

# Cooperative initiatives in Brazilian community-based tourism and their effects on sustainable local development

*Iniciativas cooperativas no turismo comunitário brasileiro e seus efeitos no desenvolvimento local sustentável*

*Iniciativas cooperativas en el turismo comunitario brasileño y sus efectos en el desarrollo local sostenible*

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## Abstract

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) is an approach to managing self-led visitation activities by community actors through cooperative relationships that prioritize the territory's endogenous resources. Thus, CBT has been carried out by cooperative enterprises that can help to promote Sustainable Local Development (SLD). Despite this, the literature needs to better understand this articulation, especially in the Brazilian context, which does not have consolidated instruments for identifying these enterprises. This paper aims to map Brazilian CBT cooperative initiatives and evaluate their potential impact on SLD. Data collection included a bibliographic review and a survey, with data interpreted using descriptive statistics and thematic content analysis. The findings revealed that many CBT cooperative initiatives have been studied and identified in Brazil, with 103 cases mapped across all regions of the country. Additionally, CBT was found to contribute to SLD through collaborative and co-creative processes that lead to sustainable, endogenous practices across environmental, cultural, economic, political, and social dimensions. This study contributes to identifying CBT cooperative enterprises at the national level and advancing the understanding of their implications for SLD, a subject that warrants further exploration in the literature.

**Keywords:** Cooperativism, Community-based Tourism, Sustainable Local Development, Collaboration, Co-creation.

## Resumo

O Turismo Comunitário (TC) é uma abordagem para a gestão de atividades de visitação autônoma por atores comunitários por meio de relações cooperativas que priorizam os recursos endógenos do território. Assim, o TC tem sido realizado por empresas cooperativas que podem ajudar a promover o Desenvolvimento Local Sustentável (DLS). Apesar disso, a literatura precisa compreender melhor essa articulação, especialmente no contexto brasileiro, que não possui instrumentos consolidados para identificar essas empresas. Este artigo tem como objetivo mapear as iniciativas cooperativas de TCC no Brasil e avaliar seu potencial impacto no DLS. A coleta de dados incluiu uma revisão bibliográfica e uma pesquisa, com os dados interpretados por meio de estatísticas descritivas e análise de conteúdo temática. Os resultados revelaram que muitas iniciativas cooperativas de TCC foram estudadas e identificadas no Brasil, com 103 casos mapeados em todas as regiões do país. Além disso, verificou-se que o TBC contribui para o DESL por meio de processos colaborativos e cocriativos que levam a práticas sustentáveis e endógenas nas dimensões ambiental, cultural, econômica, política e social. Este estudo contribui para identificar empresas cooperativas de TBC em nível nacional e avançar na compreensão de suas implicações para o DESL, um assunto que merece maior exploração na literatura.

**Palavras-chave:** Cooperativismo, Turismo Comunitário, Desenvolvimento Local Sustentável, Colaboração, Cocriação.

## Resumen

El turismo comunitario (TC) es un enfoque para gestionar actividades de visita autoguiadas por actores comunitarios a través de relaciones cooperativas que priorizan los recursos endógenos del territorio. Así, el TC ha sido llevado a cabo por empresas cooperativas que pueden ayudar a promover el desarrollo local sostenible (DLS). A pesar de ello, la literatura necesita comprender mejor esta articulación, especialmente en el contexto brasileño, que no cuenta con instrumentos consolidados para identificar estas empresas. El presente trabajo tiene como objetivo mapear las iniciativas cooperativas de TCC en Brasil y evaluar su impacto potencial en el DLS. La recopilación de datos incluyó una revisión bibliográfica y una encuesta, y los datos se interpretaron mediante estadísticas descriptivas y análisis de contenido temático. Los resultados revelaron que se han estudiado e identificado muchas iniciativas cooperativas de TCC en Brasil, con 103 casos mapeados en todas las

regiones del país. Además, se constató que el turismo comunitario contribuye al desarrollo local sostenible a través de procesos colaborativos y co-creativos que conducen a prácticas sostenibles y endógenas en las dimensiones ambiental, cultural, económica, política y social. Este estudio contribuye a identificar las empresas cooperativas de turismo comunitario a nivel nacional y a avanzar en la comprensión de sus implicaciones para el desarrollo local sostenible, un tema que merece una mayor exploración en la literatura.

**Palabras clave:** Cooperativismo, turismo comunitario, desarrollo local sostenible, colaboración, cocreación.

#### Tesauros

**Z32** Tourism; Recreation; Leisure

**O18** Regional, Urban, and Rural Development; Regional Analysis

**Q01** Sustainable Development

**P13** Cooperative Enterprises; Worker-owned Enterprises; Employee Ownership

## Introduction

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) involves cooperative management strategies designed to empower communities, increase income, and strengthen community resilience through tourism (Arratia et al., 2022; Mielke & Pegas, 2013). This approach fosters collective and innovative management to achieve shared community goals (Albuquerque et al., 2023; Arratia et al., 2022; Emmendoerfer et al., 2016). Consequently, CBT reflects the principles of cooperativism (Masotti, 2023).

Cooperativism is generally seen as a movement, system, or doctrine that advocates for an economy focused on income distribution, environmental sustainability, and improving quality of life (Hartung, 2005; Pinho, 1966), beyond the pursuit of individual profit. According to Berlanda et al. (2021), cooperativism prioritizes participation and equity among members of organizations with economic impacts.

Zawiślak (2020) observes that cooperativism has increasingly focused on solving social issues locally and promoting sustainable development. CBT aligns with this cooperative model by valuing traditional cultures, providing alternative livelihoods, and conserving local environmental resources (Almeida & Emmendoerfer, 2023; Forero, Llano & Nieto, 2025). Consequently, this study considers CBT enterprises as cooperative initiatives.

The study seeks to evaluate the potential of these initiatives for Sustainable Local Development (SLD), which is defined as a developmental approach that improves living conditions through an endogenous process, balancing essential economic, social, and environmental dimensions based on local needs and resources (Almeida & Emmendoerfer, 2023).

The SLD process is relevant because it recognizes that a balanced improvement in quality of life requires an approach that considers local culture, along with the

population's demands, potential, and interests (Collantes, 2024; Olivera et al., 2020; Sant'ana et al., 2022; Verschoore et al., 2023). This approach enables socio-territorial benefits that would otherwise be unattainable in certain contexts.

Although CBT cooperative initiatives are rooted in SLD principles, the literature provides limited discussion of how this relationship develops (Almeida & Emmendoerfer, 2023), particularly in Brazil, where established tools to describe and map these initiatives geographically are absent. Thus, this article aims to map Brazilian CBT cooperatives and verify their potential impact on SLD.

Data collection included a bibliographic search of Scopus, Spell, and Web of Science focused on national case studies of CBT initiatives, and a survey targeting individuals involved in CBT in Brazil. The data were analyzed through descriptive statistics and thematic content analysis.

This study identifies CBT cooperatives in Brazil that have served as study references, providing a descriptive overview of their locations. While not a census or a comprehensive representation of "all CBT cooperatives in Brazil," it stands as one of the few works mapping these community enterprises nationally. Additionally, this article enhances the understanding of the benefits CBT may offer to SLD, a topic that warrants further exploration (Almeida & Emmendoerfer, 2023).

## Community-Based Tourism Cooperative Initiatives

CBT practices were first identified in rural Latin American communities during the 1980s (Maldonado, 2009). According to Pinheiro (2016), CBT developed as an alternative, socially responsible model of tourism management, contrasting with conventional mass tourism, which often neglects the lifestyles, resources, and interests of traditional communities.

CBT encourages community leadership through self-management (Forero et al., 2025; Lima et al., 2022). Crucially, self-management in CBT is not an isolated, individual effort, but a cooperative, associative, and horizontal process among community members (Forero, 2022), moving beyond the subordinate roles typical in mass tourism.

Although not all community tourism enterprises are managed collectively, they engage cooperatively with other local enterprises and actors to pursue common goals (Arratia et al., 2022). This fosters the collective development of ideas through co-creative processes that integrate the community's culture and resources into tourism activities (Albuquerque et al., 2023; Emmendoerfer et al., 2016).

CBT functions through cooperative relationships that generate shared benefits (Masotti, 2023). It allows communities to recognize tourism as a vital source of income and a means to strengthen their cultural identity (Torres-Toukoumidis et al., 2022).

Given that CBT operates through cooperative initiatives, it is important to define cooperativism. Broadly, cooperativism is a movement, system, or doctrine advocating for an economy based on collaboration among individuals with shared interests, prioritizing solidarity and social justice (Hartung, 2005; Pinho, 1966). This movement follows principles such as voluntary and open membership, democratic governance, economic participation, autonomy, education, cooperation among cooperatives, and community engagement (International Cooperative Alliance, 2024).

Cooperativism also emphasizes member participation and equity in social structures with economic impacts (Berlanda et al., 2021; D'Arísbo & Rippel, 2024). This framework leads to cooperatives, organizations founded on these principles (Hartung, 2005). In this study, "cooperative initiatives" refers to CBT organizations that may not formally identify as cooperatives or have legal recognition but still reflect the core principles of cooperativism.

Berlanda et al. (2021), Castilla-Polo and Sánchez-Hernández (2020), and Sucupira and Freitas (2011) highlight that cooperative initiatives promote local sustainable development by fostering an environment where participatory activities establish shared internal goals and efforts. In the case of CBT, the benefits for SLD are likely greater, as its practices help balance the cultural, economic, social, environmental, and political aspects of the region (Almeida & Emmendoerfer, 2023). The following section will present the key attributes of SLD and how cooperative initiatives can advance its promotion.

## Sustainable Local Development and Its Dimensions in Community-Based Tourism

For many years, sustainable development concepts (promoted after the 1987 Brundtland Report, which provided the first widely accepted definition) neglected the specific characteristics of territories (Fernández et al., 2019). This perspective shifted in the 1990s (Fernández et al., 2019), as studies recognized that sustainable and balanced improvements in quality of life required consideration of the culture, strengths, and needs of each territory (Olivera et al., 2020).

In this context, SLD emerged as a developmental approach grounded in the tangible and intangible resources of the locality (Collantes, 2024; Sant'ana et al., 2022; Verschoore et al., 2023). Fernández et al. (2019) highlight that sustainable development

should be designed not only “for” the population but also “with” it, using participatory methods to identify local issues and potential.

Thus, besides being a form of sustainable development, SLD is also understood as territorial development, not in terms of a limited (micro) scale, but in terms of its inherent nature (Tenório, 2012). SLD is shaped by socio-territorial relationships that, while extending beyond the target territory, prioritize and reflect its unique local characteristics. It is important to note that the definition of “local” is relative (it can refer to a neighborhood, municipality, state, country, etc.), focusing on a territory’s distinctive elements (Kronemberger & Costa, 2016).

The territorial dimensions to be balanced in the SLD process vary depending on the study’s focus, with the most common being environmental, social, and economic (Nurwidyaningrum et al., 2022). This work references the dimensions outlined by Almeida and Emmendoerfer (2023), which emphasize the connection between CBT and SLD: environmental/ecological, cultural, economic, political, and social. Table 1 below briefly describes each dimension.

**Table 1. Main Dimensions of SLD Linked to CBT**

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Description</b>
Environmental/Ecological	Refers to the preservation and conservation of local natural resources
Cultural	Involves the appreciation of local culture
Economic	Relates to the generation of income for the local population
Political	Occurs through the decision-making power and leadership of the local population
Social	It involves generating well-being for society, based on equity and reducing socio-territorial inequality

**Source:** Adapted from Almeida and Emmendoerfer (2023).

The dimensions in Table 1 are endogenous, grounded in the local resources and needs. It is also important to note that these dimensions may be viewed idealistically, as they may not be fully realized simultaneously, but remain essential for guiding best practices in the SLD process. In this context, SLD is defined as an endogenous process aimed at enhancing human living conditions by balancing key territorial dimensions, including but not limited to environmental, cultural, economic, political, and social (Almeida & Emmendoerfer, 2023).

## Methodology

This study is descriptive, aiming to analyze the characteristics of a social group and its connections to a particular phenomenon (Gil, 2007). It achieved this by describing CBT cooperative initiatives, including their national distribution and their impact on SLD. The research follows a mixed-methods approach, integrating broad quantitative data analysis with detailed, contextual qualitative investigation (Schneider et al., 2017).

Data collection was conducted using two methods: bibliographic research (quantitative), which relies on pre-existing literature (Gil, 2007); and a survey (qualitative), which uses questionnaires targeted at a specific audience to gather descriptive information (Fowler Junior, 2011). The bibliographic research mapped Brazilian CBT cooperative initiatives and, indirectly, identified the effects of CBT on SLD. This search was conducted using Spell, Scopus, and Web of Science, respected databases with academic works relevant to the study.

The bibliographic research examined abstracts, titles, and keywords from open-access studies in these databases. Search terms were pre-tested to ensure broad coverage of national CBT initiatives. After testing, the final terms were selected to capture studies in both Portuguese and English. Table 2 presents the number of studies found in each database using these terms.<sup>1</sup>

**Table 2.** Number of Works Found by Search Terms and Databases

Search Terms	Journal Databases		
	<i>Spell</i>	<i>Scopus</i>	<i>Web of Science</i>
"turismo de base comunitária" and "Brasil" or "brasileiro" "brasileira" or "brasileiros" or "brasileiras"	14	2	0
"community-based tourism" and "Brazil" or "Brazilian" or "Brazilians"	8	28	43
"community-based tourism", country/territory: Brazil	-	35	34
"turismo de base comunitária" and the name of each Brazilian state	45	2	0
"community-based tourism" and the name of each Brazilian state	26	17	44

**Source:** Elaborated by the authors.

The bibliographic research was conducted from February 1 to February 13, 2024. During this phase, the abstracts of all studies were reviewed to identify any

<sup>1</sup> Some studies appeared multiple times across different databases.

references to CBT cases. Studies that focused on specific CBT cases—whether by locality, community, or enterprise—were fully examined to determine the location of the CBT cooperative initiative. Data were organized using Microsoft Excel.

The data mapping was analyzed quantitatively using descriptive statistics to show the frequency of CBT cooperative initiatives in each Brazilian state. Additionally, it identified which initiatives were most frequently studied in works indexed in the Spell, Scopus, and Web of Science databases.

The survey aimed to assess the effects of Brazilian CBT cooperative initiatives, targeting individuals working in CBT across the country. It was distributed online to over 200 email addresses and social media contacts of people and institutions involved in CBT, using a snowball sampling method, where respondents shared the survey with other potential participants (Vinuto, 2014).

The survey was conducted from September 1 to October 31, 2023, via Google Forms. A total of 11 responses were collected from 8 states (Amazonas 1, Ceará 1, Maranhão 3, Sergipe 1, Mato Grosso do Sul 1, Minas Gerais 1, Rio de Janeiro 1, and Rio Grande do Sul 1), covering all five regions of Brazil (North 1, Northeast 5, Center-West 1, Southeast 2, and South 1). The survey form is provided in Appendix I of this article.

The survey data was analyzed qualitatively using thematic content analysis, identifying key themes relevant to the research objectives (Bardin, 2018). These themes were categorized based on the responses, reflecting the effects of CBT cooperative initiatives on SLD.

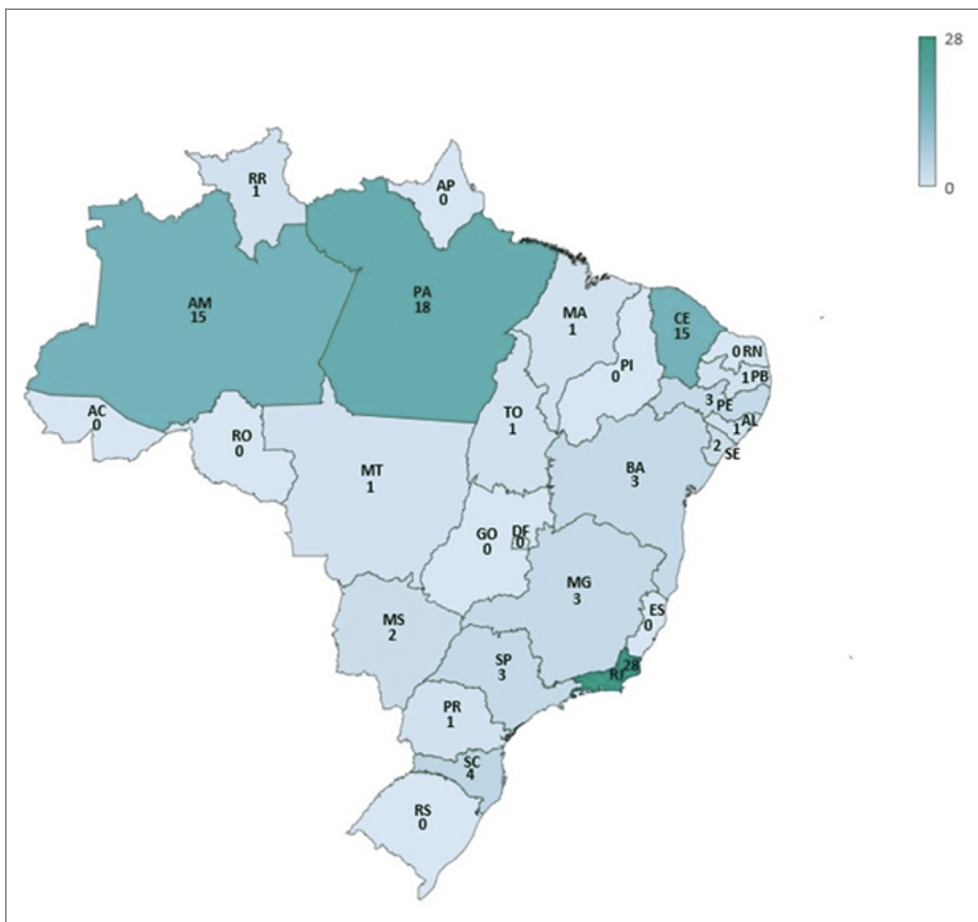
## Results

The results of this study are divided into two sections, detailed in the following subsections. The first focuses on the mapping of Brazilian cooperative initiatives, conducted through a bibliographic review of articles indexed in the Spell, Scopus, and Web of Science databases. The second explores their potential effects on SLD, derived from the analysis of survey responses from individuals involved in CBT practices in Brazil.

### Mapping of Brazilian Community-Based Tourism Cooperative Initiatives.

The bibliographic research identified 103 CBT cooperative initiatives across all five regions of Brazil (North, Northeast, Center-West, Southeast, and South). These initiatives were identified by the locality, community, or business name, consolidating

those listed under slightly different names but referring to the same initiative. Figure 1 below shows the number of CBT cooperative initiatives in each Brazilian state.



**Figure 1.** Mapping of CBT Cooperative Initiatives in Brazilian States

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

As indicated in Figure 1, Rio de Janeiro had the highest number of identified initiatives, with 28, followed by Pará with 18; Amazonas and Ceará with 15; Santa Catarina with 4; Bahia, Minas Gerais, Pernambuco, and São Paulo with 3; Mato Grosso do Sul and Sergipe with 2; and Alagoas, Maranhão, Mato Grosso, Paraíba, Paraná, Roraima, and Tocantins with 1. No cases were found in Acre, Amapá, the Federal District, Espírito Santo, Goiás, Piauí, Rio Grande do Norte, Rio Grande do Sul, or Rondônia.

It is important to clarify that this research does not serve as a census of cooperative initiatives but rather highlights CBT cases studied in works indexed in the analyzed databases. Some studies examined multiple CBT initiatives simultaneously,

and certain initiatives were covered in more than one study. Therefore, the unit of observation is the initiatives, not the studies. Initiatives studied in three or more works are listed in Table 3 below.

**Table 3. Most Studied Brazilian CBT Cooperative Initiatives**

Initiatives	Municipality/ State	Works That Studied/Identified the Initiative	Number of Studies
Prainha do Canto Verde	Beberibe/CE	Moraes, Guerra, Mendonça, and Fenerich (2024); Urano and Nóbrega (2020); Irving and Mendonça (2004); Rosa, Tur, and Andreu (2017a); Burgos and Mertens (2017); Rosa, Tur, and Andreu (2017b); Andreu, Tur, and Rosa (2017); Helmsing and Fonseca (2011); Moraes, Irving, Pedro, and Oliveira (2020); Bartholo, Delamaro, and Bursztyn (2008); Burgos and Mertens (2015); Fabrino, Nascimento, and Costa (2016); Santos, Lima, and Silva (2018); Barros and Araújo (2016)	14
Ponta Grossa	Icapuí/CE	Urano and Nóbrega (2020); Moraes et al. (2020); Gómez, Falcão, Cherem, and Silva (2016); Fabrino et al. (2016)	4
Jenipapo-Kanindé	Aquiraz/CE	Urano and Nóbrega (2020); Moraes et al. (2020); Gómez et al. (2016)	3
Curraú Velho	Acaraú/CE	Oliveira and Cardoso (2021); Moraes et al. (2020); Loureiro and Gorayeb (2013)	3
Pousada Uacari Mamirauá	Tefé/AM	Lebrão <i>et al.</i> (2021); Figueiredo (2022); Barros-Freire and Neiman (2019)	3
Anã	Santarém/PA	Figueiredo (2022); Assis and Peixoto (2019); Barreto and Tavares (2016).	3
Santa Marta	Rio de Janeiro/ RJ	Angelini (2020); Mano, Mayer and Fratucci (2017); Rompu (2018)	3

**Source:** Elaborated by the authors.

Table 3 shows that Prainha do Canto Verde, located in Beberibe, Ceará, was the most studied CBT initiative in the papers indexed in the Spell, Scopus, and Web of Science databases. According to Barros and Araújo (2016), Andrés et al. (2015), Irving and Mendonça (2004), and Santos et al. (2018), this community's CBT is notable for its strong cooperative network, made up of community members working to strengthen their territorial connections through tourism.

The remaining 96 initiatives not listed in Table 3 were studied in 2 or less articles from the analyzed databases. The following section will discuss the potential of Brazilian CBT initiatives for SLD based on survey responses. Not all initiatives identified in the survey were reflected in the bibliographic mapping, indicating that many national CBT enterprises have yet to be examined in scientific research.

## Possible Effects of Brazilian Community-Based Tourism Cooperative Initiatives on Sustainable Local Development.

The potential effects of Brazilian CBT cooperative initiatives on sustainable development were drawn from 11 survey responses, using a qualitative approach that considered the unique characteristics of each case while identifying connections between them related to the research focus. Table 4 below presents descriptive data about the respondents, including their gender, age, the number of people working in the CBT initiative (including themselves), the name of the initiative(s) they participate in (whether community, locality, or enterprise), and the municipality and state abbreviation (UF) where the CBT initiative is located.

**Table 4.** Descriptive Data of Survey Respondents

Respondent Code	Gender	Age	Number of People Working in the CBT Initiative	Initiative Name	Municipality/ State
R1	Male	69	4	Acuruí	Itabirito/MG
R2	Male	66	1	Comunidade Quilombola Boa Sorte	Corguinho/MS
R3	Male	42	50	Reserva de Desenvolvimento Sustentável Mamirauá	Uarini/AM
R4	Male	46	6	Paraty Mirim	Paraty/RJ
R5	Female	57	6	Betânia; Travosa; Satuba; Bar da Hora, Mandacaru Atins; Praia do Tatu	Santo Amaro do Maranhão/MA; Barreirinhas/MA; Paulino Neves/MA
R6	Male	49	10	Quilombo do Cumbe	Aracati/CE
R7	Female	40	18	Rede Anfitriões Litoral do Paraná	Guaratuba/PR; Paranaguá/PR; Guaraqueçaba/PR
R8	Female	43	15	Assentamento Moacir Wanderley	Nossa Senhora do Socorro/SE
R9	Female	42	3	Sapiranga	Sapiranga/RS
R10	Female	57	7	Bar da Hora; Atins; Mandacaru; Ponta do Mangue; Santo Inácio; Satuba; Buritizal; Betânia; Travosa	Barreirinhas/MA; Santo Amaro do Maranhão/MA
R11	Male	43	25	Bar da Hora	Barreirinhas/MA

**Source:** Elaborated by the authors.

According to Table 4, the respondents included six men and five women, aged 40 to 69. Some respondents are involved in CBT initiatives that span multiple communities, localities, or enterprises, as in the cases of R5, R7, and R10. Additionally, one respondent is part of a one-person CBT initiative, while another belongs to an initiative with 50 members. This demonstrates the diversity of CBT cooperative initiatives, represented across all five regions of Brazil.

When evaluating the effects of CBT on SLD, it is important to consider the specific context of each case. This qualitative analysis emphasizes the need for contextual understanding. By examining the distinct features of each initiative, the study identified common elements that reflect the potential effects of CBT on SLD, particularly concerning environmental, cultural, economic, political, and social dimensions. Unlike the descriptive statistical analysis in the previous subsection, the focus here is on what the identified categories reveal about the research topic rather than the frequency of observations.

In the environmental dimension, CBT initiatives have been actively working to conserve local natural resources through collaborative efforts. R1, for example, noted that their enterprise focuses on “forest preservation and the recovery of degraded areas,” accomplished through collective mobilization involving various community members. Similarly, R2, R9, and R11 reported engaging in environmental activities aimed at protecting native vegetation, much like R1.

R3, R4, and R6 mentioned cleaning watercourses, with R3 also incorporating renewable solar energy in their business. R5, R7, R8, and R10 described additional environmental actions for SLD, such as sustainable fishing, agroecology, recycling, and organizing discussions on responsible tourism. Thus, one potential effect of Brazilian CBT initiatives on SLD is the enhancement of the environmental dimension through collaborative processes.

In the cultural dimension, R1, R3, and R9 reported that their CBT initiatives contribute to preserving local traditions through activities such as preparing traditional dishes, showcasing historical landmarks, and participating in religious festivals that represent the region’s culture. These practices are collectively planned and organized by those involved in the initiative.

R6, R8, and R9 highlighted traditional festivals, including the “Bloco do Cumbe, Mangrove Festival, and Quilombo Day,” the “June Festivities,” and the “Fisherman’s Festival,” respectively. R4 and R11 emphasized the preservation of *caçara* lifestyles and artisanal fishing, maintained through cooperative relationships.

R2, R5, and R10 did not mention cultural activities within their initiatives as part of SLD. Although not all CBT enterprises reported cultural impacts, such effects are likely, given their principles and management approach.

In the economic dimension, all respondents indicated involvement in activities that generate income and boost the local market. They also noted that these activities, across various sectors, rely on win-win exchanges and partnerships. R3, R6, and R9 reported income from selling handicrafts.

The production and sale of food (raw or processed) were mentioned by R1, R2, R5, R6, R8, R9, and R10. Accommodations and guided tours were also provided by R1, R5, R6, and R7. R4 and R7 highlighted more specific economic activities, such as site maintenance and the creation of a community loan fund.

These initiatives typically operate in multiple economic sectors, as illustrated by R6, who reported offering “house rentals, food services, craft sales, and more.” Cooperative relationships were crucial for strengthening and expanding the economic benefits that CBT can generate locally.

In the political dimension, R1 shared that their initiative supports SLD by establishing the “Jaguara Tourist Route Governance Group,” which collaboratively develops plans for organizing tourist destinations. R3, R5, and R8 similarly noted that their initiatives enhance the community’s political engagement by creating and sustaining spaces for collective discussion and decision-making.

R9 highlighted that their CBT initiative facilitated access to public policy boards, such as municipal councils for the environment, rural affairs, and tourism. R11’s enterprise interacts with the public sector through the drafting of community commitment letters, which are delivered to candidates and local government representatives. R4 emphasized that political empowerment occurs when the community unites to fight for its goals.

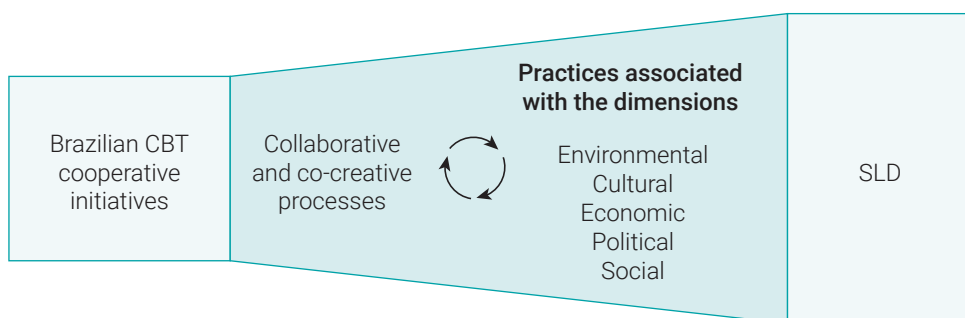
R6 pointed to a specific form of community decision-making empowerment through their leadership in managing tourism events. The remaining respondents, R2, R7, and R10, did not report political contributions from their CBT initiatives. However, based on the other responses, it is evident that CBT cooperatives can help stimulate this political aspect of SLD.

The final dimension analyzed was the social dimension, which relates to the well-being of the local population. R9 noted that their initiative enhances this dimension by fostering a sense of satisfaction and “belonging” among local residents, as CBT helps strengthen socio-territorial identity ties.

R4, R5, and R10 mentioned organizing entertainment and leisure activities for the local community, which they believe contributes to well-being. Several respondents

also emphasized CBT’s role in empowering individuals through knowledge gained from their experiences, resulting in social benefits, as highlighted by R3 and R8.

Additionally, CBT was found to positively impact the social dimension of SLD by generating employment, income, and dignity for community members, according to R1, R3, and R11. However, R2, R6, and R7 did not report practices related to this dimension. Nevertheless, the evidence shows that CBT cooperative initiatives can significantly improve the well-being of the local population. To summarize these findings, Figure 2 illustrates the potential effects of Brazilian CBT cooperative initiatives on SLD.



**Figure 2.** Possible Effects of Brazilian CBT Cooperative Initiatives on SLD

**Source:** Elaborated by the authors.

Figure 2 demonstrates that Brazilian CBT cooperatives can influence SLD through endogenous practices across environmental, cultural, economic, political, and social dimensions. These practices are driven by collaborative and co-creative processes involving community actors who discuss, plan, and make decisions collectively. The potential effects of Brazilian CBT cooperatives on SLD are represented at the center of Figure 2 (in the gray area).

It is important to note that Figure 2 is not intended as a comprehensive analytical framework for all CBT initiatives in Brazil, as the results depend on the specific context and management style of each initiative. However, based on the studied cases, it indicates that existing CBT cooperative arrangements can contribute to SLD, consistent with the findings from selected works in the bibliographic research, such as Betti and Denardin (2019), Ferreira (2014), Freire and Ferreira (2015), Oliveira and Cardoso (2021), Oppliger and Oliveira (2022), and Rosa et al. (2020).

## Final Considerations

This study identified a significant number of CBT cooperative initiatives in Brazil, mapping 103 cases across all regions (north, northeast, center-west, south, and southeast). The states with the highest number of cases were Rio de Janeiro (28), Pará (18), Amazonas (15), and Ceará (15). Furthermore, we concluded that CBT cooperatives can contribute to SLD through collaborative and co-creative processes that foster sustainable, endogenous practices across environmental, cultural, economic, political, and social dimensions.

Notably, this study did not aim to conduct a comprehensive “census” of CBT practices in Brazil, nor did it exhaust all mapping possibilities, as it was limited to case studies from three major databases (Spell, Scopus, and Web of Science). Future research should consider using additional data collection methods to expand the scope of identified initiatives.

One limitation of the survey was that, while it captured specific characteristics and connections between cases, it did not provide an in-depth analysis of contextual factors. Thus, future studies could benefit from more detailed qualitative research, such as interviews, observations, or other in-depth techniques for on-site investigations.

Despite its limitations, this study makes valuable practical and theoretical contributions. The study advanced the identification of Brazilian cooperative initiatives, providing descriptive data on their locations and the studies being conducted, which is essential for encouraging further research, particularly given the lack of national CBT mapping reports.

Theoretically, this work contributes to understanding the impact of CBT cooperatives on SLD, a topic that, as Almeida & Emmendoerfer (2023) argue, needs further exploration. Moreover, understanding practices that can drive SLD is crucial for peripheral countries like Brazil to reduce technological and economic dependence in a responsible and creative manner, drawing from their own cultural and natural resources.

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# Appendix I – Semi-structured Survey Form (open-ended and closed-ended questions)

## General Information

1- What is your gender?

Male.

Female.

Other.

2- What is your age (indicate only the number of completed years)?

-----

3- What is the municipality and state of your CBT initiative (municipality/state abbreviation)?

-----

4- What is the name of the community or locality where your CBT initiative is located?

-----

5- How many people, including yourself, work in your CBT initiative (response in Arabic numerals: 1, 2, 3, 4...)?

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## Cooperativism Information

Preamble: Cooperativism refers to processes of association and collaboration between people or institutions with similar interests, aiming to achieve collective benefits in their socioeconomic activities.

6- How are the main decisions of your CBT initiative made?

Democratically: through discussion and collective deliberation.

Freely: each person acts independently as they see fit.

Centrally: one person (or a small group) decides for everyone.

7- Does your CBT initiative collaborate with other community enterprises?

- Yes.
- Partially.
- No.

7.1- If you answered "Yes," please specify in which aspects there is collaboration:

-----

7.2- If you answered "Partially," please specify in which aspects there is collaboration:

-----

8- How are the economic gains from tourism products or services distributed in your CBT initiative?

- Fully retained by those who developed/provided the product or service.
- Part goes to those who developed/provided the product or service, and another part is passed to a person or institution with the right to receive it.
- In another way.

8.1- If you answered "In another way," please explain how:

-----

9- Do you consider your CBT initiative to have cooperative characteristics, based on the definition of cooperativism in the preamble of this questionnaire?

- Yes.
- Partially.
- No.

9.1- If you answered "Partially," please explain why:

-----

9.2- If you answered "No," please explain why:

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### **Sustainable Local Development Information**

Preamble: Sustainable Local Development (SLD) is an endogenous process (based on local resources and needs) that aims to generate lasting benefits for society by

balancing various territorial dimensions – such as environmental, cultural, economic, political, and social.

10- Does your CBT initiative carry out any environmental activities (e.g., preservation or conservation of local natural resources)?

Yes.

No.

10.1- If you answered "Yes," please describe which ones:

-----

11- Does your CBT initiative carry out any cultural activities (e.g., promoting practices that reflect local traditions)?

Yes.

No.

11.1- If you answered "Yes," please describe which ones:

-----

12- Does your CBT initiative carry out any economic activities (e.g., creating jobs and income for local people)?

Yes.

No.

12.1- If you answered "Yes," please describe which ones:

-----

13- Does your CBT initiative carry out any political activities (e.g., empowering local people in decision-making)?

Yes.

No.

13.1- If you answered "Yes," please describe which ones:

-----

14- Does your CBT initiative carry out any social activities (e.g., impacting the well-being of the local population)?

Yes.

No.

14.1- If you answered "Yes," please describe which ones:

-----

15- Do you believe your CBT initiative can contribute to promoting SLD, considering the definition of SLD in the preamble of this questionnaire?

Yes.

No.

15.1- If you answered "Yes," please explain why:

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15.2- If you answered "No," please explain why:

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