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Can multistakeholder forums empower indigenous and local communities and promote forest conservation? A comparative analysis of territorial planning in two Brazilian states with contrasting contexts

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Abstract

Multistakeholder forums (MSFs) are applied in territorial planning with the goal of bringing together diverse actors in decision-making, allowing the participation and empowerment of indigenous and local communities, protecting their territories, and promoting community-based conservation efforts. However, important questions remain. How are territorial planning MSFs shaped by context and power? Can they represent communities' diversity, respect their ancestral rights, and bring real change? This article explores how context and power affect the capacities and challenges of territorial planning MSFs to include, represent, empower, and benefit communities. Examining actors' perceptions, we comparatively analyze two cases, in two Brazilian states with contrasting contexts. We conclude that territorial planning MSFs are highly political spaces influenced by complexities in context, power relations, and communities' diversity. They may include, represent, and empower communities and help recognize and conserve their territories, but not necessarily. Especially in difficult settings, communities face more challenges than other actors to be represented and participate at MSFs, and territorial planning may empower or "invisibilize" communities. Other mechanisms (e.g., social action) can be key for communities instead of, or in synergy with, MSFs.

KEYWORDS
indigenous and local communities, multistakeholder forums, power, territorial planning

1 | INTRODUCTION

The rise of community-based conservation (CBC) focused environmental and development efforts on the rights and interests of indigenous and local communities (Chiaravalloti, 2019), as well as improving forest conservation, collaboration, and conflict mitigation (Alvarez Barriga, 2015; Campos-Silva, Hawes, Andrade, & Peres, 2018; Engen, Fauchald, & Hausner, 2019; Garnett et al., 2018; Souza, 2018). Despite efforts, however,

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communities in tropical forests continue to face deforestation and invasions by outsiders, which often result in conflicts and violence (Tauli-Corpuz, 2018). Also, interventions may impose oppressive restrictions (Chiaravalloti, 2019) or provide inappropriate or insufficient incentives to communities (Bluwstein, 2017; Mugisha, 2002; Störmer, Weaver, Stuart-Hill, Diggle, & Naidoo, 2019).

Multistakeholder forums (MSFs) have been proposed as a way to bring diverse actors together in coordinated and collective decision-making toward sustainable land uses, as well as to empower and benefit local peoples through their participation (Brenner, 2019; see Sarmiento Barletti, Larson, Hewlett, & Delgado, 2020 for a review). MSFs are used in territorial planning processes—such as Brazil's Ecological Economic Zoning (ZEE) commissions. Territorial planning processes can shape CBC efforts, as they have consequences on the recognition and protection of communities' territories (e.g., protected areas), rights, livelihoods, and diversity. In Brazil, ZEE was legislated[1] as a planning tool aimed to assign uses, restrictions, and rights to different portions of a given territory.[2]

Nonetheless, competing interests and power asymmetries affect environmental governance (Dietz, Ostrom, & Stern, 2003; Larson, Sarmiento Barletti, Ravikumar, & Korhonen-Kurki, 2018; Ravikumar, Larson, Myers, & Trench, 2018; Robbins, 2012; Scott, 1998; Miller, 2001). Some contexts may facilitate coercion by elites (*power over*) rather than community empowerment[3] and agency (*power to*) through collective action (*power with*) and self-confidence (*power within*) (Chambers, 2006; Luke, 2005; Partzsch, 2016; VeneKlasen & Miller, 2007). Even if included, indigenous and traditional populations and communities (ITPCs) who participate in MSFs might not be representative of the different communities that are stakeholders to an issue. In Brazil, ITPCs hold a range of different identities, ethnicities, practices, and interactions with markets (IBGE 2010; FUNAI, 2019a; ISA, 2019). "Traditional" peoples[4] include Afro-Brazilian communities ("*quilombos*"), extractive populations,[5] among others (Governo do Estado do Acre, 2010; ISA, 2019). Adaptive approaches to governance (Barnes & Child, 2014; Lebel et al., 2006; Mahajan et al., 2019) are key to addressing these challenges, but how this is to be achieved remains unclear.

Moreover, whether ITPC matters should be decided through MSFs (Stubbs, 2005) is questionable. MSFs may put ITPC's recognized rights up for discussion with other actors rather than empower them (Asefa, Mengesha, & Almaw, 2019; Chauvin, 2019; McGinnis, 2011). This may hinder devolutionism, a key aspect of community-based natural resource management (Jones & Murphree, 2004). Grassroots and transnational movements (Cronkleton, 2008; Kaldor, 2003) and (procedural and human) rights-based approaches, as promoted by the International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention 169 (Larsen & Gilbert, 2020) might be more effective for ITPCs than MSFs.

This article examines the capacities and shortcomings of territorial planning MSFs to include, empower, benefit, and protect the territories of ITPCs in Brazil, framed by the contextual factors and power relations within which MSFs are embedded. We comparatively analyze the ZEE commissions of the Brazilian states of Acre and Mato Grosso. These cases represent two extremes in terms of historical contexts and power dynamics. Settings in Acre favored socio-environmental goals, while settings in Mato Grosso favored agribusiness goals. To examine how MSFs can support CBC efforts and ITPCs more generally, we explore how these contrasting settings led to different experiences of participation of ITPCs in their ZEE processes, with different outcomes. We first examine how context and power relations in the two studied regions differed, shaping ITPC matters and the emergence and goals of the ZEE process. Then, we analyze actors' perceptions on whether the ZEE commissions, considering context and power dynamics in each site, included, represented, empowered, and brought positive outcomes for ITPCs. Finally, acknowledging the importance of local voices, we explore the perceptions of ITPCs about MSFs in general[6]; whether they believe or not in MSFs as a transformative solution for more equitable and effective decision-making processes, and why.

2 | METHODS

Research was carried out between 2016 and 2018. Secondary information was collected, and different questionnaires were applied to 100 interviewees, selected to represent different genders, levels, and sectors[7] in both states (see Sarmiento Barletti & Larson, 2019) (see Table 1). Context interviews with 11 key informants (including two ITPC leaders), were aimed to learn about how local settings shaped ITPC matters and ZEE processes, comparatively in each state. Theory of Change interviews explored how did six actors who organized the ZEE commissions plan to achieve the desired goals.[8] Participant interviews examined perceptions of 48 actors who participated in the commissions (including seven ITPC representatives).[9] Nonparticipant interviews were applied to 28 actors who did not participate in the commissions.

2.1 | How did Acre's and Mato Grosso's contrasting settings locally shape ITPC and ZEE matters?

This section examines how Acre's and Mato Grosso's local contexts and power dynamics diverged in terms of

TABLE 1 Number of interviewees by type

Type of questionnaire	Number of interviewees	Level in which they operate	Number of interviewees	Type of actor	Number of interviewees	Sector/land use priority	Number of interviewees	Sector/land use priority	Number of interviewees
Context	11	International	1	Indigenous populations	9	Environment	18	Men	68
Organizers	6	National	24	Traditional populations	7	Environment considering production	5	Women	32
Participants	48	Regional/state	56	Small-scale farmers	4	Production considering environment	58		
Nonparticipants	28	Local	19	Nongovernmental organizations	23	Production	18		
Extra informants	7	Total	100	Government	49	First environment, then production considering environment[a]	1		
				Private sector/large-scale farmers	8				
Total	100			Total	100	Total	100	Total	100

Abbreviation: ZEE, Ecological Economic Zoning.

[a] In an earlier phase of the ZEE process, this interviewee represented an environmental governmental agency. In a more recent phase, this interviewee represented another governmental agency that focuses on development but maintaining personal interest in environmental matters.

ITPCs and ZEE matters—with systems in Acre favoring social-environmental issues, and settings in Mato Grosso favoring agribusiness. We use secondary information and interviews to examine how land use and ITPC issues are embedded in international, national, and local settings— and so the ways how territorial planning processes emerge and are conceived.

Acre and Mato Grosso share the effect of several national policies and international forces that impacted Brazil as a country and the Amazon as a region.[10] Between the 1960s and 1980s, ITPCs in the Brazilian Amazon lost large swaths of their territory to large-scale farmers due to development programs by the military government and international banks (May, Millikan, & Gebara, 2011; Schmink & Wood, 2012). With international calls to reduce deforestation rates, Brazil's democratization, and the rise of the Workers' Party, ITPCs started taking part in policy-making. The passing of the 1988 Constitution opened spaces for civil society participation and recognized differentiated rights to indigenous peoples and _quilombos_ (Albert, 2016; May et al., 2011). It also promoted the creation of Indigenous Lands and Conservation Units, such as Extractive Reserves (Table S1). Nevertheless, it was not until the 2000s that Brazilian legislation recognized the term "traditional populations"[11] (ISA, 2019). Extractive Reserves, National Forests, Estate Forests, and Sustainable Development Reserves were explicitly established as types of Conservation Units specifically aimed to protect and promote traditional populations[12] (D'Antona, Dagnino, & Freixo, 2016). The Decree 6.040/2007 recognized traditional populations' rights and sustainable practices and established a self-identification approach to identify them[13] (Chiaravalloti, 2019).

Acre and Mato Grosso have a similar percentage of their territories legally protected as Indigenous Lands (21% in Acre and 24% in Mato Grosso's area), and a similar percentage of the total number of Indigenous Lands have been fully regularized (90% in Acre and 82% in Mato Grosso) (FUNAI, 2019b; ISA, 2019). However, the setting for ITPCs and territorial planning has been more challenging in Mato Grosso than in Acre. We now move to explain such divergence. We highlight contextual differences in terms of percentage of the territory allocated for traditional communities; level of tenure security for ITPCs' lands; level of environmental impacts of surrounding agribusiness activities on ITPCs' territories; and level of influence of ITPCs in policy-making. We explore how policies, politics, economy, markets, livelihoods, power relations, and governance became _florestania_-oriented in Acre and agribusiness-oriented in Mato Grosso. Also, how context shaped the ZEE emergence and goals in each state is examined.

2.2 | Acre's socio-environmentally friendly context and _florestania_-oriented ZEE

In the 1970s–1980s, in the absence of economic elites in Acre, movements led by rubber tappers and other ITPCs avoided invasion and deforestation threats (Schmink et al., 2014, in Katila et al., 2014). Movements also led to the creation of several protected areas, including Indigenous Lands for indigenous peoples and National Forests, Extractive Reserves, and State Forests for traditional populations. The success of these grassroots movements and the national rise of the Workers' Party got reflected in the local politics. From 1999 to 2018, state-level authorities were affiliated with the Workers' Party and linked to Acre's movements. Authorities governed closely with, and widely supported by, local civil society—in line with the national government.[14] This resulted in a politically, collectively, and ideologically powerful local alliance oriented to social and environmental goals. Many ITPC leaders occupied positions in—or had links to— the state government. Acre's government advocated for ITPCs' rights and promoted a forest-based sustainable development, which they called "_florestania_" (Schmink et al., 2014, in Katila et al., 2014; CIFOR, 2014). Indigenous Lands were regularized and more Conservation Units were created, including National Forests, Extractive Reserves, and State Forests for traditional populations (Figure 1). By 2017, about 25% of Acre's territory was conserved for traditional populations (Table S2).

Acre's ZEE process and commission were initiated by that _florestania_-oriented state government, which saw a participatory ZEE as a way to build a "social pact" with all land-use actors and legitimize ITPCs' demands. The process was completed in two phases, in both of which a commission was created (Phase 1:1999–2000; Phase 2:2003–2007).[15] Acre's governor and ZEE authorities (state-level Secretariats of Planning and of Environment) were part of the local social-environmental alliance. ITPCs were important in the emergence and goals of Acre's ZEE. With ITPCs considered as historically marginalized populations, the ZEE aimed to empower them, recognize their rights, and protect their forests. Moreover, as indigenous peoples called for a "differentiated treatment" that respected their self-determination in the process, in Phase 2, the ZEE organizers included an "ethno-zoning" (apart from local workshops aimed to include local actors in general).

2.3 | Mato Grosso's agribusiness friendly context and technocratic ZEE

Throughout the 20th century, Mato Grosso's government promoted land occupation and deforestation, in line with

FIGURE 1 Total area (hectares) of Conservation Units for traditional peoples (Extractive Reserves, National Forests and Estate Forests) in Acre through time (1988–2017). Yellow circles represent Extractive Reserves, green circles represent National Forests, and blue circles represent Estate Forests (based on SEMA (2019))

Total area (hectares) of Conservation Units for traditional peoples
(Extractive Reserves, National Forests and State Forests) in Acre through time (years 1988-2017)
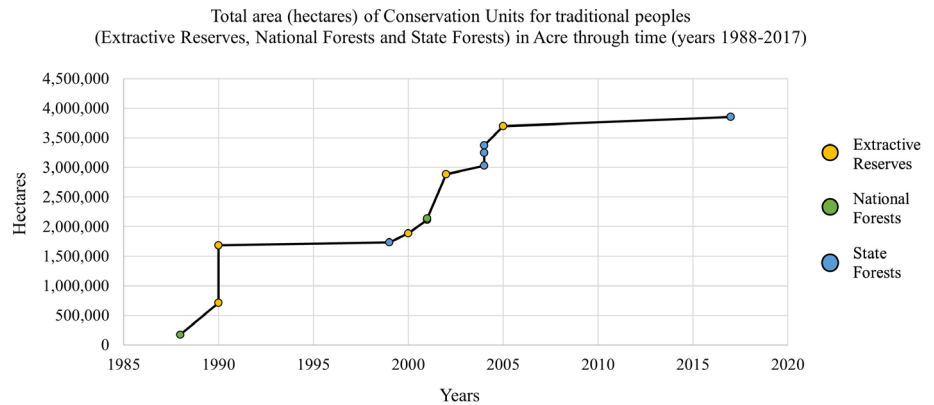
the military government's policies and international banks' development projects. The agribusiness sector remained economically and politically powerful in Mato Grosso. Today, more than 50% of the state's GDP comes from agribusiness (IMEA, 2019). Large-scale private owners own most rural properties (Moreno, 2007) and occupy positions in state government agencies.[16] Also, interviews reveal that agribusiness organizations are widely supported by numerous large-scale and small-scale farmers.[17] Consequently, about 40% of forested areas in Mato Grosso disappeared (GCF, 2018) and water systems were depleted and polluted[18] (Latrubesse et al., 2019). Furthermore, the creation, regularization, and protection of ITPCs' territories have been an ongoing struggle. An indigenous informant expressed that Indigenous Lands were created mainly because of [indigenous] peoples' outcry ("*pelos gritos dos povos*"). As for traditional populations, all 73 *quilombos* in the state are still undergoing regularization and there is only one Extractive Reserve (ISA, 2019). ITPCs' territories often face invasions and environmental impacts by surrounding farms (CIMI, 2019; Dioz 2016; IBGE 2019; Miotto, 2019; Souza, 2018). An NGO representative claimed that in Mato Grosso there is "no consideration of indigenous peoples...[there is] a system of environmental degradation." Moreover, Mato Grosso's large area, diverse biomes, and history made ITPCs' livelihoods, cultures, and identities particularly diverse and dynamic (Silva & Sato, 2010). Interviews suggested that some ITPCs are open to engaging with the agribusiness sector.

In that context, Mato Grosso's government started a ZEE process (Kohlepp, 2002), mainly to comply with international and national institutions. Early attempts to execute a territorial planning process were funded by the World Bank (preliminary phase, 1980s–1990s).[19] These were followed by national legislation regulating ZEE and requiring the creation of ZEE commissions—the so-called "unified methodology" (Federal Decree 4.297/2002). A commission was created (2008) but no

map was approved (Phase 1, 2007–2011). Later, a new attempt to finalize the process started, and a new commission was created (Phase 2, 2017 to date). No map has been approved yet. Mato Grosso's ZEE authorities (state-level Secretariats of Planning and of Environment[20]) were not aligned with the local agribusiness alliance. Organizers stated that all actors were to be treated equally through the process. There was no special treatment for ITPC nor a separate zoning process for indigenous territories.

Acre's and Mato Grosso's contrasting settings and power dynamics led to two ZEE commissions with different objectives, design, and outcomes for ITPCs. Next section details how the two commissions diverged.

2.4 | How did Acre's and Mato Grosso's ZEE commissions include, empower and benefit ITPCs?

We explore how local context shaped decisions made and challenges faced by the ZEE organizers and ITPCs, and power relations inside and outside the commissions—leading to differences in how effectively the commissions included ITPCs, enabled influence by ITPCs, benefited IPTCs and, ultimately, empowered ITPCs.

2.5 | Were ITPCs included and represented in the commissions?

In both commissions, participants were classified by chambers or blocs.[21] Neither had quotas for ITPC representatives, but Acre's commission had a greater representation of these populations.

In Acre, in both phases, the ZEE organizers included an "Indigenous Chamber," composed of indigenous organizations.[22] Traditional populations did not have an exclusive chamber, but the "Workers' Chamber" included

two national-level organizations representing rubber tappers and rural workers: National Council of Rubber Tappers and Rural Workers Union. However, some civil society interviewees claimed that those two organizations represented mainly extractive populations; therefore, they perceived that (official) representation of other types of traditional populations (e.g., _riberinhos_[23]) was limited.

In Phase 1 of Mato Grosso's ZEE, the commission, designed by the organizers, did not include indigenous representatives. Regarding traditional populations, there was only one seat for a representative of one _quilombo_, Mata Cavalo. As expressed by a community leader from Mata Cavalo, this quilombo is considered emblematic for actively fighting for the recognition of their land rights, and it is one of the two only _quilombos_ of Mato Grosso officially recognized in the land registration system. However, one _quilombo_ cannot represent all the state's _quilombos_, much less all traditional populations. A former representative of a university in Mato Grosso noted: "MSFs end up compartmentalizing ('_colocando em caixinha_') actors that, in reality, are more diverse." The organizer, acknowledging that the commission did not properly include ITPCs in Phase 1, added two seats each for an indigenous peoples' bloc and a traditional populations bloc in Phase 2. Also, in Phase 2, the organizer called civil society actors to decide by themselves which organizations would represent them in each of the nongovernmental blocs. The seats for indigenous peoples were occupied by the (recently created) state-level indigenous organization and a local indigenous organization. Notably, some leaders of the state-level indigenous organization have shown openness to dialogue with the government and agribusiness sector, which was criticized by some interviewees linked to local NGOs and grassroots movements. The two seats for traditional populations were filled by NGOs that work with traditional populations; one of them is from a _pantaneira_ community,[24] but she argued that she cannot represent all traditional communities.

2.6 | Did ITPCs effectively influence the ZEE process through the commissions?

In Acre, organizers gave the commission meaningful decision-making power in the elaboration of the ZEE map. After being drafted by a multisectoral team of governmental experts, the map was thoroughly discussed and adjusted by the commission participants, including ITPCs. Although organizers, ITPCs, and actors from the social-environmental sector acknowledged the inherent limitations of the commission (as an MSF). They emphasized the importance of the ethno-zoning and local

workshops to enhance ITPCs' representation and participation. The indigenous representative considered that the ethno-zoning was necessary to achieve certain goals that the commission was unable to, such as:

- make the discussion reach indigenous peoples at the local level;
- make technical discussions easy to digest for indigenous peoples (mitigate differences in technical knowledge);
- allow indigenous peoples to have "their own indigenous debate" focusing on subjects that are relevant for them;
- help indigenous peoples speak with confidence (not in front of actors with opposite interests);
- secure indigenous lands.

Still, ITPCs and all actors perceived that the commission played a meaningful role. ITPCs saw it as a formal governance mechanism where high-level representatives technically discussed, incorporated, and officially approved the results from the ethno-zoning and local workshops, as part of the overall ZEE process. Therefore, the commission—in synergy with other mechanisms—contributed to increasing ITPCs' influence throughout the process. A Rural Workers Union representative expressed: "...we felt it [the ZEE process] in our skin. We participated in all the stages." However, traditional populations did not have a separate process. Some traditional populations interviewees[25] considered that Acre's ZEE could have done better with reaching communities. The same Rural Workers' Union representative claimed: "We need to make the process more open ('_abrir mais o rabo do jacú_')...to give more life to the process."

Moreover, interviewees in Acre agreed that, inside the commission, ITPC representatives had great influence because they were politically and ideologically aligned with the organizers and the ZEE process goals.[26] A National Council of Rubber Tappers representative stated: "Acre was always a place of resistance against deforestation. So, all the actors that defended that cause were more influential: the government, rubber tappers, indigenous peoples." Also, ITPC representatives were knowledgeable leaders who had been part of Acre's movements, which facilitated their active participation and understanding of the discussions. Furthermore, officials from the Secretariat of Environment affirmed that they used a simple language when discussing technical issues so that all participants could understand those discussions. This was confirmed by various participants, including ITPCs.

The ZEE products in Acre were discussed and officially approved by the commission, as well as by the

three state-level Councils,[27] Acre's Legislative Assembly, the Governor of Acre, and national-level authorities.

In Mato Grosso, participants from all sectors (including ITPCs) agreed that nobody could fully understand nor exert meaningful influence in the elaboration of the ZEE map. They felt that the map, drafted by the Secretariats of Planning and of Environment, had not been properly explained and discussed in the commission. This perception was especially strong in Phase 1, when the commission met only one time, in a three-day seminar. As for Phase 2, the representative of traditional populations perceived that the main structural issues (e.g., "invisibilization" of traditional communities) were not being discussed in the ZEE commission because that would expose various ("under the carpet") problems, such as wealth concentration and illegal land grabbing.

In Phase 1, the representative of Mata Cavalo[28] attended to the only meeting that was held. In Phase 2, ITPC representatives reported they only attended one or two times because of logistic and economic difficulties in traveling from isolated rural areas to the city (where ZEE commission sessions were held). Low attendance was also linked to the fact that ITPCs (as well as various participants) had limited trust in the impact of the ZEE and, consequently, limited interest in influencing the process. They considered that the ZEE can promote but not guarantee land tenure regularization and security (which constitute their main concern). Consequently, they preferred to invest more of their time in dealing with other decision-making processes and actors that directly deal with land tenure. Although the traditional populations representative in Phase 2 maintained that she attended several of the commission's meetings because she needs to fight for traditional populations' land rights in all available governance spaces. ITPC representatives argued that they felt at disadvantage in the ZEE debates, especially in front of actors from the development sector, who had the resources to hire experts to advise and guide them through the ZEE discussions. Interestingly, actors from the development sector perceived that ITPCs were not afraid to talk at the ZEE commission.

In Phase 1, at the end of the three-day seminar, the ZEE map drafted by the Secretariats of Planning and of Environment was approved by a majority of votes (from the social-environmental sector) in the commission, with dissatisfaction from the agribusiness/production sector. This map is known as "Executive 2008."[29] Nevertheless, in this phase, the influence that ITPCs and other actors had on Mato Grosso's ZEE process was defined more by other governance mechanisms than by the commission. The agribusiness sector utilized the Legislative

Assembly[30] and the public hearings to overshadow the commissions' approval of the Executive 2008. The Legislative Assembly took charge of the public hearings.[31] Meanwhile, Mato Grosso's agribusiness organization convinced farmers that the ZEE would give away their lands to indigenous peoples[32] and persuaded them to protest at these events. ITPC leaders and their allies argued that they were overshadowed and threatened by farmers' groups during the public hearings. Although interviews suggest that indigenous peoples demonstrated the ability to speak up energetically and to connect with allies. An adjusted version of the Executive 2008 was produced,[33] but the Legislative Assembly disapproved it and, later, approved an agribusiness-oriented map,[34] which some interviewees refer to as "the horror map" or "the yellow map."[35] At that moment, social protests (by NGOs, activists, and ITPCs) and federal institutions allowed the social-environmental sector to get such map voided by federal authorities.[36]

2.7 | Did the products (in paper) benefit and empowered ITPCs?

In both states, land tenure rights and security are the main priority for ITPCs during the ZEE process and beyond.

Unlike in Mato Grosso, the resulting ZEE map in Acre contributed to this cause. In Acre, Phase 1 resulted in a database and the political decision to regularize Indigenous Lands and create 12 new Conservation Units (including three Extractive Reserves and three State Forests) (Governo do Estado do Acre, 2010). Phase 2 produced Acre's ZEE map,[37] which was promoting Acre's *florestania* and was considered equitable by ITPC interviewees. Phase 2 also produced the ethno-zoning, a special map made by indigenous peoples for their territories. That way, the ZEE commission (and ZEE process as a whole) contributed to putting ITPCs on the map, show their important role in the pursuit of sustainable development, and recognize their territories.

In Mato Grosso, none of the different ZEE maps made during Phases 1 and 2 were considered fully legitimate by all actors, nor they received full approval from all state-level and national-level authorities. Regarding the Executive 2008, interviewees from the social-environmental sector claimed that traditional populations were poorly represented, as this map only recognized two *quilombos*.[38] A social activist involved in Phase 1 expressed: "We asked ourselves where the people in that map were." Interviewees explained that the government[39] often registers traditional populations as small-scale farmers, because systems do not allow to

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register communal land tenure systems. Thus, fearing they would lose their territory, many traditional populations registered as individual small-scale farmers. Nevertheless, interviewees from the social-environmental sector voted in favor to approve this map, because they considered it good in the environmental aspects and appreciated that it recognized all Indigenous Lands.[40] Interviewees from the production sector, contrarily, opposed to this map arguing that it was too "restrictive." As for the "horror map," it excluded not only most traditional populations but also 14 Indigenous Lands undergoing the regularization process.

As for Phase 2, the Secretariat of Planning[41] used a similar version of the Executive 2008 as the starting point for negotiations at the commission (which, therefore, presented similar weaknesses). The traditional populations representative in Phase 2 maintained that the ZEE is an "outrage against peoples' rights over their territories," because communities are "invisibilized." She also stated that granting land rights is not sufficient, as "territory" also includes the cultural-religious aspects of how traditional populations live ("*modo de vida*"). Contrastingly, the production sector opposed to allocating more land to Protected Areas, arguing that indigenous peoples already had plenty.[42] A representative of Mato Grosso's Secretariat of Economic Development stated: "If we talk about ancestral territories, the whole Brazil would be indigenous peoples' territories."

2.8 | Can the ZEE bring impacts on the ground?

Interviews showed that implementation of the ZEE maps (and, thus, their impact on ITPCs) is complex in both states. ZEE in Brazil has worked more as a guiding policy tool than as a law involving enforcement and sanctions. Furthermore, both states lacked an evaluation of the ZEE commission and monitoring of the ZEE map implementation. "When the process is over, the democracy is over. If the commission is over, everything is over" (National Council of Rubber Tappers representative in Acre). With no enforcement or monitoring, a ZEE map can only promote (but not guarantee) the titling of community lands, creation of Protected Areas for ITPCs, or the effective protection of ITPC territories. These decisions depend on the willingness of the government, civil society organizations, and private sector, as well as on the availability of public funds and land tenure clarity.[43]

Additionally, a ZEE map that is unfamiliar to a wide diversity of land-use actors is unlikely to be fully implemented. Disseminating the ZEE process and map to local-level actors has been particularly challenging in Mato Grosso. Only a few of the nonparticipant interviewees knew about the ZEE process, and even fewer knew about the ZEE commission. Even the leaders of the one *quilombo* that was represented in Phase 1 were not very familiar with it. In Acre, some nonparticipant ITPC interviewees (mostly local community members) had limited or no knowledge about the ZEE commission, but they knew about the ethno-zoning or about the Plans of Territorial Management of Indigenous Lands.[44] Interestingly, despite communication challenges, nonparticipants ITPC in Acre considered the ZEE processes and results as equitable and democratic and felt well-represented in the commission, as they trusted their representatives and the organizers.

It is not surprising, then, that actors of all types in Mato Grosso were highly skeptical about whether the ZEE map would be implemented once it is approved. In Acre, interviewees had mixed opinions about the extent to which governmental and nongovernmental actors follow the approved ZEE map to make decisions on land use and projects. Although in Acre, there are some successes. The political decision of creating new Conservation Units and regularizing Indigenous Lands (which resulted from Phase 1) was implemented. Figure 1 (above) shows the increase in the area allocated to Extractive Reserves, National Forests, and State Forests in Acre, since the end of Phases 1 and 2 (2000 and 2007, respectively). Also, indigenous interviewees in Acre considered that the ethno-zoning (in Phase 2) had a meaningful impact on them.

2.9 | How did the ZEE process impact the relationships between ITPCs and other land-use actors?

In both states, interviewees agreed that the ZEE processes (including the commission) shaped relationships among actors. In Acre, ITPC representatives considered the process to be successful in promoting transparency, a collective future vision of Acre, and a transition from times of conflicts (between ITPCs and farmers) to improved relationships. As the representative from a federal environmental agency stated, "the ZEE was a great opportunity for these groups to recognize and legitimize each other." The process changed peoples' minds: "you stop being what you used to be" (indigenous representative). Actors started seeing ITPCs as agents of development rather than obstacles. A representative of a federal environmental agency expressed: "In the past, rural people were seen pejoratively... Today, the so-called 'wild animal' ('*bicho do mato*') is respected."

In Mato Grosso, various actors distrusted the impact and intentions of the ZEE. The traditional populations representative felt that organizers did not have the political will to properly include communities on the map. She feared that "the ZEE is a Machiavellian action of the state government, precisely to eliminate the traditional populations' territories, to say that they do not exist, to say that agribusiness has a very strong force in the state, etc." She also believed that the government "opened a vacancy for traditional communities partly to legitimize the process."

Concluding, Acre's socio-environmentally friendly context and Mato Grosso's agribusiness friendly context marked differences in the ZEE process. Differences refer to power relations and decisions made by organizers, ITPCs, and diverse actors, inside and outside the two ZEE commissions—shaping the commissions' outcomes for ITPC, regarding inclusion, influence, empowerment, and benefits. We now examine ITPCs' perceptions of MSFs. We show that each ZEE commission followed a trend in how MSFs have worked for ITPC matters in Acre and Mato Grosso.

2.10 | Benefits and challenges of MSF in the eyes of ITPCs, comparatively in Acre and Mato Grosso

Research results demonstrate that ITPC's trust in the benefits of MSFs is higher in Acre than in Mato Grosso. This is consistent with the results of the commissions, which are largely a function of differing contexts and power relations that characterize these states.

ITPCs were asked if they think MSFs are a transformative solution to make decision-making processes more equitable and effective. In Acre, 78% of ITPC respondents[45] strongly agreed. They explained that the success of MSFs in Acre was related to a favorable political context, with socially and environmentally friendly state and national-level authorities. They argued that Acre's government and Lula's administration[46] promoted dialogue with civil society and social movements, and, thus, MSFs become strategic for them. Overall, ITPCs argued that MSFs allow diverse actors (including them) to interact with the government to influence policy making, as well as to interact with each other, share different types of knowledge, jointly discuss matters (e.g., water, culture, or development) that cannot be analyzed "in an isolated way," and reach an agreement. "Bringing everybody together is good because everybody needs everybody" (National Council of Rubber Tappers representative). ITPC interviewees in Acre also perceived that MSFs empower them. Indigenous interviewees argued that

participating in MSFs reaffirms their position and agency as indigenous peoples in decision-making. However, they stated that MSFs are government-led and that ITPCs must build their agenda independently from the government (e.g., through social movements).

In Mato Grosso, 67% of the ITPC respondents[47] did not believe that MSFs were a transformative solution for equitable and effective decision-making processes. The main argument was that Mato Grosso's government is agribusiness-oriented and there are little results in practice. "[MSFs] include debate, but the decision is always one-sided: on the side of economic interest" (Member of an NGO that works with indigenous peoples). A *quilombo* leader and two indigenous leaders noted that most MSFs lack funds and thus depend on political will to see their decisions implemented (e.g., execution of activities, projects, programs, etc.). This is challenging in Mato Grosso, where the government is agribusiness-oriented. A traditional populations leader argued that discussions in some MSFs "end up going nowhere" because there is no collective dialogue, social control, or people's empowerment. She maintained that the ideal would be not to need MSFs but to enforce the ILO Convention 169. Interestingly, despite ITPC's general distrust of MSFs, they believe that MSFs are capable of empowering ITPC; though, such perception was more theoretical than based on their own experience.

3 | DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

As evidenced by the two case studies, territorial planning MSFs are highly political spaces that cannot completely eradicate politics, trade-offs, power relations, and competing interests, all inherent to both ITPC matters and territorial matters. Submitting land use decisions to multiple actors may or may not contribute to include, represent, empower, and enable ITPCs to influence processes and outcomes, and may or may not contribute to benefit them and protect their territories.

Context, power dynamics, and ITPC culture are complex, varied, and dynamic, and deeply shape MSFs' outcomes for ITPCs. Politics, economics, markets, livelihoods, governance, actors' alliances, and power relations that characterize certain regions in certain moments in history, affect how ITPC matters are approached in the MSF's goals and design. These factors also affect ITPCs' priorities, strategies, participation, power relations with other actors, and influence—both inside and outside the MSF. MSFs may better include and benefit ITPC by strategically adapting to temporal circumstances and local settings while considering the national and international context.

In favorable historical settings (e.g., Acre's powerful social-environmental alliance, with a supportive federal government), MSFs can contribute to: empowering ITPCs; increasing their self-confidence (pow*er within*); encouraging alliances (*power with*); giving them a real stake in decision-making (*power to*); and helping them protect their rights, interests, and territories. In difficult settings (e.g., Mato Grosso's powerful agribusiness alliance), MSFs may reproduce or even exacerbate existing domination by elites (*power over*) power asymmetries, conflicts, territorial rights violations, and environmental threats affecting ITPCs. In challenging circumstances, *power within* and *power with* become crucial for ITPCs in MSFs.

At the same time, across settings, ITPCs face more obstacles in MSFs than other actors. Obstacles are related to their representation, their effective participation, and having their rights respected and their demands met. ITPCs have limited resources, time, and technical knowledge to attend, effectively participate and influence discussions—especially when meetings are very technical and in urban centers far from their communities—and to discuss the MSF debates with *all* the widely spread communities they represent (which are widely spread). The ZEE cases show that approaching territorial planning as a merely technical matter concentrates power in actors that have technical knowledge, undervaluing traditional knowledge and other information sources. Also, implementation of MSFs' decisions—toward real benefits for ITPCs—cannot be done without transferring meaningful power and resources to MSFs.

As ITPCs' culture and identities are diverse and respond dynamically to contextual factors, by classifying actors by type and assigning representatives for each one, MSFs compartmentalize, simplify and poorly represent ITPCs. Making MSFs' goals, design, rules, and actor's categorization systems more flexible can improve representation of ITPCs and promote respect to their rights, diversity, practices, and territories. Also, often in territorial planning, the landscape is divided in sub-portions as if they were isolated from each other, and how much land is officially assigned to these populations is treated as the only issue for ITPCs. Territorial planning can overlook issues like impacts on ITPC's territories by activities in surrounding areas, external pressures (e.g., markets), long-term tenure security, and spiritual relationships of ITPCs with their territory. That said, there is political and ontological power embedded in how "territory" is conceptualized in mapping processes. To effectively enable conservation and sustainable forest management efforts in ITPCs' territories, without "invisibilizing" and threatening the existence, identities, culture, and territorial rights of ITPCs, MSFs need to embrace history, culture, identities, connections, and external forces, and how they evolve.

Consequently, decisions that involve ITPCs should not *always* be made through MSFs. In contexts and moments in which development/business dominates, MSFs and the rule of *majority* (of votes) do not necessarily mean *fairness* for ITPCs. Using other governance mechanisms instead of, in addition to, or in synergy with MSFs can be key to recognize ITPC's diversity, allow them to define their own agenda and promote community-based governance and conservation. Especially in difficult settings, despite exhaustion and low trust in MSFs, ITPCs continue fighting for their (procedural and human) rights, territories and livelihoods through social movements, civil society alliances, and international laws that protect them (e.g., ILO Convention 169).

Overall, MSFs reflect existing politics and economics. However, MSFs might challenge that "mirror" syndrome and bring positive, transformative outcomes for ITPCs if they are flexible and not-purely technical, deal with meaningful and structural issues, respect ITPC's historical rights, have significant power to ensure implementation, and are accompanied by ITPCs-oriented movements, governance mechanisms and institutions.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST
The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION
All authors have been personally and actively involved in substantial work leading to the paper, and will take public responsibility for its content.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT
The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author (J. G. T.).

Restrictions apply to data provided by research participants that requested to remain anonymous. Due to the nature of this research, the data are not publicly available due to restrictions that could compromise the privacy of participants.

ETHICS STATEMENT

This material is the authors' own original work, which has not been previously published elsewhere. The paper is not currently being considered for publication elsewhere. The study received approval from UF's Institutional Review Board. This study was possible with funds from the University of Florida (UF) and the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR).

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ENDNOTES

[1] For example, Federal Decree 4.297/2002.

[2] ZEE processes in Brazil can be done at the municipal and state level.

[3] We understand empowerment—from a governance perspective—as the process of increasing actors' ability to influence and benefit from decision-making processes and outcomes. This broad definition allowed inclusiveness and flexibility during interviews with different actors.

[4] In Brazil, this term refers to rural populations that resulted from historical interactions among indigenous, European, and African cultures and ethnicities.

[5] Extractive populations are rural populations whose livelihoods rely on the extraction of forest products such as rubber.

[6] A perception-based approach is used to evaluate whether MSFs are consistent and evolve with peoples' understandings and expectations on such processes (Ali, 2001; Bennett, 2016; Nash, Capstick, Whitmarsh, Chaudhary, & Manandhar, 2019).

[7] Interviewees represented government agencies, NGOs, the private sector, farmers organizations, indigenous/grassroots organizations, and university professors/researchers.

[8] The objective of the ToC questionnaire was to understand what change the organizers attempted to bring through the MSF (i.e., the ZEE commission), how and why. Questions in the ToC questionnaire explore how organizers envisioned the goal, approach, design, and strategies of the ZEE commissions and how they considered contextual factors.

[9] The participant questionnaire was intended to understand whether the different actors who participated in the commissions perceived them as equitable and effective or not, how, and why.

[10] About 100 and 50% of the territory of Acre and Mato Grosso, respectively, lie in the Amazon region (Governo do Estado do Acre, 2010; Governo do Estado do Acre, 2017).

[11] The 1988 Constitution did not explicitly mention the other types of traditional communities (besides *quilombos*).

[12] This was established by the National System of Conservation Units, approved in the year 2000. One of its goals is "to protect the natural resources that are necessary for the subsistence of traditional populations, respecting and valuing their knowledge and their culture, as well as to promote them socially and economically."

[13] The National Policy of Sustainable Development of Traditional Populations and Communities was passed through the Decree 6.040/2007. Article 3 defined traditional populations as "culturally differentiated groups that recognize themselves as such, have their own forms of social organization, occupy and use territories and natural resources as a condition for their cultural, social, religious, ancestral and economic reproduction, utilizing knowledge, innovations, and practices generated and transmitted by tradition."

[14] Which, at that time, was also affiliated to the Worker's Party.

[15] Phase 1 allowed to bring different actors to the table for the first time (after previous conflicts), create a complete database with information about Acre, and, in general, build the foundations for the ZEE products. In Phase 2, the database was updated and the ZEE products were finalized. Data collection focused on the commission in the second phase, as it was when the ZEE map was completed.

[16] For instance, during the first years of the ZEE process, the governor of Mato Grosso was an agribusiness actor, internationally known as "the soybean king" and Greenpeace awarded him with the Golden Chainsaw Award in 2005 (Greenpeace, 2005). Furthermore, most deputies of Mato Grosso's Legislative Assembly are part of the so-called "ruralists," which is a term used to refer to landholders and legislators that support the agribusiness sector, as explained by Ferrante and Fearnside (2019).

[17] This is partly because farmers receive technical and financial support from such organizations.

[18] Interviewees very often mentioned, for instance, pollution of rivers because of the intense use of agrochemicals by surrounding farms.

[19] This was part of the World Bank's efforts to alleviate the environmental impacts caused by their previous development projects in the region.

[20] In Phase 2, only the Secretariat of Planning was put in charge.

[21] Each chamber-bloc was representing a certain type of actor.

[22] Organização das Populações Indígenas do Rio Envira, Organização das Populações Indígenas do Vale do Juruá, and organização dos Povos Indígenas.

[23] "*Ribeirinhos*" are rural communities that live along rivers.

[24] *Pantaneiras* are rural communities that live in Brazil's tropical wetland area.

[25] This includes both participants and nonparticipants of the commission.

[26] Most participants in Acre's ZEE commission were politically and ideologically aligned with the ZEE organizers and, in general, with the state government and Acre's social-environmental alliance.

[27] These were the Council of Environment, Science and Technology, the Council of Sustainable Rural and Forestry Development, and the Council of Forestry.

28 As noted above, Mata Cavalo was the only *quilombo*—and the only ITPC representative—that was included in the commission.

29 The term "Executive 2008" refers to the fact that such ZEE map was drafted by the Executive branch of Mato Grosso's government; more specifically, the state-level Secretariats of Planning and of Environment.

30 In Mato Grosso's Legislative Assembly most deputies are agribusiness-oriented.

31 These hearings were held after the commission's decision.

32 This was reported by the ZEE organizers, context informants, and several interviewees from the social-environmental sector (including ITPCs).

33 This version resulted from incorporating the discussions of the public hearings into the "Executive 2008." This work was led by the only left-wing depute of the Legislative Assembly at that time. The resulting map is referred to as "Substitutive 1."

34 This map was rapidly made by consultants hired by the Legislative Assembly.

35 The term "yellow map" refers to the fact that a significant portion of the territory had been allocated to agriculture and livestock, which were represented in yellow in the map.

36 For instance, the Public Ministry argued that this map did not comply with national regulations, which, among other aspects, regulate civil society participation in ZEE processes.

37 Named "Mapa de Gestão Territorial."

38 It recognized only the two quilombos that were officially in process of regularization—one of them was Mata Cavalo.

39 For instance, by federal agencies or state-level agencies in charge of the "Environmental Rural Cadaster."

40 This map recognized the fully regularized Indigenous Lands and also those still in process of regularization.

41 In Phase 2, the state-level Secretariat of Planning passed to be the only official authority (organizer) of Mato Grosso's ZEE.

42 When making such statements, these interviewees did not mention traditional populations.

43 In Brazil, it is common to find lands with unclear tenure situations and/or overlapping tenure rights.

44 These were made after, and based on, the ethno-zoning.

45 Seven out of nine, from which five were indigenous leaders and four were from traditional communities.

46 Interviewees in Acre (e.g., representative of the National Council of Rubber Tappers in Acre) contrasted Lula's administration with the former military government, arguing that during the military dictatorship times, ITPCs and environmental matters were ignored. This comparison was also made by ITPC interviewees in Mato Grosso.

47 Four out of six, from which three were indigenous leaders and the other was a leader from a *quilombo*.

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SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Additional supporting information may be found online in the Supporting Information section at the end of this article.

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