# Strategic Action Fields and Social Movements around the Hydroelectirc Power Plant of Belo Monte – UHEBM (BRAZILIAN AMAZON)

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**ABSTRACT—** *The construction of the Belo Monte Hydroelectric Power Plant (UHEBM) in eastern Amazonia (Pará State, Brazil) has been the cause of various social movements at cross purposes. This paper is based on the Theory of Strategic Action Fields (SAF) developed by Neil Fligstein and Doug McAdam, in the aspects of the competence dynamics, Governance Units, and organization. The actors' objectives and the analyzed social movements go beyond the mere suspension of the hydroelectric plant operation when proposing a new model of social and sustainable development. The operability of the meso-level theory is verified, although limitations of the SAF are manifested at the micro-level specifically on the observation of the participants' identity.*

**Keywords—** Theory of Strategic Action Fields; social movements, Amazon.
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## 1. THEORETICAL EXPERIMENTATION

It was observed that many social movements beginning a quarter of a century ago and cyclical reappearances with the intervention of actors with diametrically opposed objectives and different ranges are a theoretical and methodological challenge. Theoretical challenge because the observer should look for an explanatory theoretical framework sophisticated enough to observe the phenomenon, and consequently methodological challenge because the observer should perform temporary cuts and also field cuts. The Brazilian government permission to start the construction of the UHEBM, in Western Amazonia, Pará State, Brazil, has prompted a new collective actions cycle and the reappearance of social movements[1]. The Theory of Strategic Action Fields (SAF) proposed by Neil Fligstein and Doug McAdam (2011) was chosen for this study.

Analyzing the SAF, it is observed that many actors linked to government entities act at different social movements such as *Movimento Xingu Vivo Para Sempre*-MXVPS (Xingu Forever Alive Movement), *Movimento Forte Xingu*–MFX (FORT Xingu)[2], Movimento *Indígena (Indigenous Movement),* and *Movimento de Mulheres (Women's Movement),* all of them exceeding the objectives of this study. These movements are not new; they are dating back to the late 70s and early 80s, in the case of MXVPS occurred during the social and economic impacts caused by the Transamazon highway construction[3]. It surges back two decades later during the construction of the hydroelectric power plant of Belo Monte (UHEBM) on the Xingu River[4]. As a result of this mega project, various municipalities, communities, and indigenous peoples of the region will be directly affected[5]. The construction of the UHEBM has similar characteristics to other

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[1]The research is part of the "*Mudanças sociais na região do Xingu*" project, and is funded by *Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico* (National Council for Scientific and Technological Development ) (CNPq 475044/2011-8).

[2]To observe the actors and social movements, in special the Xingu Forever Alive Movement (*Movimento Xingu Vivo para Sempre* (MXVPS), it is understood as a social movement concerning a "collective player", with "certain continuity" based on a high "symbolic integration and rationality" of collective action.

[3]The origins are found in the Movement for the Transamazon Highway Survival (*Movimento pela Sobrevivencia da Transamazônica* - MPST).

[4]The construction of hydroelectric power plant is a mega electrical project that once completed in 2014 may inundate at least 516 km2, (Estudo de Impacto Ambiental – EIA 2002 - *Study of Environmental Impact and the Environmental Impact Report* (EIA-RIMA, 2008).

[5]In principle, more than  2,000 families of the urban periphery will be affected in the city of Altamira, 800 in the rural zone and 400 families along the river banks (*ribeirinhas*) (totaling about 16,000 people). Recent technical information

projects of hydraulic mega infrastructure on the planet usually built in areas and regions basically rural and far from the centers of political and economical decision.

The actors' response from the affected region has been heterogeneous with resistance actions and mobilizations against authoritarian policies and favorable actions to the project. They all converge toward the debate around issues such as the management and control of water resources ("Nova Cultura da Água" - New Water Culture - *Declaração de Fortaleza* 2005 - The Declaration of Fortaleza 2005; AGUILERA, 2008, among others) and proposals for sustainable development, although with different nuances[6]. Many issues related to collective strategic action are arising: "Have the actors in conflict developed the ability to present proposals to overcome the conflict or to collaborate? Is the collective action due to subjective situations of historic grievance (human rights violation, violence, impunity, land grabbing) or even the survival of indigenous groups? How is the power relations of the actors established in their respective movements? How is the actor's identity manifested in the movements? Do the strategic objectives of the movements just cover the stoppage, or conclusion of UHEBM construction, or are they broader?" The raised issues about the emergence of *Movimento Xingu Vivo Para Sempre*, (MXVPS), *Movimento Fort Xingu* (MFX), and the *Indigenous Movement* go beyond the traditional theories.

For observation theoretical and empirical purposes, action, and emergence of social movements, there is a significant accumulation of interpretative frameworks and theories already tested in the empirical level. The traditional frameworks of reference (resource mobilization and structures of political opportunity) are limited for observation the *actors skills* on promoting cooperation proposals. Equally important in the movements under observation is the emergence of aspects related to the historical and economical marginalization of the region (*relative deprivation*), the participation of many organizations and networks that impel the movement, the existence in the region of an "institutional weakness" (TORRES 2004), and a closed local and regional political system due to patrimonialistic practices of local politics. These issues also allow the analysis of the stability/instability dichotomy configuration in the local and regional Political Power and the possibilities of bases creation allied to the movement that are essential to understand the emergence of these social movements. The traditional and theoretical frameworks have also shown limitations for observation and understanding the social movements in Latin America when converging their interpretation to different theoretical viewpoints. The social movements have been characterized as a theoretical combination with cultural, structural, and individual elements (MIRZA 2006; VENTURA 2007; ECKSTEIN 2001; KALTMEIER 2004).

Unlike traditional theories, the SAF theory does not put together "unit of analysis" and "social movement", whose implementation has shown its capacity and explanatory limits. The theoretical and traditional explanations on the social movements' emergence (*resource mobilization, political opportunity structure*) have been limited to respond to its aspects of emergence, composition, or action. The SAF theory aims to provide a broader analytical perspective that allows observation of the interrelationships among cooperation, conflict, and actors called "*action field*". The value and consistency of any theory are measured by its operationalization in concepts, and its good resultant applicability from the empirical evidences. Oobservations about these social movements are explained based on these premises and on the SAF. The SAF theory is a framework to observe and understand actors' action under a situation of confrontation or collaboration. It is a theoretical framework; however, it is not sufficiently tested and the tests are based just on empirical data. Applying the SAF theory and proving it with empirical evidences is a theoretical challenge that is assumed by this study's author.

For the specific characteristics of social movements in the region and the formulated questions, the Theory of *Strategic Action Fields* (SAF) will be tested empirically based on the following hypotheses:

"H.1. The actors' strategy and emergence (competence dynamics) have been developed in response to the inadequate political action of government at the federal, state, and municipal levels, which is characterized as a weak institutionalism. Historically, this fact has enabled a configuration of nonpartisan networks and social movements independently of political parties.

H.2. Governmental action through autarchies as Instituto Nacional de Colonização e Reforma Agrária-Incra (National Institute of Colonization and Agrarian Reform), Instituto Brasileiro de Meio Ambiente e Recursos Naturais Renováveis-Ibama (Brazilian Institute of Environment and Renewable Natural Resources), and state agencies like Agência Nacional de Energia Elétrica-ANEEL (National Agency for Electricity) has focused

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foresees that this number may rise by 55% and reach 25,400 people (Instituto Tecnológico/UFPA/MPF, 2012 (Technological Institute/Universidade Federal do Pará-Federal University of Pará State/Ministério Público Federal-Federal Public Attorney's Office).

[6]Reference to the concept of sustainable development according to Stahel, Andri W.; Garreta, Jaume Cendra Desarrollo Sostenible: ¿Sabemos de qué estamos hablando ? – Some criteria for a consistent use of the sustainability term applied to development base on a systemic perspective, *Revista Internacional de Sostenibilidad, Tecnología y Humanismo*, n.7, 2011, p.39-57.

directly on the configuration of actors' strategies who have reacted to "fait accompli". The creation of the Management Committee has become a new institutionalized SAF under government tutelage.

## 2. THE STRATEGIC ACTION FIELD (SAF)

The SAF theory developed by Neil Fligstein and Doug McAdam is a proposal of theoretical framework at the meso-level that allows observation and strategic analysis of actors in conflict or in cooperation conditions faced with a problem or phenomenon previously defined and limited. This theory offers a range of sufficient hypotheses, elements, and tools (propositions) allowing observation of the existing relationships in this field previously constrained by its limits, actors, and social forces involved in it. This is a theoretical and dynamic construction beyond the causal and traditional understanding on the forces producing social changes.

These construction bases are mainly found in two sources. On the one hand, the contributions of the "*New Economic Sociology*" appears (POZAS, SALAS; SAINZ 2004; MARQUES; PEIXOTO 2003) specifically concerning to the cooperation idea among the agents involved in *action fields*. To obtain cooperation among the actors, it is necessary to have *social skills* that contribute to the construction of cooperation and interaction processes among actors. Its success does not depend on the existence of good policies, but especially the success depends on the ability to configure and build political coalitions, which are also a true reflection of the play of existing forces. Fligstein and McAdam use in their theoretical proposal the term derived from the *enterprising* economy, though not in a business sense but in a public sense, that is, social and political sense of the enterprise (FLIGSTEIN 2001). They emphasize the ability of social and political entrepreneurship of the actors in play or in in conflict. In their proposal, they seek to establish a link among the theories of social movements and the organizational theory, rejecting the theories of social movements based on collective behavior. They advocate a rationalist view of the social movements based on previous explanations of McAdam (1977) and his proposal Theory of resources mobilization.

On the other hand, the sociological theory of Pierre Bourdieu and his attempt to overcome the objective-subjective or structure-agency dichotomy is another source of his inspiration regarding the understanding, not only of how the actors are inserted into reality in specific social roles but also in the possibility of altering the forces relations in the respective fields. The SAF proposal of Fligstein and McAdam is an attempt to establish a link of intersection among the "rationality" theory of social movements and the organizational theory (PERROW). The SAF idea rejects the social movements theories based on collective behavior and defends a "rational" vision of social movements. This new understanding of integrative nature inspired on integration theory of Giddens[7] is not new, dating back to the last decade.

The *field* idea is analyzed in relational and non-structural terms. The *field* idea is not new. Jeff Larson, inspired by Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992, p. 97), emphasizes the actors' positions within the *institutional field* by defining it as "network or guidance of objective relations among positions", which are characterized by cultural logics, shared understandings of a specific field, rules, actors, and pertinent authorities (LARSON 2011, p. 2). *Field* is a network of relations that is separated of individual conscience and collective will; it is not formed by individuals' intersubjective links. To define it, Bourdieu performs even one similarity with military terms by referring to *Field* as a "battlefield" (BOURDIEU 1984).

Although to a lesser extent, roots from the *Resources mobilization theory* is also perceived (McCARTHY, ZALD, 1977). Other theories with similar interpretations as the concept of *"field"* (BOURDIEU)[8], *networks* (POWELL), and *organizational fields* (DiMAGGIO), even in the self-referential perspective and the concept of *system and environment* (LUHMANN), also focus on the meso-level of analysis. From the social movements' perspective, the theoretical contributions from *Organizações formais do Movimento Social* (*formal Social Movement Organizations*-SMO) of McCarthy and Zald and from informal groups are found in the line of "field" investigation based on the combination of constructivist ideas with aspects of institutional theory.

The SAF proposal is a theory that operates at the meso-level when moving away from micro issues related to individual participation in social movements. Its central elements are (FLIGSTEIN, MCADAM, 2011, p. 2): "*1. Strategic Action Fields; 2. Beneficiaries, impellers, and governance units; 3. Social attitudes; 4. Extensive environmental field; 5. Exogenous impulses, disruptions, and containment; 6. Containment episodes; 7. Assignments*".

This research's purpose focuses on synthesizing and operationalizing SAFs made up by "*Comprised of incumbents, challengers, and sometimes Governance Units*" (Ibid. 2011, p. 5). The SAFs are defined as "the main units of collective action in society" (Ibid. 2011, p. 3). At the meso-level of analysis, the individual or collective actors interact through their proposals that are in power and their roles in the field action. Collective actors are those ones composing the social movements and those ones in the governmental system; and at each step of field enlargement, new actors appear

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[7]For an ample exposition on this theory, Giddens, Anthony, 1984. *The Construction of Society: Outline of Theory of Structuration*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

[8]Bourdieu defines field as "a system of objective relations among acquired positions (from previous fights); it is the place, the game space of a competitive fight", in: Bourdieu, Pierre, 1976. *Le champ scientifique. Actes de la recherche en Sciences Sociales*, n. 2/3, pp. 88-104

interacting to those ones. The actors' strategic action is "The attempt by social actors to create and maintain stable social worlds by security the cooperation of others" (Ibid. 2011, p. 7).

### 2.1. Specificities of SAF

The production of *Governance Units* serves to highlight the power dynamics within the SAF. During the observation of the conflict dynamics of a SAF, it is necessary to observe aspects relating to change, stability, and order that reflect the general *characterization* of the field composition. A SAF is composed by various "titleholders" actors, rapporteurs, and *Governance Units*. To get a clear view of relationships, the following questions arise: "What is the actors' position? What roles do they play? How many actors make up the field?" The answer will allow analyzing the operation of the internal and external structures of the SAF.

A diffuse aspect of the SAF theory concerns the existence of *social skills* by the actors. It means the actors' ability to *organize* and gather groups in addition to overcome difficulties and get agreements with other actors. This is a strategic action that enables political coalitions and dialogue with other actors. The actors - "individual entrepreneurs", according to DiMaggio (1988) - create collective identities to introduce instability and disorganization in SAF. Their empirical observation allows determining the dichotomy between horizontal and vertical fields of power (see methodology section).

The SAFs are also subject to *exogenous impulses* and *ruptures* with contingent outcomes involving a continuous process of interactions that always imply the existence of at least another opponent player. This complex process acquires three manifestations. The first manifestation occurs with the emergence of *a collective construction, or a threat attribution, or opportunity* that starts when an actor redefines a change in the field or in the external environment what constitutes a significant threat or an opportunity to impose the group's interests. This phenomenon manifests itself in the action field around the UHEBM with the creation of the Managing Council of the Plano

de Desenvolvimento Regional Sustentável-PDRS (*Regional Plan for Sustainable Development*) (developed in section 4.3). The second manifestation occurs with the *organizational appropriation* emergence when an actors' subgroup is not enough to define the situation realized as threat or opportunity, and the organizational resources rearrangement is needed for mobilize against threat or opportunity. It is expressed by the organization of a *Governance Unit* in order to stop the UHEBM construction. Finally, there is emergence of *innovative action* which depends on the agents' action violating the field's already agreed rules and accepted practices in defense and support of an interests group. This strategy type has shown up with direct actions against the material goods of *Consórcio Construtor de Belo Monte-CCBM (Belo Monte Construction Consortium)* performed by the *Movimento Indígena (Indigenous Movement)* during 2012

## 3. XINGU REGION: "INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXTO"

With approval of the Brazilian Constitution in 1988, the opening of the Brazilian political system is regulated, providing mechanisms for accessing the formal political system and that has being a stability framework in the action of the political elites. However, in the Amazon region in general and in the Eastern Amazon in particular, this regulatory framework suffers significant dysfunctions regarding the established formality in different aspects.

As spatial specificities of the region, the *center-periphery* terminology (WALLERSTEIN 1996) is used in this study. The region would not form part of the *periphery* but would form part of the so-called "strategic reserve and space for pioneer colonization" (CHESNAIS 1996, p. 38) or even a region denominated "peripheral of the periphery under pressure by the centers of the country" (MELLO 2011)[9], referring to the Brazilian center of political and economical decisions. The region belongs to history of the capitalist penetration border with an immanent logic of domination that has promoted during the last forty years a dispute over land ownership, conflicts, and contradictions in rural and mainly urban areas, establishing an abysmal inequality in the appropriation of economical, political, social, and territorial rights.

The *historical* evolution is another specificity, since fighting in the region and repression against rural workers often happen due to private interests. The role and presence of governmental institutions have been scarce, so that some actors defend the hypothesis of a "weak institutionalism" (TORRES 2004) or even an "absence of any government" as some actors suggest (MARTINS 1989, p. 2). Governmental institutions have been replaced by old political leaders, by large absentee entrepreneurs alien to the loyalties and political commitments of the tutelage and paternalism locked in their traditional view of land ownership. As result, in the political activity of such groups the political issues have been removed from the political agenda by the "mediation groups" as the traditional parties and the political institutions work. Instead, in the Xingu River region, the mediation groups among the political and economical elites and civil society have traditionally been the Catholic Church, mainly those groups linked to the Teologia da Libertação (Liberation Theology), and Sindicato dos Trabalhadores Rurais (Rural Labor Union).

In the perspective of social and collective actions, many features stand out in the peripheral region of Xingu:
-  Existence of a "weak institutionalism" shown in the Governmental institutions and public policies;

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[9]Lecture by Alex Fiuza de Mello at *Conselho de Economía*. Belém Capital City of Pará State, Brazil, 2011.

- As result, there are historical claims directed toward the region development, undertaken outside the traditional participation mechanisms;
- Existence of formal and informal associations networks; and
- Presence of native people - indigenous groups - who see their livelihoods, life, and identity threatened.

During the early stages of MXVPS, political parties from the left side have being opposed to the project, position that drastically changed after the *Partido dos* Trabalhadores-*PT* (Brazil's Workers' Party) getting victory in the presidential elections in 2002. The new allied base of left side parties is formed by formerly opposition parties (Socialists and Social Democrats) allowing only the minority of radical Marxism or the extra-parliamentary parties to participate in coordination meetings.

## 4. SAF TRAINING AND DELIMITATION AND BENEFICIARIES ACTORS

The SAF delimitation is a methodological challenge for observation. It results from the combined grouping in the logical and organizational appearance and conventional institutional. Its delimitation corresponds to the theoretical proposal, whose limits depend on three conditions:

1) Definition of situation or phenomenon by the observer that will depend on the involved actors. It is common to define them by the institutions' logic, although it is always difficult to draw the line.
2) Difficulty in determining the number of actors, the position of beneficiaries and challengers, as well as their specific role.
3) The interpretation of the actors' structure which can be individual or collective.

By bringing together into a *field* an ever increasing number of actors, this number expand continuously and it is more difficult to establish interrelations[10]. The *field* idea has similarities with *system* idea of Luhmann's, raising inevitably questions on the performance and the complexity increase. The pre-selection as required for field operation allows it to be defined as an "organized complexity" (LUHMANN 1990, p. 66) in a sense of the existence of selective relationships among elements. This existence self-determines since the elements - actors - are gradually formed (demands increasing, network expansion, litigation, linking with the political system) in a complex way to be able to work in such a way that it enables "the construction of a complex system" (LUHMANN 1998, p. 26).

In the *action field* the elements – actors - are determined by their quality features rather than by the quantity. The actors' selection and qualification show the observation problem and they are the complexity indicators, according to Luhmann (1990). The relationships among the actors in a field mediated by one type of communicative activity called "productive" produce an internal and external dialogue in the field as specified ahead. The external dialogue of the *action field* with its surroundings occurs with the society while the internal dialogue takes place among the "challengers" actors who form the conflict's motive power or the pressure for changing with capacity to modify the decisions of power. The *action field* pre-configuration around the UHEBM construction begins with the first Ação Civil Pública-ACP (Public Civil Action) filed by the *Ministério Público Federal*-MPF (Federal Public Attorney's Office) and overruled by the Judge of Altamira City, in 2006, who demanded the suspension of the *Estudos de Impacto Ambiental*-EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment). In the occasion of updating and hydrological inventory submission of Xingu River (2008) approved by ANEEL - the National Energy Agency - the Public Attorney's Office interposes other Public Civil Actions (PCAs). Despite the PCAs requesting specifications from Ibama (January, 2009), the agency that "authorizes the removal of vegetation in the area"[11], the consortium responsible for the works (*Norte Energia*) starts irregularly the infrastructure works in Belo Monte. The *Environmental Impact Assessment* done by Ibama (May, 2009) and funded by the Centrais Elétricas Brasileiras S.A-*Eletrobras* (Brazilian Electric Power S.A.) lists the impacts caused by UHEBM construction. In 2009, the *Public Attorney's Office of Pará State* promotes a public hearing with Indian representatives, fact that marks its position in relation to the macro project under consideration. Later, in 2010, the *DhESCA Platform*[12] denounces the violation of human rights in the region.

With the system's previous delimitation, it is difficult to predict which relationships will be selected because knowing an element – an actor - does not mean to have all the system information, being necessary to have additional information about the system. Therefore, the action field was delimited based on the following criteria (Figure 1):

- "Actors defending mainly the *competence dynamics* represented by the movements in the Xingu region. This was a way for excluding actors from the *Movimento Contra as Barragens*-MAB (*Movement Against Dams)* or

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[10]Fligstein and McAdam warn about the risk of using specific computer programs based on the networks analysis that calculate all relations and that reaches a certain moment that will be necessary to establish a selection.

[11]Autorization to deforest 238.1 hectares, 64.5 of which are located in Permanant Preservation Area (Área de Preservação PermanenteAPP).

[12]Platform DhESCA. *Plataforma Brasileira de Direitos Humanos, Econômicos, Sociais, Ambientais*. (Brazilian Platform of Human, Economic, Social, and Environmental Rights)

the nationwide influent *Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais sem Terra*-MST (*Movement of Landless Rural Workers)* whose *competence dynamics* is another. These actors and movements adhere by collaboration or strategy to the objectives of the *Action Field* around the UHEBM. For the same reason, NGOs (Non-Governamental Organizations) like *Greenpeace* or *WWF* (World Wildlife Fund) are excluded.

- Actors with legal entity. This would rule out informal people groups and informal networks.
- Actors with action strategic capacity, either by the number of resources, the number of members, or the ability to mediatic or symbolic mobilization.

The strategies are defined by a set of beliefs or common goals among a number of actors, action type, and the strategic direction type.

Figure. 1. Delimitation, beneficiaries, and SAF surroundings
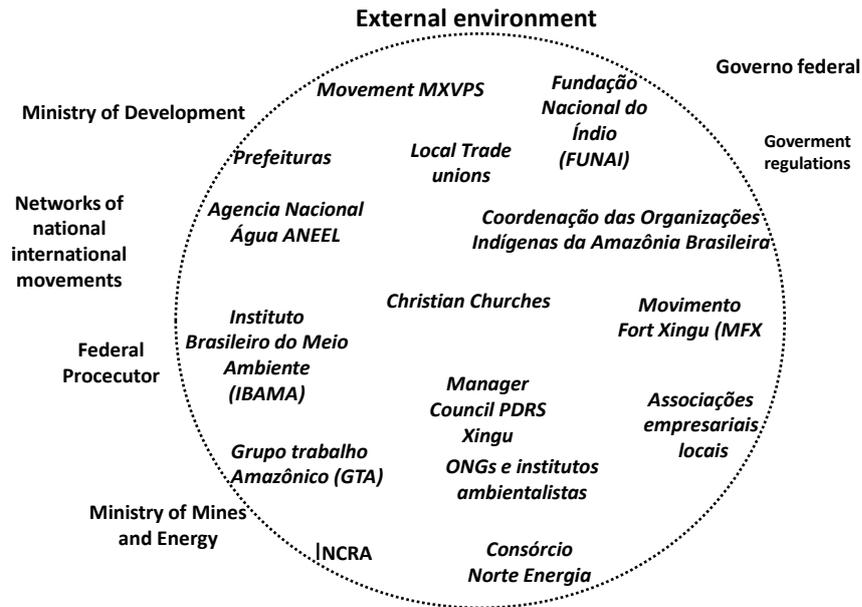


The action field map has been drawn up based on four variables: "1) Actors; 2) available resources (economic, number of membership); 3) objects in play (speeches and objectives); 4) competence dynamics (strategies)". The A*ctors* consider themselves as collective agents capable to mobilize human and financial resources sufficient to influence the action field. The meaning attributed by Fligstein and McAdam resembles in this respect the definition given by the Theory of Action, in which the actor bases his psychic principle. Not really, the *actor's* understanding about the Theory of self-referred systems is discarded that is considered a final recipient generated with self-control purposes by its own communication (JAPP 2007).

Table 1. Actors' mobilization capacity in the SAF based on the number of members or available resources

| Actor | Capacity and/or power situation in the SAF; mobilization in the region |
|---|---|
| Aneel-Agência Nacional de Energia Elétrica (National Agency for Electricity) | Inventory accomplishment of Rio Xingu |
| Public Universities | Approximately 3,000 students, professors, and staff |
| Sema-Secretaria Meio de Ambiente - Estado do Pará (Environment Secretariat - State of Pará) | Organization of public hearings on mining companies in the region |
| MXVPS-Movimento Xingu Vivo para Sempre (Xingu Forever Alive Movement) | Binds approximately 140 local entities (May 5, 2010) |
| FVPP. Fundação Viver Preservar Produzir (Preserving, Produce, Living Foundation) | Coordination: 67 local organizations (2010) "and an average of 200 people passing through on these organizations"[13] Other sources indicate membership of 113 organizations in 12 municipalities in southeastern Pará (2007) |
| Fetagri-Federação dos Trabalhadores Agrários doPará (Agrarian Workers Federation of Pará) | 144 affiliated unions (state of Pará) |

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[13] Interviewing FVPP.

| Sintepp-Sindicato dos Educadores do Pará (Union of Educadores of Pará) | 600 affiliated educators in the Xingu region |
|---|---|
| STRA-Sindicato dos Trabalhadores. Rurais de Altamira (Rural Workers Union of Altamira) | 3,000-3,500 members in the Xingu region |
| CNBB-Conferência Nacional dos Bispos do Brasil (National Conference of Catholic Bishops of Brazil) Cimi-Conselho Indigenista Missionário (Indigenous Missionary Council) | Media power and social mobilization in Brazil. Erwin Krautler, *Right Livelihood award* in Indians' defense |
| Christian Churches, Comissão Pastoral da Terra (Pastoral Land Commission) | Power of social mobilization |
| Ibama-Instituto Brasileiro do Meio Ambiente e Recursos Naturais Renováveis (Brazilian Institute of Environment and Renewable Natural Resources) | Federal agency issuing the Study on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the construction of UHEBM |
| Funai- Fundação Nacional do Índio (National Indian Foundation) Purpose: "to protect and promote the rights of indigenous peoples, on behalf of the Union" | Federal agency. Directly affected: 7 Indian ethnicities with 1,690 people[14] |
| Incra-lnstituto Nacional de Colonização e Reforma Agrária (National Institute of Colonization and Agrarian Reform) | Federal agency aiming to managing the land distribution |

## 4.1. Methodology

The observation focuses on the action field emerged around the UHEBM construction and the empirical research has been carried out in two time series from October, 2009, to December, 2012[15]. With the data and information from the interviews analysis, a four-point scale (1 to 5) was drawn up, in which the number 1 represents the minimum tendency and 5 represents the maximum tendency. With the data, a table was created by a vertical axis establishing trends between "reject the UHEBM construction/accept the construction" dichotomies, and a horizontal axis defined as "oriented toward the sustainable development/oriented toward economic growth". The classification has permitted to determine the position of each interviewed actor according to his *objects into play* (targets) and *competence dynamics* (action priorities). With this information, the *field was* created with the actors as a dynamic set of tensions and confrontation that result in a constant movement towards the positions restructuring.

## 4.2. Identity

The identity - understood as a set of symbols, values, behavior modes, and culture beliefs - operate within a social group expanded by the "reflexivity of its processes" (COHEN, 1985; KRIESI, 1992). The identity is expressed at the collective level among the region's inhabitants as a way to counteract threats from the rapid economic growth of this region. Although not operationalized when going beyond the investigation objective, the identity emerges consistently among the respondents, so to extract some of the actors' statements is considered important. The identity is manifested in two actors' groups, i.e., indigenous groups and the rest of the region inhabitants. In the first case, the identity is related to an essentialist sense as a phenomenon culturally inherited through membership of an indigenous ethnic. In the second case, the construction of identities in the region is hypothetically based on the "dialectic between individual and society" (BERGER; LUCKMANN, 1988, p. 240), according to the interactionist idea. In both cases, it is possible to apply the Habermas's hypothesis (1998) concerning the emergence causes of social movements as a form of protest against the perverse consequences of modernity.

For the *Associação dos Povos Indigenas do Xingu (*Association of Indigenous Peoples of the Xingu[16]: "Claiming to renew our roots, our culture, our traditions, and live a decent life without violence and in tranquility as we lived before the seventeenth century. Back then, life was quiet, and we want to have it back".

The identity is related to the life quality and sustainable development: "For people who have a healthy and sustainable development (...) that preserves our territory."

For *Comissão Pastoral da Terra* of Altamira (Pastoral Land Commission - a Christian Base group): "There are multiple identities here in Xingu. Of course, there are various manifestations". "This hypothetical regional identity has been historically formed by various migration waves: "Here, people live from Brazilian Northeast region, South, São Paulo State and ends up developing a single culture. (...) which now have a level of the region's own identity".

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[14]http://www.funai.gov.br/

[15]Research done from October toNovember, 2010, and from October to November, 2012.

[16] Representative: Cândida Juruna.

The specific identity of the indigenous peoples is also recognized: "I see also indigenous people living here (...) people with a culture have been living here in this region for centuries. And *ribeirinhos* (riparians) who are undergoing a similar process."

### 4.3. Objects in play (movement goals)

For a MXVPS sector, the main objective is the sustainable development that is understood as a process of social change, involving also transformation of production, economical, and social relations. For another sector, formed basically by NGOs and universities in the region, it is a matter of addressing the development based on the conservation of ecosystems and natural resources.

### 4.4. Competence dynamics (strategy)

Federal agencies of Funai reported failure in the municipal administration: "Administration at the municipal level is weak, very weak. There are no alternatives. In the previous administration, there were more jobs positions. Today many unemployed people. Very weak administration". Also suspicious of the "deflation's role" of attributions and competencies by governmental authority through deducing them from the operational capacity: "The more time passes, Funai becomes weaker. The federal government wants to extinguish Funai".

For the Fundação Viver, Produzir e Preservar-FVPP (Live, Produce, and Preserve Foundation), the role and function of the development agencies from States and Federal government are questioned such as *Superintendência de* Desenvolvimento *da Amazônia*-Sudam (Federal *Superintendency of Amazon Development):* "All the money invested in Sudam, (...) would be sufficient to support familiar agriculture for several people - millions. Why?"

Funai has expressed a similar opinion: "Our politicians are the major problems. At the municipal level, they are weak, there are no alternatives. (...). All politicians, senators, and congressmen are very weak".

The business sector agrees with the criticism directed toward the political system. The *Associação Comercial Industrial e* Agropastoril (Aciapa) (Agro-Industrial and Commercial Association) wonders the role of institutional "emptiness": "The greatest difficulty (...) the insufficient support of Federal Government that does not offer sufficient work structure. Incra and Ibama have structure but do not implement their duties". Sincort – Sindicato dos Trabalhadores da Empresa Brasileira de Correios e Telégrafos (Union of Workers of the Brazilian Post and Telegraph) is also in critical conditions in relation to different levels of governmental action: "If the municipal, state, and federal governments do not start focusing on the small producer who is very important in the economic situation, the development will be compromised".

Economical actors do not seek to achieve their objectives based on other actors' consideration; neither they have directed their action toward a mutual understanding, namely harmonizing their actions. According to Associação das Indústrias Madeireiras de Altamira-Aimat (Wood Industries Association of Altamira City), NGOs are classified as NGOs of "good" and NGOs of "evil"; it is difficult to differentiate good from the bad NGOs in the Xingu region. That is what we call them here NGOs of "good" and NGOs of "evil". Similar statement is made by another businessman: "The NGOs provide benefits for themselves".

### 4.5. Social actions (networks)

In this context, the ability of SAF actors to form alliances and build stable networks is understood as social actions. Network is defined as a set of relatively stable relationships joining various actors with common interests[17]. Their communication form is based on the resources of each actor and the political objectives that they pursue for achieving their interests. In the action field, *Governance Units* (structured networks) emerge, although the existence of actors' informal networks is also revealed.

For FVPP:

> "The articulation exists; it is more organic in those agencies affiliated with the foundation; it is also more flexible, (...) there are places where dialogue is inexistent and people live in a war with the municipality power; there are places a little better at the municipal level".

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[17]On the networks conceptualization, see: HANF, Kenneth; SCHARPF, F. W., "Interorganizational Policy Studies: Issues, Concepts, and Perspectives", in: *Interorganizational Policy-Making*, K. Hanf y F. W. Scharpf (eds.), London, Sage, 1978. ZURBRIGGEN, Cristina, Redes, atores e instituições. *Revista do CLAD Reforma e Democracia,* no. 30, Out. 2004. Caracas. http://www.clad.org/portal/publicaciones-del-clad/revista-clad-reforma-democracia/articulos/030-octubre-2004/0051000

The *Associação dos Povos Indigenas do Xingu* (Association of Indigenous Peoples of the Xingu) develops a similar action strategy: "I participate in many popular movements, women's movement, black movement, movement against the dam".

Incra (federal autarky) helps at regional level civil society and business entities in order to implement land reform. This action's purpose is the "implementation of land reform here in the region".

Funai also participates in other networks, such as *Conselho Missionário Indigenista*-Cimi (*Indian Missionary Council)*: "We participate in partnership with all other entities".

Christian groups, such as the *Comissão Pastoral da Terra*-CPT (Pastoral Land Commission) and syndicates collaborate regularly with other movements, such as "*Movimento da Via Campesina* (Via Campesina Movement - International Movement of peasants), *Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra* (Landless Workers Movement), Cimi, Movimento dos Atingidos por Barragens-MAB (Movement of People Affected by Dams), and women's movements in Altamira".

In the Sindicato de educadores do Pará-Sintepp (Teachers Union of Pará):

"We are bound to social movements and working despite political and ideological differences (...) we work with the City House of Xingu, the women's movement, the black movement, the *Viver, Produzir e Preservar* Foundation (FVPP), and the University."

This lack of effective action is manifested also in civil society. In this sense, the women's movement presents itself referring to the political action of the State: "I mean the State Government (...) Bad dialogue".

The interaction among society and institutions is manifested by a public administration support such as the local government and the structured initiatives in civil society. In Municipal Health Council: "The greatest difficulty is the vision of municipal administrators (...) It's a huge fight, it is the battle of social movements (...) Difficulty: the municipal management, because the administrators do not assume their role".

The lack of understanding among governmental and society actors occurs also in other councils: "The other councils are not well regarded by the municipal administration. The management does not like the supervisory role of councils".

To Sindepp: "We cooperate with people with common interests with ours, we are part of social movements".

For the *Viver, Produzir, e Preservar* Foundation (FVPP), the ultimate goal is the network consolidation: "Idea is not to have a large regional structure but to have a network that has strong ties; therefore, it is necessary to specialize to have strength ties". Informal networks by themselves fail to continuously bring together civil society, reason why one tries to institutionalize the Forum: "It expands (...) Depending on the capacity of actors' articulation involved in local government, with municipal power, with governmental agencies."

As argument, it is estimated that political inefficiency has contributed to this situation, in which the NGOs have assumed power in the region (Aimat):

"The interference of "NGOs of evil", for example. Our politicians do not have such political consciousness; we suffer pressure from international NGOs considered very powerful exerting strong influence ".

Consensus and communication among actors, government (state and federal), and economic actors are a problem. To Aimat: "Since PT took power, it tried to cover so many things but did not offer any solution. Currently, there is only an expression: "It is prohibited". It should be forbidden to forbid. Everything here is prohibited because nothing brings solutions".

## 5. GOVERNANCE UNITS

### 5.1. Governance Unit: *Movimento Xingu Vivo Para Sempre-MXVPS (Xingu Forever Alive Movement)*

Origin of actions in the Xingu region dates back to 1975[18] with the *Movimento pela Sobrevivência da Transamazônica (Movement for Transamazon Highway Survival)*, known later as *Movimento pelo Desenvolvimento da Transamazônica e do Xingu*-MDTX (*Movement for the Transamazon Highway and Xingu Development).* A few years later, all of them work with MXVPS. Since then, it has undergone several transformations and mobilization cycles which somewhat are similar to the model proposed by Rammstedt aiming to provoke discussions and "non-acceptance of the existing social system" (RAMMSTEDT, 1978: 108). The movement is composed by actors (associations, local movements, and formal and informal networks). The movement emerges again in 2008 after some years of retreat. Initially, it was composed by approximately 60 entities with a strong historic presence in the region and high capacity for mobilization among civil society.

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[18]http://www.xinguvivo.org.br/2010/10/14/historico/

Figure 2. Governance Units and structure of the *Xingu Vivo Para Sempre* movement (2011)
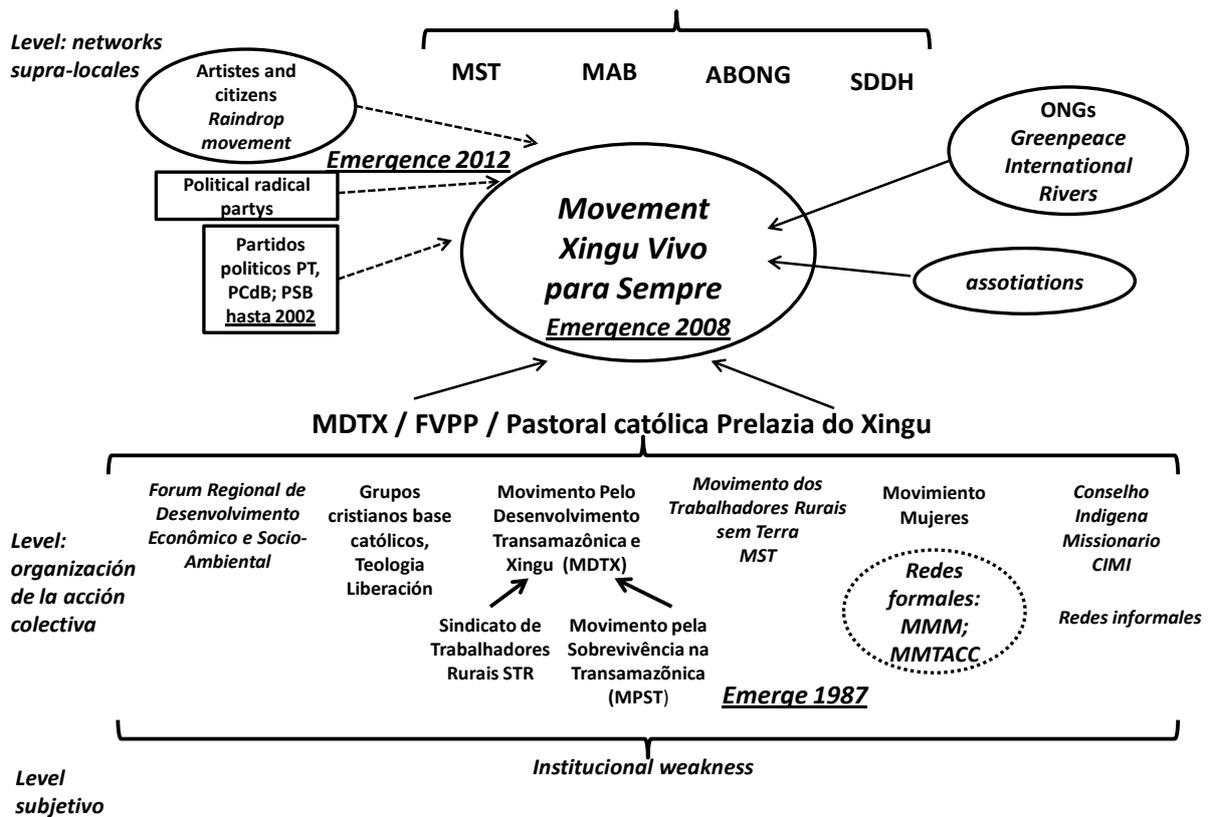


Legend: *Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra-MST* (Landless Workers Movement); Movimento dos Atingidos por Barragens-MAB (Movement of People Affected by Dams); *Associação Brasileira de Organizações Não Governamentais*-Abong (Brazilian Association of Non Governmental Organizations); *Sociedade Paraense em Defesa dos Direitos Humanos-SDDH* (Pará State Society for the Defense of Human Rights)

Since 2012, the date of *Comitê Gestor* do *Plano de Desenvolvimento Regional Sustentável* (Managing Committee of the Regional Plan for Sustainable Development) creation, some sectors particularly entities and associations have revised their stance and adopted a position of "fait accompli" by choosing to participate in the *Committee* or even to support the UHEBM construction under low ecological and social conditions. The movement aims the immediate discontinuing the UHEBM project. The movement's coordination is composed by representatives from the major associations, entities, and local movements, with regular meetings in Altamira City[19].

Since its beginning, Indians and women's groups have been involved and over time have been acquiring their own structure in such a way that they have become the *Indigenous Movement* that has remained virtually autonomous during cycles of MXVPS protests. This movement is comprised exclusively by Indians from the *Kayapó, Paquiçamba, Apyterewa,* Arara*, Jacareacanga, Mundurucus* tribes. The *Women's Movement* surges in the early 90s. It is not configured by a specific *Governance Unit* but by different actors: (*Movimento de Mulheres do Campo e da Cidade*-MMTACC (Women's Movement from Rural Environment and City), *Movimento de Mulheres Maria Maria*-MMM (Women's Movement Maria, Maria), *Instituto Feminista para a Democracia* (Feminist Institute for Democracy), and *Forum de Mulheres da Amazônia Paraense* (Women's Forum of the Amazon's Pará State).

There are two large *Governance Units* of the actors corresponding to their own specific objectives and own specific strategic action. On the one hand, actors are grouped around MXVPS *Governance Unit* and, on the other hand, actors are grouped around the *Governance Unit* situated around the *Movimento Forte Xingu-MFX* (FORT Xingu Movement) (Figure 3).

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[19]By the end of 2011, artists, personalities, and citizens of Brazil started *the Water Drop Movement* (*Movimento Gota d´Agua*) campaign which among other objectives informs citizens that the taxes they pay are for financing this construction besides the contributions of the largest bank institutions of the country.

Figure 3. *Strategic Action Field* boundaries and actors (2010)
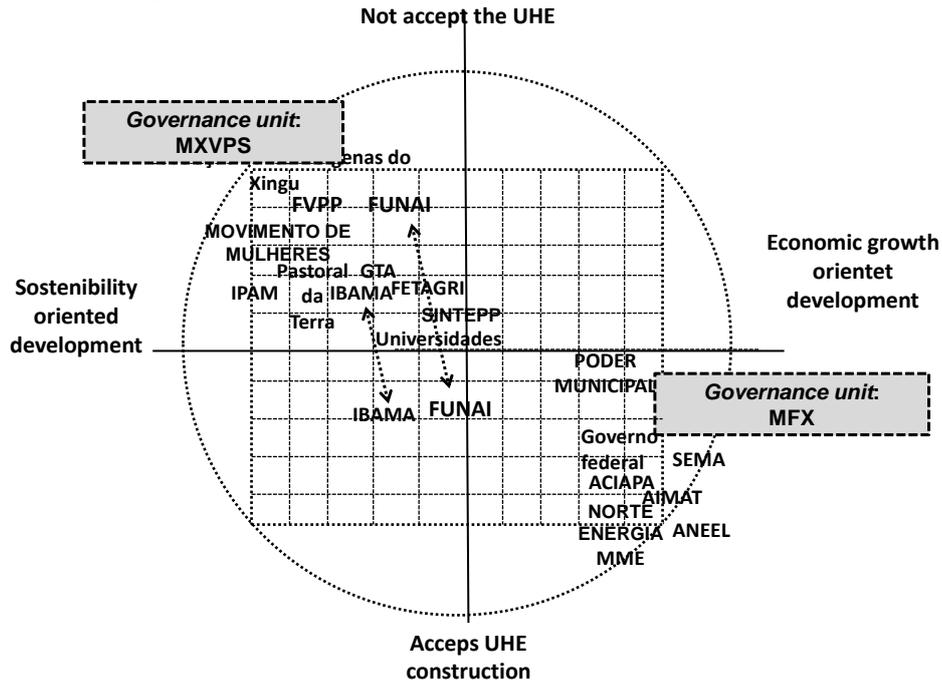


Legend: Arrows mean that the institution has no unitary positions divided among decisions from management and decisions from technicians.

### 5.2. Governance Unit: Movimento Forte Xingu-MFX (FORT Xingu).

The analysis of the interaction among movements is a permanent feature of social movements. The MFX is basically formed by the entities of the economic sphere, whose emergence dates back to early 2008 to fight the massive mobilizations of MXVPS, and in turn to express support for the UHEBM project. It is composed by local entities (Aciapa, Aimat) and associations of agricultural and wood companies. Since the beginning, these entities take the initiative and gradually are connected to various sectors and civil society leaders, political power, and various local religious institutions (churches). Actions and communicating ways of the movement since the beginning have had the financial support from companies such as *Centrais Elétricas Brasileiras S.A.-Eletrobrás* (Brazilian Electric Power S.A.) and *Centrais Elétricas do Norte do Brasil* S.A.-*Eletronorte* (North Brazil Central Electric S.A.) directly financing the mobilizations, campaigns, and information material. The *Comitê Pró-Belo Monte* (Committee for the Belo Monte) composed by about 170 different actors is responsible for coordination.

Figure 4. Governance Unit and *MFX* structure
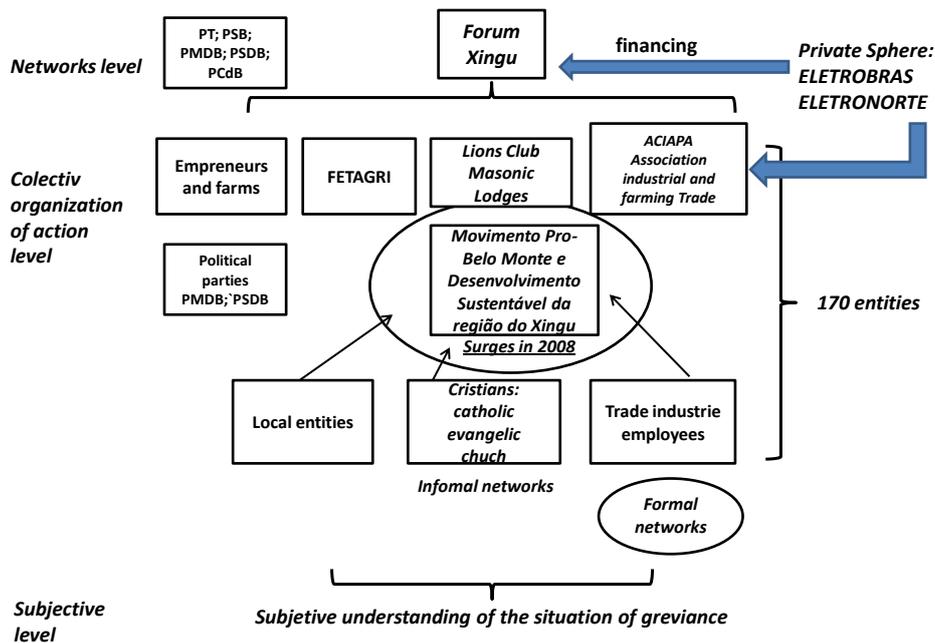


Since the *MFX* creation, several demonstrations and actions have been promoted. The principal claims are resumption of environmental impact studies for the construction of the hydroelectric power plant, formulation of a policy for the forestry sector, pavement of the federal highways, conservation of local roads, socio-economic zoning, and agrarian structuring. The MFX was basically created by the instances of economic and political power. Funding for MFX comes from these instances and its duration in time is subject to face the movement actions questioning the megaproject. The *Fórum Regional de Desenvolvimento Econômico e Socioambiental da Transamazônica e Xingu*-FORT Xingu (The Regional Forum for Economic Development e Social-Environmental Development of the Transamazon and Xingu) was created in 2009. This is a forum for discussion and debate among the organizations representing civil society, aiming to study and create alternatives to encourage and implement sustainable development models for the region. The major actors in the Forum are the municipalities that are directly or indirectly affected by the project.

Figure 5. Strategy changes among actors in the *Action Field* (2012)
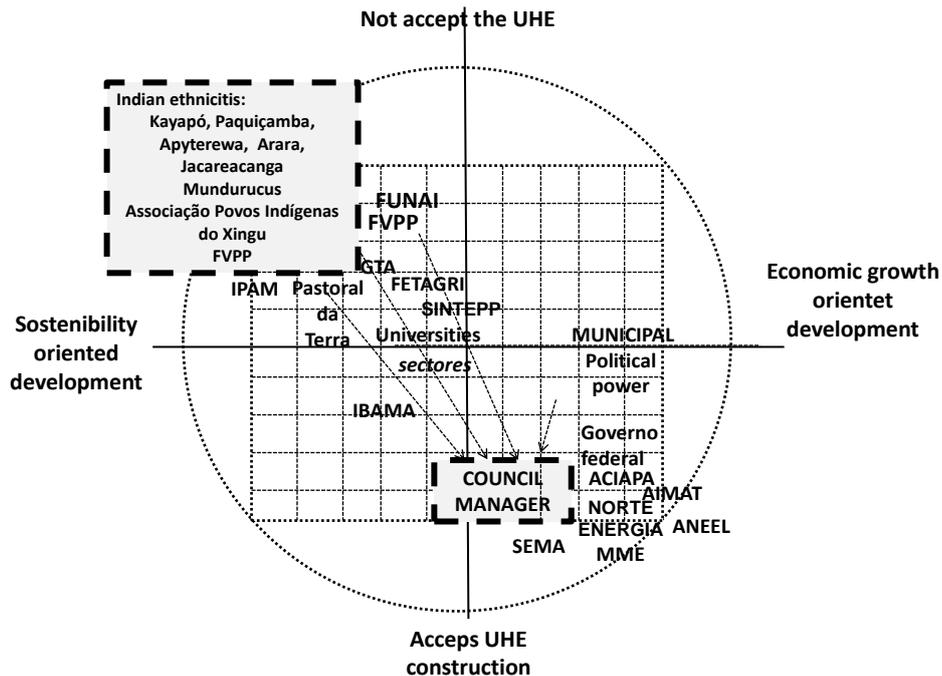


### 5.3. Stability and change in the SAF

According to the SAF theory, the emergence of a new action field is possible. This is a field occupied by two or more actors, whose actions are oriented to another direction, but they have not brought basic conditions for the SAF operation. It is possible to conceive emerging fields as a social space in which there are no defined rules, but actors who are being increasingly forced to determine another decision on account of their actions due to new dependent interests.

The change that occurs among the actors is common and never really intentional. On the contrary, it is not in constant competition, happening in fields as a result of its controversial nature. Some actors form movements and other actors that interpret them consider their options and performances. In the field, the actors who have less power and capacity are constantly making strategy adjustments in field conditions due to their position and the actions of the others. Three issues concerning SAF change and its stability are analyzed: "1) The change and its stability, 2) the allocations; and 3) the emergence of a new field".

1) The maintenance of change and stability of SAF tend toward one of three different states: "Non-organized or emergent, organized and stable, and organized, unstable, and open transformation". In each one of the states, the generated processes have particular attention. For that, Fligstein and McAdam elaborated a series of hypotheses (*propositions*)[20] serving as guides for the observation of the dynamics of changes and structure at different stages of a SAF. The continuation will be developed in a synthetic way for those that have been operationalized in this study based on the research hypotheses.

*Proposition* 1. "The unorganized social spaces become organized through a social process similar to the process of a social movement emergence" (FLIGSTEIN, MCADAM 2011, p. 15). With the creation of a new SAF, the actors are placed in a situation in which they do not control the organization from this new space neither cannot establish the basic conditions under which the groups acted. The direct consequence is the emergence of multiple possible configurations of a SAF. The social movement inserted in the SAF has its origins in the mid-80s. Since then, it has undergone several transformations and phases aiming to question the existing social relations. In the analysis of a historical perspective of social movements, MXVPS origins date back to the mid-80s motivated by the *I Encontro de Povos Indígenas* (First Indigenous People Meeting) held in the Altamira City in protest against the UHEBM construction. From that decade, the movement has had phases of mobilization depending on the projects and the resumption of the construction project. The period of the movement revitalization dates back to the early 2008 during the meeting *Xingu Vivo para Sempre* with

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[20]Fourteen *Propositions:* organization of social spaces (1), the social actors' position (2) and their corresponding identities (3), the position and hierarchy that they represent (4), the conflict relations and typology (5), the movements and creation of a new emerging framework and a new SAF (6,7,8,9), the destabilization of a field and crisis of SAF.

representatives of indigenous people, *ribeirinhos* (riparians) forest extraction workers, small farmers, townspeople, and the NGOs from the Xingu River basin to discuss and evaluate the proposed dam construction. The movement's manifest was signed by about 60 entities and civil society associations.

The institutions plus state and federal autarchies have shown various positions - often contradictories - in the course of time. The various governments, like the Federal Executive Branch, have changed their positions in regards to the UHEBM. The creation of the *Conselho Gestor* (Managing Council) as inspection agency of work has led sectors contrary to UHEMB to be involved with the entity: "The same women's movement which was against the dam has understood that they must negotiate. Only part of the movement components also understands what we are selling" (...) "It is divided"[21].

Table 2. Reorganization of a Governance Unit in the Managing Council

**Federal Goverment:**
Casa Civil da Presidência da República (Coordenação-Geral); Secretaria Geral da Presidência da República; Ministério do Planejamento, Orçamento e Gestão; Ministério de Minas e Energia; Ministério do Desenvolvimento Social e Combate à Fome;

**Goverment of state of Pará:**
Secretaria de Estado de Energia, que integrará a Coordenação-Geral; Instituto de Desenvolvimento Florestal do Estado do Pará; Diretoria Operacional do Hospital Divina Providência; Tribunal de Contas do Estado do Pará; Secretaria de Estado de Energia;

**Municipalities**
Prefeitura Municipal de Uruará, que integrará a Coordenação-Geral; Prefeitura Municipal de Altamira; Prefeitura Municipal de Pacajá; Prefeitura Municipal de Porto de Moz; Prefeitura Municipal de Placas;

**Business and labor organizations employers:**
Associação Comercial, Industrial e Agropastoril de Altamira; Sindicato Rural de Altamira; Associação dos Criadores e Exportadores de Peixes dos Municípios de Vitória do Xingu e Anapu; Norte Energia S/A;

**Unions of rural and urban unions:**
Central Regional de Apoio à Agricultura e Pesca; Federação dos Trabalhadores e Trabalhadoras na Agricultura do Estado do Pará; Sindicato dos Trabalhadores nas Indústrias da Construção Pesada e Afins do Estado do Pará; Sindicato dos Empregados no Comércio Hoteleiro e Similares de Altamira;

**COUNCIL MANAGER**

**Social Movements Sociais and Environmental organizations:**
Fundação Viver, Produzir e Preservar; Conselho de Bairros e Entidades do Município de Altamira; Instituto Socioambiental; Associação dos Moradores da Resex do Riozinho do Anfrísio;

**Indigenous Communities:**
JOSÉ CARLOS FERREIRA ARARA; DOTO TAKAK-IRE KAYAPÓ;

**Universities**
Universidade Federal do Pará;

# 6. CONCLUSIONS

The SAF model has been shown itself as a theoretical framework that provides instruments for observing the actors in conflict or in cooperation situations. However, it does not include aspects concerning the participants' identity at the micro level. Thus, the social movement is observed through its composition and strategies, although issues such as ideology, identity, or the context in which the social movement emerges are relegated to secondary importance. The root of the economic bias of the SAF manifests itself in the secondary role of the mentioned aspects. Thus, it is not possible to observe and assign one theoretical reference point to the emergence of social movements - MXVPS e MFX – and that a more extensive observation requires the combination with other frameworks.

The MXVPS has gradually expanded its contents when introducing new topics related to life in the territory going beyond critique to the UHEBM construction. The movement surpasses the local monothematic level when becomes a movement that brings together current concerns such as sustainable development, water and energy management, and the "New water culture". As objectives, a strategic vision of sustainable development in the region surges focusing on the principles of economic, environmental, and social sustainability.

The MFX emergence is only for supporting the UHEBM project, although subsequently MFX has expanded its objectives with regional development proposals focused on economic growth. The gradual demobilization of MXVPS by the government, although not of the *Indigenous Movement*, has been induced by the Managing Council creation.

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[21]Interview with a FVPP representative, July 10,2012.

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