

“The Importance of the Legal Approach in Socio-Urban Studies”

- Towards an Integrative Understanding of Urban Space Regulation in Algeria -

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Abstract:

This research problem addresses the city as a complex space of social, spatial, and legal interactions, arguing that traditional socio-urban studies are no longer sufficient to capture its complexity due to the dominance of mono-disciplinary approaches that separate social analysis from legal dimensions. The study starts from the assumption that law, particularly urban legislation, is not merely a technical regulatory tool, but a key actor in the production of urban space and in the reproduction of spatial inequalities and social relations

The relevance of this approach is particularly evident in the Algerian context, where an analysis of Law 90-29 on urban planning and its implementation instruments reveals a significant gap between legal texts and their practical application, as well as weak institutional coordination and sectoral fragmentation. This situation limits the effectiveness of urban law in addressing key urban issues such as informal housing, unplanned urban expansion, and spatial conflicts

Accordingly, the study aims to highlight the role of the legal approach within socio-urban analysis and its contribution to understanding urban space organization and achieving sustainable development. It emphasizes the need for an interdisciplinary framework that integrates urban sociology, law, planning, and geography. The study also discusses the main challenges hindering this integration, particularly weak law enforcement and the gap between legislation and reality.

Keywords: City; socio-urban studies; urban law; urban planning legislation; land-use planning; Law 90-29; spatial justice; sustainable urban development; interdisciplinary approach; urban governance; Algeria

Problematic:

The city, as a space of social interactions, conflicts, and representations, constitutes a complex subject that cannot be reduced to a single dimension, whether spatial, social, or legal. While socio-urban studies, since the Chicago School, have established a pioneering research tradition in analyzing urban life through sociological and anthropological approaches, they long tended to overlook the normative and institutional dimensions imposed by law as a coercive system of rules that regulates behavior and shapes space. However, contemporary developments, particularly in contexts that have experienced profound economic and political transformations such as Algeria, have necessitated a reconsideration of this methodological unilateralism and highlighted the urgent need for an integrative approach combining urban sociology and law.

Law, in its broad sense, is not merely a set of procedural texts or an instrument of administrative control; rather, it is a social phenomenon that interacts with economic, political, and cultural structures, contributing to the shaping of urban space and to the reproduction of spatial hierarchies and inequalities in the distribution of services and opportunities. From this perspective, the role of “urban legislation” — such as urban planning and development laws — emerges in regulating land use, directing urban expansion, addressing pathological phenomena such as informal housing and

spatial conflicts, and striving to achieve sustainable urban development based on spatial justice and participatory governance.

However, the Algerian experience, represented by Law 90-29 relating to urban planning and development, its planning instruments (PDAU and POS), and licensing mechanisms (urban planning certificates, conformity certificates, building permits, and demolition permits), reveals profound gaps between the legal text and lived reality, recurring failures in implementation, and the absence of a multidisciplinary vision that brings together experts in urban sociology, planning, and geography alongside legal specialists.

Accordingly, the central problematic of the article can be formulated as follows:

How can the legal approach, as one of the dimensions of socio-urban analysis, contribute to understanding the organization of urban space, addressing urban problems, and achieving sustainable development within an Algerian context characterized by weak implementation of legal texts, a gap between legislation and reality, and the dominance of single-discipline methodologies? Furthermore, what are the challenges confronting this approach, and what conditions are required to overcome them in favor of an integrative model linking law, sociology, planning, and geography?

To answer this problematic, the article is structured around three main axes:

First, the theoretical grounding of the relationship between law and socio-urban studies, through the clarification of key concepts (socio-urban studies, law, urban legislation, integrative approaches, spatial justice, and the right to the city).

Second, highlighting the importance of law in analyzing urban phenomena by regulating space, addressing urban problems (informal housing, unregulated urban expansion, spatial conflicts, and urban crime), and promoting sustainable development (environmental protection, social justice, and governance).

Third, discussing the challenges facing the legal approach, particularly the weak enforcement of urban laws, the gap between legal texts and lived reality, and the urgent need for a multidisciplinary approach, relying on classical and contemporary references and analyzing the Algerian case in light of Law 90-29 and its related regulatory texts.

First: Theoretical grounding of the relationship between law and socio-urban studies

The legal approach in socio-urban studies represents an emerging methodological trend that seeks to transcend the traditional boundaries between sociology and law, and to reinterpret the urban phenomenon in light of its dialectical relationship with normative frameworks that produce space and regulate practices (Grafmeyer, Y., & Authier, J. Y. (2011). *Sociologie urbaine* (2nd ed.). Armand Colin, pp. 7–12).

The city is no longer merely a geographical space or a set of social relations; it has become a fundamentally legal object (Lefebvre, H. (1968). *Le droit à la ville*. Anthropos, p. 45).

In this context, the theoretical grounding of the relationship between law and socio-urban studies requires addressing five key concepts: socio-urban studies, law, urban legislation and its fields of intervention, the complementary relationship between law and urban sociology, and finally the legal regulation of urban behavior, spatial justice, and the right to the city (Ost, F., & van de Kerchove, M. (2002). *De la pyramide au réseau ? Pour une théorie dialectique du droit*. FUSL, p. 33).

1 – Concept of socio-urban studies

a. Definition: Socio-urban studies (or urban studies) are defined as the sociological study of cities and urban life, focusing on analyzing social life and human interactions within urban areas (Lambert, A. (2013)). It is an established field within sociology that seeks to examine urban structures,

processes, transformations, and problems in order to provide insights that support planning and decision-making (Grafmeyer & Authier, 2011, *Sociologie urbaine*, p. 17).

This field aims to understand the reciprocal relationship between humans and their urban environments: how living in cities affects people and how people in turn shape the cities in which they live (Castells, M. (1972). *La question urbaine*. François Maspero, p. 32).

Definitions of socio-urban studies vary according to theoretical schools but they all converge on the idea that it is a branch of sociology concerned with studying the city as a social phenomenon moving beyond viewing it as a mere collection of buildings and roads to understanding it as a complex fabric of relationships, interactions, conflicts, and representations. (Grafmeyer & Authier, 2011, *Sociologie urbaine*, pp. 19–22).

b. Origin and emergence: Socio-urban studies experienced significant academic development in North American scholarly circles through a group of sociologists and theorists at the University of Chicago, during the period extending from the second decade of the twentieth century to the 1940s, a phase known as the Chicago School of Sociology (Park, R. E., Burgess, E. W., & McKenzie, R. D. (1925). *The City*. University of Chicago Press, pp. 1–15).

The Chicago School combined sociological theory with anthropological approaches and ethnographic fieldwork, focusing on the study of urban social organization, migration, deviance, and ethnic relations (Grafmeyer & Authier, 2011, *Sociologie urbaine*, pp. 27–30).

This school was founded by prominent figures such as Robert Park, Ernest Burgess, and Louis Wirth, who developed influential theories of urban growth, including the “Concentric Zone Model” and the concept of “natural moral areas” within the city (Burgess, E. W. (1925). *The Growth of the City*, in Park et al., *the City*, pp. 47–62).

The legacy of the Chicago School was later divided into two main currents: an interpretive approach represented by the work of Erving Goffman, and a quantitative/statistical approach represented by scholars such as Samuel Stouffer and James Coleman (Becker, H. S. (1998). *Tricks of the Trade*. University of Chicago Press, pp. 33–37).

c. Main topics of socio-urban studies

Socio-urban studies address a wide range of themes, which can be summarized as follows:

This field focuses on urban growth and spatial expansion by analyzing how cities develop and expand, as well as the factors influencing this process such as migration and economic transformations (Castells, 1972, p. 65). It also concentrates on spatial differentiation and the social division of space, namely the analysis of how social groups are distributed within urban space, including phenomena of exclusion and spatial marginalization (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 201).

It further examines social relations and everyday interactions, seeking to understand the nature of relationships among city residents, from neighborly ties to broader social networks (Goffman, 1973, pp. 29–31).

Urban studies also address deviance and urban crime, exploring the relationship between urban structure and crime rates, as well as the emergence of “criminal areas” within cities (Shaw & McKay, 1942, pp. 98–103).

In addition, the field is concerned with urban policies and public intervention, analyzing the impact of housing, planning, and urban development policies on different social groups (Grafmeyer & Authier, 2011, pp. 73–86).

A further key dimension is the study of social representations of space, that is, how residents perceive their city and neighborhoods, and how these perceptions shape their behavior and practices (Lynch, 1960, p. 46).

Finally, socio-urban studies increasingly extend to contemporary transformations such as digitalization, smart cities, gentrification, and environmental crises, in order to keep pace with ongoing changes in contemporary urban life and their social implications (Sassen, 2012, p. 85).

1 – Concept of law:

Linguistically, law is defined in the Al-Mu‘jam al-Wasīṭ (Intermediate Dictionary) as “the standard of everything and its path.”

From a technical (jurisprudential) perspective, it is defined in a broad sense as a set of legal rules that regulate individuals’ behavior in society and are accompanied by sanctions imposed on those who violate them. In a narrower sense, it refers to the set of legal rules established only by the legislative authority (Jadou, Fatima Zohra, 2018, Introduction to Legal Sciences, Algeria, Dar Belkis).

2 – Urban legislation:

Urban legislation is defined as a set of legal texts issued by the competent authority with the aim of regulating urban life, controlling land use, and guiding the urbanization process (Jadou, 2018, p. 30). Algerian Law No. 90-29 establishes the general rules governing the organization of the production of land suitable for urbanization and the formation and transformation of buildings, and it also aims at protecting the environment and natural ecosystems (Article 01, Law 90-29, 1990).

a. Fields of intervention of urban legislation

The areas of intervention of urban legislation are diverse and cover the following key dimensions:

Urban planning and construction regulation: This includes defining the conditions for carrying out construction projects, issuing building permits, and monitoring compliance of buildings with legal standards (Article 06, Decree 91-176, 1991).

Land-use regulation: This involves allocating zones for housing, industry, commerce, agriculture, and green spaces, as well as controlling population density and building heights (Grafmeyer & Authier, 2011, pp. 73–86).

Environmental and heritage protection: Urban legislation aims to protect the urban environment, natural surroundings, landscapes, and cultural and historical heritage (Grafmeyer & Authier, 2011, pp. 41–58).

Transport and mobility management: This concerns the organization of urban transport networks and related infrastructure.

Infrastructure and public services regulation: It defines the location and conditions for establishing public facilities such as schools, health centers, and recreational spaces (Grafmeyer & Authier, 2011, pp. 41–58).

Urban control and sanctions: This includes establishing penalties and sanctions for violations of urban planning regulations (Grafmeyer & Authier, 2011, pp. 73–86).

b. Difference between urban planning law and urban law

Many confuse the concepts of “urban planning law” and “urban law,” although they differ in scope, subject matter, and purpose, as follows:

Urban planning law (Droit de l’urbanisme): This field primarily concerns the regulation of buildings, land, and activities related to construction and land subdivision. It focuses on the technical aspects of urban development and real estate property (Decree 91-176, 1991). It is narrower and more specialized, aiming to control urban expansion, ensure building safety, and guarantee compliance with urban planning and aesthetic standards (Grafmeyer & Authier, 2011, pp. 41–58).

In Algeria, examples include Law No. 90-29 on land-use planning and urban development (Law 90-29, 1990) and Decree 91-176 regulating building, subdivision, and demolition permits (Decree 91-176, 1991).

Urban law (Droit de l'urbain):

Urban law goes beyond the regulation of construction to encompass the overall management of the city, including issues of housing, transport, environment, public services, and security. It is concerned with establishing “urban life” in its entirety (Lefebvre, 1968, p. 45). It is broader and more comprehensive, aiming to achieve sustainable urban development and social justice within the city, while guaranteeing the “right to the city” for all inhabitants (Lefebvre, 1968, p. 45).

In Algeria, urban law includes Law No. 90-29 itself, but extends beyond it to incorporate other legislative texts such as Law No. 01-20 on spatial planning and sustainable development (Law 01-20, 2001), Law No. 08-15 on building compliance, Law No. 11-10 on the municipality, and Law No. 20-05 on the prevention of discrimination (Law 20-05, 2020).

1 – The complementary relationship between law and urban sociology:

The relationship between law and urban sociology is not one of separation or strict differentiation, but rather an organic and complementary one. Law, as a normative and coercive system, cannot be understood or studied in isolation from the urban social reality in which it is applied. Conversely, urban sociology, which studies interactions, relations, and conflicts within the city, cannot ignore the legal frameworks that shape and regulate these practices. This complementarity stems from the very nature of the city itself, which is not merely a physical space inhabited by people, but a living entity shaped by a complex interplay between social practices and formal regulations (Grafmeyer & Authier, 2011, pp. 7–12).

This complementary relationship is grounded in the idea that the city constitutes a fertile field for both spontaneous and institutional forms of social control. Social control is not limited to norms and values that regulate everyday relations and foster cohesion among residents; it also extends to laws and regulations that provide a formal framework for behavior and define sanctions for violations (The city as a field of social control, 2022, pp. 19–20). Both represent two sides of the same coin: while customs and traditions contribute to maintaining social stability within neighborhoods, formal legislation intervenes as a regulatory mechanism to complement—and in some cases replace—informal norms, in response to the increasing complexity of urban life and the diversification of behavioral patterns (Social impacts of urbanization, 2022, p. 20).

The complementary relationship can be detailed through the following points:

Joint role in organizing daily urban life: Law and urban sociology are seen as complementary tools for analyzing and regulating individual behavior in the city. Urban sociology provides an understanding of the social context (such as poverty, marginalization, and spatial conflict), while law translates this understanding into binding rules and regulatory procedures.

Providing integrated solutions to urban problems: Issues such as informal housing and unplanned urban expansion require solutions that go beyond the legal dimension (e.g., sanctioning violations) to include social and economic policies grounded in a sociological understanding of the underlying causes of these phenomena.

Evaluation of urban policies and legislation: Urban sociology provides the tools necessary to assess the social impact of urban laws and policies, as well as their fairness and effectiveness in achieving intended goals (Jeammaud & De Terssac, 1984, as cited in “Relation entre le droit et la sociologie urbaine”, p. 11). It also helps reveal the unintended consequences of legal interventions.

Thus, the relationship between law and urban sociology forms a dialectical duality: law seeks to shape the city according to a normative vision, while it simultaneously encounters a dynamic social reality that reshapes and reinterprets it.

This is the essence of complementarity that enables a deeper understanding of the complexities of the contemporary city.

Second: The importance of law in analyzing urban phenomena

The legal approach to the urban phenomenon is not limited to viewing law merely as an administrative mechanism for regulating space; rather, it goes beyond that by considering law as a factor that contributes to shaping the city and reproducing social relations within it. As previously defined, law does not only draw the technical boundaries of urbanization, but also regulates patterns of coexistence through the nature of interaction between humans and their urban environment. This will be addressed through urban planning mechanisms and land-use regulation.

However, the imbalances produced by reality—such as informal housing, unplanned urban expansion, territorial conflicts, as well as manifestations of deviance and urban crime—have necessitated the emergence of legal texts aimed at addressing these problems. This will be examined in the second section through mechanisms of deterrence, prevention, and regularization.

Yet the social function of law does not stop at regulation and intervention; it also extends to a forward-looking dimension aimed at achieving sustainable urban development based on strengthening social justice, meeting citizens' needs through public facilities, and preserving the urban environment by promoting principles of participatory urban governance and transparency, ultimately leading to the challenges facing this approach within socio-urban studies.

1 – Law and the regulation of urban space:

From a sociological perspective, it is not possible to address urban transformations in Algeria without referring to the legislative development that accompanied economic change. If Law No. 87-03, issued on 27 January 1987, was the first law regulating urban space in Algerian cities, it was later repealed in 2001 by Law No. 01-20 of 12 December 2001 on spatial planning and sustainable development, reflecting Algeria's adoption of a market-oriented economic system.

Law No. 90-29 on land-use planning and urban development, along with its implementing decrees, constitutes the main reference framework for urban policy. This is operationalized through the Urban Master Plan (PDAU), which defines spatial planning and urban management of the city, highlighting—among other aspects—the concentration of services and activities, as well as the location and nature of major facilities and infrastructure (Article 18 of Law 90-29).

In order to regulate the behavior of urban society and organize social relations within the city, the same law has framed construction activities through a set of pre- and post-construction mechanisms, represented by three certificates namely the urban planning certificate, the conformity certificate, and the subdivision certificate as well as three permits: the subdivision permit, the building permit (Article 06 of Decree No. 91-176), and the demolition permit.

Despite the importance of the legal approach in organizing urban space and regulating relations within the city, it has also revealed a strong focus on the formal and administrative dimension at the expense of the city's social reality. In addition, administrative complexities have created a gap between legal provisions and actual implementation, particularly in the face of phenomena such as informal housing and unregulated urban expansion. Moreover, weak enforcement of control mechanisms may reduce the effectiveness of achieving justice and proper regulation within urban space. (Planning and development, housing, and land use)

1 – The role of law in addressing urban problems:

The analysis of law's role in addressing urban problems reveals a dialectical relationship between legal frameworks and spatial social reality. In the case of informal housing and unregulated urban expansion, Algerian legislation shows an apparent contradiction between deterrence and regularization, reflecting the complexity of the phenomenon itself.

On the one hand, the deterrence approach—stemming from Law No. 90-29, its amendments, and related decrees—has highlighted the emergence of informal housing as a consequence of vulnerable groups resorting to construction outside legal frameworks. To address this, the law has granted chairpersons of municipal popular assemblies the authority to enforce demolition procedures through the use of public force (Law No. 11-10 on the municipality). This approach has been further reinforced by criminal law provisions and by the 2023 law on the protection and preservation of state land, which introduced a set of custodial sentences and financial penalties targeting illegal urban expansion (Law No. 23-18, 2023).

On the other hand, the legal system has also adopted a regularization strategy for buildings constructed before 2008 through the law on building conformity and completion (Law No. 08-15), which has been periodically extended, most recently under the 2026 finance law. This orientation implicitly acknowledges the limits of pure deterrence, seeking instead to integrate informal neighborhoods into the urban fabric.

Regarding spatial conflicts, which are among the most complex urban problems, the law primarily addresses them through the lens of property disputes, often arising from inheritance issues following the death of a father or grandfather. These cases are handled by granting the affected party the right to resort to judicial proceedings (Article 03 of the Code of Civil and Administrative Procedure). However, spatial conflicts extend beyond property disputes to include social tensions between long-established residents and newcomers. In this regard, Law No. 20-05 of 28 April 2020 on the prevention of discrimination and hate speech becomes relevant, as these tensions have been exacerbated by rural migration, opening the way for a socio-urban reading of the phenomenon.

1 – Law and the achievement of sustainable urban development:

Law is considered a central urban mechanism in guiding the trajectory of sustainable urban development, as it regulates interactions between social actors and urban space by establishing rules that ensure a balance between urban pressures, environmental protection, the guarantee of social rights, and the improvement of local governance mechanisms.

This form of development is based on the interconnection of three fundamental dimensions: an environmental dimension related to the relationship between society and the natural space; a social dimension that expresses equity in the distribution of facilities and services; and an institutional (governance) dimension that defines decision-making patterns and the participation of residents in the production of the city.

Third: Challenges facing the legal approach in socio-urban studies

Before addressing the nature of these challenges, it should be noted that the legal approach in socio-urban studies, despite its methodological importance, encounters structural obstacles that prevent it from fully realizing its potential. These challenges operate at three interrelated levels: weak enforcement of legal texts, a gap between the legislative logic and lived reality, and finally the absence of a multidisciplinary vision in addressing the urban phenomenon.

1 – Weak implementation of urban laws:

The main problem does not lie in the absence of legal texts regulating urban space, but rather in their implementation mechanisms and effectiveness on the ground; laws remain largely declarative when they lack the political will and institutional capacity required to translate them into effective practices. Researchers generally agree that the weak enforcement of urban legislation in Algeria is primarily due to the multiplicity of legal texts, their contradictions, and their frequent amendments (Zettili, 2023), as well as a colonial legacy characterized by “uncontrolled urbanization” (Georges Mutin). Moreover, the complexity of administrative procedures and the overlap of planning instruments (PDAU/POS) further hinder effective implementation (Azzouzi & Harkat, 2019).

The laws themselves are also described as having a “hyper-liberal” orientation, transforming land into a commodity governed by market logic without the parallel development of strong institutional regulatory capacities. As a result, legal instruments exist formally but remain ineffective in practice (Zettili, 2023; Azzouzi & Harkat, 2019).

1 – The gap between legal text and urban reality:

The problematic of the legal approach is not limited to weak enforcement alone; it extends further to a deeper gap between the logic of legal texts—often grounded in idealized or technical representations—and the complexities of urban reality, which is characterized by dynamism, contradictions, and conflicts.

The analysis by Azzouzi Amar and Harkat Mohamed Lamine in their article “La planification urbaine en Algérie : réformes et blocages” (2019) highlights a fundamental issue in Algerian urban planning, showing that more than two decades after the implementation of Law No. 90-29, practice has revealed the “methodological and operational limits of this planning system.” The authors raise a critical question regarding whether the real problem lies in the “content and spirit of the legislation” itself, emphasizing that the urban reality in Algeria “does not allow for the proper implementation of any urban policy.”

Among the key factors identified are the contradiction between land and urban planning (*antinomie entre le foncier et l’urbain*), the persistence of centralized decision-making despite formal decentralization provisions, the overlap and inconsistency between planning instruments (PDAU and POS), and the lack of coordination between them.

From our perspective, this also reflects the absence of urban sociology specialists in the design and implementation of these planning instruments. Moreover, although planning is officially centralized, its implementation often occurs at the municipal or inter-municipal level, further deepening the mismatch between institutional design and territorial reality.

2 – The need for a multidisciplinary approach:

Disciplinary monism constitutes a major methodological obstacle to understanding the urban phenomenon in its complexity; no single field of knowledge can fully grasp all dimensions of the city, which therefore calls for an integrative approach that situates law within its social, spatial, and planning context.

The complexity of the contemporary urban phenomenon necessarily requires moving beyond single-discipline approaches toward multidisciplinary frameworks that account for the intersection of the social, spatial, legal, and planning dimensions of the city.

The city is no longer the exclusive domain of geographers or urban planners alone; rather, it is a shared object of study requiring the integration of urban sociology (to analyze social relations and conflicts), urban planning (to organize space), urban geography (to study spatial distributions), and legal sociology or urban law (to deconstruct the normative frameworks that produce and regulate space).

Many classical and contemporary references have highlighted this necessity. On a theoretical level, Henri Lefebvre's *Le droit à la ville* (Paris: Anthropos, 1968) offers a philosophical and sociological framework that transcends disciplinary reductionism. François Ost & Michel van de Kerchove, in *De la pyramide au réseau ? Pour une théorie dialectique du droit* (Bruxelles: FUSL, 2002), emphasize the need to move beyond the hierarchical model of law, while Uwe Prell's *The City: An Interdisciplinary Introduction to Urban Studies* (Opladen: Verlag Barbara Budrich, 2022) represents a strong applied model combining sociology, geography, planning, and law.

In the Arab context, works such as Ahmed Kamel & Habib Karam's *Urban Sociology* (Cairo: Dar Al-Jeel, 1973) and Mohamed El-Bashiri's *Studies in Urban Geography* (Khartoum: University of Khartoum Press, 2006) constitute pioneering attempts to build bridges between these fields.

Accordingly, adopting this integrative perspective in academic research has become a methodological necessity to decode complex urban transformations and to overcome the epistemological gaps generated by any unilateral analysis.

Conclusion

This study started from the idea that the legal approach constitutes a fundamental methodological pillar in socio-urban analysis, rather than a marginal addition. The application to the Algerian case, through Law No. 90-29 and its planning instruments, has shown that law does not merely regulate the technical aspects of urban planning, but actively participates in shaping spatial differentiation, regulating actors' behavior, and defining the identity of the city.

However the study has revealed a deep gap between the ambitions of legal texts and the reality of their implementation in Algerian cities where the multiplicity and contradiction of legal texts, administrative complexity, inconsistency between planning tools, and the legacy of "uncontrolled urbanization" have resulted in legal mechanisms that are unable to contain phenomena such as informal housing and unplanned urban expansion.

This confirms that law alone is not sufficient; it must be accompanied by political will for implementation, strong institutional monitoring capacities, and the involvement of urban sociology specialists.

The study also concludes that overcoming these challenges requires moving toward multidisciplinary approaches that integrate urban sociology, urban planning, urban geography, and legal sociology, while adopting concepts such as spatial justice and the right to the city as evaluative frameworks for urban policies.

In conclusion, the legal approach represents an essential complement to the sociological approach, and an integrated reading of legal texts, social practices, conflicts, and failures remains the only way to understand the complexities of the contemporary city. New legislative reforms may represent a historical opportunity to correct the trajectory, provided that they are formulated within a participatory and multidisciplinary framework and accompanied by institutional reforms capable of meeting current and future urban challenges.

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