CHAPTER 4.

SECOA Territories and Conflicts: Data Dilemmas

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1. Introduction

The implementation of the principles of GIScience is strongly influenced by the definition of the phenomenon and the territory to be explored, the explanatory variables, and the availability of data. This chapter will deal with those issues: how the problems were placed in SECOA and which solutions have been adopted. The themes and topics characterizing SECOA are defined, and the variables chosen for analyzing, classifying, and modelling them are described.

The themes characterizing SECOA are those connected to *places* and to *conflicts*. We first discuss place and territory followed by conflict and contrast. Then, SECOA places and conflicts are defined, and SECOA variables and data are presented.

2. Places, Regions, and Territories

The notion of *place* has been the focus of intense scientific debates in geography. Cresswell (2004, p. 51) identifies three approaches in the conceptual definition of *place*: descriptive, social constructionist, and phenomenological. The first considers place in its specificity and peculiarity. It is typical of regional, cultural and human geography and serves as the basis for research on regions. Regions and places are considered as unique objects to be studied for their specific characteristics. The second approach is followed by Marxist, feminist, and post-structuralist geographers. It considers both the peculiarities of a place (per se) and the social process that leads to the construction of place. The third approach is taken by humanistic geographers, neo-humanists, and phenomenological philosophers. It considers human existence as determinant and essential in the definition of place. These perspectives can be considered as alternative or as complementary. They can also be jointly considered to obtain a holistic definition of place.

In the liquid modernity (Bauman, 2000), mobility becomes an important element in defining places. Hannam, Sheller and Urry (2006, p. 1) remind us that "the concept of mobilities encompasses both the large-scale movements of people, objects, capital and information across the world, as well as the more local processes of daily transportation, movement through public space and the travel of material things within everyday life". Thrift (1994, p. 212) wonders "what is place in this 'in-between' world? The short answer is compromised: permanently in a state of

enunciation, between addresses, always deferred. Places are 'stages of intensity'. Traces of movement, speed and circulation. One might read this depiction of 'almost places' (...)". Hannam, Sheller and Urry (2006, p. 2) observe that "the global order is increasingly criss-crossed by tourists, workers, terrorists, students, migrants, asylum-seekers, scientists/scholars, family members, business people, soldiers, guest workers and so on. Such multiple and intersecting mobilities seem to produce a more 'networked' patterning of economic and social life, even for those who have not moved."

Place, therefore, is considered in various dimensions: the objective dimension views place as a geographical space, naturalistically and environmentally determined, existing irrespective of the existence of humans; the subjective dimension views place as a geographical space defined by the presence of the subject and from the perception of the subject; the social dimension views place as a geographical space defined by the action of society or the community and by the interaction of its members; the last dimension considers place as a manifestation of a given economic and social paradigm. The place in SECOA was considered as the result of the interaction of objective, subjective, social, and economic dimensions.

In this context, place is considered as the basic unit of a region. Place is a space of living, consuming, and producing; it is the space of social relations and mobility. Place is a social construction. There is no opposition to the global dimension, and there is no definition of scale (regional, provincial, local). There is a reference to the place. Place is understood in its complexity as a spatial-physical, social, and economic entity. A place, therefore, is given by the interrelationship of a human community, settled in a given physical space in which it carries on its business and social activities. According to Sforzi (2000, p. 186), "the place is a piece of territory to which a human group gives an individuality that comes from the individual functions and the overall role it plays in the system of spatial structures of society. And since the subject, as well as the recipient of such functions is the population, whether it lives and acts in the place or visits it from time to time (Nice, 1987, pp. 117-118), here it is that the place results as a social construction". A variety of places linked together through networks gives life to the region, which is a complex and derived entity. The importance of a region can be considered a recent acquisition. In the Fordist model, the region does not appear. The factors of production — declined in different ways and with different roles in the different schools of thought — remain: land, capital and labour. In the post-Fordist models, however, land is replaced with the region understood as ground-terrain-soil, physical space, local community-social capital, local players, processes of production and consumption. The notion of region as a factor of production is much more complex than that of

land. It includes intangible factors such as synergies among local players, the interactions of the components of local community and the active participation of the institutions. Sforzi (2000, p. 187) points out that "the economic, social and political organization of the region is expressed in a system of places, and there is the distinct possibility of interpreting the society and the economy of a nation-state through a configuration of local systems".

The consideration of place in this way has led to the need to involve different disciplines, to find a common language among them, and a common way to select, analyze, synthesize, and compare the data. This will be discussed in detail in the fourth section of this chapter.

3. Conflicts and Contrasts

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, a conflict is "a serious disagreement or argument, typically a protracted one." Contrast is defined as "the state of being strikingly different from something else in juxtaposition or close association." In literature, several kinds of conflicts and contrasts are analyzed. We are interested in the conflicts and contrasts linked to the alternative uses of the natural environment and resources by different users.

The definition of conflict in the environmental field is part of the recent scientific debate; there is not a unique interpretation of what conflict means. In early publications, conflict involves violence or armed fight and refers to clashes between territorial units (e.g. neighbouring states). Homer-Dixon (1991, p. 77) was one of the first authors to introduce the concept of environmental conflict; in presenting his research, he states that "environmental change may play a variety of roles as a cause of conflict, but I bound my analysis by focusing on acute national and international conflict, which I define as conflict involving a substantial probability of violence". Libiszewski (1992, p. 14), referring to violent environmental conflicts lists three characteristics: "environmental conflicts are characterized by the principal importance of degradation in one or more of the following fields: overuse of renewable resources; overstrain of the environment's sink capacity (pollution); impoverishment of the space of living". This definition of conflict was behind the ENCOP project – (Environment and Conflicts Project), of which the author was a member. Presenting the results of the Swedish Research Programme SUCOZOMA - Sustainable Coastal Zone Management, Bruckmeier (2005, p. 66) offers a comprehensive and exhaustive classification of conflicts starting from the definition of Tillitt (1999): "a conflict arises when two (or more) people (or groups) perceive that their values or needs are incompatible – whether or not they

propose, at present or in the future, to take any action on the basis of those values or needs. Thus, while a problem or dispute relates to a specific action or situation …, a conflict can exist without such a specific focus. Two parties can be in conflict because of what each believes, regardless of whether any action has been or is being taken on the basis of the belief." Bruckmeier (2005) emphasizes that research on conflicts crosses disciplinary fields, due to the intrinsic characteristics of the object of analysis. The author laments that "instead of studying conflicts for the purpose of improved conflict resolution, of mitigation and cooperation between stakeholders they are neglected or only dealt with indirectly in research as well as in management." He summarizes the way in which conflicts have been considered in the literature into four types:

(i) Conflicts defined as dichotomies, using juxtapositions such conflicts manifest-latent, constructive and destructive, real and virtual;

(ii) Conflicts defined from the various spheres of human activity and the various scales involved, using categories such as: (a) intra-personal conflicts (psychic conflicts); (b) inter-personal conflicts (personal relations, small groups); (c) social conflicts: intra-societal conflicts (national- and sub-national levels) between groups (political, religious, economic, social, ethnic, race, gender conflicts); conflicts related to information, communication, knowledge (access or exclusion, distribution); technology related conflicts (e.g. use of nuclear energy); environmental conflicts (conflicts in environmental policy; "livelihood conflicts"); violent conflicts (civil war, criminality, terrorism); (d) international and global conflicts: power-based conflicts (for example trade wars); war; competition between socio-political systems and worldviews (East-West conflict/cold war); global conflicts about resources and distribution of resources;

(iii) Conflicts as defined by the different attitudes and behaviour of the parties involved (Rapoport, 1970): (a) fights (unwillingness to compromise), (b) games (with pre-established rules for conflict solution), and (c) debates (based on contradicting values, interests or world views); and

(iv) Conflicts as defined by the objects of contention (Schmidtz, 2000): (a) conflicts in use, (b) conflicts in values, (c) conflicts in priorities or needs.

The way in which conflicts were defined and studied in SECOA is presented in the next section.

4. Places and Conflicts in SECOA

SECOA focused on places where conflicts were occurring. Table 4.4.1 provides an overview of the regions and conflicts studied by SECOA.

Table 4.4.1 SECOA regions and conflicts.

Countries	Metropolitan/Urban Regions/Areas	Conflicts
BE	Ostend	Ostend airport
BE	Zeebrugge	Schipdonk canal; Zeebrugge harbour
IL	Haifa	Haifa Port
IL	Tel Aviv	Palmachim beach; Netanya sandstone cliffs
IN	Chennai	Pallikaranai Marshland
IN	Mumbai	Sanjay Gandhi National Park; Mangrove forest
IT	Chieti-Pescara	Costa Teatina National Park
IT	Rome	Civitavecchia; Ostia water-use & management
PT	Algarve	Barrier islands (Ria Formosa Natural Park)
PT	Funchal	Funchal bay (Madeira Island)
PT	Lisbon	Trafaria and Costa da Caparica
SE	Gothenburg	Torsviken; Kungsbacka
SE	Malmö	Managing urban sprawl; Falsterbo-Peninsula: Vellinge municipality
UK	Portsmouth	Langstone Harbour / Farlington Marshes; Tipner Regeneration
UK	Thames Gateway	Barking Riverside; Lower Thames Crossing
VN	Haiphong	Haiphong port; Industrial zone; Cat Ba
VN	Nha Trang	Nha Trang

The first problem addressed was the operational definition of places. The problem was how to define places that could be studied in a comparative way. The solution was to give a definition of place that made sense for each country and then use methods of taxonomy and modelling to make a comparison.

Places are located in coastal areas. Places are metropolitan and urban regions defined according to case-based methodologies, formed of different functional zones (Williams, 2012). Metropolitan and urban regions are considered in both their static and dynamic aspects, namely,

their structures (natural, environmental, social, economic, and urban) and the flows by which they are crossed (of persons; temporary and permanent; consumption-oriented and production-oriented). Williams (2012) identifies the following models for the definition of metropolitan areas and city-regions: (i) based on local labour market, journey to work or travel to work definitions, (ii) based on housing-market definitions, (iii) economic activity-based definitions, (iv) based on service-district definitions, (v) based on administrative area definitions, and (vi) based on transport data (as a proxy for journey to work) definitions.

The local context has been an essential element in the definition of the territories. Metropolitan and urban areas have been identified with reference to what "metropolitan area" and "urban area" mean in the different national and regional contexts. The meaning of a metropolitan area cannot be the same in India and Portugal, for instance. Accordingly, metropolitan areas were defined using a combination of different criteria and variables. They are summarized in Table 4.4.2.

Table 4.4.2. Criteria and variables used for the definition of metropolitan zones in the case studies.

Variables/Case studies	**BE**	**IL**	**IN**	**IT**		**PT**		**SE**	**UK**	**VN**
				Rome MA	**Chieti-Pescara UA**	**Lisbon MA**	**Eastern Algarve and Funchal regions**			
Administrative boundaries	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Population density and/or dynamics	X			X	X		X			
Migration	X					X				
Housing (first and/or second homes)	X			X			X			
Income	X									
Employment	X				X		X		X	
Journeys to work and/or travelling times	X	X		X		X		X	X	
Flows related to the use of services (journeys to schools, hospitals)				X						
Transport systems and/or costs				X	X					

Functional zones were identified in each metropolitan/urban area based on urban structures and data availability.

Table 4.4.3. Functional zones in the case studies.

Functional zones/Case studies	BE	IL	IN	IT	PT	SE	UK	VN
Core	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Ring	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Further subdivisions								
Inner ring		X		X		X		
Middle ring		X						
Outer ring		X		X		X		

The definition of metropolitan/urban areas and functional zones was particularly significant for some socio-economic phenomena, in particular for the study of migration and tourism. In each region, coastal areas were identified based on criteria adapted to national situations, data availability, and themes addressed. The definition of coastal area was not relevant for the processes of creating taxonomy and modelling, since the use of GIS made different information and definition compatible and comparable.

Figure 4.4.1. Ostend region and its functional zones.

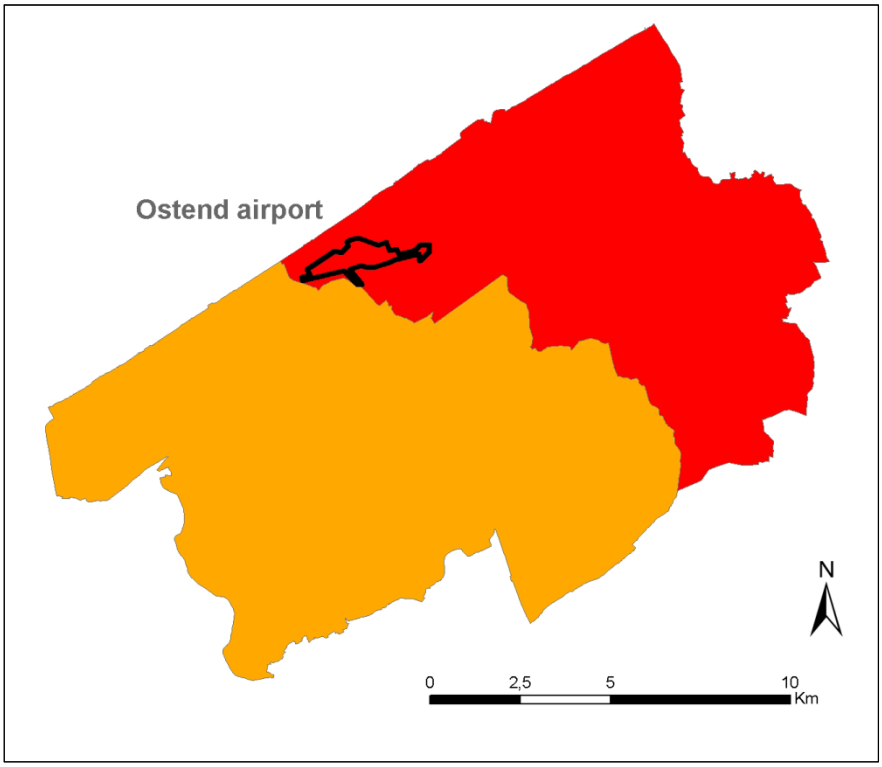


Figure 4.4.2. Zeebrugge region and its functional zones.

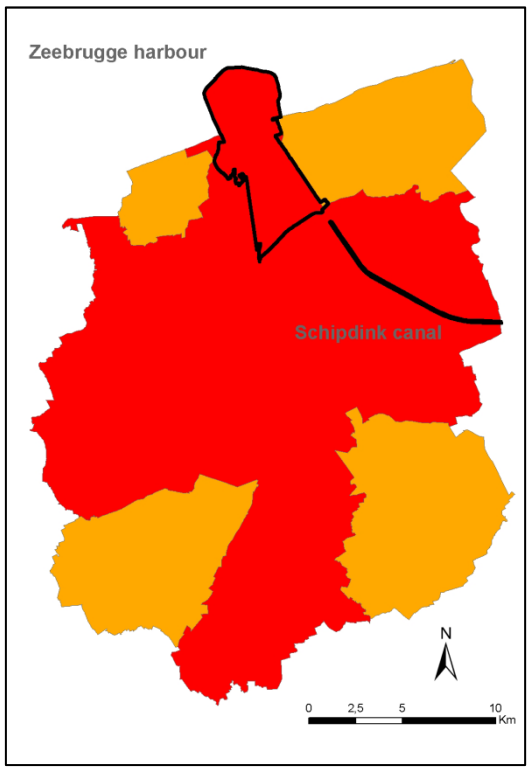


Figure 4.4.3. Haifa region and its functional zones.

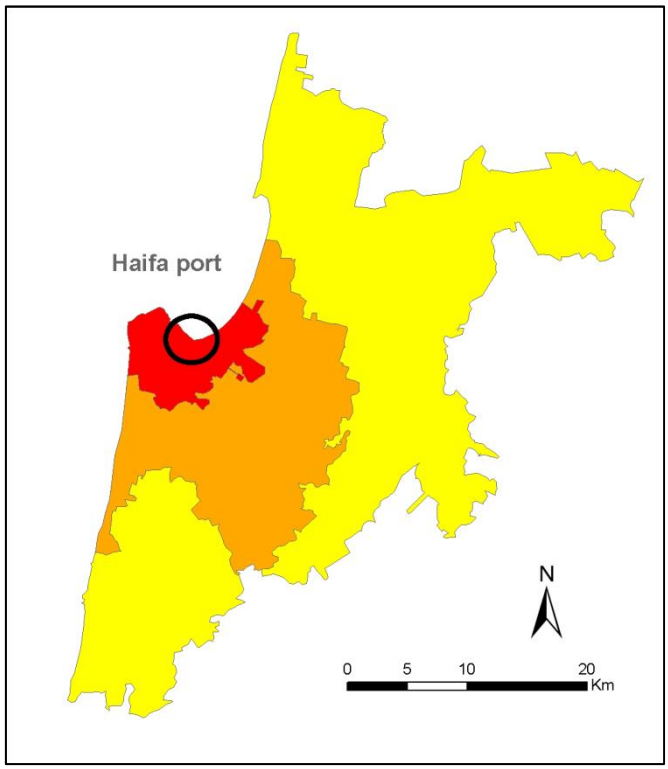


Figure 4.4.4. Tel Aviv region and its functional zones.

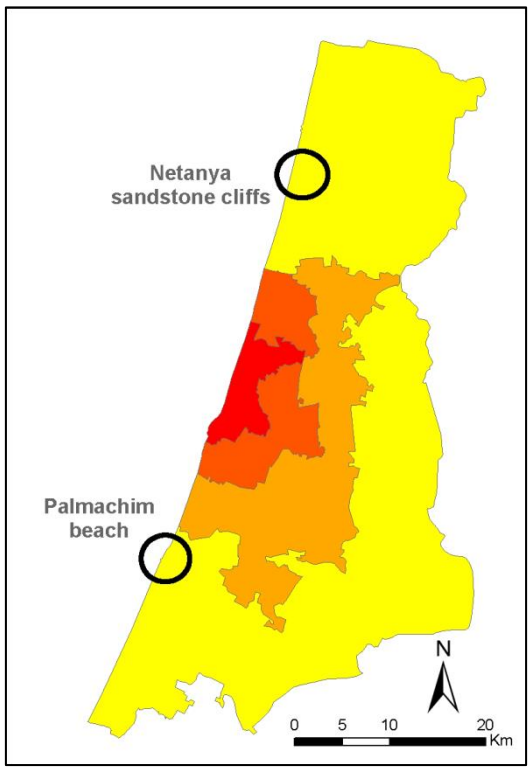


Figure 4.4.5. Chennai region and its functional zones.

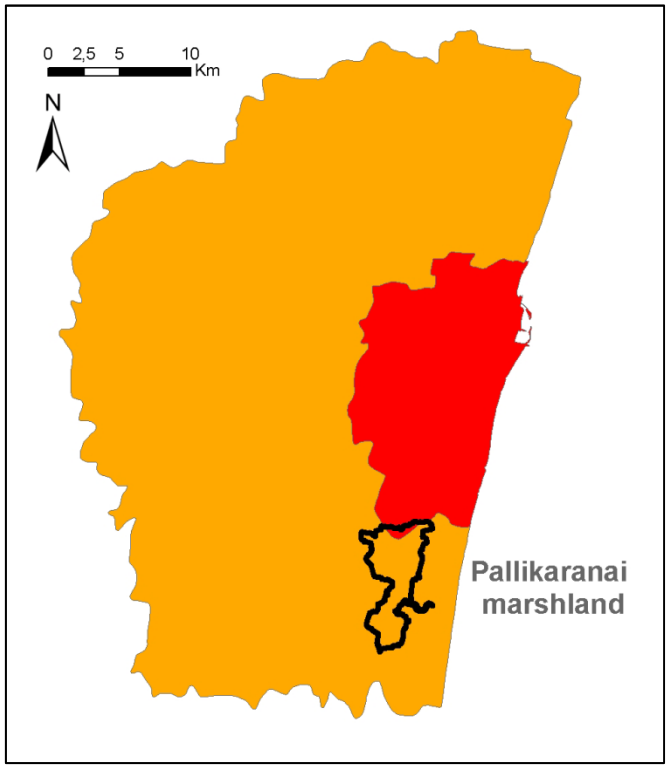


Figure 4.4.6. Mumbai region and its functional zones.

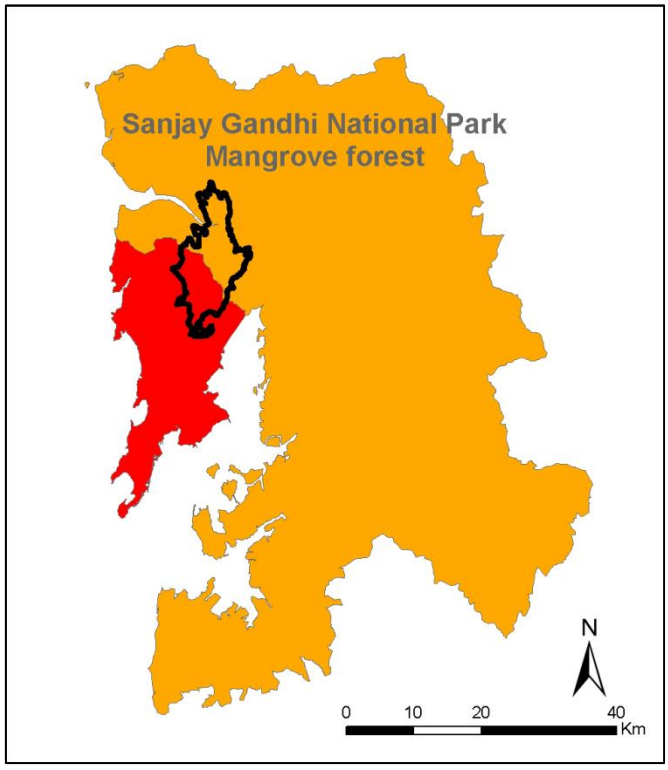


Figure 4.4.7. Chieti-Pescara region and its functional zones.

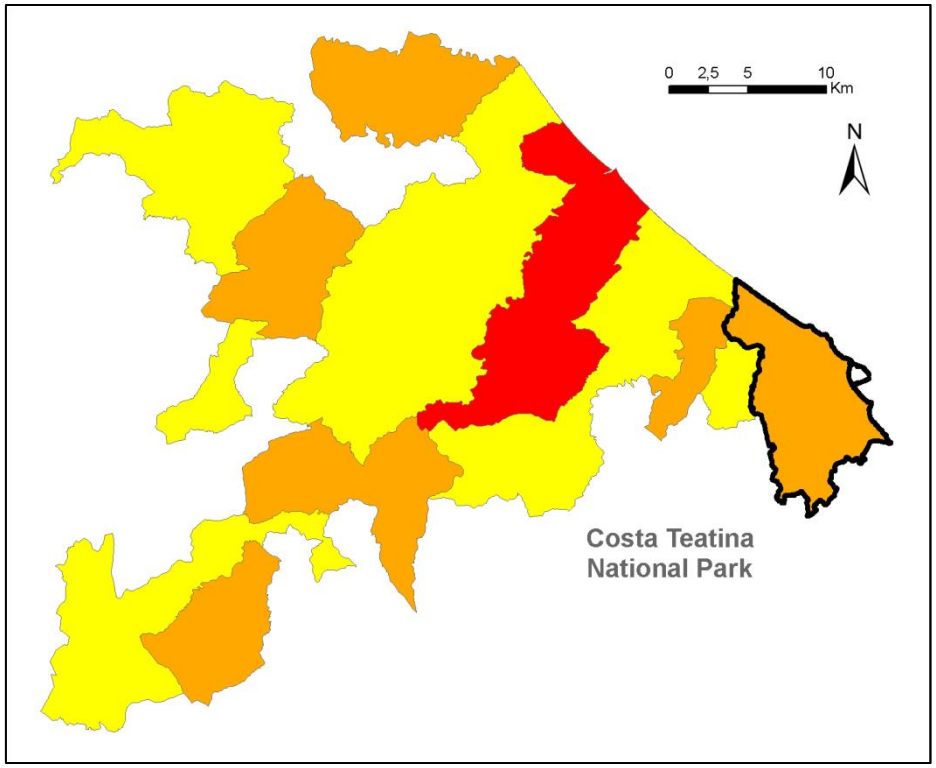


Figure 4.4.8. Rome region and its functional zones.

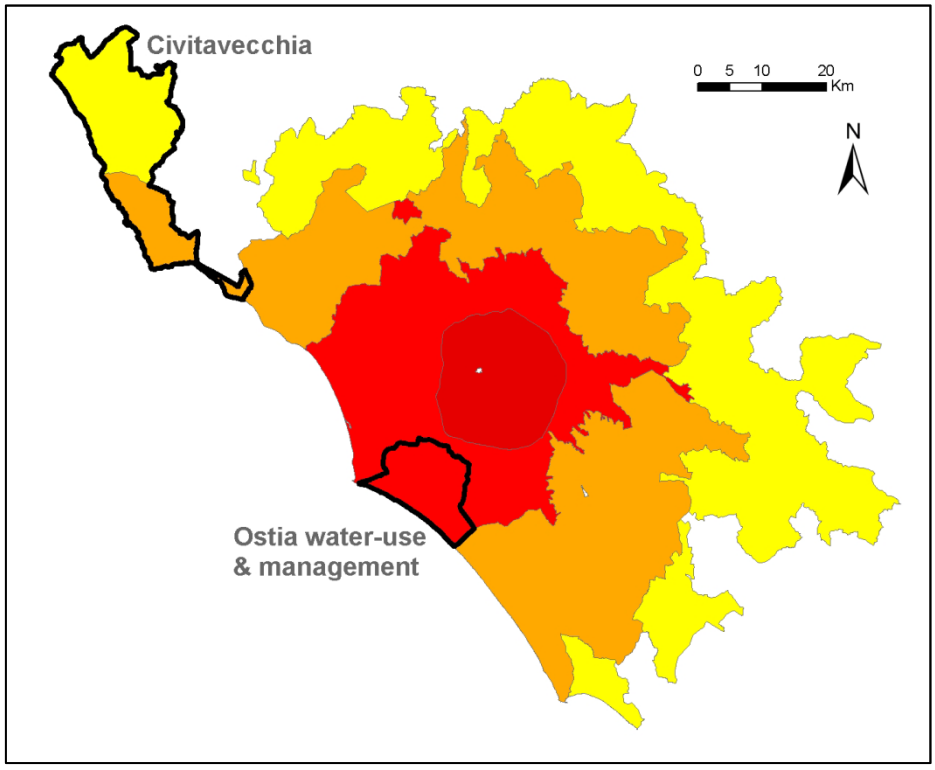


Figure 4.4.9. Algarve region and its functional zones.

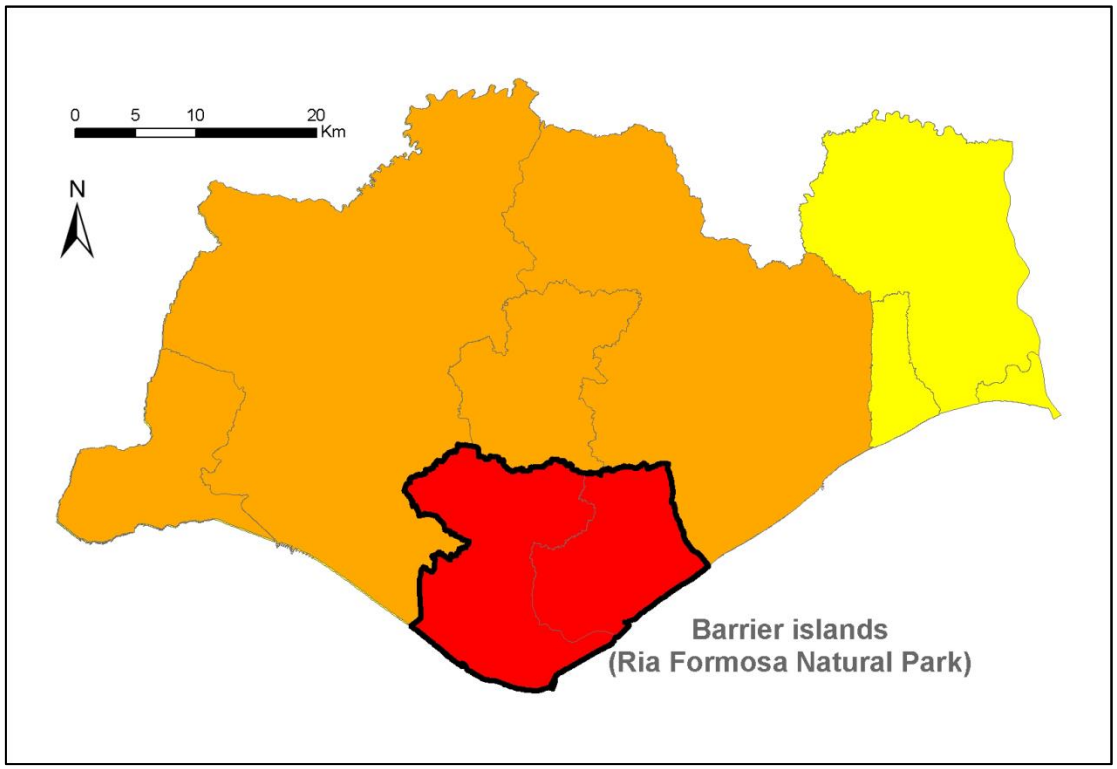


Figure 4.4.10. Funchal region and its functional zones.

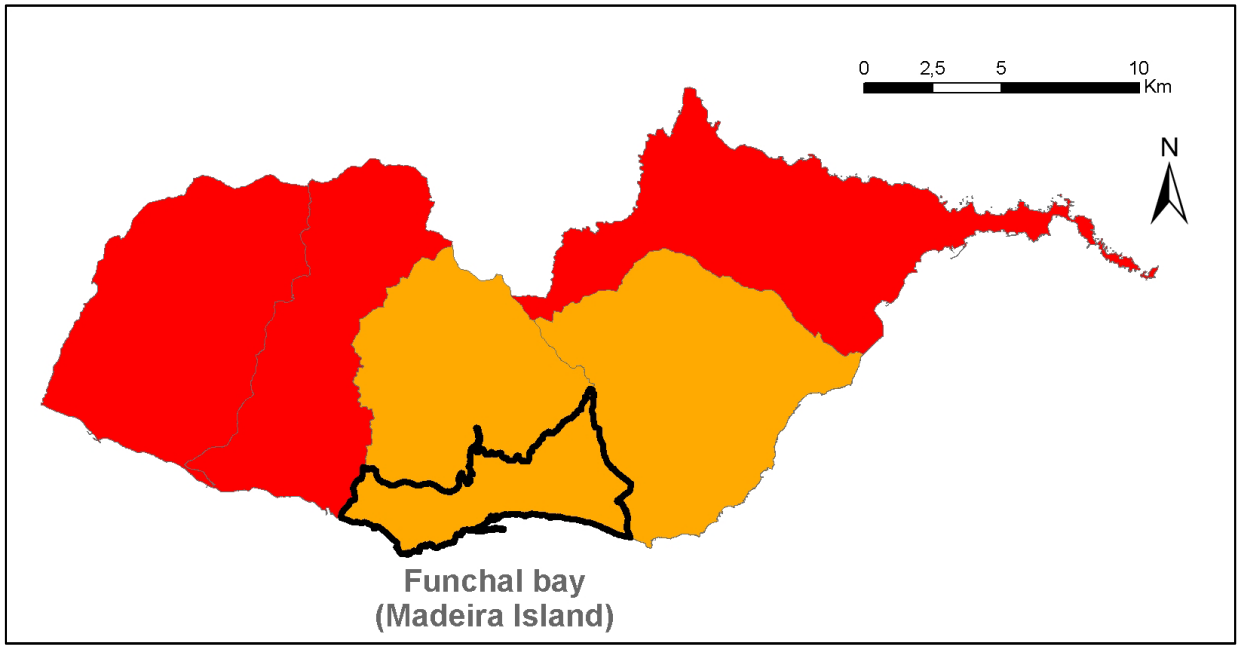


Figure 4.4.11. Lisbon region and its functional zones.

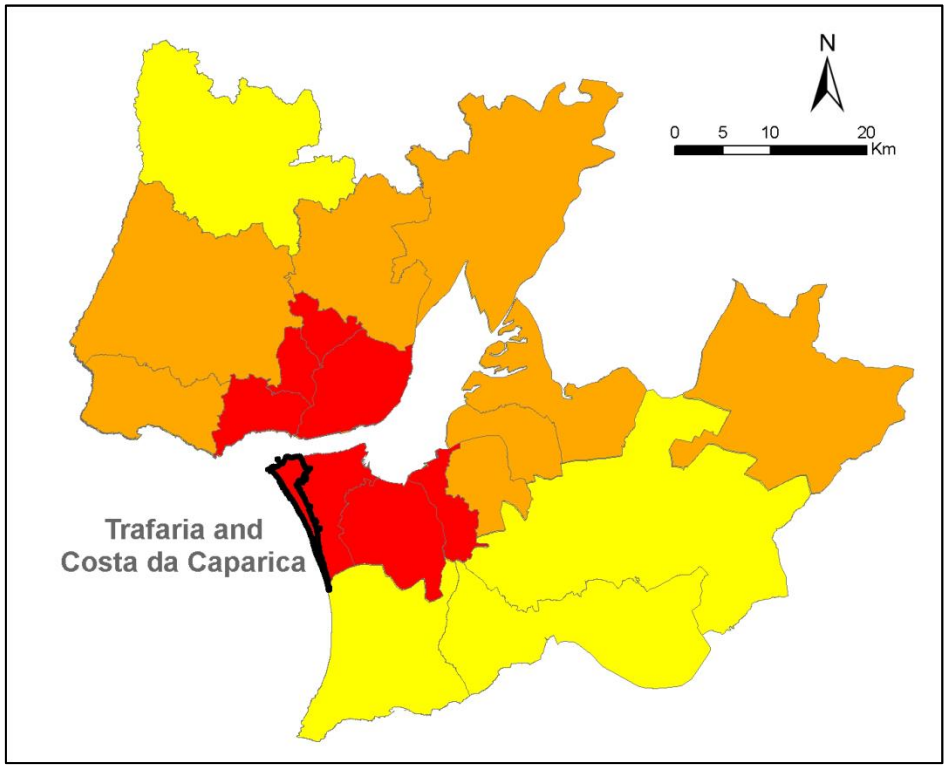


Figure 4.4.12. Gothenburg region and its functional zones.

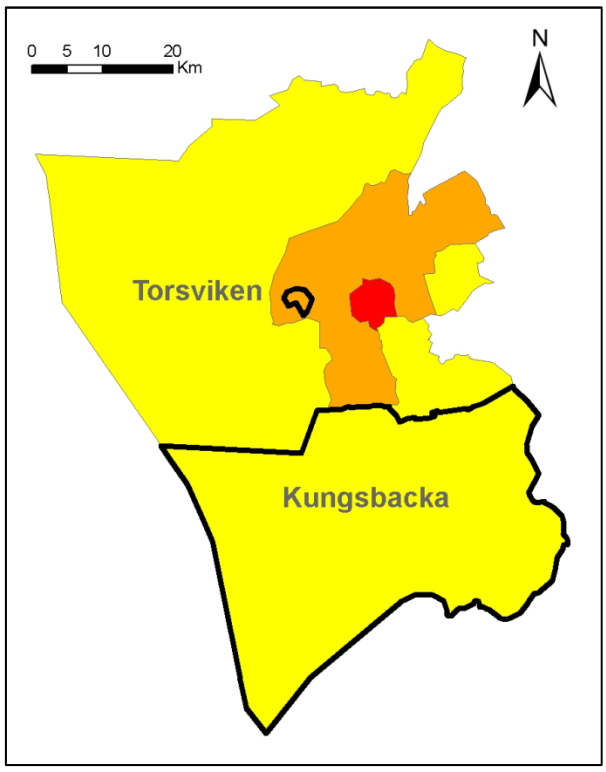


Figure 4.4.13. Malmö region and its functional zones.

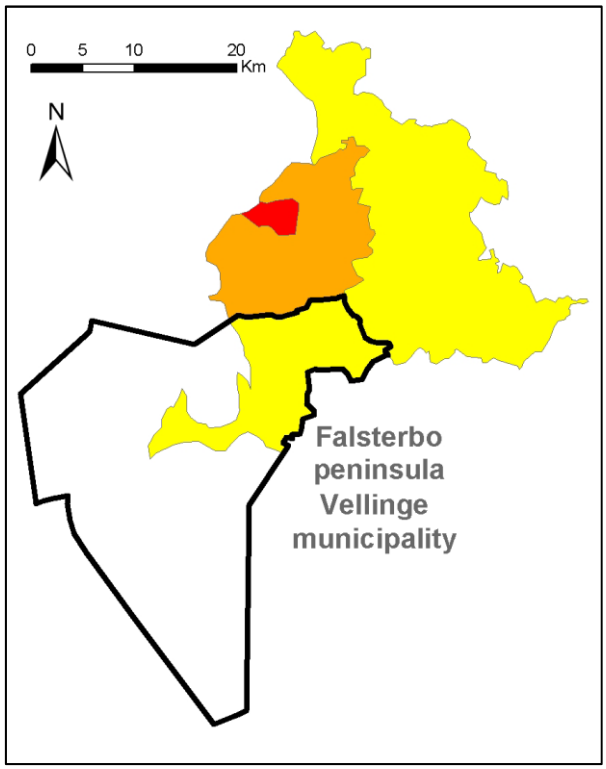


Figure 4.4.14. Portsmouth region and its functional zones.

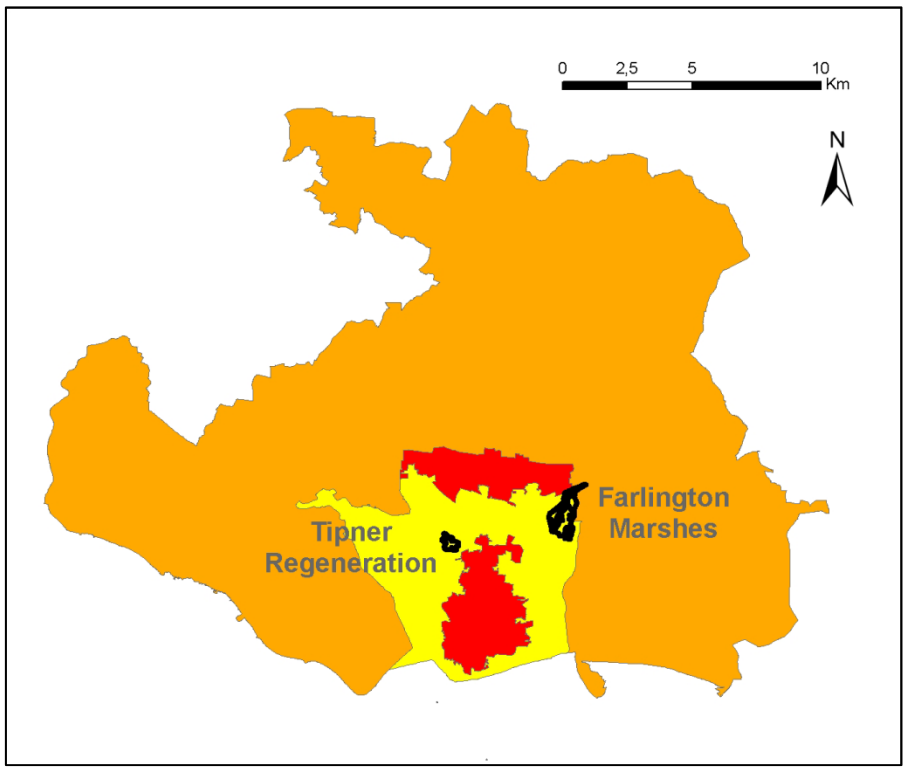


Figure 4.4.15. Thames Gateway region and its functional zones.

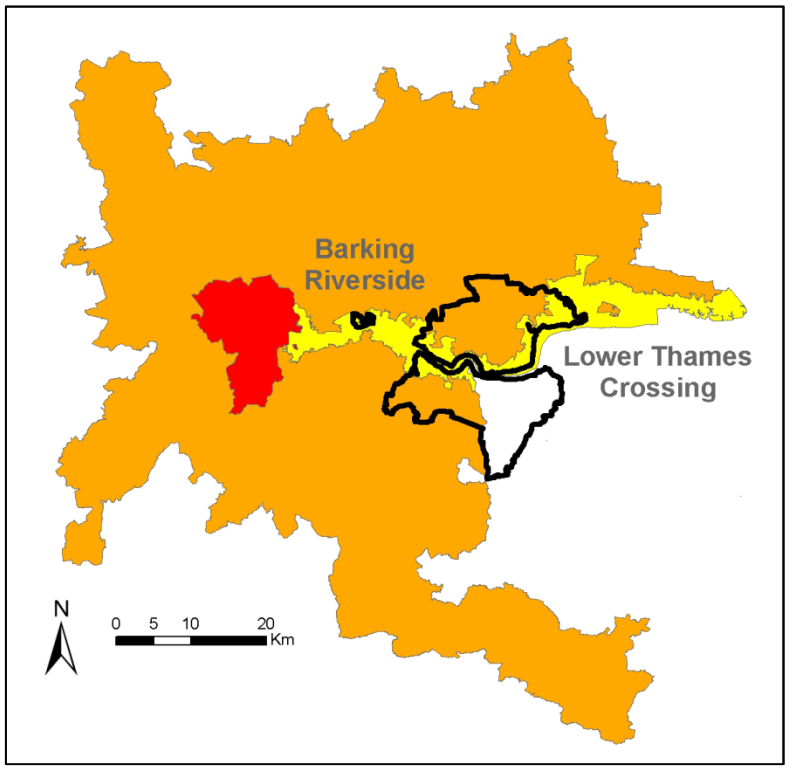


Figure 4.4.16. Haiphong region and its functional zones.

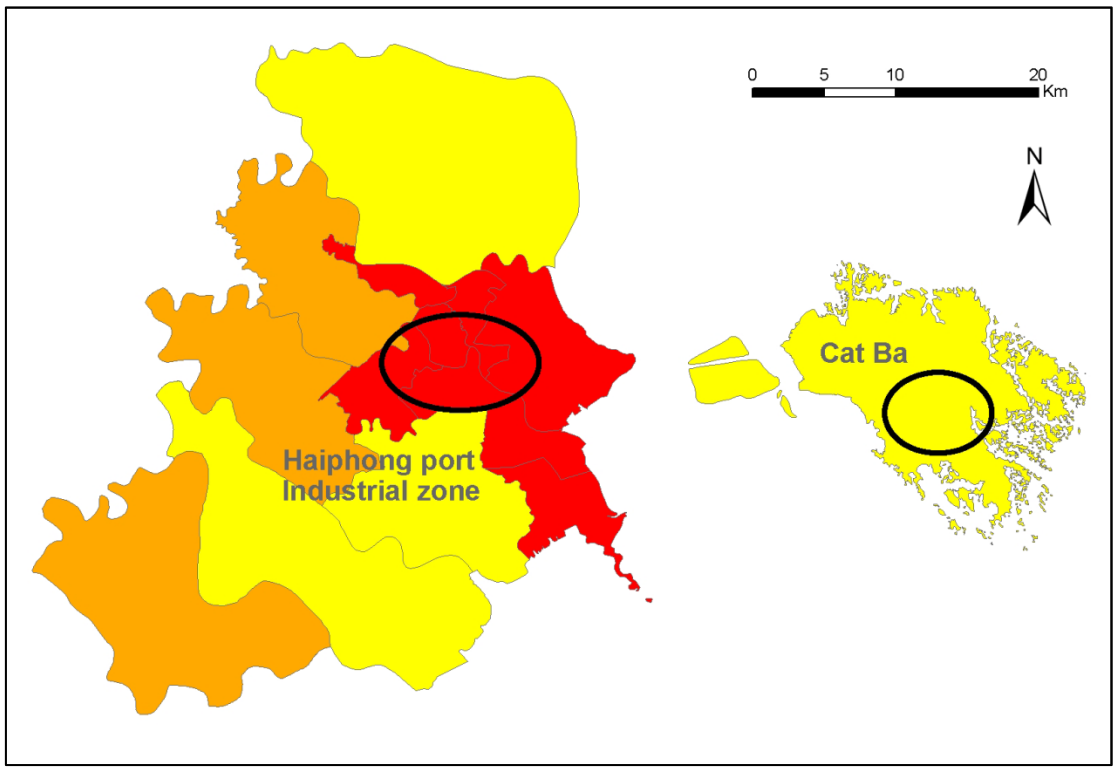
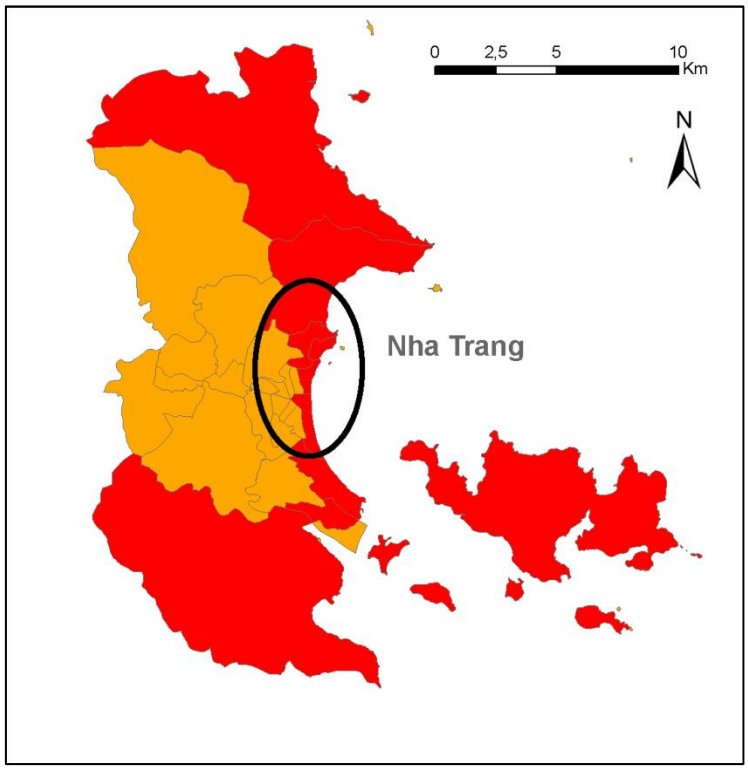


Figure 4.4.17. Nha Trang region and its functional zones.



The second problem addressed was the operational definition of conflict. What is a conflict? What are the characteristics identifying conflicts, and what is the object of the conflict? The perspective of environmental and urban policies is the one with which the theme has been addressed in SECOA. Conflicts were selected and analyzed considering that the ultimate goal was to seek innovative policies for different scenarios. It was, therefore, a policy-oriented research (Montanari, 2012). Conflicts were considered as "complex societal problems" (Khan *et al.*, 2013); conflicts in SECOA, thus, are a social construct as well as places.

Conflicts were linked to environmental issues. They were selected and defined following the Compram method as defined by De Tombe (2001). They were case-based and involved at least one of the following issues (Khan et al., 2013): (i) economic development (industrial development, tourist industry, harbour/port restructuring, marina re-construction) vs. environmental protection (creation, preservation and conservation of environmentally and ecologically sensitive, valuable and protected areas); (ii) preservation of natural sites and biodiversity; and (iii) contrasts for the use of resources between residents and newcomers for processes of human mobility. Conflicts were considered in a time span of 10 to 20 years.

Each conflict has been analyzed with respect to five aspects (Khan et al., 2013): (i) nature of the conflict, the context in which the conflict takes place and its causes; (ii) stakeholders involved in the conflict, with attention paid to their interests, goals, positions, capacities, relationships, salience; (iii) typologies of conflicts according to their manifestation, underlying cause, stage and scale; (iv) state of mediation or resolution of the conflict; and (v) ranking based on criticality, urgency and duration.

5. Descriptive and Explanatory Variables in SECOA

The transition from the idea of territory and conflict to the description of them required the definition of descriptive and explanatory variables. The choice of variables was based on two main criteria: significance, namely the ability to describe and explain the analyzed phenomena, and feasibility, namely the availability of data for all case studies. The main difficulty is posed by the second criterion. Data availability significantly diversified the case studies. Another difficulty was the difference in the languages specific to different disciplines involved in the analysis. The description of the territories required multidisciplinary analyses and the need to standardize several different languages.

Data used for the taxonomy and the model were both quantitative and geo-referenced and qualitative. The first concern natural, environmental, socio-economic characteristics of the

metropolitan and urban areas, while the second concern the analyzed conflicts. The availability of quantitative data, their homogeneity, the degree of detail, and the spatial scale are strongly country-dependent: the EU countries' data were relatively more abundant, homogeneous and spatially detailed than data for Asian countries. All data were available for two time periods of ten years each; with some differences among countries, data were available for 1991-2000 and 2001-2011.

For the physical description of the territories, variables related to land use and flood risk were used. For the description of the social and economic aspects relating to individuals, variables related to the stable part of the population (residents) and the mobile part (migrants and tourists) were used. For a description of the economic aspects of enterprises, variables related to employees and local units in the main sectors of economic activities were used. The political dimension of governance has been analyzed considering the different systems of government and the different ICZM mechanisms in the case studies. The variables considered are certainly representative of the territories but cannot be considered as exhaustive. However, they were able to explain the spatial dynamics.

Table 4.5.1. List of the variables used for the description of the territories in the SECOA taxonomy and model.

Variables	**Variables' specifications**	**Used for taxonomy (only aggregated data)**	**Used for taxonomy (both geo-referenced and aggregated data)**	**Used for model**
land use types:				
	agriculture		X	X
	industrial		X	X
	industrial-commercial		X	X
	natural		X	X
	open space		X	X
	residential mixed		X	X
	government	X		X
road network length		X		
areas at risk of:				
	flood hazard		X	X
	inundation due to sea level rise		X	X
	extreme rainfall	X		
sustainability index		X		

number of residents			X	X
number of temporary residents present		X		
number of residents by social status		X		
number of persons living in slums		X		
number of households			X	X
number of dwellings		X		
number of second homes		X		
number of temporary dwellings		X		
number of commuters		X		
unemployment rate			X	X
average income			X	X
motorization rate or number of registered vehicles			X	X
net migrants			X	X
number of tourists			X	X
peak number of passengers		X		
number of higher education students		X		
employees/local units:				
	in agriculture		X	X
	in the industrial sector		X	X
	in the tertiary sector		X	X
mechanisms of ICZM:				
	environmental impact assessment			X
	planning hierarchy			X
	setback lines			X
	marine spatial planning			X
	regulatory commission			X
political systems:				
	centralized			X
	decentralized			X
	unitary			X
	federal			X

Conflicts have been described through several characteristics and associated variables. The first group of variables concerns the object of conflict; three main themes have been identified: the conflict between economic growth and environmental protection *tout court*, the need to preserve specific natural sites and biodiversity, and the contrast for the use of resources resulting by the presence of newcomers in the area. The second, third, and fourth group of variables relate to categories of use of resources subject to a conflict, the underlying causes of the conflict (as defined by Chandrasekharan, 1996), and the size of the conflict (as defined by Warner, 2000 and Bruckmeier, 2002), respectively. The fifth and sixth group of variables concern the development of the conflict over time (as defined by Cadoret, 2009) and the stage at which the conflict is currently (as defined by Rupesinghe, 1995), respectively. The seventh group concerns a comprehensive assessment of the conflict (obtained through Delphi or alike methods).

Table 4.5.2. List of the variables used for the description of the conflicts in the SECOA taxonomy and model.

Variables	Variables' specifications	Variables' contents
Theme	Economic Development vs. environmental protection	Port/harbour restructuring, expansion and infrastructure; tourism lead infrastructure and urban development; industrial zones and airports expansion; waterfront and brown fields regeneration; energy/power generation; pollution (air, soil, water) associated; landscape/nature conservation; wildlife habitat protection; parks/beaches /protected areas; waste water management
	Preservation of natural sites and biodiversity	Preservation of natural sites/ islands /marshlands; protection of biodiversity habitats; national parks; cultural heritage and landscapes
	Human mobility and contrast for use of resources	Physical infrastructures (transport, utilities and waste water); social infrastructure (migrants/new comers, social exclusion/segregation, slums); tourism (housing, recreation and second homes); commuting (job related, daily, occasionally)
Category of uses		Ports and harbours related uses; urban growth and development in terms of specific urban functions including tourism; energy generation/production; natural environment and habitat including national parks and protected areas
Underlying cause		Change in resource quality and availability; legal/policy reasons; infringements over access; authority over resource; conflicts that are value based

Scale		Micro-macro conflicts; inter micro-micro conflicts; intra micro-micro conflicts; hybrid; between local and territorial/regional scales
Dynamics and manifestation over time		Chronic, anticipation, hybrid, hushed or deferred
Stage		Endurance, management, formation, transformation, manifestation
Final Ranking		Criticality; duration; urgency

6. Conclusion

17 coastal urban areas and 27 conflicts in SECOA have been analyzed, classified, and modelled using variables expressed through quantitative and measurable data and qualitative information. The selected variables had to meet two requirements: to be able to represent the phenomena and to be comparable through different case studies. This second requirement led to a strict selection of the variables related to quantitative data. Territories have been studied through variables related to their natural-environmental, socio-economic, and policy-related characteristics. Conflicts have been studied through variables related to their objects, their causes, their manifestation, their duration, and their scales. National, cultural, historical differences among the case studies may have affected the processes of data collection and information creation. Taxonomy and modelling aim to reducing the background noise and highlight similarities and differences.

7. References

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ABSTRACT: The present chapter addresses the definition of territories and conflicts in SECOA, the choice of variables, and related data. Territories and conflicts are considered as social constructs. Territories are studied through variables related to their natural-environmental, socio-economic, and policy-related characteristics. Conflicts are studied through variables related to their objects, their causes, their manifestations, their durations, and their scales. Variables are expressed through quantitative and measurable data and qualitative information. The involvement of multiple disciplines and very heterogeneous countries in SECOA has imposed choices of variables and data that were meaningful for the analysis of the phenomena. The 17 urban coastal areas and 27 conflicts in SECOA are presented here together with their descriptors.

KEYWORDS: Places, Territories, Conflicts, Variables, Data.

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Annex I.