

## **Implementing the AIR Centre:**

### **Developing knowledge-based economic and social ecosystems**

My name is Wilsa. When invited to present this theme, I was a little anxious about how I should treat this theme, since I represent here, not only my opinion, but my country. But when analyzing the theme I realized that it would be impossible not to associate the idea of an ecosystem without speaking about my personal experience, in this way. I will use, in an illustrative way, my personal and professional knowledge base within the Brazilian environment.

In 2007 I started a small business developing new technologies for the physical oceanography sector. In the same year I was able to incubate at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, UFRJ. Making our first bond of knowledge. The University's partnership with the company provided us with qualitative and accelerated growth that generated partnerships and professional maturity, which otherwise could take a long time to reach.

From the partnership with the Incubator, other development links were developed between University laboratories and research centers of leading companies in the sector: mainly Oil and Gas companies. Clearly, in our experience, the integration of laboratories was an important function of aggregating knowledge production, using research structures and researchers, as well as the critical mass of students enrolled in postgraduate courses.

Through these partnerships, growth was inevitable, with each new contact we were weaving a network of knowledge, with other companies in the industry and other professionals. To the point that, in a time of economic crisis, we could support ourselves with a partner company, so we could circumvent this moment. Now, I'm work at OceanPact Services,

At some point in the process of maturation and growth, a new entrant has made it possible to foster the development and growth of our ideas and ideals. This new entrant was the Brazilian government, with public policies of economic subsidy for companies with innovative profiles, such as mine, which assisted companies in the development of their innovations, with mitigated risks and the possibility of aggregating highly technological values through partnerships already integrated into our ecosystem, such as university laboratories. With this we managed to capillarize the company and generate fruit in the local economy.

We have a clear example of how these partnerships work, today I am proud to be here with some of our partners, as one of the laboratories of UFRJ, represented here by professors Landau and Luiz Paulo.

Through this ecosystem I realized the importance in generating oxygenation to the sector and growth for all involved. And even more, I could see that development in terms of science, technology and innovation has direct repercussions on the pace of economic and social growth of our small social nucleus

It is not difficult to find a theoretical basis on the subject, such as that proposed by Henry Etzowitz, who bases the synergic interaction between academia and the productive sector and the government, aiming at the production of new knowledge and social and economic growth, the so-called "triple helix ". I was able to feel the positive effects when each of the participants in this triple alliance acted in an integrated and harmonious way, with the interests and objectives of the others, aligning themselves with strategic projects, structures and assets.

Based on the structure presented and experienced, I have observed the great potential presented in the meetings already held at the Air Centre, with a great diversity of objectives and technologies, which in my view can add a lot to all those involved, both in technology and in the economic and social growth of our countries.

We are instituting a new era in the observation of the oceans with the introduction of new paradigms and management of our resources, with profound impact on our societies and economies. For this we need to start at some point. Some countries need support, just as I was given by the Brazilian government at the beginning of our activities. For at least a year I have been participating in these meetings and I am very enthusiastic about this process, as well as the others involved. Of course, inter-ministerial and international policies and agreements are necessary so that we can perpetuate this process, overcoming the time management barriers of each of the political actors.

Based on personal and professional experience and on a holistic view, if we base ourselves on the precepts of the network, where government is a strategic option for the development of society; the university, an instrument to promote teaching and social harmony, including the transfer of knowledge; and companies gain in competitiveness and generation of continuous

innovation, oxygenating the market with innovations and ideas of economic growth, we can experience a gradual increase of a dynamic environment, which generates jobs, culture and knowledge. In addition to the preservation of a very precious asset to all of us, the Atlantic Ocean.

The rupture of something already known to all is a long and meticulous process. But, technology is something imperative, not too late. Here we have the gathering of a small select group of minds highly qualified and hungry for new challenges. We can in a unique and innovative way use different expertise here and, why not, we can develop projects that join universities, companies and governments; we can develop something unique and disruptive.

Rather than being encouraged by the perspectives outlined here, we need to start partnerships between universities and companies from different countries, through existing programs and those that will still be created. We need and wish that, in an integrated way, we can initiate this process, even in a timid but effective way, so that we can use the experiences initiated as case studies for the formulation of policies that provide greater effectiveness in this process.

Pulling the ball to our side of the field, Brazil has been developing countless research both in the spatial aspect and in the oceanographic aspect, in its Universities such as USP, UFRJ and many others, as well as in its companies, mainly incubated ones. These surveys can add up and contribute a lot to the processes already started in other universities and companies.

What, I imagine, we all wish for is that we can in an integrated way start this process, even if in a timid, more effective way. Perhaps it is time to begin these exchanges of knowledge by visiting and informing us internally to this small, highly qualified group.