WORLD FRONTIERS AND PUBLIC POLICY: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW AND A FUTURE AGENDA TOWARD A SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Introduction

According to the United Nations (UN, 2015), collaborative partnerships among nations are a fundamental requirement for redirecting to a world that develops sustainably, being the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Agenda and the 169 targets an action plan to achieve it. Thus, although Sustainable Development is recognized as of crucial importance, since it advocates the balance between economic, environmental and social development, one of the greatest global challenges for the implementation of Agenda 2030 has been the integration among nations (UN, 2015).

In this sense, public policies that represent the State in action (Jobert & Muller, 1987), can act as instruments to overcome obstacles and build bridges between countries that are territorially close, but distant in their governmental actions (Cruz, 2014). However, since each frontier has unique characteristics, depending on its fluidity or fortification (Machado, 1998), the implementation of this Agenda can face barriers or opportunities.

Several studies have approached world frontiers in several aspects (Brunet-Jally, 2012), nevertheless there is still a lack of systematization of the available knowledge on frontiers and public policies demonstrating the reality of these localities concerning public intervention for their integration or separation, as well as their greater challenges and opportunities vis-à-vis the SDG.

In light of this research gap, the goal of this manuscript is to conduct a systematic literature review on world frontiers and public policies, in order to contribute the Sustainable Development of these localities. For the systematic review, the terms frontiers and public policies were used in the searches on internationally consolidated databases, being presented in more detail in the next session, methodological aspects, following the results and discussions, and concluded in the final considerations.

Methodological aspects

In order to achieve the research goal, the study is of qualitative and exploratory nature, using as research technique the systematic literature review, encompassing articles that approach the following subjects: frontiers and public policies. The articles were collected in Scopus and Web of Science databases, for being considered as bases that gather the largest number of publications in a wide range of research fields. Data were collected and the study was carried out between February and August 2017.

After the collection, the articles were analysed, being excluded those that did not correspond to the subject, were unavailable for download or duplicated. With the conducted analysis, codes composed by numbers and letters were used to build a classification structure of the articles regarding the following dimensions:

- **Category A** - Continent from where the study started: A1-America; A2-Europe; A3-Asia; A4-Africa; A5-Oceania.
- **Category B** - National context in which the frontier is inserted: B1-Developed countries; B2-Developing countries; B3-Does not apply;
- **Category C** - Research method of the article: C1-Qualitative; C2-Quantitative; C3-Theoretical; - C4-Empirical; C5-Case Study/Interviews; C6-Survey;
- **Category D** - Status regarding the SDGs: D1-No poverty; D2-Zero hunger; D3-Good Health and Well-being; D4-Quality Education; D5-Gender Equality; D6-Clean Equality and Sanitation; D7-Affordable and Clean Energy; D8-Decent Work and Economic Growth; Industry, D9-Innovation and Infrastructure; D10-Reduced Inequalities; D11-Sustainable Cities and Communities; D12-Sustainable Consumption and production; D13-Climate Action; D14-Life Below Water; D15-Life on Land; D16-Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions; D17-Partnership for the goals; NA-Not applicable.
- **Category E** - Type of integration: E1-Collaborative; E2-Indifferent; E3-Resistant; NA-Not applicable.

The result were mapped on world frontiers, being shedding light on the research flows on the subject and proposed a future research agenda.

Results and discussions
Table 1 brings the set of analyzed articles. The title, number of citations, authorship, publication year, journal, country where the study was conducted and a summary of each article are presented.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title (citations)</th>
<th>Authors (year, journal and country frontiers)</th>
<th>Brief summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multilevel governance in regional development: a case study of the Intermunicipal Consortium of Frontier (0)</td>
<td>Henrichsn &amp; De Meza (2017, Revista Brasileira de Gestão Urbana, Brazil-Argentina)</td>
<td>Aims to analyze the contribution, based on the study of the Intermunicipal Consortium of Frontier (CIF), of multilevel governance to regional development process in border regions. As a result, it was found that it contributes to the improvement of intergovernmental relations, in federative context, and serves as a link between intention and realization of regional development from the ground, enabling the democratic participation in the process. Also, CIF are important tools for coordination and work as a development strategy, not only for the municipalities involved, but also for the entire regional surroundings because they enable to plan, implement and manage shared public policies to solve common experience problems, giving visibility to the region over other governmental levels.</td>
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<td>Chameleon Wall. Inside Two Competing Coalitions of Pro-“Fence” Actors in Israel (0)</td>
<td>Simonneau (2016, Journal of Borderlands Studies, Israel-Palestine)</td>
<td>Explores the various meanings ascribed to the West Bank Wall by certain segments of Israeli society, specifically by pro-fence actors pressuring the Government between 2001 and 2005. Based on the identification of beliefs associated with the fence by such actors, the Wall appears to act as a Chameleon “solving” issues concerning security, identity, territory and separation. Beyond military and control purposes, the Wall also acts as a tool of reassurance on these issues to the Israeli public. Nowadays, separation is favored over negotiations and territorial or political compromises. The Wall is thus a consensual public policy for most Israelis.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Colombia–Ecuador Border Region: Between Informal Dynamics and Illegal Practices (0)</td>
<td>Medina &amp; Calderón (2015, Journal of Borderlands Studies, Colombia -Ecuador)</td>
<td>Examines two phenomena in the Amazonian border region: (1) the informal dynamics of everyday life that have been part of the State formation process, and (2) illegal practices. Finally, States act individually in the Andean region with no policies of cooperation and guerrilla and Colombian government peace talks have opened a new path to think differently on how to consolidate the State control and to build social linkages based on regional integration, social inclusion and consolidation of democratic rule.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Looking Through the Mirror: A Historical Geographical View of the Canadian–American Borderlands (1)</td>
<td>Widdis (2015, Journal of Borderlands Studies, United States-Canada)</td>
<td>The paper aims to reflect briefly on the relative importance of the border in Canadian and American society and to argue briefly that those who deliberate on the future public policy implications of political, economic and security developments currently affecting the Canada–United States border and, consequently, Canadian–American relations, need to situate these issues and relations in historical and geographical context in order to gain necessary perspective and avoid making statements and policies that promote resentful cultural divisions.</td>
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<td>The border network for human rights: From community organizing to public policy action (0)</td>
<td>Heyman (2014, City and Society, United States-Mexico)</td>
<td>The Border Network for Human Rights (BNHR) is a community-based organization in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands, focused on human rights in the domain of immigration law enforcement and comprehensive immigration reform. BNHR focuses on the U.S.-Mexico border region, the region of most intensive U.S. immigration enforcement; uses a base community organizing strategy and has brought the voices and perspectives of border and immigrant community members to the public policy process. BNHR is reformulating political agency in the borderlands and the U.S.</td>
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<td>An Introduction to the Multiple US-Mexico Borders (5)</td>
<td>Correa-Cabrera &amp; Staudt (2014, Journal of Borderlands Studies, United States-Mexico)</td>
<td>Aims to explore differences and similarities from the western industrialized Tijuana–San Diego Pacific coastal region, the de-populated Sonora–Arizona desert, the densely settled global manufacturing central Paso del Norte site, and the agricultural spaces and smaller urban settlements of South Texas–northeastern Mexico. The relevant differences complicate public policy impacts, social and environmental issues, and action strategies for the future, posing intriguing new research with implications for borderlands in other world regions.</td>
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<td>Cross-border governance on the U.S.-Mexico border: Institutional challenges and developments in health collaboration (1)</td>
<td>Cruz (2014, Regions and Cohesion, United States-Mexico)</td>
<td>Establishing interlinkages between health and security aspects of the border collaboration, the author presents a descriptive panorama of the problems inherent to cross-border health governance and analyze institutional perspectives and border typology. As borders continue to change with time, cross-border collaboration continues to be shaped and redefined.</td>
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<td>Tuberculosis in Amazonian municipalities of the Brazil-Colombia-Peru-Venezuela border: epidemiological situation and risk factors associated with treatment default (8)</td>
<td>Belo, Orellana &amp; Levino (2013, Revista Panamericana de Salud Pública, Brazil-Colombia-Peru-Venezuela)</td>
<td>Aims to describe the epidemiological situation and the incidence of tuberculosis and to investigate the factors associated with treatment default in the Amazonian municipalities located in the northern Brazilian international border. Results show a high incidence of tuberculosis in the Amazon portion of the northern Brazilian international border, especially among indigenous peoples. Considering the socio-cultural specificities of these populations and the poor tuberculosis control in this area, the authors conclude that the integration of different national health systems is both necessary and urgent.</td>
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<td>Sexual abuse at the US-Mexico border: Exploratory analysis of the borderlife (1)</td>
<td>Rogers et. al., (2012, Journal of Borderlands Studies, United States-Mexico)</td>
<td>The current study explored sexual abuse at the US–Mexico border through the Borderlife Archive, a collection of over 10,000 personal narratives from interviews conducted on the South Texas border. Over 100 incidents of sexual abuse were spontaneously reported in interviews on unrelated topics. The incidents showed broad patterns of abuse familiar from larger North American studies. In addition, unique factors related to life in the borderlands were reported in the narratives, such as the involvement of immigration and employment status in abuse situations.</td>
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In the increasingly global economy, are borderland regions public management instruments? (1)


Aims to question whether free trade, and particularly continental economic integration in North America, impacts the economies, and leads to forms of transboundary governance. Based on a review of the literature, public policy and individual interviews, and a survey of 700 private and public policy decision makers, the results suggest that increased economic interdependence has led to the emergence of trans-boundary governance. Public managers and policy-makers view those as mechanisms that ease trade and public policy relations. Contrary to broad assumption, North American trans-boundary policy networks are helping trade relations and facilitate policy making.

Claiming Space, Claiming Water: Contested Legal Geographies of Water in South Texas (19)


Drawing on current scholarship in critical legal geography, the article details how emerging legal discourses rescripted narratives about colonias residents’ access to water through debates over the political territoriality of the WCIDs. Moreover, the legal process shifted the terms of debate from voting rights to historical precedent, the market, policy failure, and prospective water rights. The final legal ruling against colonias residents foreclosed any standing they had in regional water governance and shunted them into their current position of passive consumers of dysfunctional public services with limited ability to change their relationship to regional water management institutions.

Understanding the geography of food stamp program participation: Do space and place matter (10)

Slack & Myers (2012, Social Science Research, United States-Mexico)

Examines the extent to which geographic variation in Food Stamp Program (FSP) participation is explained by place-based factors, with special attention to the case of the three poorest regions of the United States: Central Appalachia, the Texas Borderland, and the Lower Mississippi Delta. Using descriptive statistics and regression models to assess the prevalence and correlates of county-level FSP participation circa 2005, the findings show that the economic distress that has long characterized Appalachia, the Borderland, and the Delta clearly translates into greater reliance on the FSP relative to other areas of the country.

Desflorestamento na Amazônia Brasileira: ação coletiva, governança e governabilidade em área de fronteira (2)

Machado (2009, Sociedade e Estado, Region of the Brazilian Amazon)

Aims to analyze the role of occupation policies and the use of natural resources of Amazonia and identify in which measure those policies can affect the behavior of some groups towards the region’s deforestation. The results indicate that deforestation control policies only influence the behavior of actors if a State’s effective action is conducted, by using regulation mechanisms.

How can we address health inequality through healthy public policy in Europe? (17)

Curtis (2008, European Urban and Regional Studies, Europe)

Considers some examples of strategies which are being used in European countries to facilitate Health Impact Assessment; interpreted in terms of theories of a world risk society, put forward by Ulrich Beck. This article considers the relevance of literature from regional science concerning the appropriate scale and type of agency to handle complex regional planning issues and how to create learning regions that successfully integrate new knowledge into regional policy.

Universal health systems and territory: challenges for a regional policy in the Brazilian Legal Amazon (11)

Viana et. al. (2007, Cadernos de Saúde Pública, Region of the Brazilian Amazon)

Presents the results of a study on Federal health policy in the Brazilian National Health System (SUS) by the population living along the borders. Identifies the challenge of social movement of persons and the demand for public services with limited ability to change their relationship to regional health policy proved to be low in the Amazon during the study period, due to structural, institutional, and political difficulties. There is a certain gap between Federal actions and territorial dynamics, expressed as a mismatch between the current policy and its recognition by local administrators.

The challenge of social integration in the MERCOSUR: a discussion on citizenship and the right to health (5)

Dal Pri, Mendes & Miotto (2007, Cadernos de Saúde Pública, Mercosur)

Discusses the guarantee of the right to health care and the exercise of citizenship in border areas between Brazil and the other MERCOSUR member countries, considering cross-border movement of persons and the demand on the Brazilian National Health System (SUS) by the population living along the borders. Identifies the predominance of the economic dimension in the MERCOSUR and considers alternatives to the extension of such rights and the definition of public health care policies along the MERCOSUR border in order to meet the demand for services provided by the SUS.

The obstacles to European Union regional policy in the Northern Ireland borderlands (9)

Wilson (2000, Human Organization, European Union)

The essay examines a European policy program, INTERREG, which has enjoyed only partial success at the border area, and adverse social indicators. Institutional consolidation of health policy proved to be gradual and slow. What appears to be the key is a result of a process of institutional adaptation which is its opportunity/challenge.

Table 2 present the authors, publication year and categories and results analyzed in the present study, demonstrated as follow.

Table 2 – Classification of the analyzed studies

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<th>Ord</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Categories</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A - Continent from where the study started</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Henrichsn &amp; Meza (2017)</td>
<td>A1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Simonneau (2016)</td>
<td>A3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Widdis (2015)</td>
<td>A1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Heyman (2014 )</td>
<td>A1</td>
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Considering the results organized in Tables 1 and 2, it can be noticed that most of the articles found on frontiers and public policy analyze the subject in the American continent (fourteen studies), of which an expressive portion portrays the frontier between the United States and Mexico (six studies), for being a region with many realities, due to different histories, populations, climate, economic dynamics, social integration, politics, beliefs, art, cultural expression, etc., thus requiring contextualized public policies to the local reality, capable of coping with multiple complexities, such as unifying violence and dehumanization in the areas of cross-border flows, stemming from political constructions and media, emanating from above, and not from border dweller (Correa-Cabrera & Staudt, 2014).

Other challenges identified in the region include the obstruction of human rights of immigrants, such as the right to documented passage, exploitation of workers (Heyman, 2014), sexual violence (Rogers et al., 2012), criminalization of the informal economy, fostered by the cinematography of a border stereotyped as illegal and trafficker (Cruz, 2014).

On the other hand, human rights networks have been fostered to give voice to the borderland community, proposing collaboration between institutions and the implementation of a cross-border governance to facilitate access to public goods (Heyman, 2014), as health, that “not knowing frontiers”, its shortcomings disseminate communicable diseases, requiring governments to see and implement public actions not based in their territorial limits, but on agreements aimed at border areas where transnational communities reside (Cruz, 2014).

Similar aspects were analyzed in South America frontiers, since the articles as the articles that portray the region (six studies), describe that the public policies that should be implemented considering the development and security of the frontier residents, in fact aim the great urban centers of the countries without articulating themselves through agreements for integration and transnational cooperation (Medina & Calderón, 2015). Considering that, from the articles surveyed (seventeen studies), most deal with the frontier regions in development (thirteen studies). Medina & Calderón (2015) point out that the historical marginalization of the frontiers, together with the lack of access to decision-making processes and the consequent less development of these regions compared to the others of the nation-state, favor the capture of illicit activities, generating prohibitionist campaigns in the region.

It is important to emphasize that every time the State implements a public policy for development that would promote strengthening and administrative organization in the region, and disarticulate it without achieving its objective, crime reaches important tactical advantages because, since the problem was not solved, the capture reappears in a more intimidating and violent way, with new arrangements and creativity (improving its entrepreneurial and adaptive capacity), thus returning to a new level through symbiotic alliances between transnational groups of organized crime (Medina & Calderón, 2015).

Due to the dense structural problems that favor this complexity, Henrichsn & Meza (2017) highlight that the population of these territories can develop sustainably through a multilevel governance, which advocates the cooperation through transparency, control and accountability, with ethics as sediment.

It is important to point out that the idea that has been disseminated worldwide of the frontier as a wall of containment is contrary to the agreement reached by the 193 countries signatories to the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development (UN, 2015), and has had repercussions not only between developing countries, but
among those developed. For example, on most European frontiers (Curtis, 2008; Wilson, 2000) or between Canada and United States (Brunet-Jailly, 2012; Widdis, 2015), which are described as areas where the closure has been deepened, where cross-border relations, once forged by the migrations of labor, capital and commerce, which constituted a continuity that linked the past and the present, can nowadays become a fence that prevents the continuance of ties in the future, becoming similar to countries where the walls have long since become physical, consensus for the majority of population as public security policies (Simonneau, 2016).

Continuing the analysis, the following map (Figure 1), shows the researchers contribution from different countries, to the literature on world frontiers and public policies. Thus, for better visualization, using Google Maps and Photoshop the frontiers analyzed by the collected articles were located, being numbered by the corresponding researches as well as the institutions that the researchers belong.

**Figure 1** – Geographic localization of all world frontiers and the respective research institutions

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Figure 1 shows that there are individual and collaborative research between researcher from different research/teaching institutions of the same country on the subject, not presenting collaborative studies between researchers from different countries. From the 17 analyzed studies, most of the researches were conducted by a single researcher (nine studies); and from the studies that were conducted by more than one author (eight studies), it is important to highlight five studies with partnerships between institutions.

Thus, the conjoint efforts of the research institutions are represented by the following numbers on the map: 1- Universidade Tecnológica Federal do Paraná, Curitiba, Brasil; and Universidade Federal do Paraná, Curitiba, Brasil; 6 - University of Texas at Brownsville, Brownsville, EUA; and University of Texas at El Paso, El Paso, EUA; 8- Universidade Federal do Amazonas, Manaus, Brasil, Fundação Oswaldo Cruz, Manaus, Brasil and Fundação Oswaldo Cruz, Rio de Janeiro, Brasil; 15 – Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brasil, Fundação Oswaldo Cruz, Río de Janeiro, Brasil and Instituto de Saúde de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brasil; 16 – Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre, Brasil, and Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Florianópolis, Brasil. The other articles (twelve studies), were also numbered in the respective analyzed frontier.

Thus, proposing a future research agenda on the subject, it should be pointed out that, as far as the continent category is concerned, due to the small studies on the African and Asian frontiers, there is an opportunity for research in these regions. Regarding the category of national border contexts, most studies have focused on analyzes of the frontiers of developing countries or of developed and developing countries. It is therefore relevant to deepen research on the borders between developed countries. Moreover, in the research method, of the articles surveyed, only three performed quantitative analyzes, bringing new opportunities for future studies.

In the SDGs status category, no research directly correlated the themes, since the implementation of Agenda 2030 is relatively recent (UN, 2015). However, the studies contributed to themes related to SDGs, such as: health (SDG3), reduction of inequalities (SDG10). It remains a challenge and opportunity for future research, contributions to integration between countries (SDG17) and transnational security (SDG16). Finally, the category type of integration has shown that frontiers that tended towards integration have become resistant or indifferent, and this is an opportunity to concatenate research with strategies for cooperation for sustainable development.
Final considerations

Through the present study, it was possible to identify the research gap which integrates the subjects world frontiers and public policies. The available knowledge was systematized through the classification and codification of the results found, presenting recommendations to guide future research. The results implied in the characterization of the world frontiers on integration: collaborative, indifferent or resistant; as well as the greater challenges and opportunities related to the SDGs. The coded results were demonstrated through mapping at the respective frontiers, where the resulting map showed the distribution of scientific knowledge on the subject, which allowed a broad view of governmental actions at world frontiers, as well as where greater efforts are needed or the greatest opportunities are present for cross-country partnerships aiming a sustainable and integrated development.

Referencias


