

**TERRITORIAL IMPACT OF THE DYNAMICS OF NETWORKS OF INTERNATIONAL CITIES.  
THE WORLDWIDE NETWORK OF PORT CITIES (AIVP)  
THE CASE OF THE BAHIA BLANCA PORT MANAGEMENT CONSORTIUM.**

Patricia Viviana Del Cero<sup>1</sup>  
Universidad Provincial del Sudoeste Bonaerense  
[patriciadelpero@gmail.com](mailto:patriciadelpero@gmail.com)

**ABSTRACT**

The territorial impact of the network of port cities on the dynamics of networks of international cities is materialized in the territory based on the need to insert and articulate local, regional or territorial entities in the current system of networks. Which allows recomposition to the territories - in which the geographical scales overlap and interact - and thus conform new specialties.

On a local scale, the case of the Bahía Blanca Port Management Consortium is analyzed as a relevant case of local and tourist development in a space that acquires particular characteristics

**KEYS WORDS**

Networks of cities - Territorial impact – Local development – Touristic development – Port cities

**DYNAMICS OF NETWORKS OF INTERNATIONAL CITIES**

At the current stage of the global society, the articulation and insertion of the local spaces, regional or territorial entities in the system of networks of cities, allows to recompose to the territories - in which the geographical scales overlap and interact-, and form new territorialities (Roccatagliata 294:2008). Although the scope of the networks is diverse - since the scale can transcend from regional, interstate or international-, these can be understood as a system of relationships adapted to the development of activities and dynamics of the territories. Today, international networks of cities are a growing phenomenon and their objective is oriented towards international cooperation and sustainable development.

They are also regulated by a set of norms and members that are their own, with common aims and international reach. The spirit of forming an international system of networks, is based the need to unite two or more cities that share a common objective to work together.

Once the group has been consolidated, the members are encouraged to cooperate by generating links, sharing ideas and experiences, and unifying - in pursuit of their objectives -, behavior patterns. Many networks start as an association of municipalities within a country, to later open and expand on a continental scale and even worldwide. At present, there are networks of cities around the world, working together on a specific cooperation objective such as sustainable development, environmental care, mobility, culture and education, which are the main motivators of such partnerships. Thus, there are networks that unite from a common feature which federates them in their specificity, turning it into a great organization in which they articulate, on an equal footing, actors who pursue common objectives and whose results are superior to the sum of their individual actions. (Cravacuore, D 1: 2016).

All the governments of the international networks of cities act in a level of legal equality allowing to develop the articulation without hierarchies, even more considering the dimension of each network in the scope of its territorial intervention as a province, country or set of countries. From this dimension, the action agenda of each territorial entity is defined, which guides the work so that the results of the work turn out to be significantly superior to those that would reach its associates by itself. The organizing element conditions the agenda of a network of cities and the form that will acquire in its intervention, and in this way, will also determine its territorial impact. For example, if the network is structured around an economic activity, the emphasis will be on the lobby. On the other hand, in another organized to promote an activity, the exchange and learning will take leadership.

This is based on the fact that city networks deal with one theme and extend only to others that are binding. Bilateral agreements between network cities are established with territorial entities of other countries in order to formalize their relations and thus approach the achievement of its

<sup>1</sup> Licenciada y Profesora en Geografía. Maestrando en Gobierno Local.

objectives. In consequence, they become thus in Instruments of International Cooperation that favor the processes of local development, by facilitating and expediting the exchange, promoting the development of specific initiatives and technical assistance at the various levels of public policy. In this sense, each of these subnational government entities have the ability to exercise or provide assistance to the outside, beyond the guiding plans of each country, complementing them, or opening other lines of support, such as the Argentina Network for International Cooperation (RACI).

Our country is part of the " Association Internationale Villes et Ports » (AIVP), or the Worldwide Network of Port Cities. Its name in French is because the organization originated in France and is now based in Le Havre. This association provides a meeting point to all urban and port actors, being a privileged witness of the evolutionary changes that perceive the different cities and ports of the world. The objective of this network is to develop, enrich and strengthen the relationship through dialogue and mutual cooperation and this starting from collaborating with the members in the implementation of new strategies and tools that enable them to cope the proposed changes, to bring them closer to economic, social and environmental development, to port cities.

The Worldwide Network of Port Cities has more than 180 members and more than 45 countries in the 5 continents, regularly promoting events on the development of port cities. In these world conferences work is under way on the development of practices and expertise, through exchanges of experiences between local authorities and economic actors in the development of port authorities, destined to a diverse public: port authorities, urban authorities (elected or technical), researchers and academics, economic and institutional partners in the development of port cities and 400 to 500 delegates from 50 different countries participate.

The last conferences were held in 2016 in Rotterdam, Netherlands, at the 15th World Cities and Ports Conference "Crossovers", and in 2014 in Durban, South Africa at the 14th World Conference on Cities and Ports, "Smart Port City", where he worked in a human connection between the city and port.

The Worldwide Network of Port Cities has international recognition which is a consequence of its active and regular collaboration with international bodies such as the World Bank and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. Its services range from constant international monitoring of information material on city - port projects, accessible online and regularly updated. The global network of experts works on the redesign of the port city interface, in the economic dynamics of port cities, in the social integration of ports, and on sustainable development issues which port cities face. There is permanent support in the preparation and execution of port city projects, among which are benchmarking actions, which relate to management techniques that take as reference the best practices of other companies.

Among the outstanding segments of the Worldwide Network of Port Cities, those who have been treated in Rotterdam 2016, are the need to consider new types of city-port cooperation to generate economic value, in social and environmental contexts today altered by new technologies and global challenges, such as climate change, scarcity of natural resources and especially those that are extracted from the fossil energy.

Nowadays, port cities to experiment with new approaches to developing its ports with an emphasis on convergence and complementarity, as well as in the search for synergies, which is essential for local discussions. In the local development of port cities it is important to consider the promotion of employment, improvement of the quality of life and safety, and in this way to reconcile interdependent themes such as mobility, energy, climate and demography, which become more important. For that there is a constant drive to promote innovation at the local level as a way to improve social cohesion and the well-being of local communities and businesses.

The actors of the port city must provide the search for new marketing models which must be adapted to the new technologies that are being developed, in order to find concrete solutions, based on the heritage of a specific natural, human and economic ecosystem. In this way, the need arises to establish new coalitions between local communities, local entrepreneurs, port businesses and public entities to forge a joint work which offers possibilities for action and innovation. The related areas to be explored are the transmission of knowledge, renewable energy, flexible urban development, human capital development, social cohesion and a

collaborative economy. This is expected to lead to the establishment of new City-Port-Citizen synergies, an invaluable product for responsible port cities facing the challenges of the future of local society.

Among the potential of the Worldwide Network of Port Cities it is considered of special relevance the improvement of social innovation associated to a favorable change of the image of the ports. This objective aims to be concretized with the staging of a civil society with a proactive role in development, role that is expected to increase, of the hand of the knowledge and development of the necessary abilities. The ports and their partners, visible from business to unions, universities and municipalities, represent the vanguard of this change. These social actors must play a leading role in social innovation and the training of current generations and future workers.

**WHAT IS THE ROLE OF OUR COUNTRY IN THE WORLDWIDE NETWORK OF PORT CITIES?**

Argentina is associated to the Worldwide Network of Port Cities AIVP through the Bahía Blanca Port Management Consortium (CGPBB), in order to facilitate the relationship of local government in international cooperation to obtain general and common benefits to its associates. From the analysis of the territorial impact of this network, it has been focused on implementing projects that materialize in strengthening the City-Port link, as they were in the same Consortium, the construction of the Balcon al Mar and the Paseo Portuario, in addition to actions aimed at the community in matters of social responsibility. In this way, tourist attractions are promoted with the aim of strengthening and promoting the neighbors' bond with the port.





To this end, there are various extension activities on the territory, among which can be recognized Port Center Network, an activity that, based on social integration, develops actions that bring the inhabitants of the city to the port. The Port Center is a strategic tool that allows the center and the city to carry out information activities and education within the concept of edutainment: educating with entertainment. In accordance with the mission of the Port Center network of the Worldwide Network of Port Cities, the Bahía Blanca Port Management Consortium contributes to the creation of new Port Centers within its network, through the dissemination of the mission, organization and moderation of work sessions to extend the port culture among the general public and the development of pedagogical tools and mediation adapted to the needs of port cities.

#### ***WHAT IS THE TERRITORIAL IMPACT IN THE BAHIA BLANCA CITY?***

In the Bahía Blanca territory, sequential programs have been implemented, according to their degree of complexity. In principle they consist in the communication to the society on the importance of the connection City-Port and the economic and social value -cultural port to the city that contains it and extensive to the region. At a later stage it was promoted an opening of the port towards the neighbors with recreational port infrastructure works generating new attractions such as the aforementioned Balcón al Mar and Paseo Portuario, as well as educational visits for all levels (from kindergarten to university) and mass cultural events. Sustainable development and environment are implicit in the operational protocols, and although there are several actions to be undertaken, such as generating better efficiency in the use of water, energy and waste disposal from maritime operations, including the dredging of the navigation channel and the docks, much has materialized to date around the perception and social bond of the community with the port.

In their active participation, their events impact beyond the local territory, through the gestation and strengthening of the relations with other ports that have similar programs, where each of them adapts them to their particular realities.

Quickly, the Worldwide Network of Port Cities showed its interest in participation in Latin American ports because there was practically no background and, in accordance with that goal, the AIVP vice presidency is granted in 2013 to Dr. Hugo Borelli, who remained until the end of his term as President of the Port of Bahía Blanca.

As stated above, Argentina is part of the Worldwide Network of Port Cities through the Bahía Blanca Port Management Consortium and the participation of the city of Bahía Blanca in the network of cities allows to exchange experiences of local management and cooperate with other cities on issues of urban relevance, through the collection of technical and financial resources from the international stage, in order to raise the quality of public management. In addition with the participation of the city in this network, it promotes the international articulation that contributes to the expression of the local perspectives in regional or global scopes and allows coordinating efforts to front facing issues of global scale and local impact.

In this sense, the Port Management Consortium Bahía Blanca expresses a permanent concern about the future of the port city, the one that tries to put itself in context with the agriculture and

<sup>1</sup> Licenciada y Profesora en Geografía. Maestrando en Gobierno Local.

analysis of the improvements in the retentions, consequence of the movement of wheat, corn and derived products in the zone. The city is oriented to a positive trend change, which follows a cycle in which the sector has perceived a sustainable fall.

The Consortium is thus planning to adopt an increasingly open policy, which is part of a process that is expanding. In this way, new projects are being developed to promote tourist attractions to continue strengthening the neighbors' bond with the port so that the population has possibilities to enjoy the river and observe maritime activities such as the entry and exit of boats.

The Municipality of Bahía Blanca is currently involved in other networks, the Network of Mercociudades which is the main network of municipalities of MERCOSUR, and the greatest reference in terms of local governments in the integration process. Currently, Mercociudades has 123 partner cities in Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, Chile, Bolivia, and Venezuela where more than 72 million people live. As a result of this participation can be highlighted the Summit of Belo Horizonte, The Los Lagos Integration Committee, created after the democratic opening in Chile and Argentina. The Integration Committees are instances of public and private participation that meet, at least once a year, with the primary objective of installing a new scenario from the political, economic, cultural and social, which complements and amplifies the action of MERCOSUR. The purpose is directly related to the creation of a new scenario of greater regional competition that will reverse the long history of disagreements between our countries, allowing communities to concentrate complementary policies for sustainable development.

This way the Committee of Integration of the Lagos is integrated by the Chilean regions of Bío Bío, Araucanía, Los Ríos, Los Lagos, and the Argentine Provinces of Neuquén and Río Negro, as well as the Municipality of Bahía Blanca, in the province of Buenos Aires. Bahía Blanca was included in the Committee as of June 30, 2010.

Finally, it is important to highlight the contribution to the municipal area of international economic promotion whose general objective is to contribute from the area of International Affairs to local Productive Development, through the integration of the technical teams that develop projects with international edges, identified by the areas with specific competences in the field such as the Local Development Agency, Foreign Trade and mixed instances linked to it.

With regard to the positioning of Bahía Blanca and the region on an international scale, the proposal is to contribute and / or articulate urban development projects together with public and private companies committed to positioning Bahía Blanca and its region on the map of the world, enhancing the positive economic conjuncture. The actions are aimed at reinforcing the attributes of identity and reference of the city from the cultural, productive, educational, tourist, among other points of view.

### **REFERENCED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

ASOCIACIÓN INTERNACIONAL DE CIUDADES Y PUERTOS (2015) "Carta para el desarrollo sostenible de las ciudades portuarias". 10a Conferencia Ciudades y Puertos, Sydney

BARSANTI, P; BERNASCONI, M.V; BILLI, P y otros (2002) "Manejo integral de cuencas hidrográficas y planificación territorial" 2da ed. Universidad de Mar del Plata, Ambasciata D'Italia y Centro de Geología de costas y de cuaternario. Liliana B. Teruggi, Argentina

CRAVACUORE, D. (2006) "Análisis del asociativismo intermunicipal en Argentina". En medioambiente y urbanización, Año 22 n° 64. Instituto Internacional de Medio Ambiente y Desarrollo. América Latina, Buenos Aires, Argentina,

CRAVACUORE, D, (2016) "Asociativismo Municipal". Maestría en Gobierno Local, Universidad nacional de Quilmes, Argentina

DIAZ DE LANDA, M. y PARMIGIANI de BARBARÁ, M. C. "Gobierno local y relaciones intergubernamentales en Iberoamérica". Las bases formales de los procesos de gobernanza local. Cravacuore, D. y Navarro C., Argentina

<sup>1</sup> Licenciada y Profesora en Geografía. Maestrando en Gobierno Local.

PERILLO, G; MELO, W; CUADRADO, D y otros (2004) "Ecosistema del Estuario de Bahía Blanca" Instituto Argentino de Oceanografía. Bahía Blanca

ROCCATAGLIATA, J. A (Coord.); AUZA, N. T, BLANCO, S y otros (2008) "Argentina: una visión actual y prospectiva desde la dimensión territorial" Emecé, Argentina

### **INTERNET REFERENCE**

PUSSETTO, Pablo (2016) El gran desafío del puerto de Bahía Blanca. Disponible en: [http://labrujula24.com/noticias/2017/30456\\_Pussetto-qEl-gran-desafio-del-puerto-es-abrirse-a-la-genteq](http://labrujula24.com/noticias/2017/30456_Pussetto-qEl-gran-desafio-del-puerto-es-abrirse-a-la-genteq) Red mundial de ciudades portuarias. Encuentro ciudades – puertos: megabuques para ciudades portuarias. Junio 2016, Málaga, España Consultado en 24/02/2017. Disponible en <http://www.google.com.ar/webhp?sourceid=chrome-instant&ion=1&espv=2&ie=UTF-q=red%20mundial%20de%20ciudades%20portuarias>

Red mundial de ciudades portuarias. 12ª conferencia internacional de la Asociación Internacional de ciudades y puertos /AIVP/ en Buenos Aires y Rosario / Argentina. Consultado en 03/03/2017. Disponible en: <http://www.citiesandports2010.com/>

15ª Conferencia Mundial de Ciudades y Puertos "Crossover" (2016), Róterdam, Países Bajos. Consultado en 25/02/2017. <http://citiesandports2016.aivp.org/en/topics/>

<http://www.bahiablanca.gob.ar/la-ciudad/puerto-de-bahia-blanca/>

<http://www.cepal.org/es/publicaciones/6314-conectividad-ambitos-impacto-desarrollo>

Analysis and experiences:

[www.aivp.org/en](http://www.aivp.org/en)

<http://www.aivp.org/en/2015/06/30/plan-the-city-with-the-port-guide-of-good-practices-2/>