

# **The Porto Alegre Sustainable Innovation Zone (ZISPOA) and the Paralelo Vivo Sustainable Innovation Hub**

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Good morning, everyone! It's an honor and pleasure to be here today and participate with all of you for this very important sixth annual seminar on Sustainable Urban Management. Many thanks to Ligia, Suzana, Gracia, and Patricia from Todavida for organizing this seminar and inviting me to speak.

Today I want to talk with all of you about the Porto Alegre Sustainable Innovation Zone – ZISPOA – and ZISPOA's collaborative house, the Paralelo Vivo Sustainable Innovation Hub. First I want to show you this brief video, produced by POAdigital for the Porto Alegre City Government, featuring our very first ZISPOA course held at Paralelo Vivo during last October, November, and December:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NHTM-Z-b3aE>.

As you can see from this exciting video, ZISPOA is a grassroots, citizen-led, community-based movement to transform parts of the Independencia and Floresta neighborhoods in Porto Alegre's 4th District into the most sustainable and innovative place in Latin America by 2020. Over this past year, hundreds of people have participated in ZISPOA activities, with many more people joining us every week.

ZISPOA is the first implementation step of the Leapfrog Economic Strategy for the State of Rio Grande do Sul (RS) to become the most sustainable and innovative place in Latin America by 2030

[http://www.globalurban.org/2015\\_RS\\_LEAPFROG\\_ECONOMIC\\_STRATEGY.pdf](http://www.globalurban.org/2015_RS_LEAPFROG_ECONOMIC_STRATEGY.pdf).

This economic strategy, funded by the World Bank, was produced for the RS State Government by Global Urban Development (GUD), an international policy NGO and professional network of more than 600 leaders and experts in 60 countries, committed to generating greater prosperity and higher quality of life throughout the world, enabling all people everywhere to live and thrive in peace with each other and in peace with nature.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, people, places, and organizations can literally “get richer by becoming greener” through the Four Greens: Green Savings, Green Opportunities, Green Talent, and Green Places. Sustainable Innovation and Inclusive Prosperity is the key to dynamically growing businesses, jobs, and incomes through earning and

saving more money by conserving, renewing, and reusing resources much more efficiently.

My wife Nancy and I have been living and working in Porto Alegre for past three years to help make Rio Grande do Sul a world leader in Sustainable Innovation and Inclusive Prosperity, following an economic development framework that GUD has successfully applied in cities, regions, states, and provinces throughout the world. For example, the NoMa neighborhood in Washington, DC, an internationally recognized “best practice” in sustainable economic development and urban regeneration, is viewed as an inspiring example for ZISPOA and the 4<sup>th</sup> District.

Since last September, GUD has been collaborating with many people and groups to help organize the Paralelo Vivo Sustainable Innovation Hub, the first startup hub, coworking and maker space, and innovation ecosystem in Latin America focused on promoting sustainable entrepreneurship, currently with 31 participating businesses and organizations. GUD worked with startup Pulsar on the Entrepreneurship Challenge for nearly 200 students at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS), and collaborated with Pulsar to teach two ZISPOA courses at Paralelo Vivo, as well as the Next Citizens ZISPOA course held at Paralelo Vivo and other ZISPOA collaborative houses: Casa Cultural Tony Petzhold, CC100, Marquise 51 Hub Criativo, and Vila Flores. Together nearly 100 students participated in these three courses.

**ZISPOA focuses on combining six key elements:**

- 1) Innovation and Technology;**
- 2) Entrepreneurship and Startups;**
- 3) Sustainability and Resource Efficiency;**
- 4) Creativity and Collaboration;**
- 5) Participatory Community Management; and**
- 6) Business-Friendly Environment.**

**Currently ZISPOA is focused on becoming the most sustainable and innovative place in Latin America by 2020 through accomplishing five major goals:**

- Most Solar Powered;**
- Most Energy Efficient;**
- Most Digitally Connected;**
- Most Renewable Technology-Friendly; and**
- Most Bike-Friendly.**

ZISPOA is receiving considerable encouragement and assistance from the Porto Alegre City Government, including Mayor Jose Fortunati, Local Governance Secretary and Chief Resilience Officer Cezar Busatto, Porto Alegre Resiliente, POAdigital, DMLU, and INOVAPOA.

**In October 2015, ZISPOA created six working groups based on each of the key elements. These working groups developed Strategic Action Initiatives, and since then the working groups have been implementing these initiatives, including:**

- organizing monthly international Green Drinks networking events in Porto Alegre with organic food and beverages and brief presentations by local Sustainable Innovation entrepreneurs;
- working with Oz Engenharia at Tecnopuc to obtain solar trees for ZISPOA at Shopping Total and Praca Florida;
- organizing monthly Sustainable Connections seminars at Paralelo Vivo;
- organizing the first ZISPOA Festival for World Environment Day in honor of Jose Lutzenberger on June 5, featuring community sustainability educational and entertainment activities at Vila Flores for more than 400 participants;
- presenting ZISPOA to the UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development and to the UN Human Settlements Program (Habitat);
- creating a partnership of ZISPOA, Porto Alegre Resiliente, and UFRGS to collaborate with Ecocity Builders, ESRI, WRI, the US Government, and several other international organizations on sustainable urban geoinformation and ecocitizen mapping for ZISPOA;
- building a business-friendly ZISPOA information website ([www.zispoa.info](http://www.zispoa.info));
- creating a ZISPOA Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/zispoa](http://www.facebook.com/zispoa));
- developing an electric car sharing plan for ZISPOA together with MVM Tecnologias and UFRGS Administration Professor Luis Felipe Nascimento and his students, including building Porto Alegre's first electric car solar charging station at Shopping Total, which Sweden's Ambassador to Brazil will help us officially launch on October 20;
- conducting community-based research for sustainable urban development with 3C Urbanism, UFRGS Design Professor Julio van der Linden and his students, and Environmental Engineering students from UFRGS;
- promoting community-based recycling and building the new Espaco Floresta community garden and composting center with DMLU, Mãos Verdes, and three startups: Re-ciclo, Horteria, and Corpo com Equilibrio;
- creating #zistalks with startup Point every Monday night at Paralelo Vivo, both for the ZISPOA working groups and for the general public;

- participating in the November 29 Climate March at Parque Farroupilha/Redencao;
- participating in the RS State Government Commission for the UN Sustainable Development Goals;
- mapping ZISPOA solar power generating capacity with Junior Enterprises RENOVA and OTMZA, and other students and professors at UFRGS;
- creating TEDx talks and a Startup Marathon with the UFRGS School of Engineering;
- establishing Miudinho, a new sustainability blog with startup UPSS;
- organizing various activities to support Porto Alegre Zero Waste Week;
- developing a network of advanced manufacturing and new materials research and entrepreneurship with Printup 3D and other startups from the UFRGS Hestia Incubator and from Tecnopuc;
- **plus much, much more.**

Currently ZISPOA is collaborating with the Swedish Government's Smart Living Challenge global network, including an international technical expert webinars at Paralelo Vivo on April 28 about "Sharing for Sustainable Mobility" featuring ZISPOA startups such as weBike for bike sharing, Easybox for garage sharing, and MVM for electric car sharing. On October 21, ZISPOA entrepreneurs and experts will participate in a major Sweden-Brazil Innovation Week seminar at Nos Coworking on Green Energy, and Sustainable Mobility, and Sustainable Urban Development.

**On June 30, both ZISPOA and Paralelo Vivo won awards from Virada Sustentavel and Fundacao Gaia. In addition, two ZISPOA startups, Re-ciclo and Genese Social, also won awards, and four other ZISPOA startups were finalists for awards: Cesta Feira, Horteria, MVM, and weBike. Amazingly, all eight of these organizations are new, meaning that ZISPOA is a rapidly growing movement.**

In addition to international partnerships with Sweden and the US, ZISPOA also is developing partnerships with Canada, Germany, Singapore, Spain, the UK, and the United Nations. Soon we will see similar hubs and zones in many cities throughout Rio Grande do Sul, such as Canoas, Caxias do Sul, Pelotas, Santa Maria, and many other places. Already Sustainable Innovation Zones are spreading to other cities in Brazil and Latin America, including Sao Paulo and Panama City.

In the future, ZISPOA can become an internationally recognized Portoalegrense initiative, just like Participatory Budgeting and the World Social Forum. Porto Alegre, the Barcelona of Brazil and the San Francisco of South America, will join the ranks of globally advanced Sustainable Innovation and Inclusive Prosperity cities such as Berkeley and Freiburg, and Rio Grande do Sul will become an advanced

Sustainable Innovation and Inclusive Prosperity state just like California and Baden-Wurttemberg in Germany.

Of course none of this will happen without everyone here in this auditorium, and many more people throughout this city and state, getting actively involved in enabling ZISPOA to become a major success. Our world's future, and the future of our families, friends, neighbors, colleagues, and indeed all of our loved ones, depends on us acting together now to co-create the innovative changes and sustainable accomplishments that we truly want and need.

We welcome all of you to help make ZISPOA a beacon of hope and a source of good ideas, best practices, and inspiring results for the Gauchos, for humanity, and for Gaia.

Thank you very much!