz and Anchieta) amounted to 71% of the GDP of Espírito Santo in 2010 (the GDP of ES is equivalent to 2.5% of the Brazilian GDP) and represented 88% of the taxes collected in the state (Box 2). Its GDP per capita is also 30% higher than that of the state.

Territorial inequalities within MRGV are considerable between the richer municipalities, such as the capital Vitória and a populous municipality Cariacica, the latter with GDP per capita, fiscal resources and income per capita well below those of the state capital. Thus, the Vitória city-centre has a GDP per capita 5 times higher than that of Cariacica and collects 9 times more taxes. Cariacica has a larger population and more social and economic problems than those of Vitória.

This reality creates an uneven spatial organisation and a flagrant spatial injustice intensified by the new wave of monopolist industrial and port projects that affect the state of Espírito Santo and our study region in particular in terms of the exploitation of oil, gas, wood pulp and the expansion of the existing steel centres as well as the development of new port and industrial areas linked to these sectors. Land speculation occurs partially because of this process of capital expansion and spatial reorganisation in Brazil (Harvey, 2006 [1982]). These factors together have set the direction of the urban expansion of the region and its progress on the fringes located between rural and urban areas and the appreciation of central areas, as well as of areas peripheral to them.

In this article, we will work in a preliminary manner with the hypothesis that land rent is a consequence of land and real estate control in central areas, empty urban spaces, the surroundings of environmental protection areas and, in part, rural areas of greater interest to the real estate capital. Land rent is central in the developmentalism policies grounded in industrial projects for raw materials

processing for export (iron ore originated from Minas Gerais and wood pulp extracted from the large eucalyptus plantations throughout the entire state) and/or to supply other industrial Brazilian states and for export (oil and gas extraction) and real estate expansion of the expanded metropolitan region.

### Methodology

We start from the initial problem that land and real estate ownership by certain renter social categories or associated with real estate and financial capital extract a quota of the wealth collectively produced by capturing surplus-profits generated by productive activities as described by Karl Marx (1988, p. 112-113) and David Harvey (1980 [1973] and 2006 [1982]).

With the aim of demonstrating our problem, we performed a survey of land concentration in rural areas of the Metropolitan Region of Vitória and in its expanded area and mapped the changes in uses and occupancies of the land in the region between 1997 and 2010; we also mapped empty spaces and environmental preservation areas present in the urban perimeters of municipalities and in the entire territory of the region. Then, we performed a survey and mapping of housing deficits, vacant domiciles and real estate launchings in the region. Finally, we mapped the major industrial centres and the main existing infrastructures and some relevant projects that thoroughly transform the socio-spatial characteristics of the region.

### Rural and urban areas, empty spaces and the protected natural spaces of the urban perimeter of EMRGV

Despite being considered a metropolitan area, 63% of the MRGV territory consists of rural areas (74% of the expanded region area). However, little significant rural activity occurs; in general, a significant portion of this area is covered by pastures and contains few peasants and/or rural workers and relatively few agricultural activities. There are estates, in part, waiting for appreciation. The smaller properties are generally farms, country houses and secondary residences for the minority portion of the metropolitan population (including farms intended for "rural tourism"). Rural properties, empty urban spaces and protected natural areas of urban perimeters account for 86% (94% of the territory including the municipalities of Anchieta, in the south, and Aracruz, in the north) of the metropolitan territory. These spaces have little occupation and/or are part of the extremely low-density rural area (cf. Map 1 and Box 1 and 2).

This reality provides us with the dimension of the possibilities for the expansion of the current urban patch. This expansion occurred in the past along the main roadway axis from north to south, parallel to the coast (highway BR 101 and Sun Highway) and from east to west (along the penetration axis of highway BR 262). These axes connect the region to the other Brazilian states. The "empty urban spaces" represent 18% of the entire area of EMRGV and 24% of MRGV. These empty spaces account for 69% of the entire urban perimeter of the expanded region; the perimeter is legally defined by the municipalities and indicates likely urban expansions in these areas and/or the transformation of rural spaces into buildable areas for land allotment. The protected natural spaces represent 9.4% of the urban perimeter of the expanded region. Thus, 26% of the

area in the municipality of Vitória is associated with protected spaces or for future protection (notably the Parks and the Environmental Protection Areas of the central massif of the main island of the municipality and the Lameirão island reserve).

Empty urban spaces have the connotation of spaces that are not only in interstitial areas between the occupied urban areas. To measure these areas, the urban areas effectively occupied and the protected natural areas were subtracted from the urban perimeter defined by the municipality through the analysis of aerial photos from 2010. Areas of pastures and resting [woodland] and forest patches were often observed. The concept of “empty space” refers to the notion of “vacant land” with an undefined function, even if the land contains pasture patches, which, in reality, generally provide a simulation of occupation to maintain the land while waiting for appreciation; the “empty space” also refers to the notion of unoccupied space, even if there are public or private owners, and they are inserted in the middle of the communication and circulation networks and near occupied areas. These spaces are also vacant in the sense of a lack of definition, of an oscillation, as one of the meanings that can be attributed to the term *vague*, wave, in French. This threefold sense is reviewed by other authors by CAMPOS (2004) and appears useful for framing the definition. In our definition, “vacant land” is not unknown land; it is inserted in an economic-political process as “operative empty spaces” and represents “territories of operative reservations of the control spaces” (CAMPOS, 2004, p. 125) apparently unoccupied.

Municipality	Municipality area km <sup>2</sup> (a)	Rural area km <sup>2</sup>	Urban perimeter area km <sup>2</sup> (**)	Effectively occupied urban spaces km <sup>2</sup>	Urban empty spaces km <sup>2</sup>	Protected natural spaces (*) within the urban perimeter km <sup>2</sup>	% Empty urban spaces /urban perimeter	Protected natural spaces in municipalities
Anchieta	409.63	277.18	132.45	10	119.15	3.30	90.0	5.98
Aracruz	1,419.67	1,320.59	99.08	22	77.08	-	77.8	0.083
Cariacica	279.65	150.34	129.31	64	65.31	-	50.5	30.86
Fundão	286.77	269.55	17.21	5	12.21	-	70.9	28.70
Guarapari	589.14	331.36	257.78	34	158.47	65.31	61.5	134.59
Serra	547.44	355.89	191.55	96	91.23	4.32	47.6	29.37
Viana	312.22	283.63	28.60	16	12.6	-	44.1	-
Vila Velha	209.87	74.20	135.67	66	63.47	6.20	46.8	6.19
Vitória	86.33 (b)	0.00	86.33	45	7.44	21.96	8.6	21.96
Total EMRGV	4,140.73	3,062.75	1,077.98	358	745.98	101.09	69.20	257.76

Box 1: Rural areas, urban perimeters, occupied urban spaces and empty urban spaces of EMRGV – 2010.

(a) Includes water masses

(b) Including hydrography (creeks, rivers and part of the ria - bay and estuary - of Vitória with 11.9 Km<sup>2</sup>)

(\*) Includes state and municipal parks, ecological stations, environmental protection areas and APPs [Áreas de Preservação Permanente / permanent preservation areas]

(\*\*) The urban perimeters are delimited by the municipalities.

Source, IJSN [Instituto Jones dos Santos Neves / Institute Jones dos Santos Neves], 2010, IDAF [Instituto de Defesa Agropecuária e Florestal / Institute of Agriculture and Forest Defense]/DTCAR [Departamento de Terras e Cartografia / Department of Land and Cartography], 2010, IEMA [Instituto Estadual de Meio Ambiente / State Institute for the Environment], 2010

Municipalities	Population 2007	Population 2010	Population growth 2010/2007	Rural population 2010	Total area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Rural area %	Density km <sup>2</sup> 2010	GDP 2010 in millions	GDP per capita in thousands	Land properties with + 200 hectares (%) (**)	Taxes in millions 2010 (***)
Anchieta	19,459	23,902	23	5,741	409.63	67.67	58.4	4,185	175	61	131
Aracruz	73,358	81,832	12	10,381	1,419.67	93.02	57.6	2,837	35	79	381
Cariacica (*)	356,536	348,738	-2.1	11,095	279.65	53.76	1247.0	4,904	14	38	822
Fundão	16,125	17,025	12	2,647	286.77	94.00	59.4	274	16	30	23
Guarapari	98,073	105,286	7.3	4,758	589.14	56.24	178.7	1,059	10	35	82
Serra(*)	385,370	409,267	6.2	2,817	547.44	65.01	747.6	12,703	31	68	2,388
Viana	57,539	65,001	13	5,369	312.22	90.84	208.2	977	15	50	159
VilaVelha (*)	398,068	414,586	4.1	2,011	209.87	35.36	1,975.4	6,978	17	63	1,168
Vitória (a) (*)	314,042	327,801	3.6	0	86.33	0.00	3,797.2	24,969	76	0	7,722
Total MRGV	1,625,7	1,687,704	4	28,697	2,311	63.38	730	51,864	31	-	12,364
Total EMRGV	1,718,5	1,793,438	3.7	44,819	4,140	73.97	433	58,886	33	-	12,876
Espirito Santo	3,351,3	3,514,952	5	583,480	46,095	-	76	82,121	23	-	14,614

Box 2: Territorial, population and socio-economic data of the EMRGV - ES - 2007 - 2010

(\*) Population projected in 2007

(\*\*) Land concentration of properties with greater than 200 hectares - percentage over the total rural area.

(\*\*\*) Includes state and federal transfers

(a) Excludes oceanic islands and includes, as the other municipalities, rivers, bays and estuaries (the water masses). Includes neighbourhoods, currently of Serra, Hélio Ferraz, Carapina I and Neighbourhood of Fátima.

Source, IBGE [Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística / Brazilian Institute for Geography and Statistics] Contagem população [Population Count] 2007, IBGE Censo 2010 [Census 2010], IJSN - GDP 1999-2010, Censo Agropecuário [Cattle and Agriculture Census], IBGE, 2006. Área Urbana e área rural [Urban area and rural area], IJSN, 2010 and IDAF/DTCAR, 2010.

Land ownership concentration in rural areas and land availability in the empty urban spaces waiting for industrial, commercial and residential uses, among others, of the areas within the urban perimeters of the municipalities but generally outside the most valued areas may indicate a tendency towards extraction of land rent in these areas in relation to central and valued spaces of the city, as indicated by David Harvey (1980 [1973]) from Gaffney:

Today, too many allocation decisions are made under the shadow of impending increments [in land value]. Visualise the hierarchy of land uses as a series of concentric circles. Demand for higher uses is not fully satisfied in their proper circles, because of land holdouts there. Unmet demand probes outward, casting a diffused "floating value" over outer zones. This floating value raises land prices enough so the outer land is too high priced to renew its present use, although still unripe for the higher use (...) The socially optimal course is to renew the site in its present lower use. But the floating value factor discourages that. [The landowner] is more likely to let old builds get old for a while, reserving the land for the higher use. Builders needing land for the lower use are forced out another ring, casting their floating value over the next lower use, and so on in a series of shock waves-result: more sprawl at every margin of land use. (GAFFNEY apud HARVEY, 1980, p.160)

Soil values in central areas determine soil values in more peripheral areas through the demanded uses that raise soil prices; however, Harvey (Op. cit., p. 163) draws attention to an aspect of land rent and the uses and values of urban or metropolitan soils:

In capitalist economies, rent arises under forms of monopoly, differential and absolute. Once arisen, rent serves to allocate land use. When use determines value, an exception can be made for the social rationality of rent as an allocative artifice that leads standards and capitalist production towards efficiency (although the aggregated amount of paid rent appears an extraordinarily high price for society to pay for such allocative mechanism). However, when value determines use, allocation occurs under the auspices of uncontrolled speculation, of artificially induced scarcity and similar things, making any claim to have something to do with the efficient organisation of production and distribution to disappear.

Harvey indicates that uses that are effectively needed for production and people allocation can be defined to a certain extent, as evoked by numerous authors of the spatial economy and economic geography tradition (Lösch, Alonso, Von Thünen, among others), as the search for "allocation efficiency" in capitalist productions. However, in other cases, and as far as we are concerned in the present study, it appears that the values of the goods for sale in central areas and

in some metropolitan cores have determined land use (according to monopoly rent and absolute rent) and have artificially caused the expansion of the metropolitan region (using differential rent).

To better understand these definitions of rent and their possible application in the region under study, we will proceed to succinctly define the meanings of land rent according to Marx.

Marx's analyses were performed based on examples from rural land properties (Marx, 1988), even if he episodically refers to cases of urban properties; to overcome this difficulty, we have adapted these theses to urban areas based on the works of David Harvey (1980 [1973], 2006). Land rent has been discussed, questioned and/or adapted to the urban context, or not, by several other authors in the past, including Topalov (1979), Lojkine (1981 [1977], 1979) and Singer (1979). The subject of land rent in urban areas, after being relevant in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, was somewhat forgotten and has been re-examined by many authors in Brazil, particularly geographers (Volochnko, 2007; Damiani, 2008; Silva, 2012; Vargas, 2011; Alcântara, 2011).

### Absolute, monopoly and differential land rents

Henceforth, we will provide some general considerations about the notions of land rent suggested by Marx (1980) and Harvey (1980 [1973] and 2006 [1982]).

Land rents analysed by Marx are in fact interwoven with each other and very difficult to separate and often lead to confusion, as stated by Harvey in *Social justice and the city*. However, the figures of the land owner and the capitalist, separated in reasoning, may be unified, which would not change the essentials in the reasoning of rent obtained from the land, as indicated by Marx (1980). In the same manner, different social formations, with collective and community-based properties can exist at the same time and be juxtaposed with the capitalist modes of land property, without modifying the processes of land rent dispersal, according to Marx himself (1980).

### Monopoly rent

The monopoly rent is the guarantee of private property by the law and by the state, which ensures the owner the right to sell the land to whoever wants to buy it. This rent arises because it is possible to set up a monopoly price "determined by the eagerness of the buyer in buying and the ability to pay, regardless of the price determined by general production cost, as well as by the product value" (Marx apud Harvey, p. 153). Thus, "(...) an independently determined monopoly price allows monopoly rent to be gained" (Harvey, op. cit., p. 153). In truth, this rent is inscribed in the knots and links established by the law and founded in the relations of forces because it is the "right" that formally ensures the property. In Brazil, the land constitutes a knot in the sense of a confusion among the different legal statutes, particularly what is commonly called "terra devoluta", i.e., common land, which should be under the aegis of the State and which is often "invaded" by representatives of the dominant classes (and also to a lesser extent by the dominated classes); subsequently, for the dominant classes, this occupation is legitimised through force and/or by the state. However, the lands, often the worst ones and located in the interstices of the so-called legal city, are occupied without



property titles by economically and socially dominated people; these people are constantly under threat; even if there are the possibilities of recognising these people legally, this "legalisation" is laborious and slow. Thus, the law operates with a variable geometry and is one of the forms of legitimization of collective expropriation and perpetuation of an inextricable situation in the land statute of Brazil.

### Absolute rent

Harvey explains that the absolute rent (absolutely guaranteed) is the source of the *monopoly price* to differentiate it from the "*monopoly rent*". The *monopoly price* is generally higher than the *equilibrium price* that is fixed on a competitive market. This price originates from the possibility of the *value of goods* being greater than their *production cost* (which for Marx is the equalisation of profit rates - based on the surplus value, meaning that the competition of capitals tends to impose for every capitalist a profit rate equal to the average profit rate). Thus, with a higher value of goods in precise terms, as in the example of agriculture given by Marx in *Capital* (op. cit. p. 220-221), it is possible to extract a larger amount of surplus value, which is transformed into higher profits than the average profit rate defined by the production cost.

In this manner, therefore, surplus profits in agriculture - under certain conditions of a particular property in a situation that is similar to another existing in the same place or region - are institutionalised in absolute rent through the strength of private property monopoly (Harvey, op. cit., p. 155). Therefore, these profits are converted into rent and become surplus-profit; these profits are a type of fee charged by the soil owners to the capitalists. This absolute rent arises from the absolute power that a given owner is legally guaranteed and which is the general condition for all private property of the soil. This rent emerges as monopoly rent when there is a cartel of owners or even when a single owner operates in many different places and holds large properties, thus conditioning soil availability (Harvey, op. cit., p. 157).

### Differential rent

The differential rent indicates the relative advantages of certain locations with different characteristics (natural and infrastructural aspects, for example) and with different amounts of invested capital that may cause different patterns of differential rent, always in relation to an average profit and production costs (Harvey, idem, p. 154). The locations, distances and transportation costs are fundamental to define this rent; infrastructure and equipment location, as well as the "amenities" of nature for certain types of residential or leisure occupancy, are clearly important in urban cases.

To fix the ideas and better understand one of the forms that differential rent may assume, we will refer to Marx's famous example when referring to generalities of differential rent (op. cit. p. 129-134). Thus, Marx assumes that one has two similar products produced in two separate factories, which have the same production cost that is equal to the sale price (which includes constant capital and variable capital - with the general equalisation of the profit rate embedded).

Between these two similar products, produced in the same volume, one is produced with a steam machine and the other is produced using the hydraulic force of waterfalls. One will have a higher cost because it spends more capital on the steam machine that requires coal to operate, while the other will have a lower cost because of the use of natural energy, the waterfall.

In the first case, the steam engine, the temporary excess profit that may eventually be generated originates from the employed capital or from technical inventions leading to the use of new processes that could increase the profit rate with supplemental relative surplus value, which, in turn, will be subsequently equalised in the general average profit rate that supposes the generalisation of new production processes that are imitated by all the producers through competition. However, for the water wheel employment, a different situation arises. As Marx writes about the second producer (*op. cit.*, p. 132),

the increased productiveness of the labour used by him comes neither from the capital and labour itself, nor from the mere application of some natural force different from capital and labour but incorporated in the capital. It arises from the greater natural productiveness of labour bound up with the application of a force of Nature, but not a force of Nature that is at the command of all capital in the same sphere of production, as for example the elasticity of steam. In other words, its application is not to be taken for granted whenever capital is generally invested in this sphere of production. On the contrary, it is a monopolisable force of Nature which, like the waterfall, is only at the command of those who have at their disposal particular portions of the earth and its appurtenances. It is by no means within the power of capital to call into existence this natural premise for a greater productivity of labour in the same manner as any capital may transform water into steam. It is found only locally in Nature and, wherever it does not exist, it cannot be established by a definite investment of capital. It is not bound to goods which labour can produce, such as machines and coal, but to specific natural conditions prevailing in certain portions of land. (...)The possession of this natural force constitutes a monopoly in the hands of its owner; it is a condition for an increase in the productiveness of the invested capital that cannot be established by the production process of the capital itself; this natural force, which can be monopolised in this manner, is always bound to the land. Such a natural force does not belong to the general conditions of the sphere of production in question, nor to those conditions of the latter which may be generally established.

Thus, land ownership in certain conditions favours the extraction of land rent because the surplus-profit that "arises from the employment of this waterfall is not due to capital, but to the utilisation of a natural force which can be monopolised, and has been monopolised, by capital. Under these circumstances,

the surplus-profit is transformed into ground-rent, that is, it falls into possession of the owner of a waterfall." (Marx, op. cit., p. 133 ).

Various forms of differential incomes are analysed by Marx, including those that, according to the classical economists, are related to marginal land productivities, being defined as "worse land" or less fertile land. Thus, according to David Ricardo, rent is a differential rent, that is to say that it is linked to the difference in productivity between lands; the market price establishes a level that allows covering the production costs of less fertile lands, and everything that exceeds this price is profit, or surplus-profit, i.e., part of the profit over the average profit that is captured in the form of rent by landowners or those associated with them. The amount of land rent is then defined by a market mechanism: the determination of agricultural price by confrontation between supply and demand. Marx will comment on and criticise these positions, unfolding the differential rent in many cases. However, for our needs of reasoning here, we will use the example given above and the fact that they are always "worst soils" that, in a reversed way, will determine the degree of surplus-profit extracted from land rent in the "best soils" through a differentiation process based on relative fertility and the amount of capital and technology invested in them. That is, the best soils are the ones with higher marginal productivity in relation to the worst ones, of lower marginal productivity; we will see below how this situation applies in cities.

For Harvey "Differential rent obviously cannot enter into the cost of production or the price of products for it merely arises out of excess profits to certain producers by virtue of their advantageous situation" (Harvey, 1980, p. 154). Advantageous situations exist for various reasons in different conditions and relative locations. Harvey (1980, p. 154) writes "Marx then combines all of these elements, and shows how various combinations of soils in different locations with different characteristics exploited in different sequences with different quantities of capital can give rise to various patterns of differential rent".

Because we have observed the importance of the land ownership issue in Marx, we will return to his definition in the urban world. Thus, to understand the processes of land rent in the cities by distinguishing the different land rents, David Harvey states (op. cit., p.160-161):

The high rental value of land in central cities should not necessarily be interpreted as a reflection of differences in marginal productivity of land (as Mill suggests). Absolute and monopoly rents at these locations enter into the costs of production. Differential rents do not. If absolute and monopoly rents are dominant in the determination of land value at central locations then it is land value which determines use. If differential rents dominate then it is use which determines land value. In practice, of course, rent arises out of all three circumstances [absolute, monopoly and differential] and it is often difficult to determine what portion of the overall rental value arises out of which circumstance.

What Harvey has written is that land rent from the most valued parts of the metropolitan urban centres and of large cities cannot be measured by *differential rent* because what determines these incomes are the *absolute rents* (higher values, surplus-profit, guaranteed by specific ownership processes) and *monopoly rents* (guarantee of ownership of these places to certain dominant actors of the urban portions and producers of certain city). Harvey needs the problematic to understand this relationship and the types of activities that are installed in the most valued urban centres:

The problem under these conditions is to discover (or generate) firms with production functions which can readily adjust to absorb these costs. It is not surprising to find, therefore, that the highest rent areas in the city are colonized by commercial activities whose productivity cannot be measured - government offices, banks, insurance companies, stockbrokers, travel agents and various forms of entertainment, are good examples. Hence arises the paradox that some of the most unproductive activity in society is found on land which is supposedly of the greatest marginal production by virtue of its location. The solution to this paradox is simple. Land and property rent in central locations does not arise out of the land's marginal productivity but out of the processes which permit absolute and, even more importantly, monopoly rents to be charged. (Harvey, op cit., p. 161).

Therefore, soil uses in areas linked to supply and competition for places based on distances and transports using the location models of Von Thünen, Alonso and others, as stated by Harvey, are able to explain the differential rents based on marginal rents and the best locations for companies and activities under certain conditions; however, soil uses could not operate in the centres of large capitalist agglomerations because in these situations, it is not that "land use determines value" but that "value determines land use".

In other words, soil use in the outskirts based on transportation time-cost and the diseconomies of agglomeration, in locations in high-quality spaces with numerous natural features where gated communities are installed, in locations in faraway places where housing programmes are directed to the poorest and to certain portions of the "middle classes" determines the relative land value; of course, here, the land ownership monopolies and the bases for the absolute rent are also considered. However, the centres would be, in an overdetermined way, defined by the values that impose the possible and speculative usages as they are occupied by "unproductive" sectors. We could ask ourselves about these "unproductive sectors"; apparently these sectors would be those that produce nothing. This concept of production discards the economic sectors dependent on others and that are parasites of others (the banking sector, for example) but that, in spite of operating using speculation and fictitious capital, with the profit expansion and its transformation into money, feedback the economic circuits and the real economy (Harvey, 2005 [2001]).

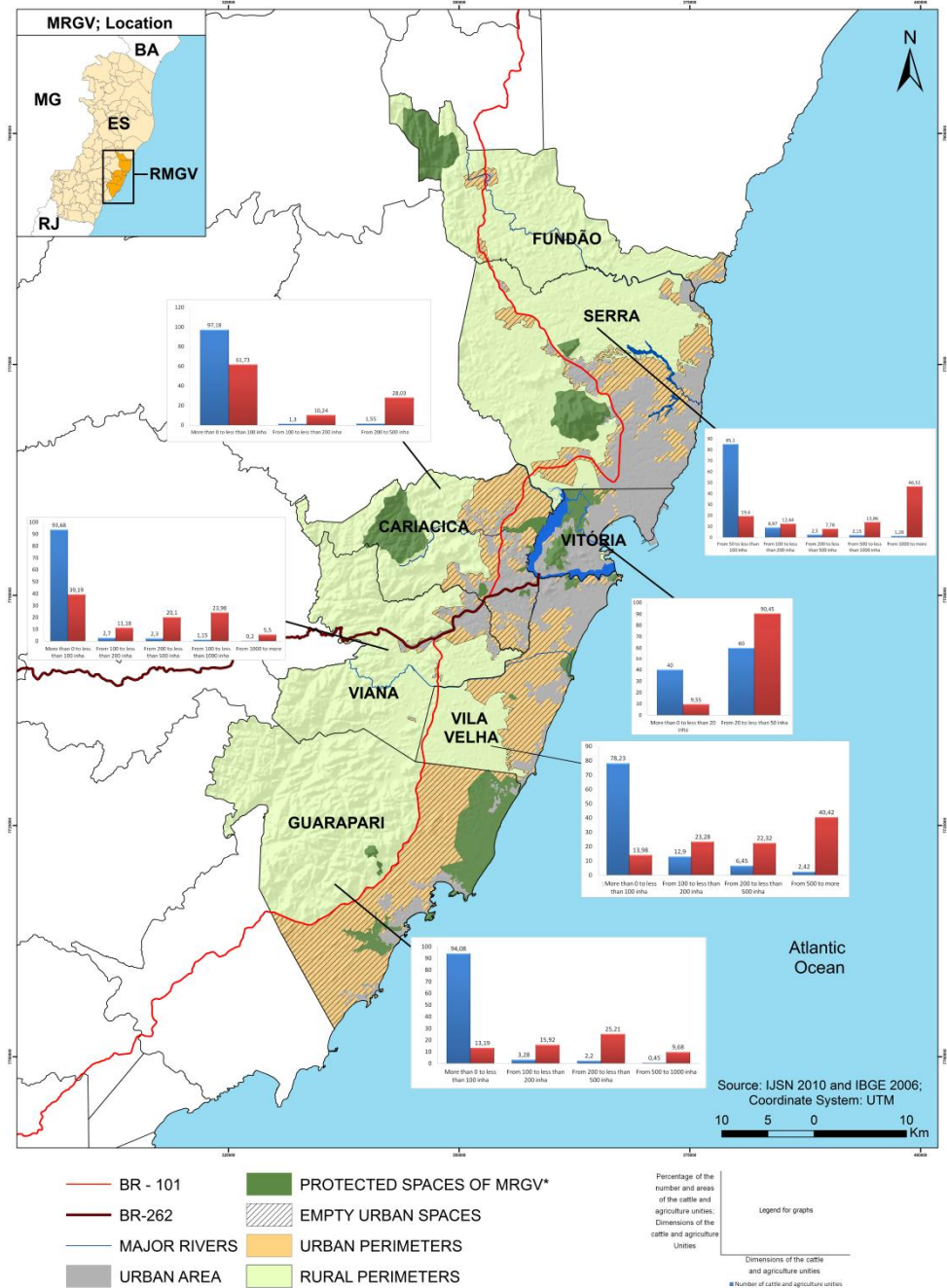
It is possible, however, to imagine a convergence between these appreciation booms (on the one hand differential and, on the other hand, absolute and monopoly). Thus, at first glance, the uses are imposed because of the high value in the central areas, thus expelling the "less noble" uses of the centres. Therefore, the outskirts will have, in a relative way, their land values defined directly and indirectly because of the speculative wave. However, in turn, based on access, transportation and the environment and infrastructure quality, these peripheral areas could have their values defined in a successive and/or concomitant manner with the absolute and monopoly wave through the different possible uses and by the relative position that they occupy in the differential wave. The waves can be reversible at a given moment and space, converging to a virtual space of values and prices but are real and impregnated with all the possibilities and reversals in their definition.

### Latifundia in EMRGV

What appears to confirm Harvey's theses in relation to monopoly rent, absolute rent and differential rent in MRGV and in its expanded area is the generalised appreciation of property in central spaces and "empty" urban spaces in the surroundings of environmental protection areas, protected natural spaces and rural areas as well as the land ownership concentration in the hands of a few in the rural area and in the "empty" urban spaces.

In fact, there are numerous large farms, real metropolitan latifundia in the region, as previously indicated; based on data collected from the 2006 Cattle and Agriculture Census performed by the IBGE, an exceptional land concentration can be observed (cf. Map 1 and Box 1).

The rural area is significant, as we have observed; however, only 2.5% of the population of EMRGV is rural. The municipalities of Anchieta, Fundão and Aracruz have larger rural populations, which make up 24%, 15.5% and 12% of the total population, respectively (cf. Box 2). However, with the exception of Guarapari, Cariacica and Fundão, more than 50% of the areas of rural properties have a surface area larger than 200 hectares and are concentrated in the hands of a few.



Map 1: Rural and urban areas, empty urban spaces and land concentration in MRGV

In 13 years, there has been an exponential transformation of the land situation and land uses and occupancies in the region. Thus, the urban and agricultural uses and occupation, eucalyptus plantations and pastures and forest areas (primary and secondary forests that denominate woods) increased from 1997 to 2010 from 85% to 92% of the EMRGV surface area; urban space and eucalyptus plantations and agriculture areas experienced a positive development in the region as a whole, in its participation in land occupation, to the detriment of woods and pastures (which are still the main type of land use in the region), as well as the restinga vegetation and, at least in part, of flooded areas (see Maps 2 and 3).

Variation in the percentage of the surface area occupied by urban spaces was substantial during the cited period (over 58.4% for EMRGV and 36% for MRGV); the area for agriculture increased by 314% in EMRGV and 391% in MRGV, and the eucalyptus plantations experienced an exponential growth in MRGV (249% in 13 years) and 66.5% in EMRGV; thus, today there are almost 800 km<sup>2</sup> of area dedicated to this monocrop. Conversely, the woods (primary and secondary reserves, parks, protection areas and other spaces, permanently protected or not) experienced a dramatic setback, losing 113 km<sup>2</sup> of area in EMRGV and 107 km<sup>2</sup> (16% less) in MRGV. The area occupied by pastures - although they represent 1/3 of the total area of the region - decreased by 17% (less than 267 km<sup>2</sup>).

These changes are associated with land ownership concentration and represent an imminent danger to the ecological balance of the region and the welfare of its inhabitants because spaces once preserved are being literally eaten by misuse.

Thus, the area of the metropolitan region has witnessed a transformation of pastures and woods into urban space and/or other crops and a monocropping through eucalyptus. The latter represents today almost 1/5 of the region territory; these plantations are, notably, concentrated in Aracruz but expand to all the municipalities (cf. Maps 2 and 3).

The woods today do not represent more than 1/4 of the metropolitan territory, causing numerous problems for the water sources that supply water to the region. We have witnessed a significant development of agriculture in the same period, taking over the pastures and woods, a phenomenon well visible in Guarapari and Aracruz. However, the spaces occupied by agriculture only represented 7.6% of the territory of the expanded region in 2010.

The main activity of extensive cattle breeding in large pastures in a metropolitan region can be explained by the maintenance, by several owners, of a minimum production activity with the intention that their property will not be declared unproductive and could be the object of dispossession and used for agrarian reform, sheltering landless workers. Thus, landowners wait for appreciation of their land with the expansion of the urban patch caused by the expansion of infrastructure and industrial and port activities linked to oil, steel and wood pulp.

Examples of land conflict can be observed at the very heart of the metropolitan region, in the capital, Vitória. The municipality of Vitória, the most populous one in the region, in spite of being considered entirely urban and devoid of rural areas and a rural population in the official zonings, contains 190 hectares of pasture and

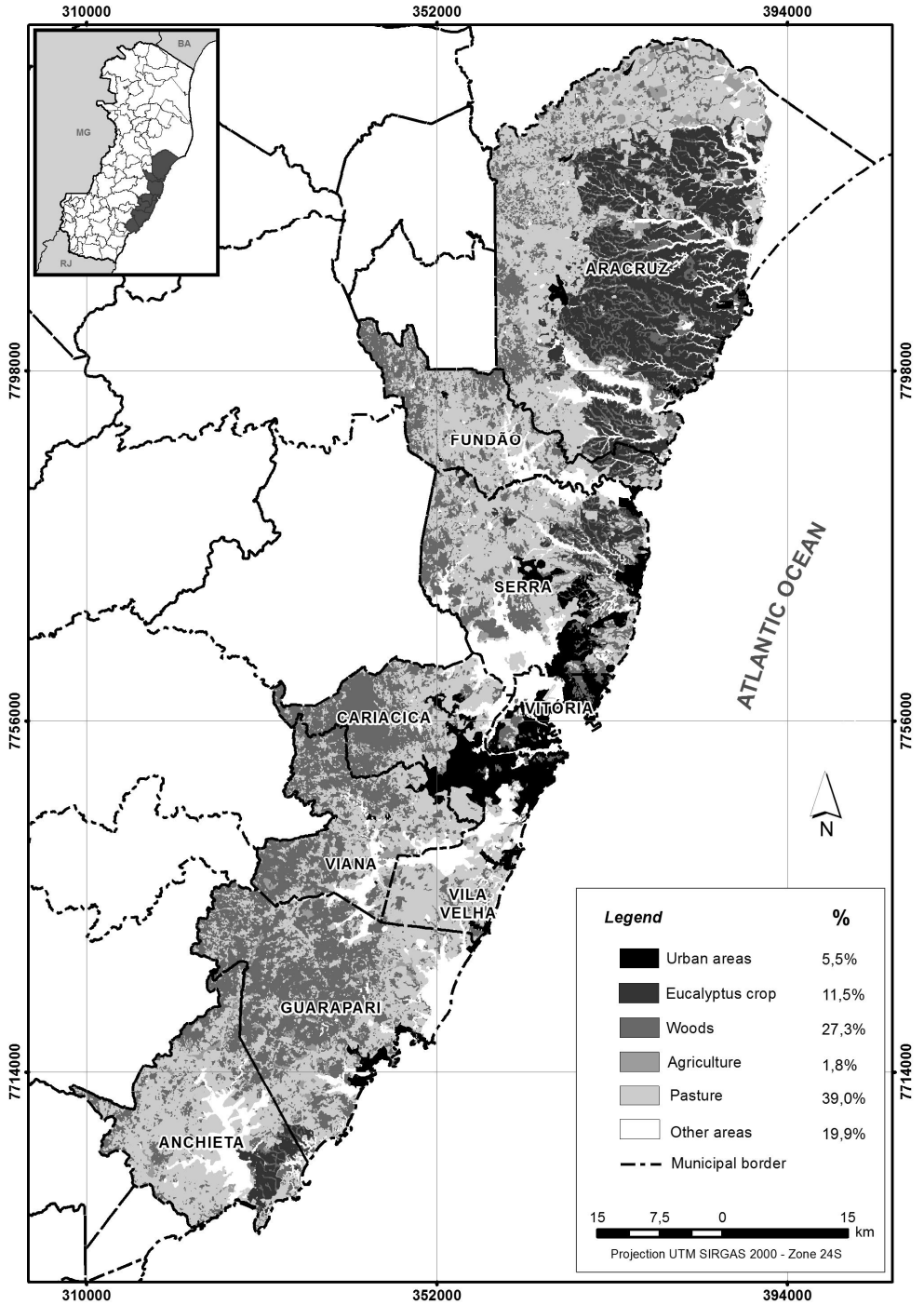
180 hectares of planted eucalyptus. These areas are associated with farms located in localised areas or within the environmental protection areas as in the Fonte Grande and Mulemba parks, or the environmental protection areas (EPAs) in the surroundings of these parks in the central massif of Vitória. These areas often constitute old disputes where owners and heirs of the old farmers of the region are in legal disputes with Vitória city hall and administrators of the park and are requesting millionaire reparations. These heirs do not always have ownership titles, which makes the action of public authorities more difficult and the legality of the declared property suspicious. These areas contain some cattle (176 heads, IBGE 2011) that affect the parks themselves and are frequently burned. These criminal fires seem to be intended to destroy the parks and the protection areas to transform the still existing farms into negotiable land in the real estate market.

Therefore, a monopoly of absolute land ownership and its concentration in the hands of a few is one of the corollaries of this process, which allows a transformation of rural land - or land that in spite of being in a park or another type of environmental protection area is still claimed by landowners - into land suitable for urban development and, therefore, enabling the extraction of land rent through this privileged condition.

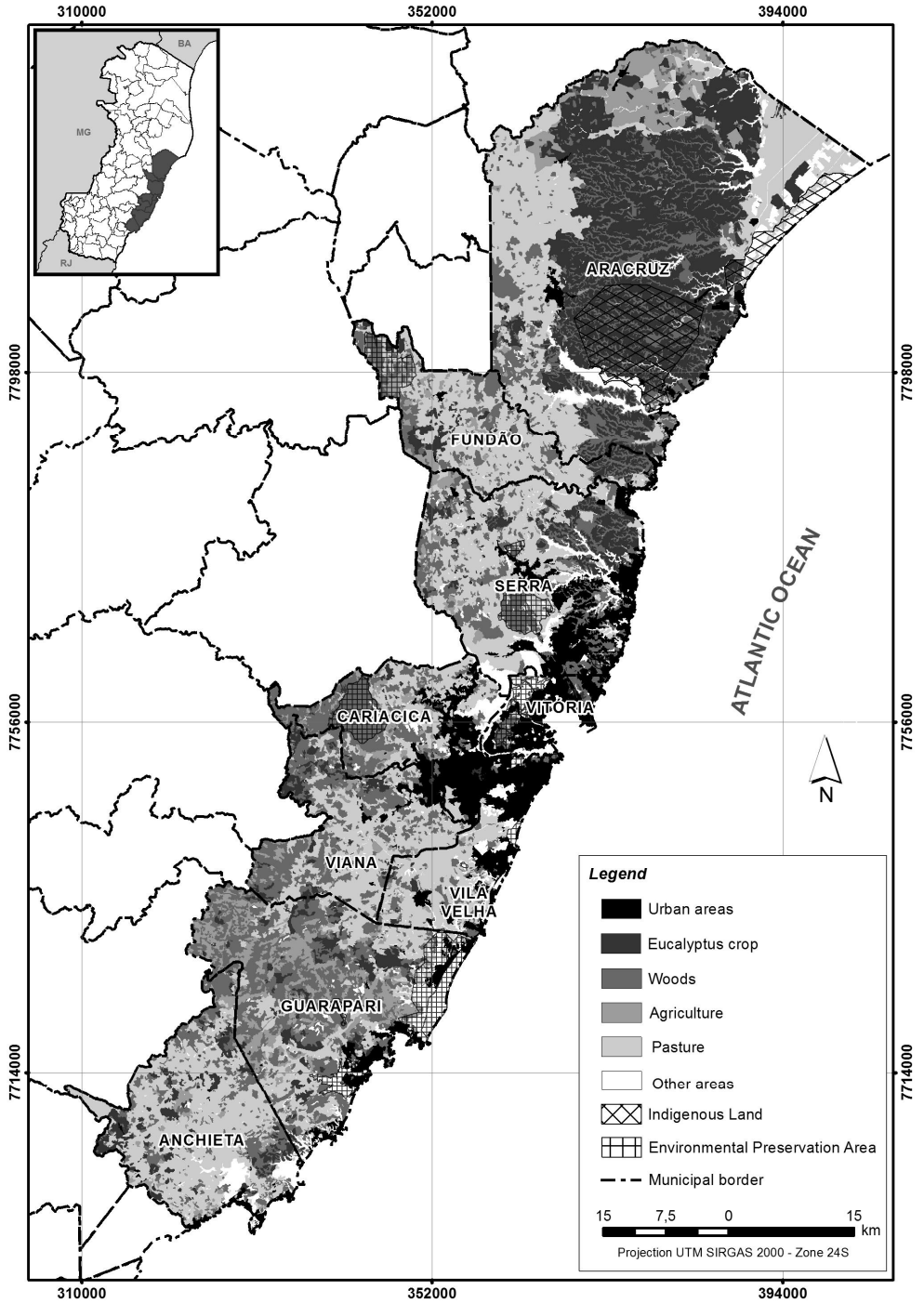
Another example that we could highlight is the industrial municipality of Serra, the second most important municipality of the region economically. In 2006, 60% of the rural land in this municipality contained more than 500 hectares, concentrated in the hands of only 3% of owners; and 47% of the rural properties belonged to three owners, which was equivalent to 145 km<sup>2</sup> (14,500 hectares), twice the total area of the municipality of Vitória. In Serra, in the 356 km<sup>2</sup> (35,600 acres) of land considered to be rural by IBGE in 2011 - in spite of a rural population of 2,817 inhabitants in 2010 (0.7% of the total population) and 880 persons employed in cattle and agriculture activities in 2006 - the production of temporary and permanent crops with areas greater than 100 hectares was 1,610 hectares (16 km<sup>2</sup>). In this municipality, the pasture area was almost 200 km<sup>2</sup> in 2010, which is greater than 1/3 of the land use and occupation and 56% of the rural area.

In this manner, a significant portion of the rural area is occupied by pastures with few cattle, suggesting that these areas are areas waiting for appreciation with infrastructure projects that are intended for the space and/or that are intended for country houses and gated communities - such as the example of the Alphaville Jacuhy condominium, built in an allotment of one of the largest latifundium of the municipality and MRGV (ZANOTELLI et al., 2012). Today, the price of a plot, until very recently rural, in this gated community - with an area of 244.6 hectares located on the southern slope of the Mestre Álvaro massif and near the mangroves of the Vitória Bay - urbanised with infrastructure and leisure facilities, is R\$ 220,000 for a 461 m<sup>2</sup> plot, i.e., R\$ 477 per square meter (cf. the website <http://lotes-venda.vivastreet.com.br/terrenos-venda+serra/alphaville-jacuhy>). One 55-hectare farm, located on the northeast slope of the same massif, a few kilometres from Alphaville, next to the urban area and with a head office and access is being sold for R\$ 9.35 million (cf. the website <http://vender-sitios.vivastreet.com.br/>), i.e., R\$ 17 per m<sup>2</sup>, 28 times the price of the square meter in Alphaville.





Map 2: Land uses and occupancies in EMRGV in 1997



Map 3: Land uses and occupancies in EMRGV in 2010

Municipality	Urban			Woods			Pasture			Agriculture			Eucalyptus (*)		
	1997 km <sup>2</sup>	2010 km <sup>2</sup>	Variation %	1997 km <sup>2</sup>	2010 km <sup>2</sup>	Variation %	1997 km <sup>2</sup>	2010 km <sup>2</sup>	Variation %	1997 km <sup>2</sup>	2010 km <sup>2</sup>	Variation %	1997 km <sup>2</sup>	2010 km <sup>2</sup>	Variation %
Anchieta	1.8	10	455	88.4	78.5	-11.2	237	230	-3.0	8.4	19.8	135.7	27	43.2	60.0
Aracruz	14.5	22	51.7	255	259.7	1.8	466	351.4	-24.6	27.6	98.6	257.2	402	581.9	44.8
Cariacica	40.6	64.0	57.8	116.3	100.5	-13.64	100.7	68	-32	2.5	20.7	728	0	8.8	880
Fundão	1.9	5.06	159.6	86.7	75.1	-13.37	151.8	149.8	-1	4.5	22.7	404	13.6	30.6	125
Guaraparí	13.2	33.5	152.7	275.4	218.5	-20.6	221.3	120	-46	17.4	116.7	571	4	46.6	1065
Serra	62.3	95.8	53.8	130.0	132.8	2.14	213.1	199.9	-6	5	14.7	194	30.7	53	73
Viana	9.4	15.7	66.3	138.3	112.7	-18.52	128.5	138.1	7	8.5	17.5	106	0.1	25.7	25.600
Vila Velha	43.2	66.0	52.7	23.12	24.05	4.05	89.4	85.6	-4	1.9	3.3	74	0.04	3.1	7650
Vitória	38.3	44.8	17	12.78	11.31	-11.54	3.9	1.9	-51	0	0	0	0.1	1.8	1700
MRGV	209	325	35.7	782	675	-15.9	908	763	-16	39.8	195	391	48.5	170	249
EMRGV	225	357	58.4	1126	1013	-10.0	1611	1344	-16.6	75.8	314	314	477	795	66.5

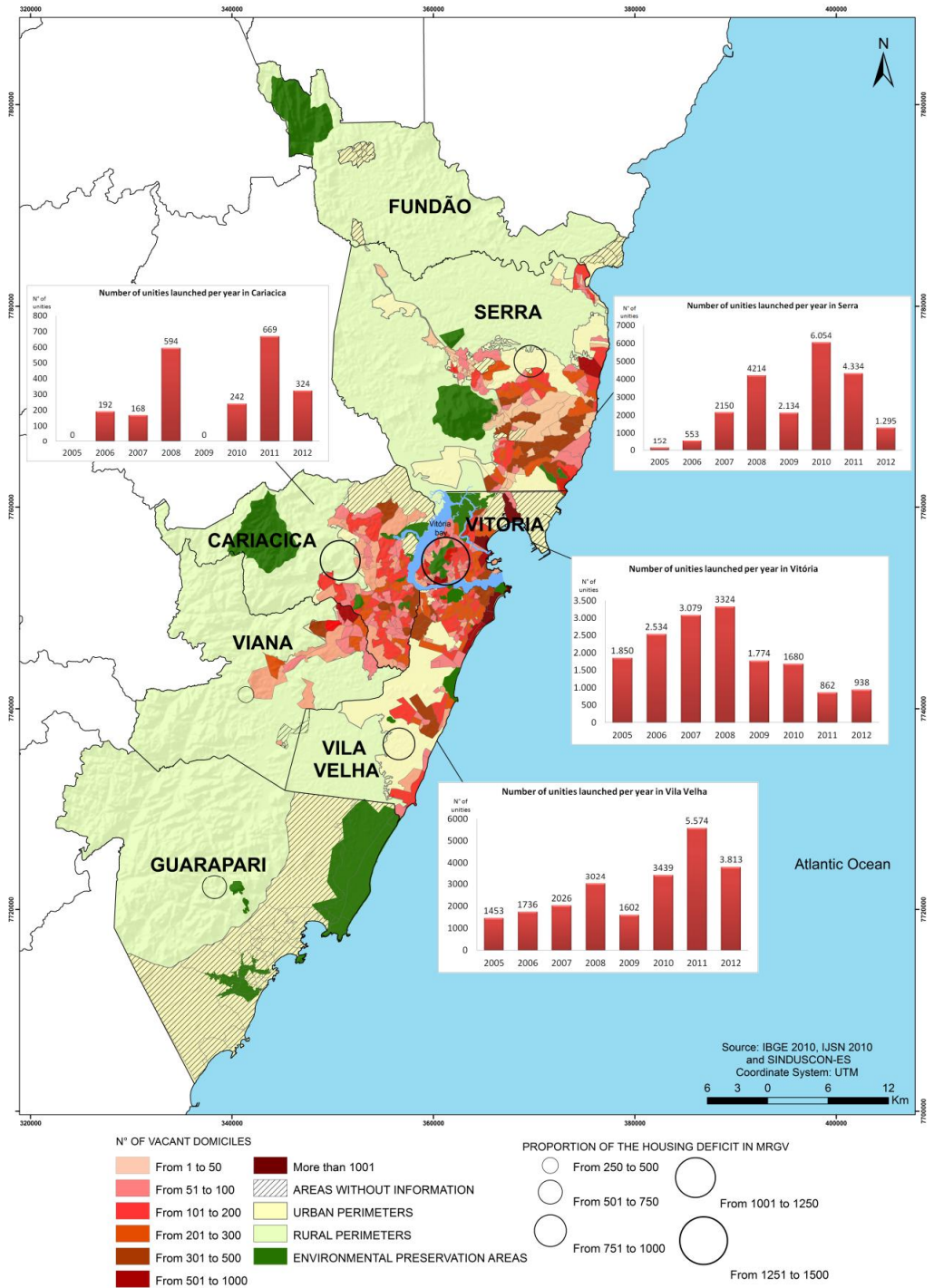
### Box 3: Absolute values and variation of the land use and occupation in the municipalities of EMRGV 1997-2012

Source: Fibria, 1997, adapted, and Institute Jones dos Santos Neves - IJSN, 2010.

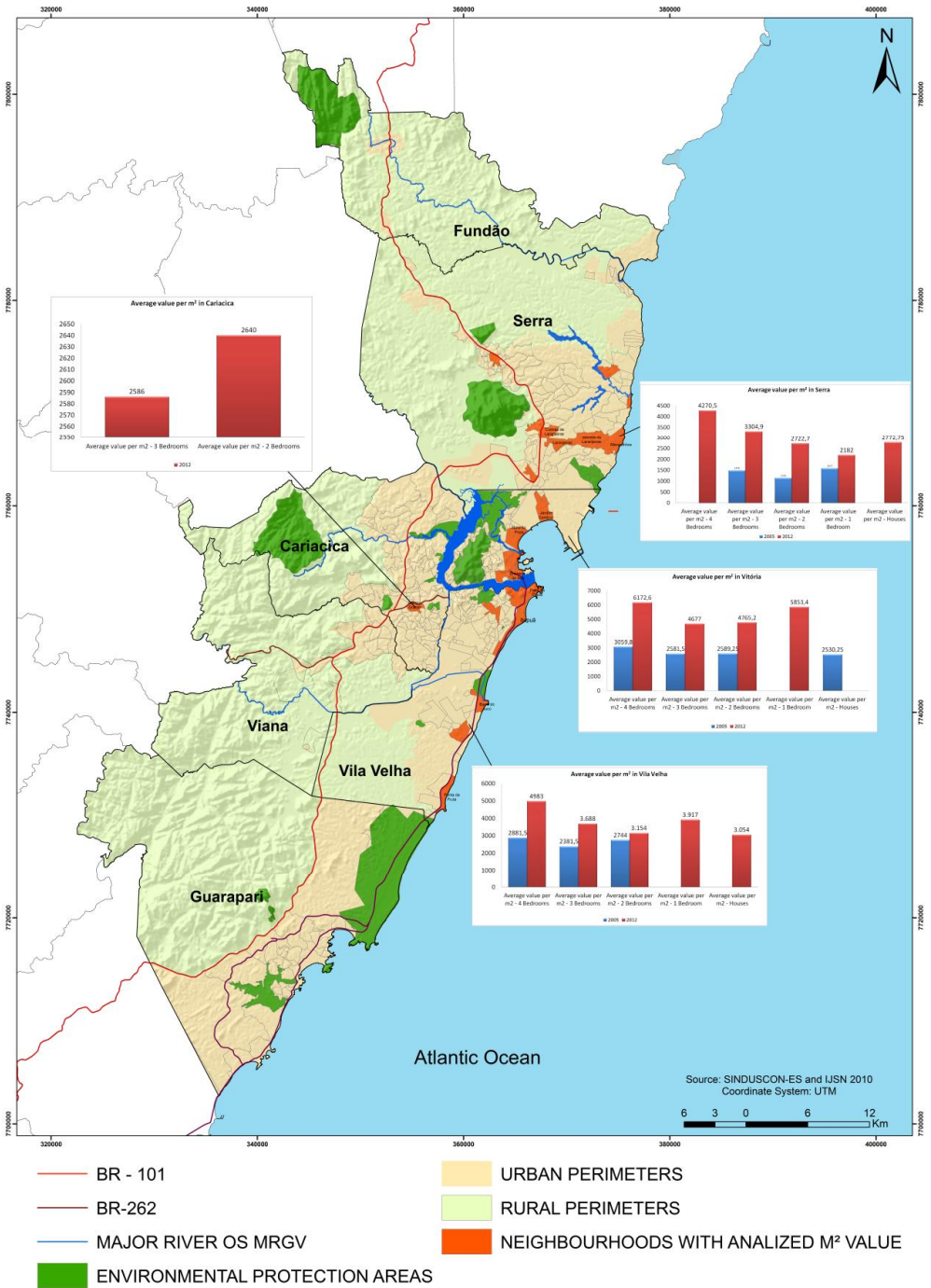
(\*) includes rubber tree plantations for rubber production; in 2011, according to IBGE, the production of EMRGV corresponded to an area of 33.3 km<sup>2</sup> (especially in Guaraparí with more than 1/3 of the plantations), i.e., the equivalent of 4% of the total area of what we call eucalyptus crop in EMRGV because eucalyptus is the dominant plant at 96%.

#### Vacant domiciles, real estate launchings and housing deficit in MRGV

We will analyse the following as a method of strengthening our initial hypotheses about the extraction of the land rent and real estate speculation in the region: the vacant domiciles with data from IBGE from the 2010 census and the real estate launchings and the average prices of real estate indexed by the Construction Industry Syndicate of Espírito Santo (Sindicato da Indústria da Construção Civil do Espírito Santo - Sinduscon) in several areas of the study region during the period of 2005 to 2012, correlating them to the equipment and service density of the areas where they are allocated. We will then cross-reference these data with the housing deficit for 2008, set by Institute Jones dos Santos Neves (IJSN) (cf. Maps 5 and 6).



Map 5 Vacant domiciles, housing deficit and real estate unities indexed by the construction industry syndicate between 2005 and 2012 in MRGV



Map 6: Average value per square meter of real estate launchings indexed by the construction industry syndicate from 2005-2012 in MRGV

Our first observation (cf. maps 5 and 6) is the high number of vacant domiciles (66,306 in 2010, cf. IBGE census) in the metropolitan region vis-à-vis the housing deficit announced by public bodies (5,236). In summary, we can observe that only 8% of these domiciles would be sufficient to meet the housing demand; however, in addition to the fact that the deficit calculation may not consider many precarious domiciles, the demands of the poorest are not always where these domiciles are vacant.

However, the speculative situation becomes even more clear when we verify that these vacant domiciles are distributed throughout the region; there are certain concentrations in neighbourhoods generally located in the agglomeration centre and the most valued areas. These areas are predominantly the areas where greater construction occurred in recent years and where the values of the constructed buildings increased from 2005 to 2012 (cf. Maps 5 and 6).

In relation to real estate launchings indexed by the construction industry syndicate, which in general considers buildings constructed by national and/or local real estate companies, after the 2008 crisis, we observe a slight decrease in some central areas. However, the launchings continued to occur in a constant and "sustained" manner in 2010 and 2011, even though there was a marked decline in 2012, in particular in Vila Velha, Serra and Cariacica. Because Vitória has less available land, it has exhibited a downward trend in real estate launchings since 2008.

The launchings computed by the real estate market in 2010, 2011 and 2012 seem to be a consequence, especially recently, of the federal government programme My Home, My Life (Minha Casa Minha Vida - MCMV), which expects the construction of 2 million domiciles throughout Brazil between 2009 and 2014. The programme finances housing for the middle and lower classes from savings funds and also the Guarantee Fund from Length of Service (Fundo de Garantia de Tempo de Serviço - FGTS) – a fund composed of resources originating from an obligatory employer contribution, calculated based on the wages of the workers and that constitutes a fund that can be withdrawn when the worker loses his/her job or intends to purchase a home of his/her own - to which all Brazilian formal workers and employers contribute. This programme has led Brazilians to accumulate a growing debt; thus, housing credit in Brazil has grown so much over the past four years that this credit represented 25% (R\$ 1.1 trillion) of all types of credit of the national financial system for individuals in November 2012, equalling personal credit in the top credit positions (Folha de São Paulo, January 13, 2013). Debt has increased exponentially since 2004 in all economic sectors, from 24.5% of the GDP to 53.5% of the GDP in 2012 (Jornal O Globo, January 26, 2013, p. 21), still below the debt of major capitalist countries but indicating a worrying development.

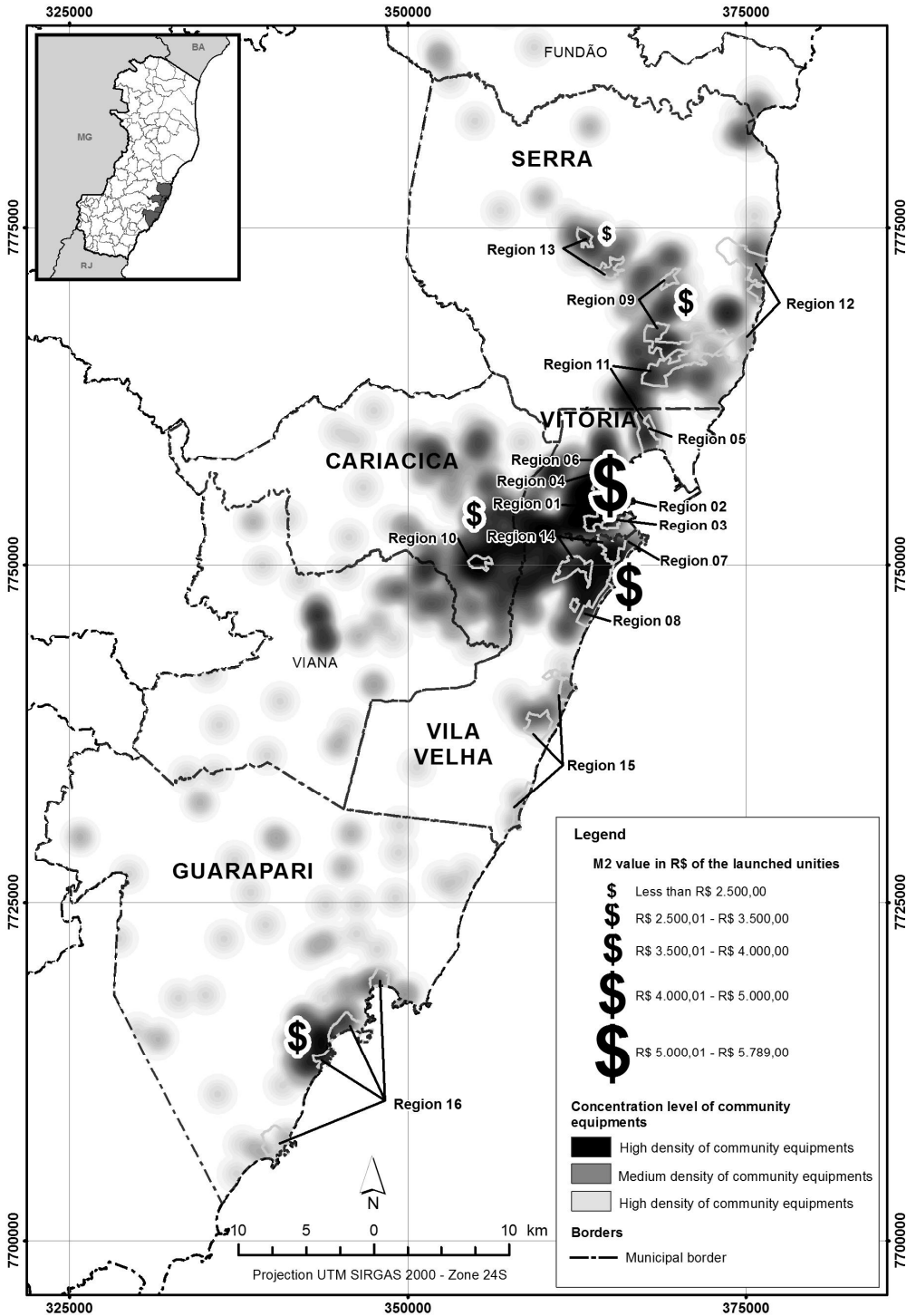
The MCMV programme was conceived as a method to maintain economic growth in the face of the 2008 international crisis by repeating the same housing policy model of the military government. Real estate loans have subsidised interest rates and, for the poorest sectors of the population, the subsidy is almost complete; in this category, people must pay a fixed value that varies from R\$ 50 to

150 per month, which refunds only a small portion of the financing value; however, even so, there are extremely poor sectors that could not pay that sum (MARICATTO, 2011). This model was designed in partnership with the federal government, with 11 large companies in the real estate industry (MARICATO, 2011, p. 63 and) and responded to the difficulties in this sector in the face of the economic crisis, ensuring "the continuity of a new level of accumulation in residential real estate production in Brazil" (MARICATO, 2011, p. 63). [1]

However, as in the past, with the policy of the National Housing Bank (Banco Nacional da Habitação - BNH) during the military regime, the housing financing will not absorb the housing deficits (cf. MARICATTO, op. cit.) where they are more urgent (90% of the Brazilian deficit of residences), for the population whose income is less than 3 minimum wages (1 minimum wage in 2013 is equal to R\$ 678, the exchange rate of the Brazilian real in February 2013 is R\$ 1 = USD 2). In all the other social categories in the range above three minimum wages, this deficit will be substantially exceeded (RONCHI, 2013, p. 8 -9) and, as in the past, priority will be given in exceptional circumstances to the high level portions of the employed population from resources of the workforce as a whole, which are deposited in FGTS and savings.

In Espírito Santo, the housing deficit calculated in 2009 was of 21,683 residences (IJSN, 2009) and there was a project, in the first phase of the 2009 programme, to build 16,846 residential units. Only a portion of these units are in fact being contracted (14,803 residences) and are in various stages, from projected to under construction (Ronchi, 2013); however, the quota intended for the poorest corresponds to 46% of the domiciles. This value must be associated with the 90% of the housing deficit that is located in this income range. What is noticeable is an uncontrolled construction process based on this programme that will only increase the stock of vacant domiciles belonging to the most privileged, many under the form of purchases to "invest in", i.e., to rent or resell later. The metropolitan region is the main location for the construction of houses through the government programme, and the majority of these houses are based on the model of "gated communities", with guards in the entrances, cameras and leisure areas, copying, therefore, the dominant models of gated communities in Brazil and the MRGV (ZANOTELLI et al., 2012).

These MCMV ventures intended for the middle classes are located in more central areas and where infrastructure is available. These ventures are the spaces in which the real estate business invests more in the region, in particular in the municipalities of Serra and Vila Velha. The regions of real estate launchings from the construction industry syndicate of Espírito Santo can be studied through the analysis of the residential units with two bedrooms. Thus, the increases of the square meter values of these units, based on centrality and concentration of community equipment such as schools, health centres, police stations and of social assistance, can be examined (see Map 7).



Map 7: Square meter values of units with two bedrooms and concentration of community services in MRGV - 2012



In the MRGV, we also find almost all of the constructions of the programme in Espírito Santo for those who earn up to 3 minimum wages, and invariably, these sets of poor-quality domiciles and houses of 42 m<sup>2</sup> are located on the outskirts of the region in the empty urban spaces and in the limits of urban and rural areas with little or no transportation infrastructure, equipment, businesses and various other services. In this manner, a horizontally extended city is produced (cf. Ronchi, op. cit., p. 12). The housing states are located where the land is less expensive, allowing real estate promoters to extract surplus-profit from the venture based on large subsidies or donations of these lands by the public authorities to make the project viable because the value of the houses is limited by the federal government [2]. In this manner, companies reduce their costs and maximise their relative profits. In fact, the extraction of land rent is appropriated, in this case, by the landowner through the intermediation of the state that pays the surplus-profit directly to him, thus directly subsidising the real estate promoters' profits. This practice can be identified in various housing estates of the My Home, My Life programme in MRGV, particularly in Cariacica.

This programme results in two complementary effects, two simultaneous waves that are convergent and divergent. The first effect is the fact that further enhancement of the central areas is sought, where one can find launched ventures predominantly intended for the upper layers of the middle classes, leading to the construction of domiciles in an exceeding number, which are added to the vacant domiciles present in the most valued areas (higher monopoly and absolute rents defining the occupancies), further increasing supply problems that already lead to a rearrangement of prices, causing a decline in the pace of sales and prices in central sectors of the MRGV [3] and an equalisation of earnings of some real estate agents in relation to the others. The second effect is the relative appreciation of areas on the fringe of urban areas with rural ones because they tend to have higher values than the current ones based on the infrastructures that sooner or later will accompany housing estates. This appreciation, in addition to competition for land between real estate companies, can further accelerate the urban expansion, bringing more structural problems to the region. This differential dynamics tends, in the same manner, to suffer from the effects of speculation in the central areas; thus, values may vary more or less in the outskirts due to the movement of supply and demand, as appears to be the current case.

## Final Considerations

The processes that tend to capture land rent through urban and rural land and that thus determine the price of real estate in MRGV comprise three main groups of actors: the state, the entire real estate industry (including real estate promoters, the construction industry and the real estate agencies that sometimes can be gathered in the same economic actor or establish numerous partnerships between the local capitals and the national and/or international capitals facilitated by the financial market) and the land and estate renters.

In the information presented on the uses and occupancy of the region, we observe the extreme land concentration with pasture, a major expansion of the urban area (8.6% of the area of the expanded region and 14% of the metropolitan region *strictu sensu*) and the gradual reduction of woods, restingas and mangroves. Associated with these aspects, we note the existence of important empty spaces in land considered urban (69% of the urban perimeter) and the existence of thousands of vacant domiciles in the MRGV (66,306), which indicate, in relation to the housing deficit (5,236 domiciles), a frantic speculation regarding real state production (34,863 residential units under construction in December 2012) – mainly apartment buildings of 2 and 3 bedrooms – in the metropolitan region, which conforms to a capture of the land rent, either absolute, monopoly or differential, at a variable geometry and in an intricate way.

This portrait of the region cannot be understood without the active role of the state (federal, state and municipal) in enabling this expansion through tolerances to transgression and/or hurried adaptations of the Municipal Director Plans and of environmental and urban legislations (ZANOTELLI et al., op. cit.) in the development of industrial and infrastructural projects. These projects are stimulated mainly by the government plan drawn up by large companies ES 2025 and open up and/or affect rural and/or environmental protection areas and spaces of living for traditional populations. The state also plays a role by initiating housing programmes that allow an uncontrolled expansion of the city and of speculation.

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