

## ***Special call: Tourism and Covid-19***

Reintroduction of Ethics in Public Tourism Policies: a necessary reflection in addressing the consequences of Covid-19.

Reincorporação da Ética às Políticas Públicas de Turismo: uma necessária reflexão no combate às consequências do Covid-19..

Reincorporación de la ética en las políticas públicas de turismo: una reflexión necesaria para combatir las consecuencias de Covid-19.

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### **Keywords:**

Ethics;  
Public Policies;  
Covid-19;  
Common Good;  
Sustainable Tourism.

### **Abstract**

From a global perspective, the tourist phenomenon has been characterized by an economic rationality that strengthens the dissociation between “public policies” and “ethics”, by abdicating purposes aimed at the common good. It reproduces the finalistic logic of growth in the excessive flow of tourists and the expansion of consumption, without responsible and sustainable planning. The objective of this study is to understand to what extent ethics has been considered in the Brazilian public policies of Tourism, and to identify elements that can become premises and/or proposals for future policies to mitigate the consequences of the pandemic (Covid-19), with a view to the common good and sustainability. Therefore, an exploratory research was carried out, with a qualitative approach, through structured interviews with 29 renowned researchers in the field of Tourism. Results point out that future public tourism policies, in fighting Covid-19 effects, should consider, as a supreme premise, the purpose beyond a base restricted to the economic progress of destinations, but mainly directed to a process of human and sustainable development and common welfare.

### **Palavras-chave:**

Ética;  
Políticas Públicas;  
Covid-19;  
Bem Comum;  
Turismo Sustentável.

### **Resumo**

Sob uma ótica global, o fenômeno turístico tem sido caracterizado por uma racionalidade econômica que fortalece a dissociação entre “políticas públicas” e “ética”, ao abdicar de propósitos voltados ao bem comum. Reproduz a lógica finalística de crescimento no fluxo excessivo de turistas e a expansão do consumo, sem um planejamento responsável e sustentável. O objetivo desta pesquisa é compreender em que medida a ética vem sendo contemplada nas políticas públicas nacionais de Turismo, e identificar elementos que possam se tornar premissas e/ou proposições para futuras políticas de mitigação das consequências da pandemia (Covid-19), com vistas ao bem comum e a sustentabilidade. Para tanto, foi realizada uma pesquisa exploratória, com abordagem qualitativa, por meio de entrevistas com 29 pesquisadores de notório saber no campo do Turismo. Resultados apontam que as

futuras políticas públicas de Turismo, no combate aos distúrbios do Covid-19, devem considerar, como premissa suprema, o propósito para além de uma base restringida ao progresso econômico dos destinos, mas principalmente direcionado a um processo de desenvolvimento humano e sustentável e de bem estar comum.

#### Palabras clave:

Ética;  
Políticas Públicas;  
Covid-19;  
Bien Común;  
Turismo Sostenible.

Peer-reviewed article.

Received in: 29/07/2020.

Approved in: 07/10/2020.

Editor:

Glauber Eduardo de Oliveira Santos



#### Resumen

Desde una perspectiva global, el fenómeno turístico se ha caracterizado por una racionalidad económica que fortalece la disociación entre “políticas públicas” y “ética”, al abdicar de los propósitos dirigidos al bien común. Reproduce la lógica finalista del crecimiento en el flujo excesivo de turistas y la expansión del consumo, sin una planificación responsable y sostenible. El objetivo de esta investigación es comprender hasta qué punto la ética ha sido contemplada en las políticas públicas nacionales de turismo, e identificar elementos que pueden convertirse en premisas y/o propuestas de políticas futuras para mitigar las consecuencias de la pandemia (Covid-19), con el fin de el bien común y la sostenibilidad. Con este fin, se llevó a cabo una investigación exploratoria, con un enfoque cualitativo, a través de entrevistas con 29 investigadores de renombre en el campo del turismo. Los resultados señalan que las futuras políticas públicas de turismo, en la lucha contra los trastornos del Covid-19, deben considerar, como premissa suprema, el propósito más allá de una base restringida al progreso económico de los destinos, pero principalmente dirigido a un proceso de desarrollo humano y sostenible y bienestar común.

**How to cite:** Tasso, J. P. F.; Moesch, M. M.; Nóbrega, W. R. M. (2021). Reintroduction of Ethics in Public Tourism Policies: a necessary reflection in addressing the consequences of Covid-19. *Revista Brasileira de Pesquisa em Turismo*, São Paulo, 15 (1), 2141, Jan./Apr. <http://dx.doi.org/10.7784/rbtur.v15i1.2141>

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Ethics (ethos), in its basis of the Aristotelian reflection, refers to the study of moral values and human behavior. Following a teleological order, it recognizes that every human action tends to a greater purpose, the highest good (“*summum bonum*”), defined by the very essence of man, and beyond riches. This supreme purpose of human life is represented by the pursuit of happiness (*eudaimonia*). In the same way, because every subject is also, naturally, political, we have that the ultimate goal of political life should always be the search for the common good. (Aristóteles, 1991)

Therefore, following the ethical presupposition, the public policies must initiate from the adoption of “habit”, in its exercise, and “prudence” (*phronesis*) in its actions, in order to achieve the collective good and a virtuous and balanced life. Thus, we ask: from an ethical perspective, what are the real purposes of developing tourism in a territory? What real purposes should be expressed in public policies for tourism development in Brazil, in periods of global crises such as the Covid-19 pandemic?

The Pan American Health Organization – entity associated with the World Health Organization (WHO) – declared, on January 30, 2020, the outbreak of the disease caused by Covid-19 as a Public Health Emergency of International Importance, the highest level of alert from the Organization, as predicted in the International Health Regulations (IHR). On March 11, 2020, Covid-19 was declared a pandemic by the WHO.

In the face of a major world crisis, such questions are even more relevant. Certainly, even in the midst of so much uncertainty, there is a clear evidence: the undeniable need to reflect critically about modern tourism, and about the aspects that should be incorporated into public policies to mitigate the disastrous consequences caused by the pandemic.

It is certain that, from a global perspective, it is possible to perceive a series of phenomena related to tourism development that, often, present themselves in a dichotomous way: on the one hand, due to the economic strength that contributes to the growth of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP); on the other, for the disturbances and threats that affect the social, environmental, territorial, political, cultural, and economic dimensions of a tourist destination.

On the eve of the Covid-19 pandemic, Tourism in the world was growing significantly and the economic strength associated to it, is a factor that arouses the interest of countries that have the potential to do so. In Brazil, in 2018, the contribution of Tourism to the national GDP was USD 152.5 billion (8.1%), with growth of 3.1% of the tourism GDP. Tourism generated 6.9 million jobs (7.5% of the total), and USD 6.2 billion in foreign spending, an increase of 12.8% compared to 2017 (WTTC, 2019). In January 2019, the arrival of international flights grew by 7% compared to the same period in 2018, which represents 6,120 flights landing in Brazilian (Embratur, 2019a).

Contributions and losses over the last 50 years, have shown a contemporary global tourist phenomenon characterized by an economic rationality strictly based on private interests (profit), and widening the gap between economy and society, removing ethics from political and economic decisions.

The separation between “ethics” and “public policies” in Tourism can be noted in the rejection of purposes aimed at the common good, and by the reproduction of ends rationality in stimulating the growth of tourist flows – sometimes overtourism – and of expansion of consumption, without responsible and sustainable planning that recognizes the limits of ecosystems, and that seeks to effectively improve the quality of life of all agents affected by it. The result? The generation of a series of negative externalities in the context where it is reproduced.

The advent of the Covid-19 pandemic, with the consequent restrictions on circulation and the closure of public and private visitation spaces, Tourism was one of the most affected. Immediately, the recurring debate on the problematic thesis of overtourism gave way to an opposite situation, as a dialectical counterpoint to the discussion: the total absence of tourists in the destinations.

On May 7, 2020, the UNWTO announced that only in the first quarter, international tourism retracted by 22%, reaching a total of between 60 and 80% in the year (UNWTO, 2020a). Only in March, this represents 67 million fewer international arrivals, which will result in a loss of USD 80 billion in tourism exports. In the construction of prospective scenarios, the UNWTO predicts, by the end of 2020, a total of between 100 and 120 million direct jobs threatened in tourism.

It is in this moment of severe crisis that is opened up a space for a fundamental resignification of Tourism, recognizing its complexity and the necessity for critical and systemic analysis, but, especially, for an inevitable reconfiguration of public policies and the premises and priorities that govern them, avoiding the resumption, in the post-pandemic, of a traditional and inconsequential model.

To this end, the objective of the research is to understand how ethics has been contemplated in the national public policies of Tourism, and to identify elements that may become premises and/or propositions for future policies to mitigate the consequences of the pandemic (Covid-19), with the aim of the common good and sustainability.

The article is divided into four topics, apart from this introduction and the conclusion. The first topic is dedicated to the description of the methodology adopted. The second presents a brief discussion on the central concepts of the research, among them: public policies, Tourism, externalities, ethics, and the common good. The third consists of a summary of the main contemporary challenges faced by Tourism – particularly Covid-19 pandemic –, which it is translated into increasing negative externalities, and presents a preliminary analysis of the political proposals, in the field of Tourism, adopted by the current Brazilian government. Finally, the fourth, presents the reports of the interviews, carried out with renowned researchers in the field of Tourism, and the critical reflections.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

This article is a summary of the results of the introductory stage of the postdoctoral research of the first author. This study uses a philosophical lens, with a qualitative approach, and of an applied and exploratory nature.

A qualitative approach was adopted because, having as object the context of the formulation of public policies, it was sought a deeper understanding of elements with characteristics beyond the numerical representation. In this sense, the analyzed data represent a universe of meanings, processes, and phenomena that cannot be reduced to the operationalization of variables (Minayo, 2001).

This study aimed to contribute to the formulation of Tourism public policies, from the generation of knowledge for practical application in addressing a pandemic context, thus, it is considered of an “applied” nature (Gerhardt, Silveira, 2009). As the theme of ethics and tourism takes place at the time of the pandemic, the level of deepening was exploratory in order to answer the problematization that arose in this context: from an ethical point of view, what are the real purposes of developing Tourism in a territory? What purposes should be expressed in public policies for tourism development in Brazil, in periods of global crises such as the Covid-19 pandemic?

The methodological procedures used were:

- a) Identification of Brazilian and international publications, of official news, in electronic media, about the negative consequences/externalities resulting from Tourism, prior to the period of the Covid-19 pandemic;
- b) Survey of documents representing the current Brazilian policies (particularly the National Tourism Plan 2018-2022), and of actions and measures to promote the resumption of Tourism by the current Brazilian federal government to combat the social and economic effects of Covid-19;
- c) Literature review (state of the art) of theoretical concepts such as ethics, public policies, common good, externalities, and Tourism. The main databases of Brazilian and international journals were used, including: SciELO and Capes;
- d) Structured interviews with twenty-nine leading Brazilian scholars. Due to social distancing and quarantine, the interviews were conducted online. The respondents were selected based on the relevant experience and practice with research and projects in the field of Tourism – information gathered and confirmed on Lattes CNPq Platform – representatives of the following institutions of higher education: University of São Paulo (USP), Federal University of Paraná (UFPR), Federal University of Ouro Preto (UFOP), Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC), State University of Ceará (UECE), Federal Institute of Bahia (IFB), Federal Fluminense University (UFF), Faculty of Technology of the State of São Paulo (FATEC), State University of Amazonas (UEA), Federal University of Bahia (UFBA), Paulista University (UNIP), State University of Rio de Janeiro (UERJ), Federal University of Maranhão (UFMA), Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte (UFRN), Federal University of Piauí (UFPI), Federal University of Pernambuco (UFPE), Federal University of Pará (UFPA), and University of Brasília (UnB);
- e) Systematization, analysis, and interpretation of collected data, in order to present bases for discussion on elements to be incorporated into tourism public policies in Brazil in mitigating the consequences of Covid-19.

### 3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

It is certain that the movement to create a “public policy” – understood as an action (or inaction) of government intervention (Dye, 1992), which implies a deliberate choice between alternatives (Hall, Jenkins, 2004) – results from the current environment policy, in which values and ideologies, the distribution of power, institutional structures and decision-making processes are permeated, added to the social, cultural and economic characteristics of society (Hogwood, Gunn, 1984; Hall, Jenkins, 1995).

However, in order to be considered truly “public”, policy needs to define the target of the actions or recipient of benefits, mainly in response to the demands of vulnerable and marginalized sectors of society, and expanding and enforcing citizenship rights. Likewise, ensuring that the design process is submitted to public debate, addressing the expectations expressed by society. Otherwise, they are only “government policies”. (Teixeira, 2002; Bursztyn & Bursztyn, 2012)

In this sense, it is understood that public policies must be, firstly, ample processes of democratization, at the same time, of “access” – for the usufruct of goods – and of “management” – for the organization of society for the definition of the forms of distribution of these goods. Particularly in the field of Tourism, public policies must be configured as an instrument aimed at the broad democratization of access to leisure and hospitality, as a fact and as a right not only for visitors, but also for the host community (Gastal & Moesch, 2007).

Tourism public policies must similarly ensure the democratization and legitimacy of the participation of the various segments of society in decision-making processes, by stimulating and raising socio-political awareness about the consequences, local and regional, of tourism development. Public policy must prevent superficial strategies from being defined based on immediacy (such as the current pandemic context) and localism, being restricted to works, promotional marketing, and services, and not as a necessary set of proposals for integrated and multisectoral interventions (Gastal & Moesch, 2007).

Figueiredo and Nóbrega (2015) state that it is fundamental that social representations assume (co)responsibility for the implementation of a more comprehensive planning process, focused on the local and endogenous development of Tourism. In addition, for the authors, there is a need to raise awareness and mobilize local actors because, even though it is the responsibility of the State to implement tourism planning and management policies, without the effective participation of all those affected by them, they tend not to be implemented.

Lastly, public tourism policies that seek to effectively soften the various multidimensional problems that affect its development, must be clear about which concept of tourism underlies their actions. Otherwise, the interventions and their planning will consist of one-off, ineffective proposals, or even harmful ones, as they do not contribute with elements that are indispensable to territorial development.

Historically, the multiple strands of definitions of Tourism, as a scientific object of investigation and reflection, have been unable to overcome fossilized paradigms and reductionism in their epistemological treatment, which insists on classifying it as an activity characterized by the Cartesian, compartmentalized disciplinary isolation, categorized, measurable and linear, translating it as an “industry” or mere “economic activity” (Moesch, 2004; 2013).

The holistic understanding of tourism presupposes more than that. It must be treated as a complex and systemic phenomenon (Beni, 2003; Molina, 1998). Not only for the recognition of the multisectoral nature and dynamism of its material structure. But also, of transversality, multidimensionality and interdisciplinarity (Beni, 2020), of a system formed by elements that are also immaterial and subjective.

However, globally, strategic proposals and tourism planning goals have been driven exclusively by economic pragmatism, represented by the generation of foreign exchange and the expansion of consumption, and by the expansion of the flow of visitors and the number of jobs. Along with initiatives aimed at economic growth, amazing disturbances and disastrous results broke out, many of which are irreversible.

In Brazil, shortly before the global pandemic, several manifestations of these negative (social, environmental, cultural, and economic) impacts on host communities and ecosystems had already been revealed. The effects of irresponsible tourism culminate in situations of social exclusion, poverty, socioeconomic inequality and devastation of protected areas, resulting in saturated destinations and rejection of Tourism (Beni, 2020).

Several destinations have linked warning signs by recognizing projections of future conflicting scenarios that may involve adverse effects on natural resources, infrastructure, congestion, and loss of urban mobility, as well as the socio-cultural impact (UNWTO, 2019). The growth of these effects made the search for sustainability a global challenge (Sachs, 2002).

The development of a mistaken and incoherent Tourism public policy on the territory, conceal a series of effects which, some with specific characteristics, can have profound, long-lasting and long-range consequences, with unforeseeable impacts on space and on time (Bauman, 2013). These are “externalities”, understood as systemic consequences, positive or negative, resulting from actions of primary entities and felt (financially) by others, who did not fully consent or were unable to act contrary to the decision that led to the event in question (Cornes & Sandler, 2003; Tasso, 2019; Meade, 1979).

However, in the global tourism development processes, a notable dissociation between “public policies” and “ethics” can be recognized, as regards not only the political proposals adopted before the Covid-19 pandemic, but also in the contemporary government initiatives. For the present research, ethical component is, perhaps, the one that deserves a greater critical and deep reflection, considering that, in political and market processes, strictly focused on the incessant dynamism of production and consumption, ethics seems to be frequently ignored.

The field of ethics (or “moral philosophy”) presupposes its understanding as part of the philosophy that is dedicated to reflection on “morality”, on human behaviors and on the acts of individuals: before, during, and after (Boff, 2003). It is normative knowledge, with the intention of guiding actions and behavior of human beings (Cortina, Orts, & Navarro, 1996), through habits, values, character, prudence, and coherent decisions without harming fellow human beings (Boff, 2003).

The human process of adopting conducts, based on the ethical assumption, requires increasingly evolved subjects, to the point that their primary acts become acts resulting from a detailed analysis and reflection on different factors, and which involves the dimensioning of consequences (Boff, 2003)

Drawing on Aristotle, ethics is conceived as part of the philosophy that reflects on the set of moral values and on human behavior. Every practical rationality of man affects a teleological order, that is, it is understood that every human action has a purpose, a goal, an objective, a good, beyond money making: a supreme good (“*summum bonum*”), happiness. (Aristóteles, 1991)

The life of money-making is one undertaken under compulsion, and wealth is evidently not the good we are seeking; for it is merely useful and for the sake of something else. (Aristóteles, 1991, p. 8)

The supreme purpose, happiness, well-being, fullness of being, derive from a concept defined as “*eudaimonia*” (supreme human good) (Aristóteles, 1991). The supreme goal of achieving happiness is to realize that, for this, it is necessary to understand and create circumstances that increase the potential of acting and thinking. A human conduct that provides the affection of joy and releasing the determinations of others (passions), that is, asserting the need for man's own nature, a desire to maintain or increase the power to persevere in existence, an effort of self-preservation (*conatus*) (Spinoza, 2009). And the search for this “highest good”, or “greater good”, is only possible since humans are endowed with will, reason, and sensibility, which allows them to act (Schio, 2009).

For that, it is essential to adopt the “habit” in its exercise, and the “prudence” (*phrónesis*) in its actions, constituents of what is meant by “moral virtue” (excellence of action, of doing). Although moral/ethical virtue does not arise by nature in human societies, it can be acquired through a “moral education”, which must endeavor to introduce, in a lasting way, reason/purpose with customs, through affectivity, due to the capacity of these societies to learn about values, conduct, and conviviality (Aristóteles, 1991; Novaes, 2002)

The adoption of human actions aimed at the achievement of collective purposes and objectives, designed for a virtuous life, however, express an indispensable need for prior evaluation, so that decisions are made in a way that is not merely usual:

Evaluation is an indispensable part of choice, of decision making: it is a need felt by humans as decision makers, a need that those whom act out of habit rarely reflect on. (...) What action should be measured and by what criteria? And if numerous criteria apply, which one to prioritize? (Bauman, 2013, p. 12)

In the face of the global emergency generated by Covid-19, it is essential, in the field of Tourism, prior to any decision-action, to question and critically evaluate the aims of the political proposals aimed at its development in current times. In many countries, political decisions have been based on actions and decisions of a purely economic nature, incapable of dealing with the notion of limits and with the ethical objectives of expanding substantive individual freedoms (Sen, 2000), mainly of the host communities in tourist destinations.

It is true that, as part of the process of conception and critical evaluation of political proposals, intervention actions and decisions aimed at tourism development in a territory, three fundamental questions<sup>1</sup> must be presented to be able to understand, clearly, the real purposes of this movement in the current context of chaos and pandemic:

- Foster tourism how? In an efficient and innovative way, with responsibility in the use of available ecosystem resources, and with respect to resident communities and appreciation of their culture;
- Foster tourism for whom? For all those involved and/or affected directly or indirectly, including civil society (mainly marginalized, excluded, and vulnerable groups), public authorities, third sector, business, tourists, and others;
- Foster tourism for what? Here is where the central doubt in the present study lies. This would be, perhaps, the crucial question (but so little promoted) that would allow a better understanding of the real purposes of developing Tourism in a territory at this time of global health concern.

As a primary purpose, the search for the “common good” – adoption of collective rationality over individual rationality in a community, or “commonwealth” (Hardt, Negri, 2011) – should be conceived as the backbone of any and all process of the territorial planning of tourism, recognizing the importance of prudence with finite natural resources, and the disastrous consequences (externalities) of government interventions with purposes restricted to economic growth and the expansion of consumption, such as those mentioned above.

Complex studies and analyses of the “common good” examine decades of critical reflections, demonstrated: by the need to rethink the indiscriminate use of common finite resources and the tragedy that can result from the establishment of an individual rationality (Hardin, 1968); the possibility of creating collective institutional arrangements, capable of adopting a governance system for the common good, self-organized and polycentric (Ostrom, 1990); for the containment of damages through the socialization of surplus production and distribution, for the establishment of a new common wealth open to all, and search for creative ways of using the powers of collective work for the common good (Harvey, 2011).

According to Karnal (2019), it is essential to establish an ethical dialogue capable of recognizing the limits that must be established between the individual good and the collective good, to the point that no common good should overlap individuals, oppressing them. Just as no individual should oppress, oppose, or overlap society.

The search for common well-being, and the need for reunification between ethics and economics is, according to Abramovay (2012), the most important mission for the social sciences of the twenty-first century, and this will only be possible through the fulfillment of strategic objectives of a new economy, which increases efficiency, which reduces inequality in the use of resources, and which places ethics at the center of decision-making, aiming at ensuring the healthy reproduction of human societies.

#### 4 CURRENT CHALLENGES AND CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF NATIONAL TOURISM POLICIES AGAINST COVID-19

The Covid-19 pandemic has sparked a series of heated debates among experts from around the world. In the field of Tourism, the numerous videoconferences (webinars) have promoted narratives of representatives of the market, the government, the academic community, and others, who, with rare exceptions, have been directed to the presentation of data on impacts, prospective scenarios, and market trends, but, above all, innovative strategic proposals towards the trivial “return to normality”. However, the question arises: to what extent should the so-called “normality”, or new normal, be the object of such a global desire?

Contrary to the position taken by the General Secretary of the UNWTO – who recognizes Tourism as a platform to promote equality and inclusion and, from there, reach a new normality (UNWTO, 2020b) and declares that Brazil “is an example of how the Tourism can transform lives”(UNWTO, 2020c), the Brazilian tourist scene

<sup>1</sup> Issues addressed by Abramovay in his lecture “Far beyond the Green Economy” on TV Cultura in 2014, here adapted to the field of Tourism.

faced, even before the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic, an antagonistic reality, characterized by multiple examples of social and socio-productive exclusion (Tasso, 2014), by the expansion of social disparities, the concentration of income by large international corporations, increase in real estate speculation, informality, and low wages, and the loss of quality of life in many host communities.

For the analysis of the global scenario, in the search for the assessment of the referred “normality” (questionable by ethical presuppositions) and for the identification of disturbances preceding the Covid-19 pandemic, examples are inexhaustible. In Cancún, Mexico, behind all the glamor of the renowned international resort, a progressive deficit of basic services was identified, a production of large amounts of contaminated waste, depredation, and the irreversible impacts on natural ecosystems, social vulnerability and the expansion of speculation in protected areas, the limitation of recreational options for residents, the predominance of verticalized urban management models with limited participation of local communities, and the creation of “large pockets of marginalization” in their territory (Cruz, 2019; Córdoba y Ordóñez & Fuentes, 2003).

Consolidated tourist destinations such as London (United Kingdom), New York and San Francisco (USA), Venice and Rome (Italy), Berlin (Germany), Paris (France), Barcelona (Spain), Maya Bay Beach and Koh Islands Khai (Thailand), Santorini (Greece), Maldives (Asia), Dubrovnik (Croatia), Amsterdam (Netherlands), Machu Picchu (Peru), Hong Kong (China), are just some other examples that have expressed concern about the recognized disturbances in their territories. (Cheung & Li, 2019; Colomb & Novy, 2016; Beni, 2020)

In Brazil, even before the pandemic, disturbances – although to a lesser extent and without the intensity portrayed by the saturation of visits to global destinations – were also reported. Revealed, mainly, by fluctuating-temporary flows, in specific periods – seasonal – of high season (Christmas, New Year's Eve, school vacations, and public holidays) or of major events (carnival, festivities, concerts, and commemorative dates).

According to the reports of the interviewees in this study, these are growing flows that, due to the absence of territorial planning, end up collapsing and not being able to control the massive visitation processes and the appearance of many local problems and adversities, such as: precariousness of the sewage and water supply, electricity, health, communication, basic sanitation, garbage collection, and transportation systems; degradation of natural ecosystems, and pollution of rivers and lagoons; neglect of cultural heritage; increased waste disposal; growth in prostitution, drug use and trafficking; decrease in interest rates of return of visitors; excessive increase in product prices; scrapping of tourist equipment; increased social and psychological burden on residents; exploitation and precarious working conditions, and the decrease in wages of employees in the sector; lack of concern for training and professional development in order to enable career advancement of tourism workers; lack of contingency plans and carrying capacity assessment.

Several Brazilian tourist destinations are faced with many of these issues and, consequently, demanded greater attention by public policies for local and regional tourism development. The interviewees of this research highlighted: Rio de Janeiro, Paraty and Ilha Grande (RJ), Fernando de Noronha, Ipojuca/Porto de Galinhas and Olinda (PE), Gramado, Canela, Nova Petrópolis and Bento Gonçalves (RS), Florianópolis, Bombinhas, Blumenau and Balneário Camboriú (SC), Salvador, Porto Seguro, Morro de São Paulo and Itacaré (BA), Caraguatatuba, Ubatuba, Ilhabela, São Sebastião, Santos, Guarujá, São Vicente, Bertioga, Praia Grande (SP), Ouro Preto, Lima Duarte/Ibitipoca and Tiradentes (MG), Fortaleza and Jijoca de Jericoacoara (CE), Caldas Novas and Pirenópolis (GO), Paranaguá/Ilha do Mel, Balneário de Matinhos, Caiobá and Guaratuba (PR), Natal and Tibau do Sul / Pipa (RN), Barreirinhas/Lençóis Maranhenses (MA).

In this context, the central questions of this study are resumed: from an ethical perspective, what are the real purposes of developing Tourism in a territory? What real purposes should be expressed in public policies for tourism development in Brazil, in periods of global crises such as the Covid-19 pandemic?

The Ministry of Tourism (MTur) has put up structured National Plans aimed at achieving three goals: increasing the flow of tourists (Brazilians and foreigners), increasing the revenues, and creating more of jobs. The four global goals presented by the National Tourism Plan (2018-2022) (Brasil, 2019a) address, precisely, only a quantitative dimension – increase/expansion – of the sector:

- Goal 1: increase the annual inflow of foreign tourists from 6.5 to 12 million;

- Goal 2: increase the revenue generated by international visitors from USD 6.5 to USD 19 billion;
- Goal 3: increase the number of Brazilians traveling through the country from 60 to 100 million;
- Goal 4: increase the number of tourism jobs from 7 to 9 million.

In the search for the fulfillment of this plan, the current Brazilian government presented, before the Covid-19 pandemic, through Decree 9,731/2019, the definition for the visa exemption (previously mandatory) for citizens of the USA, Japan, Australia, and Canada, who wish to travel to the country as tourists. Such measure reduces bureaucracy and generates an expectation of an increase in the tourist flow from 6.6 million visitors to 12 million by 2022 (Brasil, 2019b). More recently, the same visa-free initiative for tourism and business – not necessarily reciprocal – has extended to China, India, and Qatar, which surprised diplomats concerned with national security (Portal G1, 2019b; Folha de São Paulo, 2019a ).

In addition, the most recent Brazilian Tourism Promotion Agency (Embratur) officially launched several new promotional campaigns: “Brazil: visit and love us”, “The King of Rolê”, and the most recent, for the period of Covid-19, “Brazil You Want It! We Got It!” (Embratur, 2019a; 2019b).

Another measure foreseen by the current governmental administration is to end the restrictions imposed on the Bay of Ilha Grande – natural and cultural heritage of humanity by Unesco – and the stimulus of the growth of tourist flow in the region, which houses the Tamoios Ecological Station (ESEC-Tamoios). It is a federal environmental protection area, created in 1990, located on the south coast of Rio de Janeiro, which occupies less than 6% of the bay of Angra dos Reis, home to species threatened with extinction. On site, fishing, visiting, building, and anchoring boats are prohibited. The idea is to ease the use by repealing the decree demarcating the area, and to reproduce a tourism development model based on Cancún, together with private international investments (Folha de São Paulo, 2019b).

It is noted that such measures are in line with the government proposal and its goals of unrestricted growth of the tourist flow in the country, either through the wide opening of borders, or by the reversal of charge rates for environmental preservation, massification of tourist saturation levels, or making more flexible the use of spaces for biodiversity conservation.

The declaration of a public health emergency, due to the Covid 19 pandemic, new actions led by the Ministry of Tourism (MTur) were presented as relevant measures aimed at containing the impending economic catastrophe in the Tourism sector. Among others, we can highlight:

- Provisional Measure (MP) 936, of April 1, 2020: established the Emergency Program for Maintenance of Employment and Income, which provided for the payment of emergency benefit (unemployment insurance), the proportional reduction of working hours and flexibility of wages through individual agreements between employers and employees (to avoid redundancies), and the temporary suspension of the employment contract for a period of two months (Brasil, 2020a).
- Campaign “Don't cancel, reschedule!”, from April 7, 2020: these are advertising pieces designed to raise tourists awareness about the importance of not canceling trips and tour packages at the time of a pandemic (Brasil, 2020b).
- Provisional Measure (MP) 948, of April 8, 2020: deals with the cancellation of services, reservations and events in the tourism and culture sectors, allowing companies and providers of tourism and entertainment services not to be obliged to immediately reimburse amounts paid by the consumer, establishing a period of 12 months for completion with due monetary correction (Brasil, 2020c).
- Provisional Measure (MP) 963, of May 7, 2020: opens an extraordinary credit, in the amount of R\$ 5 billion, through the General Tourism Fund (FUNGETUR), aimed at tourism service providers registered in Cadastur that are interested in more attractive lines of credit, with annual interest reductions – from 7 to 5%, and an extension of the grace period from 6 to 12 months (Brasil, 2020d).

- “Responsible Tourism - Clean and Safe” seal, from June 2020: certification that recognizes establishments in the sector, registered in Cadastur, which follow recommendations for good biosafety practices and protocols established by Ministry of Health, Anvisa and MTur guidelines (Brasil, 2020e)

It is perceived, therefore, that although government efforts to mitigate the economic suffocation caused by Covid-19 are fundamental, the basis for conceiving purposes aimed at the development of Tourism in Brazil remains flawed. The gap between ethics and public policies in the sector is still the critical point, as sustainability measures are sidelined – prudence with the environment, social equity, recovery and preservation of cultural identity, socioeconomic and political inclusion of vulnerable groups – on behalf of inconsequential economic dynamism.

## 5 PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

In order to recognize important elements that should be incorporated into public tourism policies, with a view to mitigating the alarming impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in the national context, interviews were conducted based on three topics: (a) What should be the real purposes to develop Tourism in a territory?; (b) What should be revised or incorporated into current federal public policies, aiming at the ethical purpose of the common good and sustainability? What should be the focus?; (c) How does the great world crisis generated by Covid-19 lead us to reflect on the model of Tourism that is set in contemporary times? Which characteristics will demand more attention for future public tourism policies?

### (a) Goals/purposes of developing Tourism in a territory

It was possible to notice a clear alignment between the narratives presented by most of the interviewees, regarding the real purposes of developing Tourism in a territory. The rhetoric was given to the search for the “common good” and “human and sustainable development”. Evidently, the paths highlighted in this direction were multiple, and run through issues of a social, environmental, economic, cultural, political-institutional, spatial, and educational nature.

Regarding the environmental perspective, it was reinforced the need to meet the purpose of respecting the dynamics of ecosystems and the balance in their use, as a way of guaranteeing: subsistence (extractive) practices; protection of natural environments that are sensitive to human presence; water preservation; conservation of landscape heritage and biodiversity; maintenance of ecosystem services for current and future generations; innovations that minimize damage and that benefit environmental sustainability.

On the political-institutional aspect, in line with the reflections presented by Bursztyn and Bursztyn (2012), the notes were made for the expansion of spaces for dialogue – local councils and collaboration networks – that enable the effective and democratic participation of local populations in decision-making on tourism. It was also highlighted the responsibility for the elaboration of truly public policies, which provide leisure and cultural practices for residents, which focus on reducing social and economic inequalities.

Regarding the cultural dimension, the arguments focused on actions to enhance and preserve the biocultural heritage of local communities, their *modus vivendi* and telluric practices. According to the interviewees, the purpose should also include the containment of a tourist practice that artificializes, distorts, and mischaracterizes originality and cultural spontaneity, the history, the rites and beliefs, the manifestations, and diversity. It must strengthen identity, self-confidence/self-esteem, and pride of a people.

The spatial nuances of the territory were also addressed by the respondents as important premises in the pursuit of collective well-being and local development, which includes the democratization of the use of territories, spatial ordering and planning (aiming to mitigate conflicts), and the understanding and responsibility to treat the destination not only as a leisure space for visitors, but also as work and housing space for the host community, which, likewise, must be included in the process of optimizing public spaces. From the responses of the interviewees, collective well-being appears as a purpose dependent on mediation actions of different and sometimes conflicting interests, of tourists, businessmen and residents (involved or not with the tourism sector).

In the case of assisting in the interests of local populations, the arguments presented – according to Teixeira (2002), mentioned above – denote that tourism should aim at the well-being and improvement of the quality of life (psychosociological and material) of the communities, through social and economic development, provided by: opening up opportunities for formal employment and decent jobs; expansion and equitable distribution of income from tourism; encouraging local economic and productive activities (handcrafted, familiar, community based), and the establishment of commercial relations; talent optimization; strengthening self-esteem and rooting in traditional practices; recreation (enjoyment of leisure), and culture practices for marginalized communities; labor relations that value the health of workers and better working conditions.

Another goal that, according to the reports, deserved to be highlighted is the promotion of education and training actions for the local population. Such actions must take place with a view to: spreading the appreciation of culture, identity and memory, strengthening knowledge about history, geography, arts and events, religiosity, traditional knowledge, gastronomy and heritage in a broad sense; improvement of social indicators (level of education) that promote the development and autonomy of the population, awakening vocations and knowledge regarding the sector's development process; promotion of environmental education in natural environments; structuring of services, professionalizing concepts of excellence in hospitality and welcoming.

According to the respondents, the purpose of the common good must also meet the interests of tourists and local businessmen. For the former, by being offered a good welcome and leisure practices (as highlighted by Gстал & Moesch, 2007), through opportunities for experiencing and sharing the wealth of historical and cultural heritage (tangible and intangible) and the contemplation of the protected environment. For the latter, by encouraging economic development, based on efficiency, responsibility, and sustainability.

Finally, it was emphasized, still with a focus on human and sustainable development, that the purposes of developing Tourism must run through the search for socio-cultural integration between residents and visitors, through a pacifying and effective welcoming process, aimed at building and exchanging (communicational and cultural) experiences, recognition of the other, and human training and improvement of the quality of life for all. A way to promote understanding between peoples, in the encounter of cultures, establishing socio-affective relationships for, and with, local communities and tourists, differently from what is identified in the current model, characterized by:

(...) profound economic and technical exploitation, in which the individual itself is disregarded. It is considered how long he will stay in a place, how much he will spend in the place, what he will consume: then, they are goods. (Interviewee)

On the other hand, a small number of interviewees directed referred to other purposes that, for them, should be a priority in tourism policies: economic growth and profit (accumulation of capital) for the productive sector; generation of jobs and income; quality leisure for all.

### **(b) Aspects that should be reviewed or incorporated into current federal public policies, with a view to the common good and sustainability**

The respondents' reports initially went through brief analyses of the goals of the current National Tourism Plan. Similarities were identified in the reports, which signaled a series of limitations and mistakes in defining them.

Among other arguments, the following can be highlighted: hard, unrealistic, ambitious goals, top-down structured, focused exclusively on the quantitative approach – number of visitors and increased international flow – and economic and financial aspects, aiming at income/revenue/foreign exchange generation, employment and taxes; they do not prioritize socio-environmental aspects and the mitigation of impacts and costs that tourism practices impose on society (such as environmental degradation, social inequality, among others); it is not similar to a State policy that seeks to correct flaws in the process, but rather to a market program that is concerned only with the end context of the productive sector; they are ridiculously superficial, for not addressing the quality of jobs to be generated, and for the total disregard for issues related to the interests and rights of workers in the sector; they replicate global models, applied since the 1970s, and demonstrate that the government departments responsible for Tourism are dominated by business interests (tourism trade) and individual ambitions, harming the plurality of the local offer.

It is noteworthy that it was presented, as the argument of only one of the interviewees, that sustainability and the common good should not be part of the scope of a public tourism policy:

As for sustainability and common good goals, they are like jargon. How can we talk about Tourism sustainability if it is a capitalist economic activity and, in this way of production, everything is vulnerable? If the Brazilian society, at the economic level, is not sustainable, why would Tourism be? Sustainability is also a questionable concept. Common good is an idea applicable only at the metaphysical level.

Still about the search for sustainability and the common good, two interviewees stated that there is no tourism public policy capable of achieving such purposes if the capitalist logic dominates consumption and production patterns. According to them, the socio-metabolism of capital is related with the socio-spatial realities.

(...) it is necessary to know such relationships, which also involves the field of social reproduction – culture, tradition, etc. It is the dialectic between relations of production and relations of social reproduction, without fatalisms, but relations of production and distribution are elementary in the analysis. Thus, (...) it becomes meaningless to analyze the operationality of these policies. Rather, it is necessary to analyze the State from the broader referential of social classes, and the Neoliberal political form.

As for the elements and aspects that, according to the interviewees, deserved to be incorporated and/or reviewed, the following stood out: prudence and protection of the natural heritage, with a view to the responsible enjoyment of both tourists and residents (incentive to leisure), creating socio-environmental indicators for monitoring; appreciation and respect for cultural heritage (tangible and intangible), represented by local identity, ways of life and customs, gastronomy, and other specific manifestations, and evaluation and definition of strategies for the conservation of multiculturalism and good living; actions that favor the ideal of spatial citizenship and democracy, for the autonomy of social groups and for achieving the minimum worth for localized survival, starting from a qualified dimension of living space, and not just quantified by revenue; income distribution and improvements in working and employment conditions; incorporation of new concepts, including those that approaches the digital transformation of destinations; training and social transformation actions, starting with the expansion of levels of schooling (of individuals and families), as an emancipatory and humanitarian education process, incorporating Tourism into the curriculum and pedagogical projects; encouraging small entrepreneurs and self-managers (popular cooperatives), and strengthening regional and national industry, services and local commerce; carrying out studies on the impacts of uncontrolled increase in tourists; qualification and training actions, accompanied by wage increases; guarantee of democracy and diversity of participation in the discussion of public policies, by strengthening councils (municipal, state, and federal) and encouraging representations of workers and entities related to the theme; creation of integrated collective marketing policies between Mercosur countries, and a policy of affordable prices for domestic tourism; mapping of regions and local social demands to provide decent living conditions, including housing, basic sanitation, security, access to education and technology, communication, health and social security; development of local based tourism before attracting foreign investment; and strengthening of cooperation networks, consortia and associations between municipalities, and shared routes.

### **(c) reflections on the model of Tourism development in contemporary times in the face of the great world crisis caused by Covid-19, and characteristics that will demand greater attention for future Tourism public policies**

The interviewees were asked about which characteristics will demand greater attention by the national public tourism policies in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic, and which aspects of the current tourism development model deserve to be rethought.

A first point highlighted by the respondents deals with the essential attention to the new attitudes, motivations and requirements that will be adopted by tourists on their future trips. According to reports, tourists will be more cautious, discerning, and will be even more selective in their choices for destinations. Their requirements will be focused on the best conditions for sanitation, mobility, health services, compliance with biosafety measures and protocols, and protection and conservation of ecosystems.

Therefore, according to the respondents, tourism development policies – whether national, state, or municipal – should provide for effective investment actions in basic sanitation, public lighting, improvement of public transport services, food security, and worker safety. Measures in health, education (formal, environmental,

and entrepreneurial), and empowerment of the host community. Strategies to combat poverty, unemployment/informality, and job insecurity. Practices of socioeconomic inclusion and generation of decent jobs that value human potential. Strengthening of public-private partnerships and opening credit lines for small and medium entrepreneurs. Creation of mobility alternatives, decentralization of flows, and integration of the actors in the production processes. Establishment of regulatory frameworks for service and booking platforms (aiming to collect taxes). These are actions and measures based on the ethical assumption, in analysis, reflection and dimensioning of their consequences, as expressed by Boff (2003).

Politics need to consider the context of tourist visitation at the local and regional level – travel around the place of residence – as, initially, the most likely and important in the process of resuming domestic tourism. First, because it reflects a lower health risk. Second, due to the global economic limitations resulting from the pandemic, when lower transport costs will be sought, among other things. In this case, it will be essential to present a pricing policy compatible with the Brazilian situation.

Finally, tourism development policies will need, according to respondents, to rethink the backward and limited understanding of the visitor as a voracious and detached consumer, and the host community as a mere spectator of the process. There must be a paradigmatic break from the tourism model that is being put in place, which allows the tourist to be recognized as part of the place that receives them, which reinforces the necessary sharing of responsibilities (“moral education”, treated by Aristóteles, 1991), in their practices and experiences, to maintain destination quality. It is precisely the learning about values, conduct, and conviviality, reinforced by Novaes (2002). Similarly, the local community leading role, human relations, solidary, cooperative, alterity, and resilience should be highlighted.

We need to transform the current globalized consumer tourist into a globalized citizen tourist, understanding that his/her action interferes in a systemic way on the planet. Thus, in tourism public policy, we will have to be imposing as to ethical and moral principles, which should preserve the common good, not only of urban humans, but of native peoples and the ecosystems established there. We must put an end to a relationship of desire-consumption-commodification of everything, to desire-experience-humanizing and loving relationship.

## 6 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The construct created from the development of this research involved the effort to understand and critically analyze two central aspects: (a) the extent to which ethics has been contemplated in Brazilian Tourism public policies; (b) and identify elements that could become premises and/or proposals for future policies to mitigate the consequences of the pandemic (Covid-19), with a view to the common good and sustainability.

The first aspect, through the analysis of the global goals that govern the guidelines, lines of action and strategies of the current National Tourism Plan and, consequently, the other public policies proposed, the ethical component seems dissociated when contesting the real purposes of each goal. According to the interview reports, these are ambitious, unrealistic goals, drawn without the involvement of community groups to be reached by them in their territories, centered on a purely quantitative approach, concerned only with the approval of the business sector.

It is not enough to focus on the huge increase in the number of jobs, without, in the same proportion, strict monitoring of compliance with labor rights and on underemployment analogous to slavery. It is unreasonable to define, as a political proposal, achieving a surprising increase in revenue generated by visitors, when it is acknowledged that there is no balanced and coherent distribution of this revenue among external investors (owners of large corporate networks) and the local community. It is not prudent to propose an increase in the flow of foreign tourists by exempting visas, or even the flow of domestic tourism, without considering the primary need for government incentives in the scope of basic infrastructure (in consolidated destinations and in consolidation), for conservation of protected areas, of technology, of professional training and, mainly, in the formation and/or strengthening of alternative destinations, as a way to, at the same time, distribute the flow (preventing saturation and its negative consequences) and generate new fields of local development in the country.

The same way as the provisional measures and advertising campaigns presented during the pandemic period, no matter how much they sought to contribute greatly in some directions – such as the payment of

emergency aid for formal employees in the sector – ended up limiting the focus to the incentive to the re-scheduling of trips, flexibilization of work contracts and salaries, support to the business sector – by not requiring immediate reimbursement of amounts received, and opening of credit lines – and creation of a seal that show compliance with good biosafety by tourism enterprises, without any prior inspection.

With respect to the second aspect, it was observed, from the interviewees' reports, that the supreme goal of promoting Tourism should not be limited to enhance destination economic development, it should aim much more than that. The supreme goal (“premise”) must be linked to a process of human and sustainable development, aimed at achieving the common good, which would require a greater attention, among other things, from public policies (“propositions”): protection and enhancement of local (natural and socio-cultural) heritage; improvement of social indicators and implementation of emancipatory and humanitarian education projects (formal, environmental, and entrepreneurial), and democratic participation of communities in decision making (governance).

Finally, in a pandemic situation, we must add to the aforementioned proposals the inclusion of strict and monitored measures to comply with biosafety protocols. Infrastructure investments (basic sanitation, public transport, and health) and food security. Actions for worker safety and mitigation of unemployment and informality. Encouraging the creation of new destinations, with a view to decentralizing the flows. Development of new information technologies and of sustainability promotion. Measures to raise the awareness and co-responsibility of visitors in their tourist practices, stimulating a commitment to a more humane, supportive, and welcoming society due to the more ethical practices of Tourism.

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