



## Territory management centers in the southeast of the Eastern Amazon

Centros de gestão do território no sudeste da Amazônia Oriental

Centros de gestión territorial en el sudeste de la Amazonía Oriental

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### Abstract

The southeast of the Eastern Amazon is one of the Amazon regions with the greatest economic and populational density that integrates what Becker (2009) pointed out as an arch of consolidated population and the core of the regional economy. In light of that, this paper seeks to identify and analyze the main centers that command that segment of the urban network, considering the public and economic administration of the territory. This research is based on a bibliographic revision and analysis of micro-data of the publication of Regiões de Influência das Cidades – REGIC (IBGE, 2020). It has been observed that the region has three levels of territorial administration: at the top are the cities of Palmas, Marabá, and Imperatriz, which establish administrative interactions that transcend the region. In the middle, there is a list of cities focused on national investments and the installation of a variety of public services but with a reduced capacity of making city-ness interactions, having their territories as initial points. Finally, in the third level, there is a set of cities whose prevailing interactions comprise town-ness.

**Keywords:** Urban centers. Territory management. Eastern Amazon.

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### Resumo

A região sudeste da Amazônia Oriental integra o que Becker (2009) chamou de arco do povoamento consolidado, porção territorial amazônica que concentra o cerne da economia regional. Diante disso, esse trabalho procura identificar e analisar os principais centros que comandam esse segmento de rede urbana, considerando a gestão pública e econômica do território. A pesquisa foi realizada com base em revisão bibliográfica e análise dos microdados da publicação Regiões de Influência das Cidades – REGIC (IBGE, 2020). Constatou-se que a região possui três níveis de gestão territorial: no topo, estão as cidades de Palmas, Marabá e Imperatriz, estabelecendo interações de gestão que ultrapassam a região; em nível

intermediário, encontra-se cidades que são focos de investimentos nacionais e de instalação de uma gama de serviços públicos, mas com reduzida capacidade de construir interações city-ness, tendo seus territórios como ponto de partida; e, no terceiro nível, está um conjunto de cidades cujas interações predominantes são de tipo town-ness.

**Palavras-chave:** Centros urbanos. Gestão do território. Sudeste da Amazônia Oriental.

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### Resumen

El sureste de la Amazonía Oriental es una de las regiones amazónicas con mayor densidad económica y poblacional que integra lo que Becker (2009) nombró de arco de población consolidada y núcleo de la economía regional. Frente a eso, este trabajo busca identificar y analizar los principales centros que comandan ese segmento de la red urbana, considerando la gestión pública y económica del territorio. Esta investigación fue realizada en base a una revisión bibliográfica y análisis de microdatos de la publicación de Regiões de Influência das Cidades – REGIC (IBGE, 2020). Se constató que la región posee tres niveles de gestión territorial: en la cima están las ciudades de Palmas, Marabá e Imperatriz, estableciendo interacciones de gestión que aventajan a la región; en el nivel intermedio está una lista de ciudades que son focos de inversiones nacionales e instalación de una gama de servicios públicos, pero con capacidad reducida para construir interacciones city-ness, teniendo sus territorios como puntos de partida y en el tercer nivel, se encuentra un conjunto de ciudades cuyas interacciones son de tipo town-ness.

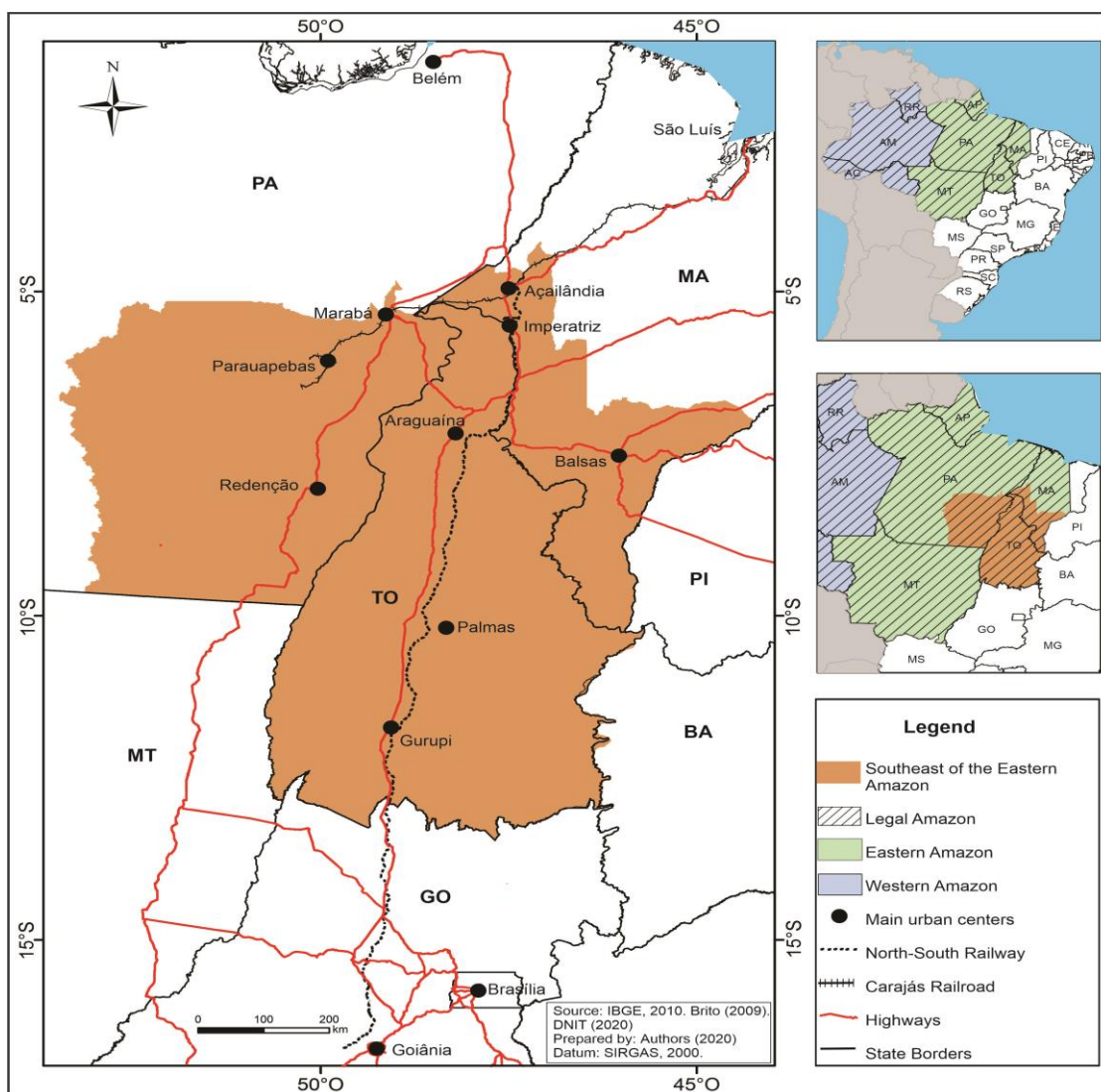
**Palabras-clave:** Centros urbanos. Gestión territorial. Amazonía Oriental.

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## Introduction

The southeastern region of the Eastern Amazon encompasses the territories of three Brazilian states: Tocantins, southern/southeastern Pará, and southern Maranhão, as shown in Figure 1. It comprises a critical transition area between the Cerrado biome and the Amazon Rainforest, in the inter-plateau depression of middle-Tocantins (AB’SÁBER, 2004). The integration of the region into the dynamics of capital took place mainly from 1960 onwards, through the implementation of highways with regional penetration (Rodovia Transamazônica – BR-230 – and Rodovia Belém-Brasília – BR-010) and various agricultural and mining and metallurgical projects. Currently, it is part of the consolidated settlement arc of the Legal Amazon and is marked by intense agrarian and environmental conflicts (BECKER, 2009).

Figure 1: Southeast of the Eastern Amazon: geographic location and main cities, 2021



Source: Sodré and Oliveira (2021).

In a recent study, Sodré and Oliveira (2021) highlighted that the region has undergone redefinitions regarding its centralities and spatial interactions. A number of cities, such as Marabá, Pará (PA) and Araguaína, Tocantins (TO) reduced their areas of influence, while others gained in terms of centrality, such as Redenção, PA and Balsas, Maranhão (MA). The latter stand out for their increasing attraction of investments linked to the agribusiness industry, in the first case, mainly of beef cattle, and in the second, grains such as soybeans and corn.

The study also notes that the cities of Imperatriz and Palmas lead this network segment, expanding their centralities and spatial interactions in terms of proximity and

long reach. These are the centers with the greatest capacity to attract large economic groups operating in Brazil and those related to the retail industry. Towards the base of the network, a number of cities play a key role, such as Porto Nacional, TO, Paraíso do Tocantins, TO, Xinguara, PA, and Açailândia, MA, which perform sub-regional functions.

Despite this relevant contribution, another look at the regional urban network is required to ensure a better understanding of the ongoing transformations. Thus, a snippet of the management of the territory sheds light on aspects of economic and state control in the region. In other words, which centers effectively control the territory? What are the regional cities from which economic and public decisions that impact the region disseminate?

Economic performance, translated into centrality for certain activities, is not always accompanied by control of the territory, both in the private and public dimensions. In the former, the predominant dynamics can be exogenous, which despite strengthening the nodes in the network, weakens the effective territorial control of the center at multiple scales. In the latter case, public agencies fail to keep up with the rapid changes in economic dynamics, preserving past hierarchies for this segment, which make difficult a more robust urban restructuring.

Therefore, the goal of this paper is to identify and analyze the main centers that command this segment of the urban network, considering the public and economic management of the territory. The work analyzes the asymmetries of these two dimensions in the region, relating them to the capacity for control, spatial interaction, and the position that the centers occupy in the regional hierarchy.

### **Methodological procedures**

To prepare the research, a few procedures were required. The first was a literature review focusing on a reading that relates the Brazilian urban network and the management of the territory, as presented by Corrêa (1989, 1992, 1995), Ribeiro (1998), Sposito (2007, 2009) and Reolon (2013). This procedure was complemented with readings that offered an understanding of the socioeconomic dynamics of the

southeastern region of the Eastern Amazon, as presented by Valverde (1989), Ribeiro (1988), Becker (2009, 2015), Trindade JR and Madeira (2016) and Leopoldo (2020). The second procedure was based on the analysis of micro-data from the publication Regions of Influence of Cities (IBGE, 2020).

In the scope of business management, the classes of centrality of business management, total number of head companies, total number of branches controlled by head companies, total number of branches, and total number of head companies that control branches in the cities under study were analyzed. When reading these data, it was considered that the greater the difference between the number of branches controlled by the head company and the total number of branches in the city, the greater the control of the territory that the city being evaluated will have. This position was reached after IBGE data (2020) showed that the main territorial management centers in Brazil have many more companies that carry out control than branches in their territory.

Another interpretation made possible by the data, based on the conceptual discussion by Lencioni (2017), concerns the concentration and centralization of capital. In the first case, this is due to the narrow difference in the total number of head companies that control branches in the city. Conversely, centralization is verified in the difference in the total number of branches controlled by head companies in the city. Here, the analysis will be qualitative rather than quantitative.

With regard to public management, a survey was carried out based on IBGE data (2020), regarding the presence of the following bodies in the cities of the region: National Social Security Institute (INSS), Department of Labor, Federal Revenue, Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), Federal Court, Electoral Court, and Labor Court. For each one, a five-level scale was considered, ranging from the lowest (agencies) to the highest (headquarters). To this end, the websites of each body were consulted, and the presence and/or absence of each one in the studied cities was cataloged.

In a third moment, the synthesis of these two dimensions was constructed, which, when considering the centrality of territorial management, emphasizes the relationships between urban centers. These can comprise a long-distance approach (city-ness), articulating multiple scales, or a proximity-based approach (town-ness), relating

to the conformation only of regional and micro-local command patterns. The data mentioned in this methodology are organized throughout the paper in tables and maps, the latter being prepared in the QGIS freeware program, with a vector base provided by IBGE (2020). This systematization contributes to a better visualization of the economic, political and territorial management centers in the region, as well as their interscale spatial interactions.

### **Urban network and territory management**

According to Corrêa (1989), the interest in the study of territory management has grown notably since the 1950s, with the first study on the subject being conducted in 1955, in France. This interest was motivated by the recognition of the increasing spatial concentration of control and management activities, with the simultaneous dispersion of production activities, which highlights the role of multinational corporations. In Brazil, studies on land management have been disseminated since the 1970s and, in particular, the 1980s, although they never reached the popularity of those referring to the centralities arising from the distribution of goods and services.

Similarly, the few of the existing studies have focused on the control roles of metropolises, which are effectively the largest centers of territorial management, as demonstrated by Reolon (2013). Therefore, the management dimension is essential in the understanding of the roles that cities play in the urban network, as they do not only perform the roles of distribution and production, but also command and control the territory. Although this role is much more restricted to metropolises and capitals, it also has its influence in redefining the centralities and spatial interactions of medium-sized cities, as noted by Sposito (2007).

According to Ribeiro (1998, p. 235), “the importance of the territory management center resides, on the one hand, in the location of the various state bodies and, on the other hand, of the headquarters of companies whose decisions directly or indirectly influence a given space,” which is under the control of the main center, “through the companies based there.” It concerns, therefore, the ability to guide flows,

orders, hierarchies, information, and money, which comprise structuring elements of the urban network (IBGE, 2020).

In a similar proposition, Corrêa (1992, p. 115) states that the management of the territory is the “set of practices that aim, in the immediate plan, at the creation and control of the spatial organization. It consists of the creation and control of spatial forms, their roles, and spatial distribution,” as well as “certain processes of spatial concentration and dispersion, which shape the organization of space in its origin and dynamics.”

In class-based societies, like ours, management of the territory “implies the creation and maintenance of spatial differences,” through which “economic and social differences are realized, legitimized, and reproduced. It is about managing spatial differences” (CORRÊA, 1992, p. 115). At the economic level, it means, among other things, the creation of income extraction networks that flow towards the headquarters of companies, generally located in large urban centers.

Territorial management is also carried out by the differentiated location of public bodies, which directly influence inequalities in access to services by the population and the decision-making process that impacts vast hinterlands. The purposes of each public agency can also be linked to tax collection, data collection, planning, and public policy implementation (IBGE, 2020).

According to Corrêa (1995, p. 83), “as a political-administrative focus, the magnitude of a center is given by the number and hierarchical level of state bodies located in it, by the importance of the state in national life, and by the dimension and wealth of the territory.” In the case of business management, the greater the number and size of the companies, and the larger and wealthier the space under their control, the greater the magnitude of the management center (CORRÊA, 1995).

IBGE data (2020) indicate that the level of economic concentration in Brazil (1,288 management centers) is greater than the distribution of public bodies (1,896 management centers). The Electoral Courts, present in 1,781 cities, comprise the most capillarized public institution across the national territory. They are followed by the National Social Security Institute (INSS), which is present in 1,207 centers.



This economic concentration extends the control of corporations based in south-central cities over the Amazon region (RIBEIRO, 1998), a region par excellence focused on doing business (SANTOS; SILVEIRA, 2006). This understanding is reinforced by Arrais (2016, p. 205), for whom “in the global world, which in theory witnesses the erosion of national states, corporations appear as organizers of regions that become an answer for a global project of competitiveness.”

It is in this context that Castilho’s analysis (2019) encourages us to understand that territorial management is one of the vehicles of spoliation of the Amazon region, which is simultaneously strategic, due to its vast natural and population resources, and the target of attacks by the capital with state support. This reference, therefore, leads us to a critical reading of territorial management.

Nevertheless, an articulation of geographic scales is required (SPOSITO, 2007) to ensure a better understanding of the plundering logic of the territorial management networks. Medium-sized cities not only operate as support centers for the distribution of goods and services for domestic and international companies (SPOSITO, 2009), but also act as nodes from which the State and large corporations exercise control over regional territories.

The decisions of large multinational corporations are not made in regional centers but are rather carried out there, impacting the entire region of influence of these cities. Something similar happens in relation to the State, as the gateway to the inner areas of the territories and the application of public policy, as well as information gathering, tax control, and imposition of its ideology, occurs through medium-sized cities.

Medium-sized cities, however, are not merely spaces where economic dynamics arrive, nor are they merely supporting points of a network for the circulation of commands. There is an inverse movement, which comprises the management nexuses that depart from these cities, even if in cooperation and/or conflict with the dynamics that arrive in them. These are local business initiatives, which create companies with regional and national operations.



Such companies start to open branches in small cities in the region of influence of the medium-sized city, in other medium-sized cities and cities, in some cases, with a higher hierarchical level. This means that territorial management networks must be thought of as pertaining to three types of interactions: vertical (hierarchical), horizontal (between cities of the same size or different urban networks), and cross-sectional (cities of different sizes and different urban networks).<sup>1</sup>

These considerations refer not only to intermediate cities in the center-south region, but also to those in the Amazon region. Becker (2015, p. 13) argues that the peripheries are no longer solely “consumers of industrial products and exporters of resources – they also have industrial production of products that are consumed even by the centers.” Rigidly hierarchical schemes are no longer sufficient to understand the place of the Amazon region in Brazil.

It is also worth mentioning that agents from the Amazon sub-regions vie for the control of the region among themselves. This point is underlined by Becker (2009, p. 146, emphasis added), citing the example of the macro-region of the consolidated settlement as the core of the regional economy, from where “networks, interests and capital *depart* towards other regions.” Thus, once again, the articulation of geographic scales is central to the understanding of territory management, notably in the economic dimension.

In the case of public management, this possibility of movements starting from medium-sized or sub-regional cities becomes virtually null, as municipal entities are not responsible for creating bodies in other municipalities. Moreover, according to the IBGE (2020), state management includes another temporality, which does not always accompany economic dynamism or lack thereof in the short term.

Medium-sized cities, however, articulate commands that can be understood within the scope of the management of the political economy of the territory, albeit difficult to measure. From this perspective, Valverde (1989) demonstrates, for example, that the cities of Imperatriz and Marabá have been bases for the political articulation of the nascent regional elites who gathered in the region in the 1980s to establish strategies

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<sup>1</sup> The approach to these three scales of spatial interaction can be found, in the context of the discussion on urban networks, in Sposito (2010).

for occupying the territory, which involved the application of violence against landholders.

According to Trindade Jr. and Madeira (2016, p. 47), the “presence of major associations, trade representatives, unions and various social categories (...) grant centrality to local and sub-regional political forces that, from” the “cities, gain projection, including giving visibility to movements that propose the creation of new federation units, either in the form of new states or in the form of new municipalities.” Therefore, the dimensions of political commands are updated in the region with new articulations of regional elites.

### **Business management centers in the southeast of the Eastern Amazon**

According to Sodré and Oliveira (2021, p. 17), “large economic groups (...) are crucial in the dynamics through which the southeastern region of the Eastern Amazon has passed,” as “they settle in consolidated or emerging regional centers and begin to command, on the one hand, the distribution of goods and services and, on the other hand, the processing, purchase and export of raw materials.”

In view of this consideration, Table 1 identifies the main business management centers in the region (which are represented in Figure 2), highlighting the articulation of geographic scales and the levels of economic concentration and centralization of regional capitals, according to consolidated and emerging centers. The cities of Palmas, Imperatriz and Marabá stand out as the main centers of control of the territory.

The city of Palmas, TO stands out among the three main centers in the region, attracting approximately 539 branches and managing 484 companies in other urban centers. There is also a major concentration and centralization of capital, as seen, on the one hand, in the large number of companies that control branches in that city – 422 – and, on the other hand, in the low number – only 135 – of companies established in the region that control the aforementioned branches (484). Each multi-located head company controls an average of 3.5 branches (IBGE, 2020).

Table 1: Number of head companies and branches in the main cities in the southeast of the Eastern Amazon, 2018

CITIES/ FEDERAL UNIT	Total number of branches in the city	Total number of head companies controlling branches in the city	Total number of head companies in the city	Total number of branches controlled by head companies from the city
Palmas (TO)	539	422	135	484
Imperatriz (MA)	364	274	125	396
Marabá (PA)	379	306	92	203
Araguaína (TO)	209	175	62	132
Balsas (MA)	152	123	31	126
Redenção (PA)	90	76	55	101
Gurupi (TO)	149	130	52	90
Parauapebas (PA)	350	303	48	76
Paraíso do Tocantins (TO)	92	86	23	68
Açailândia (MA)	114	103	27	54
Porto Nacional (TO)	94	86	27	50
Xinguara (PA)	61	53	22	44
Cannã dos Carajás (PA)	119	113	12	21

Source: IBGE, 2020.

The following city is Imperatriz, MA, which commands 396 companies outside its territory and attracts 364 business units to it, which are controlled by 274 companies, indicating a high intensity of activity of exogenous capital in the city. In turn, the degree of centralization of capital is lower when compared to Palmas, with 3.1 branches per multi-located head company (IBGE, 2020).

The third most important business management center in the region is Marabá, PA, which features 203 branches controlled by the city's head companies and 379 branches attracted to its territory, controlled by 306 companies, which demonstrates a high concentration of capital (see Table 1 and Figure 2). In turn, the city tends to have a low economic centralization, as each multi-located head company controls, on average, approximately 2.2 branches.

In the analysis, it was observed that only two cities command more companies than the number of branches they have in their territories: Imperatriz, MA and Redenção, PA – a relevant indicator of the capacity of local capitals to expand beyond their territorial limits. They refer to entrepreneurial elites with a wide market capillarity, something that is not typical in regions focused on doing business (see Figure 2).

Cities such as Parauapebas, PA and Açailândia, MA also stand out, both thanks a strong presence of the mining activity, as well as Araguaína, TO, Balsas, MA and Redenção, PA, which are linked mainly to agribusiness activities, which justifies the presence of a considerable number of external companies in their territories, as well as head companies controlling branches in other municipalities (IBGE, 2020).

Among the cities of this last group, the city of Balsas is worthy of mention, in view of the high centralization of capital operating in the region. This center has approximately 126 branches controlled by head companies in the city but has only 31 head companies in its territory, making the average number of branch companies the highest in the region, at 4.06 (see Table 1). This city has undergone strong economic growth arising from agricultural activities and is on its way to consolidate itself as a medium-sized city in southern Maranhão (IBGE, 2008, 2020).

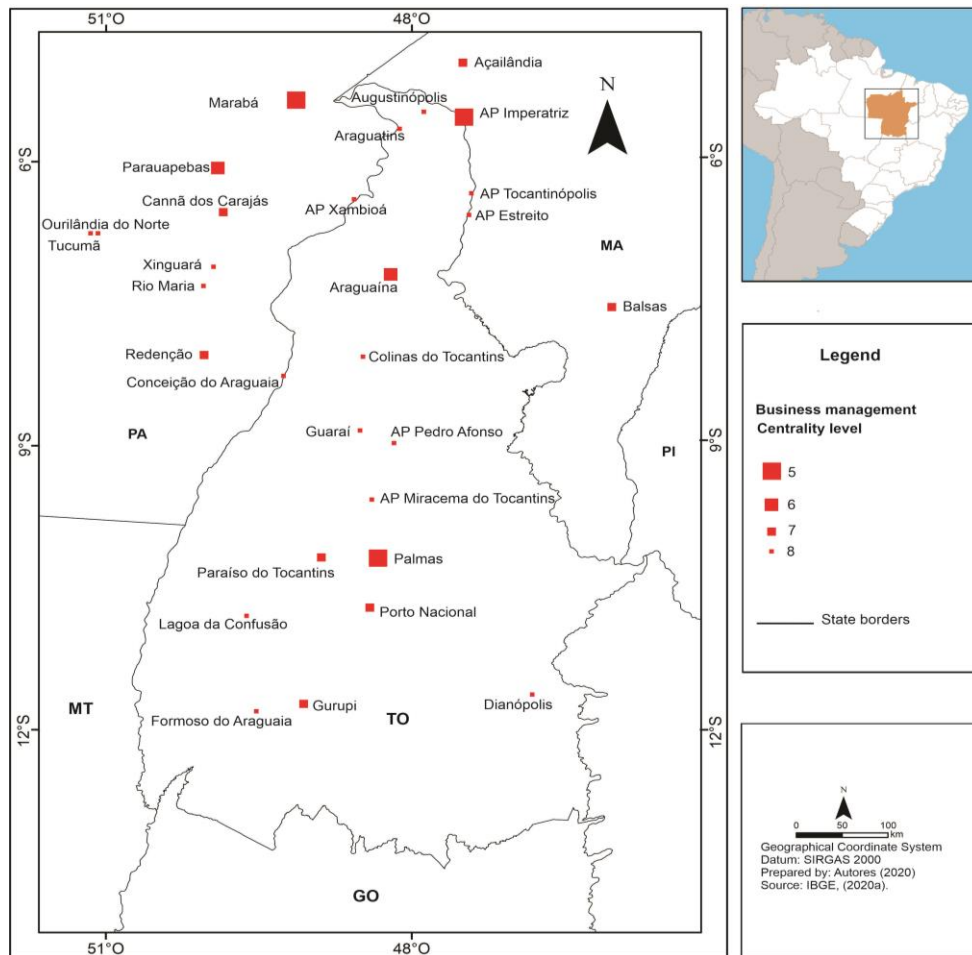
Figure 2<sup>2</sup> shows that smaller cities such as Paraíso do Tocantins, TO, Porto Nacional, TO, and Xinguara, PA also act in territorial control through activities related to the field. In turn, the small town of Cannã dos Carajás, PA has its growth and economic dynamics linked to mining, attracting 119 companies to its territory (IBGE, 2020), more than the medium-sized<sup>3</sup> city of Açailândia, MA, whose economy is linked to mineral extraction, housing, for example, a number of steel companies.

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<sup>2</sup> The roles and interactions of urban centers are considered as a criterion for defining a small town. Their scale of action is, at most, sub-regional or micro-regional, not reaching regional status, which would already cover the scope of medium-sized cities. From this perspective, population size does not have a defining character, but rather the regional context in which these cities are inserted. For a broader discussion, see Corrêa (1999, 2011), Endlich (2006), Fresca (2010), and Santos (1979, 1993).

<sup>3</sup> Sposito (2000) establishes key conceptual differences between medium and medium-sized cities. The first is defined by the regional roles they assume in the urban network, on the one hand, serving (with the distribution of goods and services) an inner region, composed of smaller towns and rural areas and, on the other hand, establishing an intense web of relations with spaces of greater importance, on a national and international scale. Medium-sized cities, in turn, face a much greater demand by demographic size, not taking on regional roles. An example of this are cities inserted in metropolitan regions, incapable of organizing a polarized space that performs the intermediation between metropolises and small towns. There are, however, medium-sized cities located away from metropolises, especially when they are the product of instrumental actions of hegemonic and state agents with specific purposes of exploring the territory and/or in light of geographical positions that make intra- and inter-regional relationships difficult.

Figure 2: Spatial distribution of economic land management centers in the Southeast of the Eastern Amazon, 2020



Source: IBGE, 2020.

The indicators for the Pará cities reinforce Leopoldo's observations (2020, p. 8), for whom the "urban network of the South and Southeast regions of Pará, which is contained in the Eastern Amazon, has a very strong connection with agricultural and extractive production." Regarding to these activities, it is worth noting that this is an area of naturalization of barbarism, deeply marked by the agrarian question, in which 35 massacres and the death of 212 rural workers took place in the period between 1985 and 2015 (LEOPOLDO, 2020).

In Figure 2, therefore, this discussion is represented through the spatial distribution of centers by business management level. It is observed that, in the economic management scale ranging from 1 to 8, only centers that are located between levels 5 and 8 are present, which demonstrates the aforementioned low degree of territorial control across the region. Level 5 includes Palmas, Marabá and Imperatriz,

while level 6 includes Araguaína and Parauapebas. Level 7 and 8 makeup a set of small and medium-sized cities, part of which are in the process of ascension in the regional urban network, such as Balsas and Redenção.

A step forward in this analysis consists of asking what sectors of the economy and economic groups are behind the business management conducted in the southeast of the Eastern Amazon. These are linked to three sectors: commerce, services, and mainly, agribusiness, but with specific cutoff areas within the region, as the centers have a certain degree of functional specialization, as previously mentioned, not to mention sub-regions that can be identified in this cutoff region.

In this regard, Andrade (1977) warned that the look at regions must consider internal heterogeneities, which also involve different levels of development. In view of this, we can mention some large regional economic groups, such as Magazine Liliani stores, in Imperatriz; Nosso Lar stores, in Araguaína; the Revemar group, from Marabá; and CRP Tecnologia, from Palmas.

CRP Tecnologia, which is a company that operates in the production of software, infrastructure and information security, has its headquarters in Palmas and branch offices in Brasília, Goiânia, and Araguaína. From the standpoint of providing services, it records clients across the domestic market and already with an international presence, in Angola (CRP TECNOLOGIA, [ca. 2021]). This company indicates that the region has not only derivative economic logics, but also productive creation logics.

The Nosso Lar group, headquartered in Araguaína, has expanded strongly at the regional level, currently having a presence in 15 cities in the states of Tocantins, Bahia, Pará, and Maranhão. Its main area of activity is the home appliances sector, although it also has SIM, a brand owned by the group, operating in the distribution of motorcycle parts, with two units, Araguaína and Marabá (NOSSO LAR, [ca. 2021]).

The Revemar group, in turn, is headquartered in the city of Marabá, with its capital of agrarian origin, the company is known for being a Honda Motos dealership in the southeastern region of the Eastern Amazon. The company also has SULPARÁ (Massey Ferguson and Volkswagen), Unique (Hyundai), Fênix (Ford), Tropical Veículos (Nissan), Du Nort (Renault), and the Revemar JCB brand, which sells JCB

machines. Currently, the company has branches in Tocantins, Rio Grande do Norte, Maranhão, Amazonas, Acre, Roraima, Rondônia, Mato Grosso, and Sergipe (REVEMAR, [ca. 2021]).

Finally, Magazine Liliani stores, which are headquartered in Imperatriz, are present in Tocantins, Ceará, Pará, and Piauí, being distributed across an extensive network of cities, with approximately 41 centers served by the company, in a total of 62 stores. The company operates in the retail segment of furniture, appliances, and electronics. It has been operating for four decades and focuses on the market in the Northeast region (LILIANI, [ca. 2021]).

It is observed that, in the spatial interactions generated by these companies, proximity and long-distance flows are associated, being materialized in the North and Northeast regions. Therefore, the most important component revealed by the spatial logics of these companies concerns the mobilized interscale spatial interactions, i.e., interactions of a vertical, horizontal and cross-sectional nature.

### **Public management centers in the southeast of the Eastern Amazon**

The parameters for the identification of centrality in public management, in the southeast of the Eastern Amazon, were prepared based on the spatial distribution of seven public bodies and their structuring levels, namely: INSS, Department of Labor, Federal Revenue Service, IBGE, Federal Court, Electoral Court, and Labor Court (IBGE, 2020). Table 2 presents the classification of the decentralized units of each one, in the main cities of the region.



Table 2: Classification of decentralized public management units at territorial management levels, in the southeast of the Eastern Amazon, 2021

CITIES / FEDERAL UNIT	INSS		Department of Labor			Federal Revenue		IBGE		Federal Court		Electoral Court	Labor Court	TIMES / QUANTITIES
	Level 2	Level 1	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1	Level 2	Level 1	Level 3	Level 1	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1	Level 1	
	Executive Mgmt. Agencies	Reg. Supervisors	Regional Managers	Reg. Agencies	Offices	Agencies	State Units	Agencies	Judicial Sections	Judicial Subsections	Electoral Zones	Labor Dist. Courts		
Palmas (TO)	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X		X	X	7
Marabá (PA)	X	X		X		X	X		X		X	X	X	7
Imperatriz (MA)	X	X		X			X		X		X	X	X	7
Araguaína (TO)		X			X		X		X		X	X	X	7
Gurupi (TO)		X			X		X		X		X	X	X	7
Redenção (PA)		X			X		X		X		X	X	X	7
Balsas (MA)		X			X		X		X		X	X	X	7
Dianópolis (TO)		X			X		X		X			X	X	6
Açailândia (MA)		X			X				X			X	X	5
Carolina (MA)		X			X		X					X		4
Parauapebas (PA)		X							X			X	X	4
Xinguara (PA)		X							X			X	X	4
Araguatins (TO)		X			X				X			X		4
Paraíso do Tocantins (TO)		X					X		X			X		4
Porto Nacional (TO)		X			X				X			X		4
Estreito (MA)		X										X	X	3
Grajaú (MA)		X							X			X		3
Conceição do Araguaia (PA)		X			X							X		3
Guaraí (TO)		X										X	X	3
Miracema do Tocantins (TO)		X					X					X		3
Tocantinópolis (TO)		X							X			X		3
Amarante do Maranhão (MA)		X										X		2
Porto Franco (MA)		X										X		2
Ourilândia do Norte (PA)		X							X					2
Rondon do Pará (PA)		X										X		2
São Geraldo do Araguaia (PA)		X										X		2
São Félix do Xingu (PA)												X	X	2
Arapoema (TO)		X										X		2
Arraias (TO)		X										X		2
Colinas do Tocantins (TO)		X							X					2

**Note 1:** Cities with only one public agency were excluded.

**Source:** IBGE, 2020, 2021; INSS, 2021; MTE, 2021; RFB, 2021; TRF, 2021; TRE, 2021a, 2021b, 2021c; TRT, 2021a, 2021b, 2021c. Organized and adapted by: Authors, 2021.

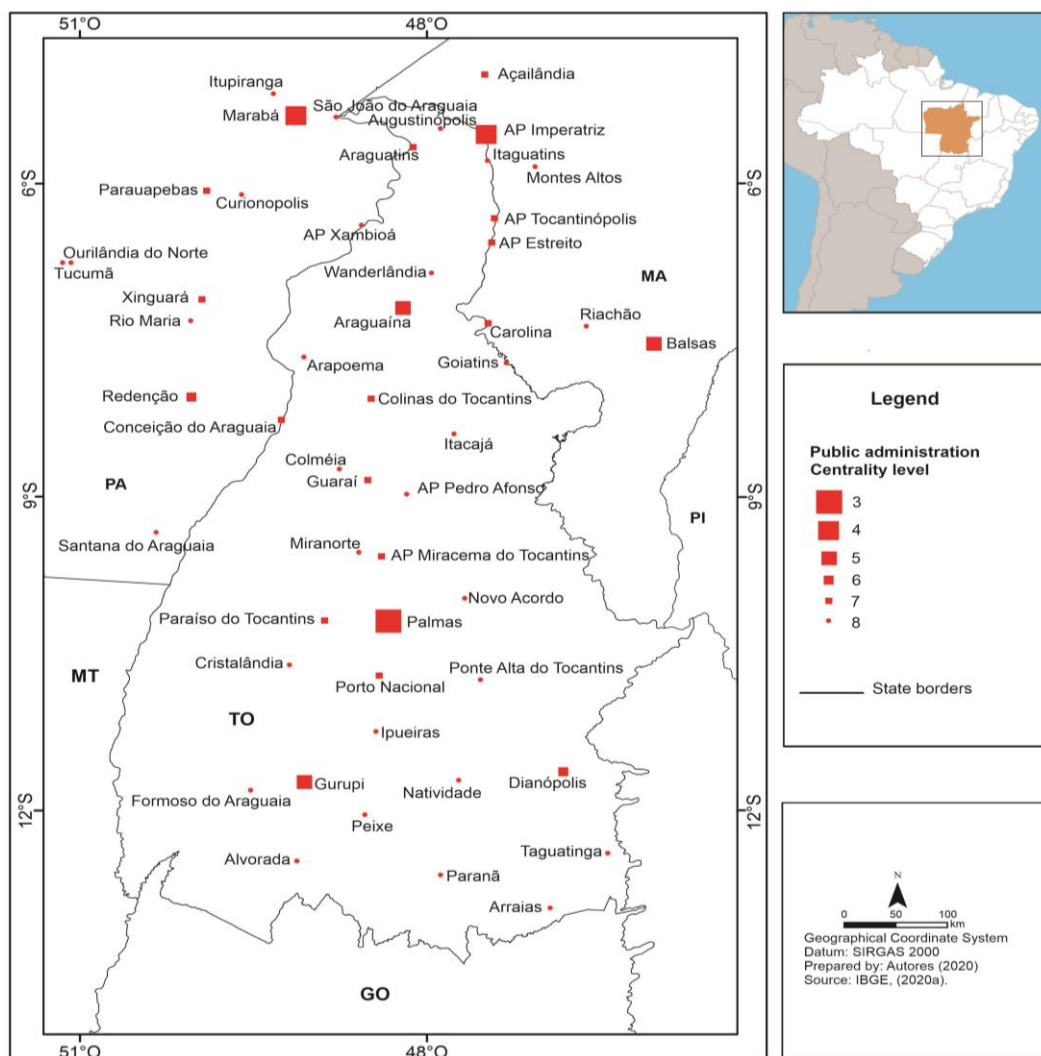
Marabá and Imperatriz (Regional Capitals C) ranks second and third, respectively, due to the former having a Federal Revenue Service Office (Level 2). As for the cities of Araguaína (Regional Capital C), Balsas, Gurupi, and Redenção (Sub-Regional Centers), all present the same levels for each of the seven agencies, which places them in the first group in public management centrality (see Table 2). Two cities were classified in the second group, one with six and the other with five units. The first is Dianópolis (Center of Zone A), with the absence of only the Federal Court, possibly being served by larger centers such as Gurupi and Palmas, which are closer, while the second is Açailândia (Sub-Regional Center B), which does not have the presence of the Federal Revenue Service and Justice Court, with everything indicating that this is the case due to the proximity of 67 kilometers from Imperatriz.

In the group of cities with four decentralized units, six cities stood out: Araguatins, Carolina, Paraíso do Tocantins, Porto Nacional, Parauapebas, and Xinguara. Of these, the only city located in Maranhão is Carolina, which differs from the others, as it presents not only the INSS and Electoral Court, but also agencies of the Secretary of Labor and the Federal Revenue Service. In turn, the two cities in Pará, Parauapebas and Xinguara, in addition to presenting Level 1 for IBGE, INSS and the Electoral Court, are the only ones in the group with the presence of Labor Courts. The cities of Araguatins, Porto Nacional and Paraíso do Tocantins have particularities – the first two are marked by the absence of the same bodies (Federal Revenue and Justice, and Labor Justice), although the third is the only one with a Federal Revenue agency.

As for the last two groups, they cover a greater number of cities – approximately 15 – and the smallest concentrations in units. The penultimate group features three of the seven bodies, two in Maranhão (Estreito and Grajaú), three in Tocantins (Guaraí, Miracena do Tocantins, and Tocantinópolis), and one in Pará (Conceição do Araguaia). All have the presence of INSS agencies, which also serve neighboring municipalities, in addition to housing Electoral Zones (ZE). Nevertheless, they do not include the physical presence of the Department of Labor and the Federal Courts (see Table 2). The base of Table 2 shows nine municipalities in the three states studied, with only two agencies, which are: Porto Franco and Amarante, in Maranhão; Rondon do Pará, Ourilândia do Norte, São Geraldo do Araguaia, and São Félix do Xingu, in Pará; and finally,

Arapoema, Arraias, and Colinas do Tocantins, in the newest state of the federation, Tocantins.

Figure 3: Spatial distribution of public land management centers in the southeast of the Eastern Amazon, 2018



Source: IBGE, 2020.

The public management scenario of this group is similar to the previous one, except for the cases of São Félix do Xingu, the only city without an INSS agency, but the only one in the group with a Labor Court. Ourilândia do Norte and Colinas do Tocantins are the only municipalities that do not house a ZE. The centrality in public management has a scale from 1A to 8, according to IBGE. At the top, 1A, is Brasília, followed by a group of 5 metropolises, while the Northeast region has only one of them – Recife – and the

North region has no city with this level of public management. Thus, southeast of the Eastern Amazon has only levels ranging from 3 to 8, as shown in

Figure 3.

Figure 3 shows six levels of centrality in public management, in which the highest stratum (level 3) stands out with the state capital of Tocantins, Palmas (as previously mentioned, with a status that differentiates it from other centers of the same size); following it, the second stratum (level 4) contains the cities of Imperatriz and Marabá, which comprise regional capitals that stand out for their ability to attract different flows from neighboring centers and, subsequently, have greater numbers of public bodies.

The third stratum (level 5) has three cities, two in Tocantins – Araguaína to the north and Gurupi to the south – in addition to Balsas, in Maranhão. The first two have considerable economic dynamics, given the regional role they play as medium-sized cities in the north and south of Tocantins. As for Balsas, despite having its dynamism notably linked to economic activities, is starting to structure itself as a public management center in the southern territory of Maranhão.

In the fourth group of cities (level 6), only two were identified: Rendeção, PA and Dianópolis, TO. Most of the cities are in the last two levels of public management. Level 7 has a total of 12 centers: in Maranhão, three cities (Açailândia, AP Estreito, and Carolina), three in Pará (Conceição do Araguaia, Parauapebas, and Xinguara), and six in Tocantins (Araguatins, Tocantinópolis, Colinas do Tocantins, Guaraí, Paraíso do Tocantins, and Porto Nacional). Conversely, at level 8, thirty centers of lower centrality were found.

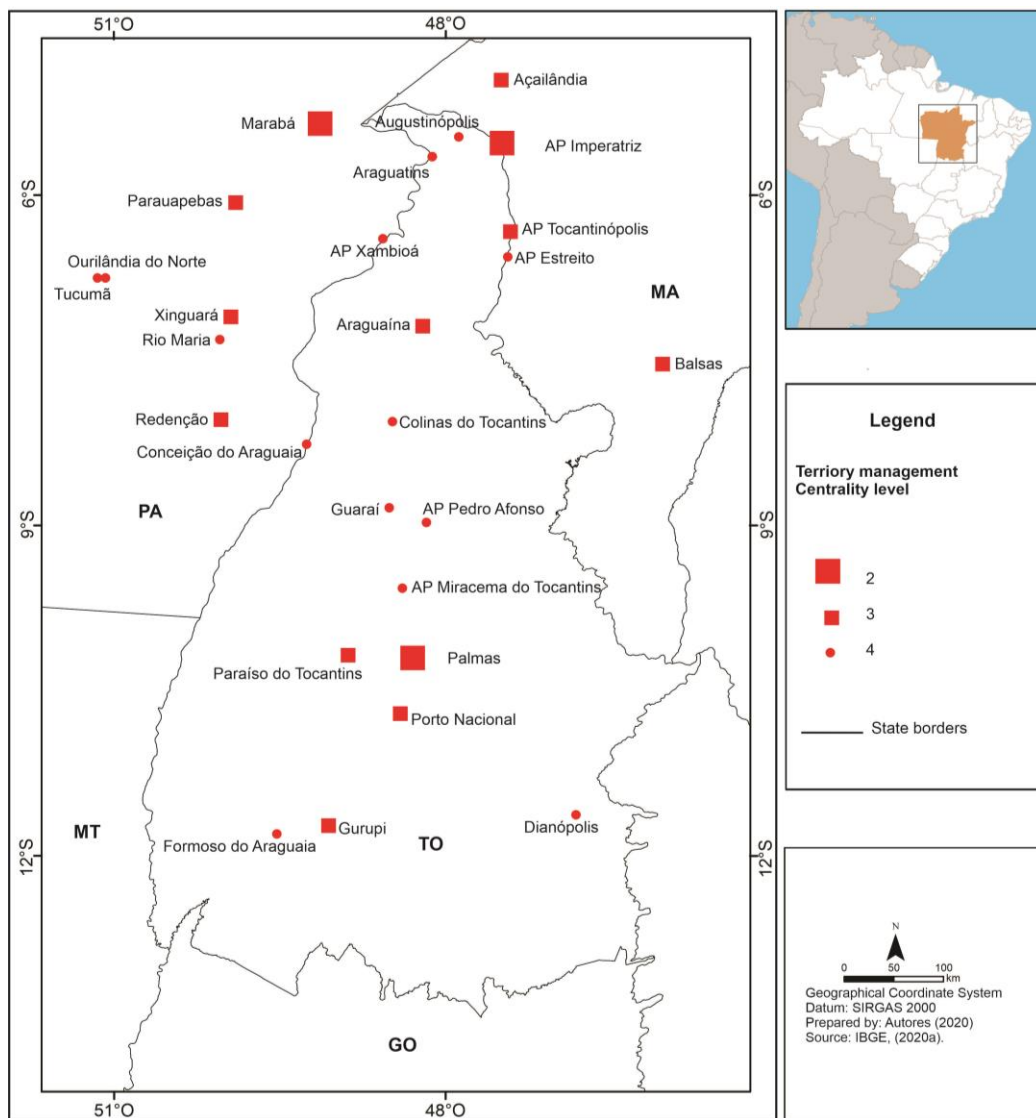
### **Public management centers in the southeast of the Eastern Amazon**

Considering the synthesis of these two dimensions, at the public and private level, the results indicate that in the territorial management of the southeast of the Eastern

Amazon, three cities are highlighted, one in each of the three states that make up the region, exercising regional command roles: Palmas, TO, Imperatriz, MA, and Marabá, PA. When observing the levels of centrality in management, only the three cities mentioned appear at level 2, on a scale from 1 to 4 (see

Figure 4).

Figure 4: Synthesis of territorial management in the Southeast of the Eastern Amazon, 2018



Source: IBGE, 2020.

It is in these cities that activities that engender city-ness-type interactions in the region are preferably established. It consists of the predominance of spatial interactions of an interscale nature, going extending the southeast of the Eastern Amazon, operating markets on a macro-regional and national scale, which translates into greater economic dynamism for these regional centers.

Long-distance interactions necessarily demand a greater social and territorial division of labor, given that the degree of competition is significantly higher. Hence, on the one hand, they are spaces that are conducive to innovation processes, attracting qualified labor, while on the other hand, they are centers that articulate a network of locations that, subordinated or in cooperation, structure an architecture of service provision that makes up the control of the territory.

Level 3 contains a number of cities, such as Araguaína, Tocantinópolis, Porto Nacional, and Paraíso, in the state of Tocantins; Açailândia and Balsas, in Maranhão; and Xinguara, Redenção, and Parauapebas, in the state of Pará. Some of these cities manage to establish long-distance relationships, even if predominantly by attracting companies, and not expanding them through branches with headquarters located in them (see

Figure 4). These are followed by the cities classified at level 4 of territorial management, establishing predominant town-ness relationships, which have more affinities with the base of the urban network. This classification is given by the low consumption capacity of these centers, in addition to the small number of branches from these centers in other cities. In this case, cities such as Estreito, Conceição do Araguaia and Colinas do Tocantins are included.

Most Level 4 management centers are located in the state of Tocantins, which indicates the structuring of a more complex urban network, with multiple hierarchies and points that intensely dispute control of the territory, particularly in cases where they are located in proximity, such as Pedro Afonso and Guaraí. In Pará, there are also several centers that operate with Level 4 management, with an emphasis on the competition between Ourilândia do Norte and Tucumã.

## Final remarks

The study of territorial management seems crucial to ensure the understanding of the current relational stage of the Amazon region in the Brazilian economic dynamics and spatial structure, particularly in its sub-region comprising the southeast of its eastern portion. This region has long ceased to be merely a locus of investment for domestic groups based in the Center-South or transnational corporations, although this reality is still predominant.

The region continues to be the periphery of Brazil, but its economic agents are also starting to create dynamics that depart from this region, towards other regional and national spaces. The main cities, Marabá, Imperatriz and Palmas, establish far-reaching interactions and together control over a thousand branch offices. From these cities, an intense horizontal and vertical integration of the region is established.

The rise of sub-regional cities and the consolidation of medium-sized cities also expand intra-regional and inter-regional economic links, so that the expansion of the insertion of large national groups and the proliferation of regional groups in the southeast of the Eastern Amazon region is verified. This reality can be seen in the number of branch offices attracted/controlled by the analyzed cities, which strengthen them as tentacles of territorial command.

In public management, the southeast of the Eastern Amazon features a multiplicity of cities with the presence of federal services, indicating a singularity in relation to several sub-regions of the Amazon. Thus, journeys to access INSS agencies, electoral zones and the labor courts tend to be reduced. Conversely, Federal Revenue agencies and the Federal Courts are much more concentrated.

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