

Peri-Urban Growth in Latin America

UN Expert Group Meeting on Population Distribution,
Urbanization, Internal Migration and Development

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Cebrap – Brazil

Contents

1. Conceptual issues
2. Why are peri-urban areas important?
3. Why are peri-urban areas growing?
4. Implication for policies
 - Land use
 - Transportation
 - Housing
5. Peri-urban information deficit

Conceptual issues

1

Slum definition (Habitat , 2006)
based on indicators of:

- Durable housing
- Sufficient floor space
- Access to treated water
- Access to sanitation
- Secured tenure

Can be estimated through
household surveys

Problems

- Does not differentiate shantytowns from illegal settlements
- Does not provide information on poverty spatial distribution

Conceptual issues

1

Shantytown

Invaded land (Lim 1995):

- Private
- Public

Government action
on invaded land is
more difficult

Illegal settlement

Private development not fully
recognized by city government

Problems

- Requires local register databases for population estimates
- Does not provide information on poverty spatial distribution

Likely to be a shantytown -
Southwest Caracas



Mosaic of houses

Likely to be an illegal settlement -
Eastern Lima



Geometrically designed streets

Conceptual issues

1

Peri-urban, also known as:

- Periphery
- Suburb

Allows for the spatial definition
of “problem area”

Preliminary definition:

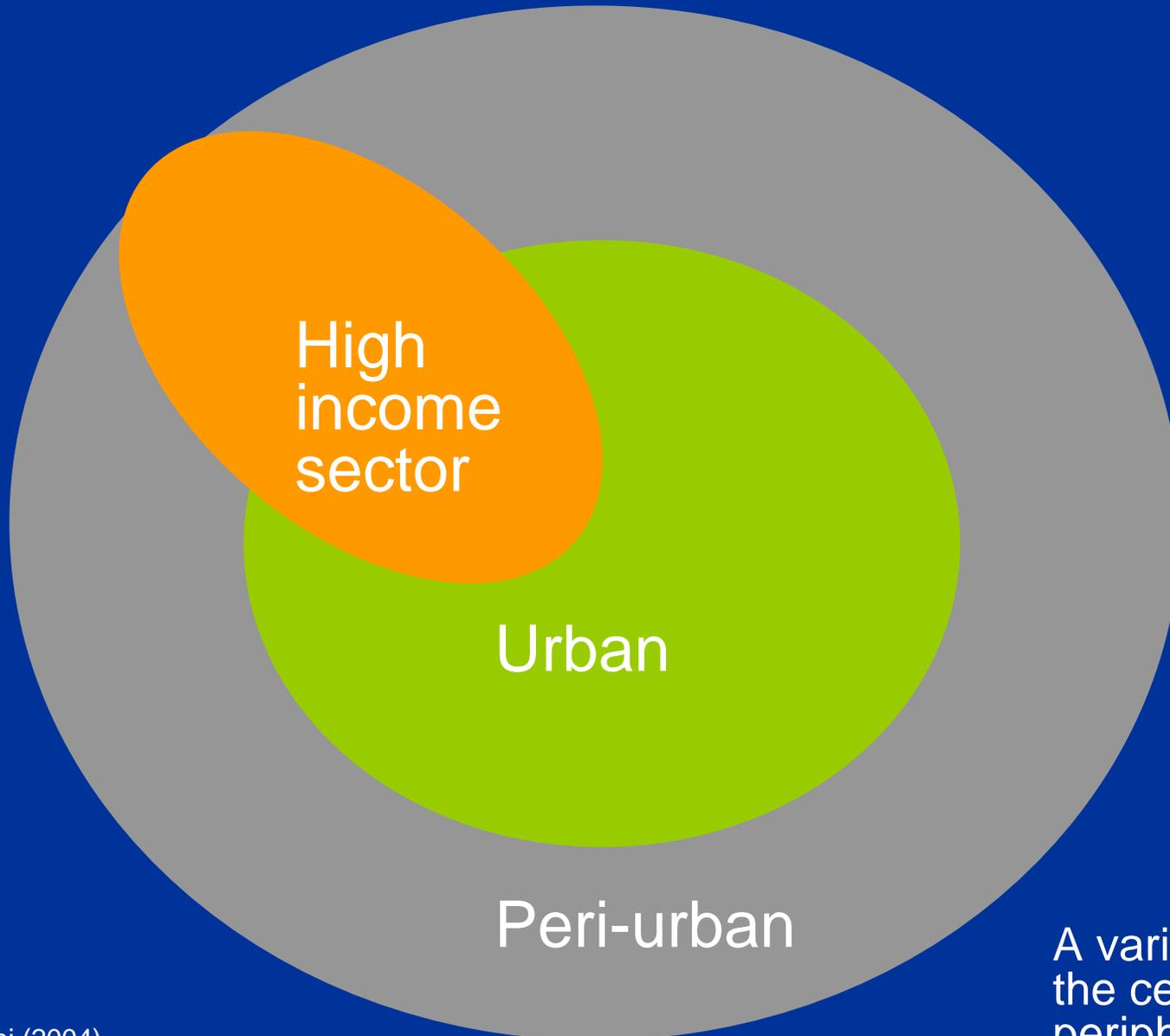
- Located in-between consolidated urban regions and rural ones
- Typically have lower demographic density, poorer urban infrastructure and mixed land use

Problems

- The existence of high income areas in some parts (Sabatini, 2004)
- The existence of poor areas and shantytowns close to central areas

Conceptual model

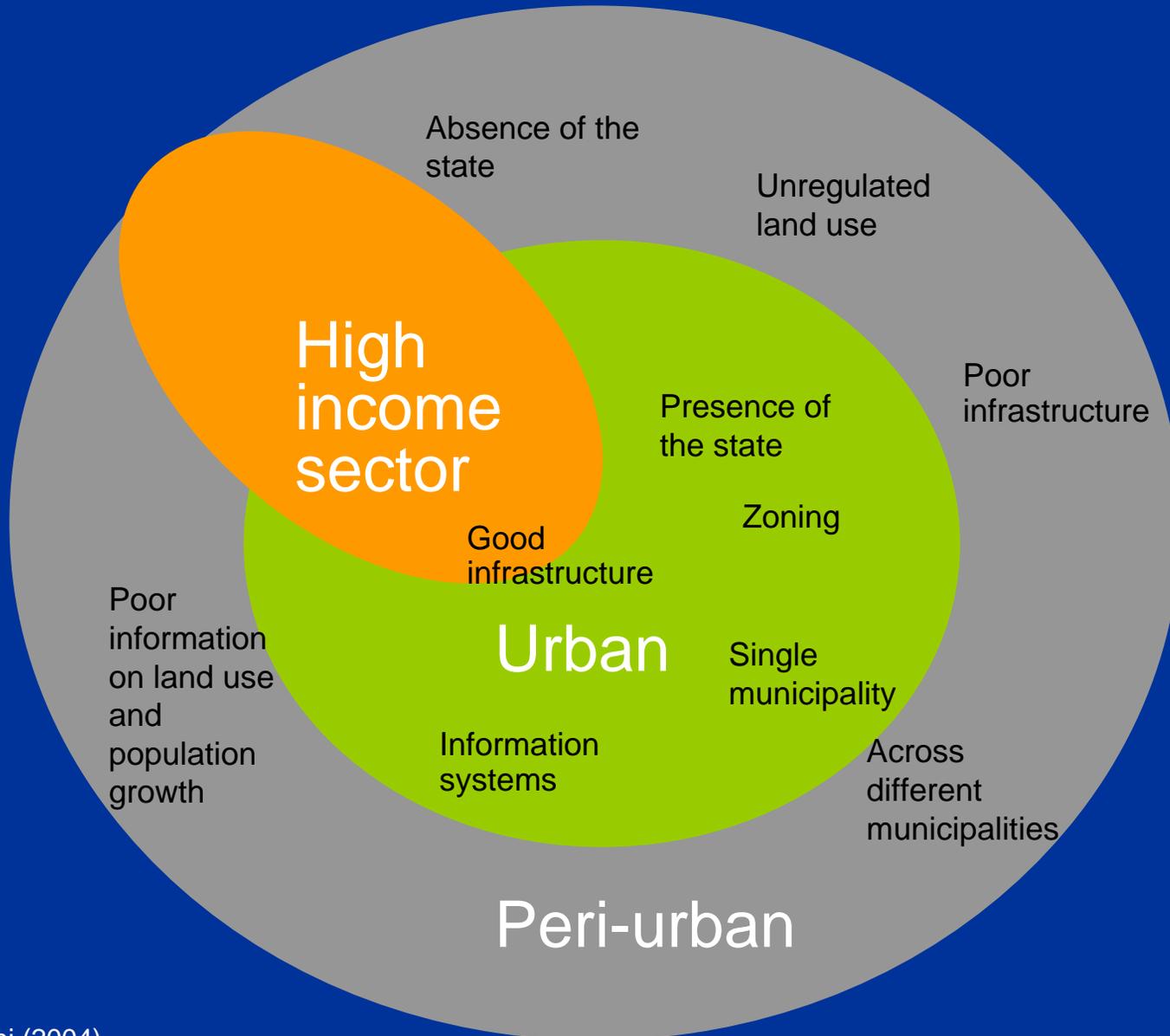
1



A variation of the central-periphery model

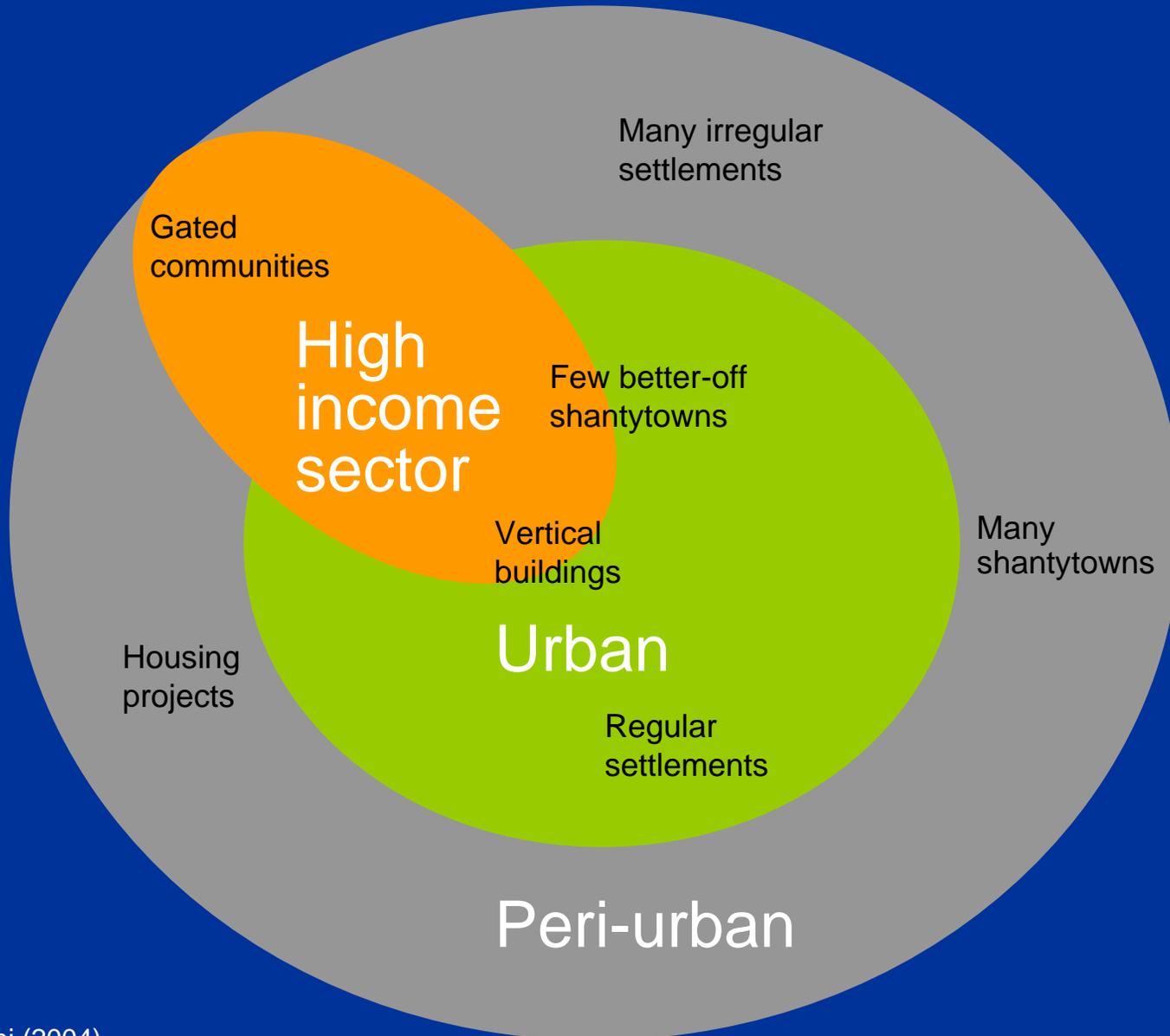
Institutional environment

1



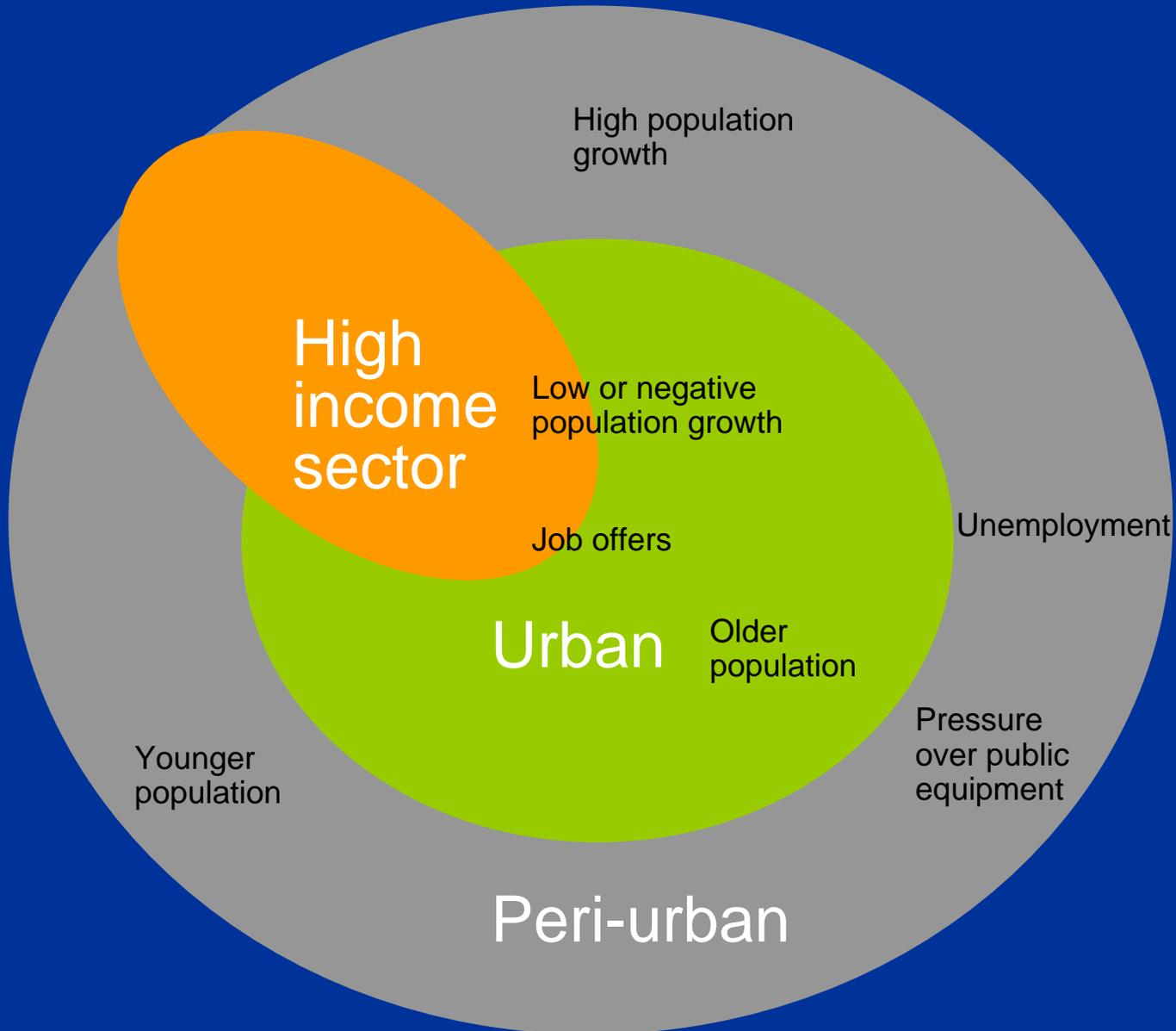
Land use

1



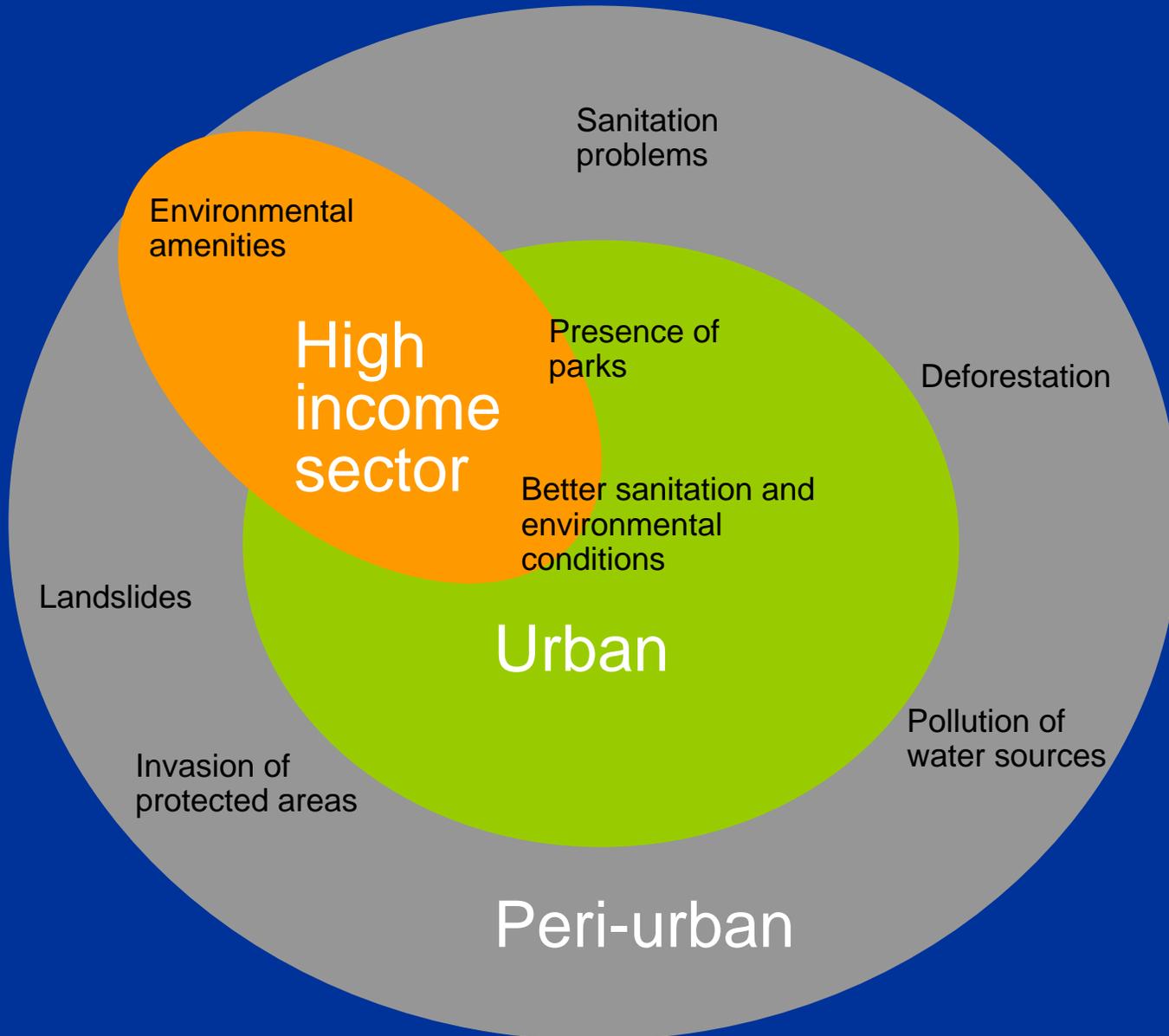
Demographics

1



Environment

1



Centro del Valle

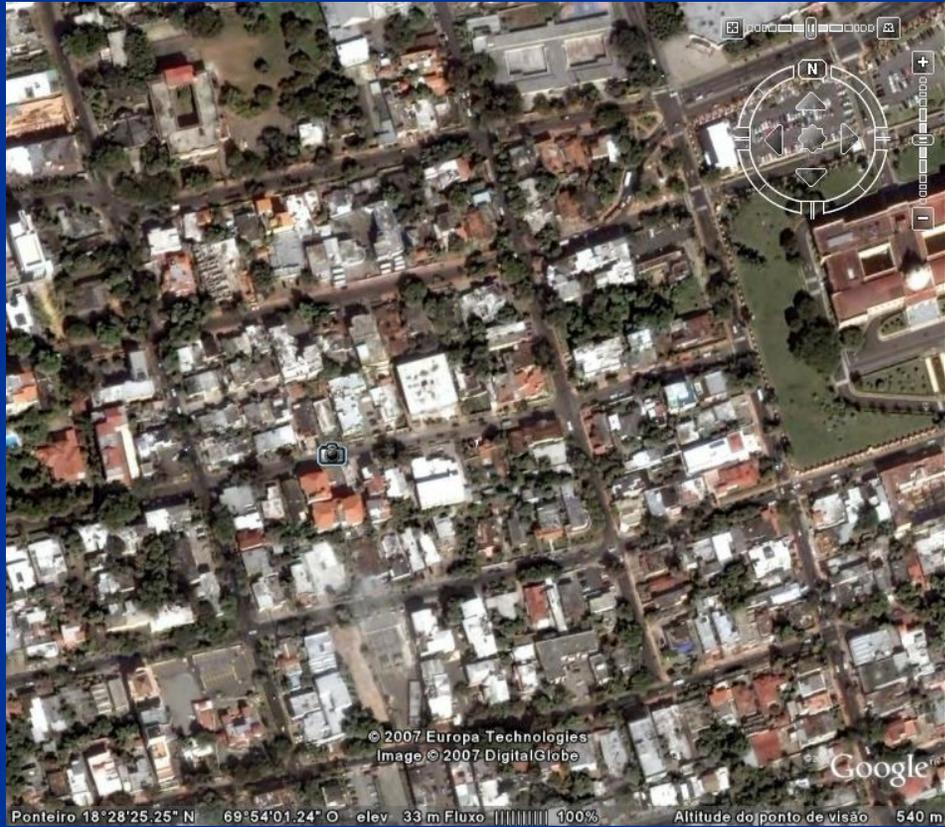


Organized land use

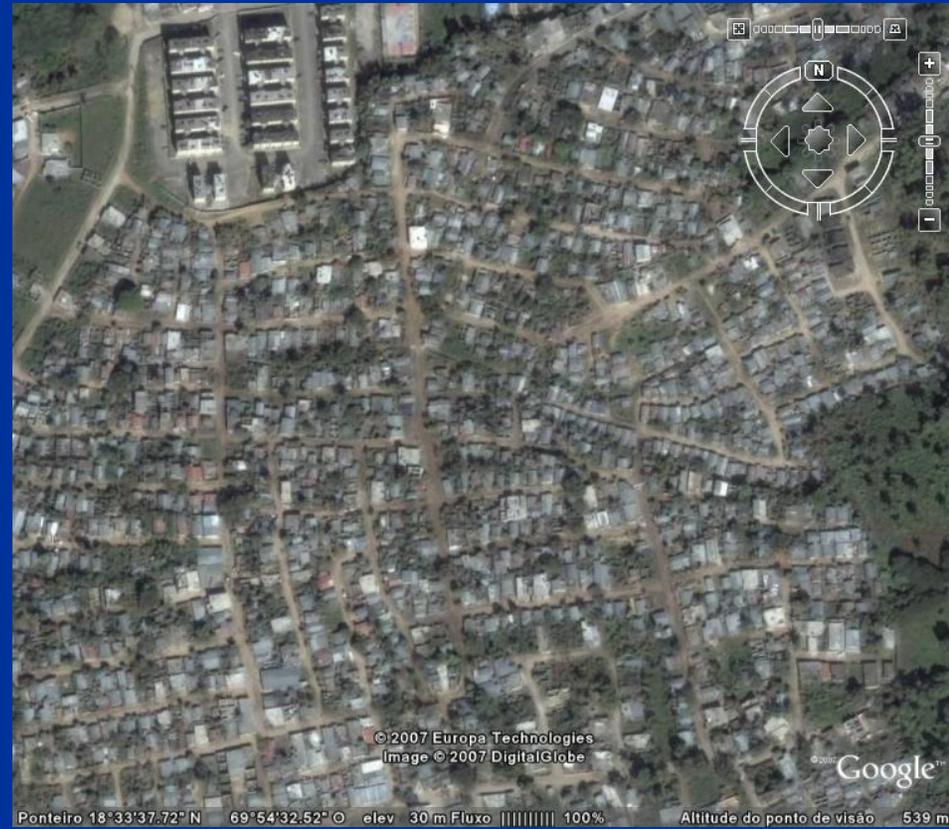
East: Border of La Caldeira volcano



Central area



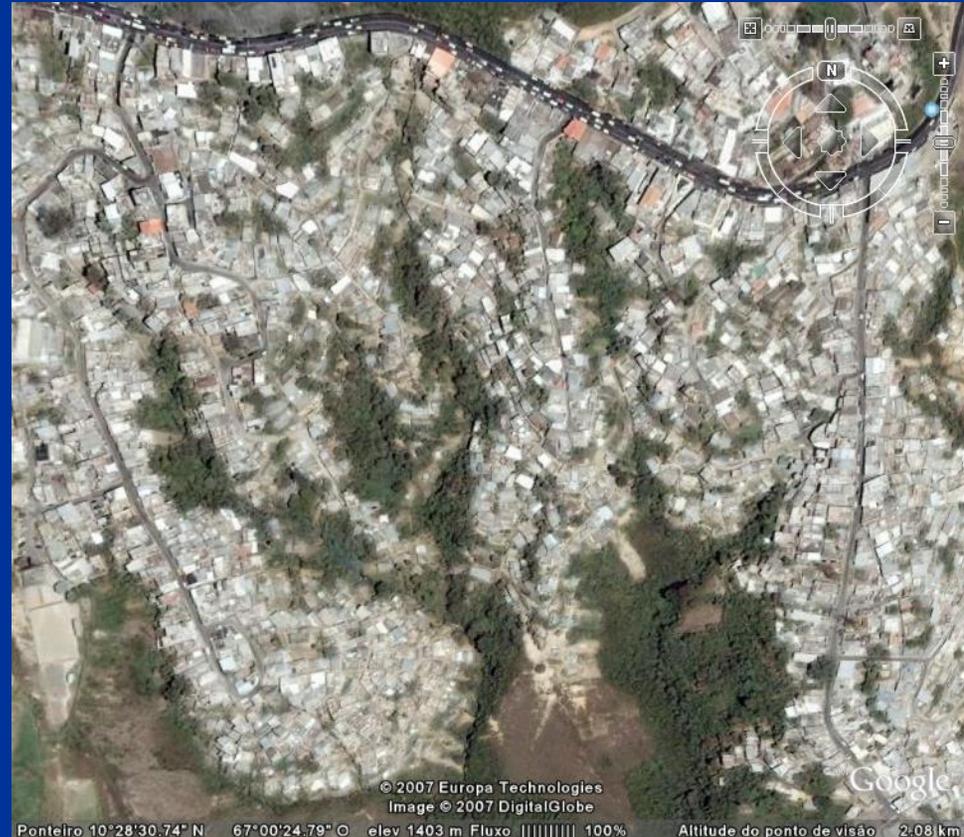
North



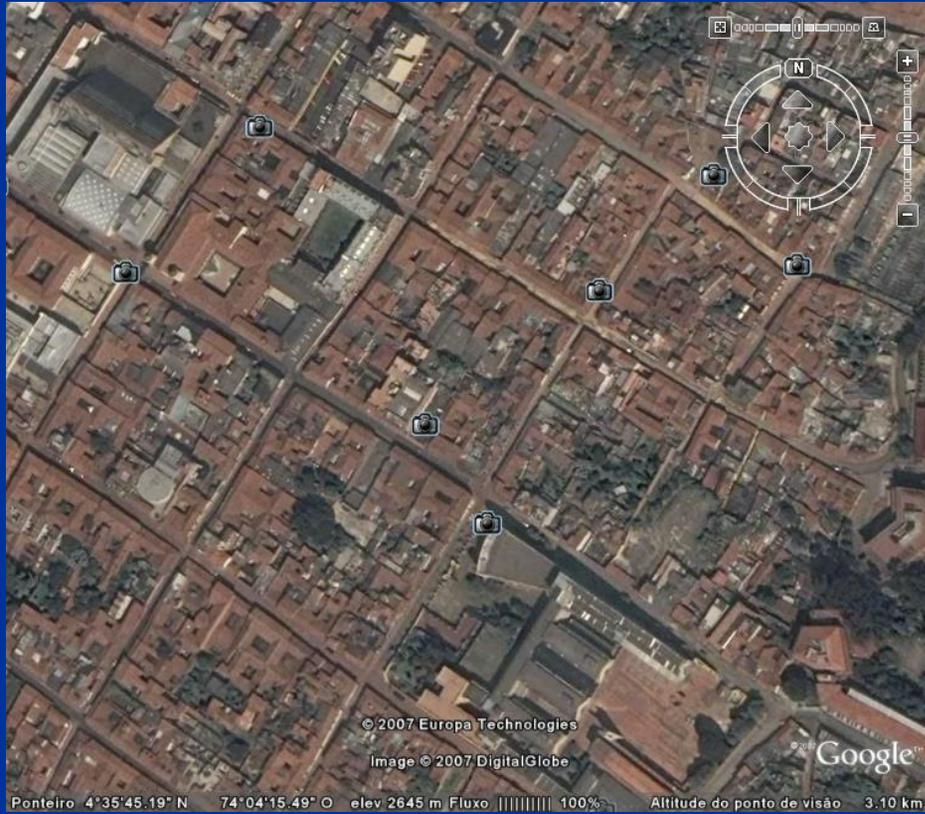
Central/North



Southwest



Central

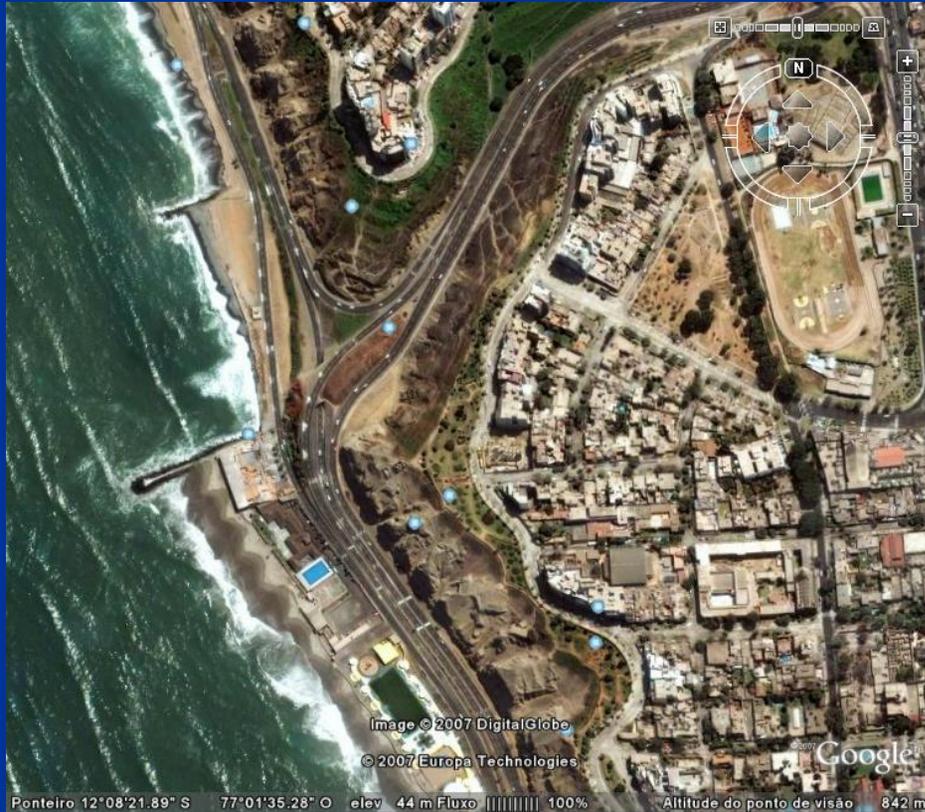


Usaquén (North)



Risk areas

Miraflores



Environmental amenities

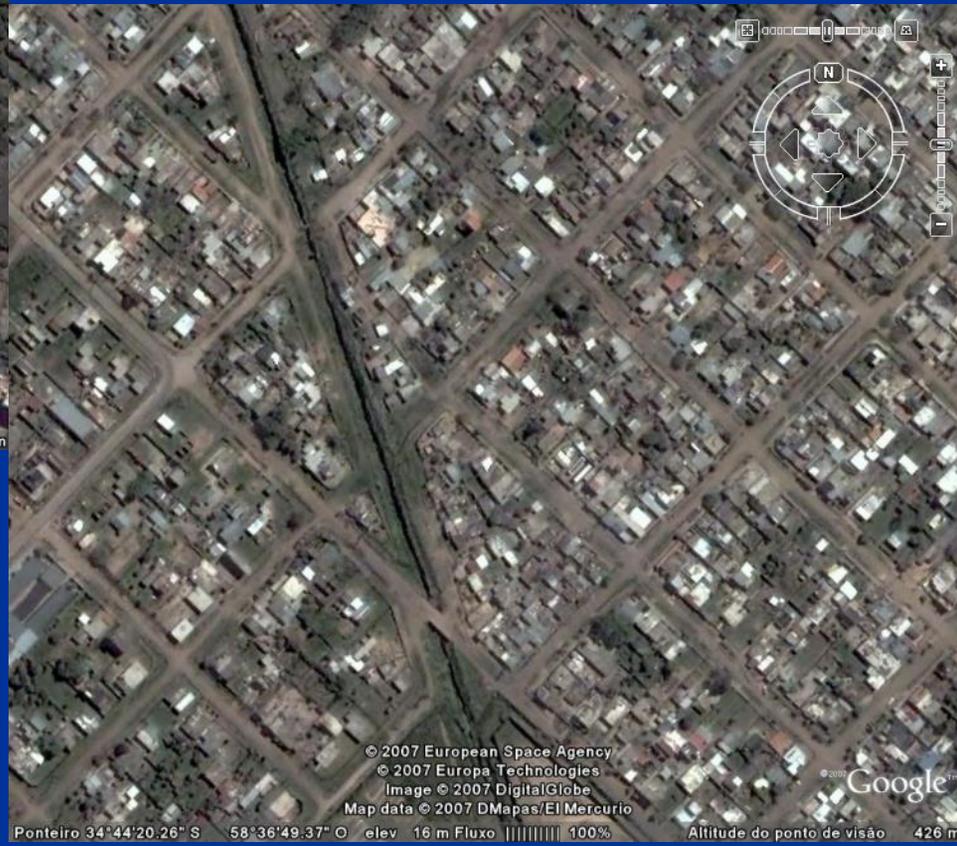
Vilarte (Northeast)



Palermo

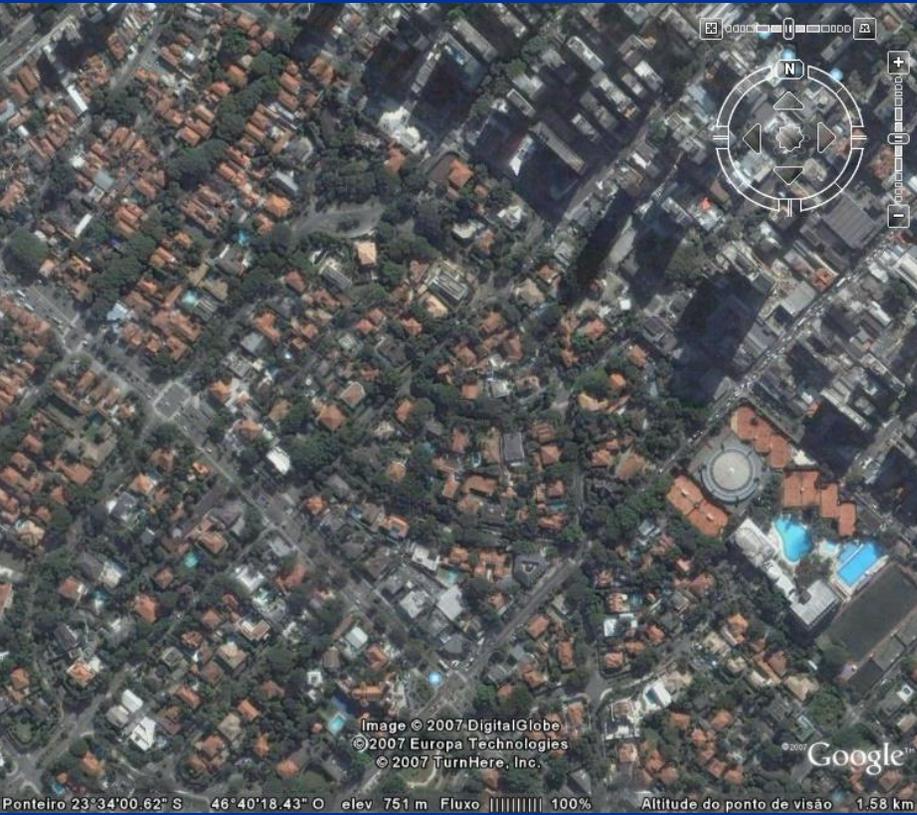


Rafael del Castillo (Southwest)

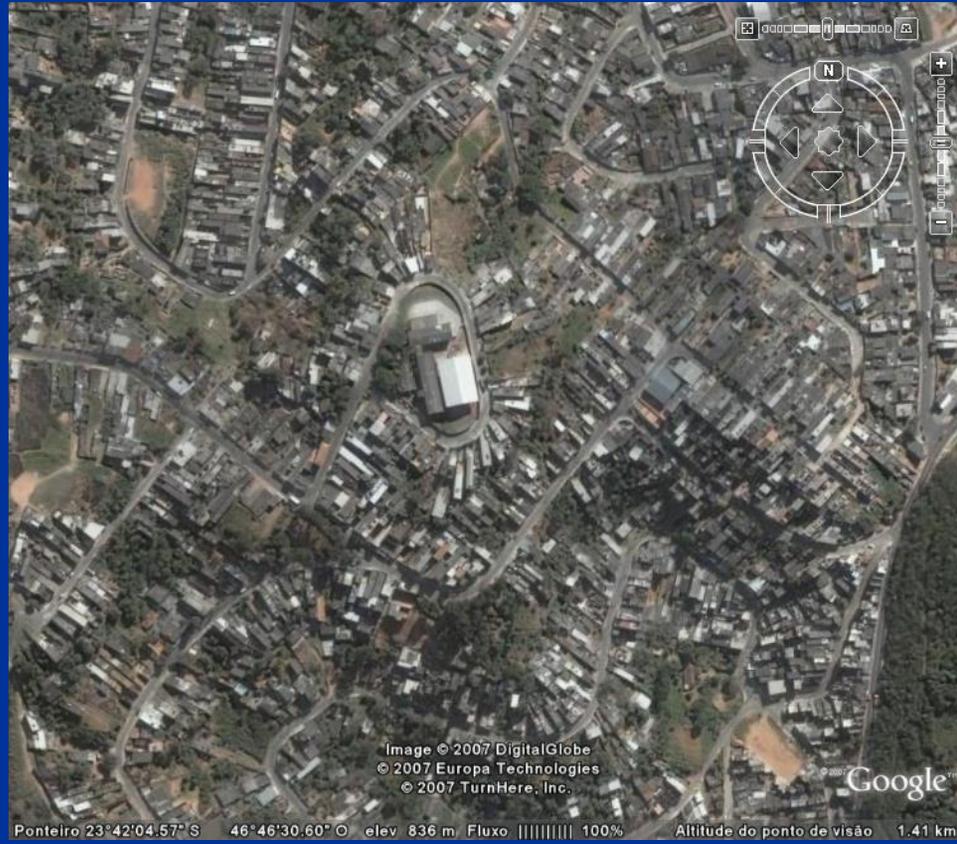


Vertical building and parks

Jardins (Central/West)



Jardim Angela (Southwest)



Active zoning

Why are peri-urban areas important? 2

Peri-urban areas:

- Will concentrate almost all population growth
- Already represent a significant share of the urban population

- Latin America's urban population 2007: 450 million*
- Latin America's urban population 2030 (E): 609 million*

Limitations

- Except for some case studies (Mexico, Sao Paulo, Santiago), we do not have hard data to fully support this argument
- Peri-urban population estimates depend on spatial data for two censuses (before 2000, most censuses had few GIS features)

Why are peri-urban areas growing?

3

1. Expensive housing markets in central areas

- Poor families and/or recent migrants unable to settle in central areas

2. Restrictive urban zoning (for central areas only)

- Zoning rationale mostly anti-growth
- Artificially increased land price

3. Inadequate housing policies

- Limited and not well funded

4. Different demographic dynamics in urban and peri-urban areas

- Peri-urban population typically younger and less educated

Zoning, parks and building norms

- Difficulties for the state to enforce urban regulation and property rights
- Invasion of parks and protected areas
- Policy unintended consequences:
 - Very restrictive urban regulations ---> More irregular occupation

Policy issues

Transportation

- Longer journeys for peri-urban dwellers
- Crowded public transport systems
- Difficulties in accessing job centers

Different types of transport system may induce or restrict urban sprawl

Policy issues

Housing

- Housing policies reduce environmental degradation
- Traditional housing policies do not avoid segregation
- Land regularization is more cost effective

Limited housing policies (except Chile)

Peri-urban information deficit

5

Invisibility of peri-urban areas

- Policy makers' residence located elsewhere
- Lack of media coverage and focus
- Inadequate registration by urban information systems

Censuses are the only sources of information on peri-urban expansion, but they are conducted only at 10-year intervals

Peri-urban information deficit

The lack of information on peri-urban trends leads to:

- Poorly located schools and health care facilities
- Crowded public facilities
- Incapacity of the state to regulate land use

Peri-urban information deficit

5

The need for “early warning systems”*

- On-the-spot indication of unexpected urban expansion
- Use of satellite images and administrative data
- Easy access for local public managers

Google Earth, although helpful, is unable to indicate urban trends

* Banerjee, Tridib (1996).

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