



# Different approaches in analyzing water governance: implications to the case of Belo Horizonte, Brazil

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# Outline

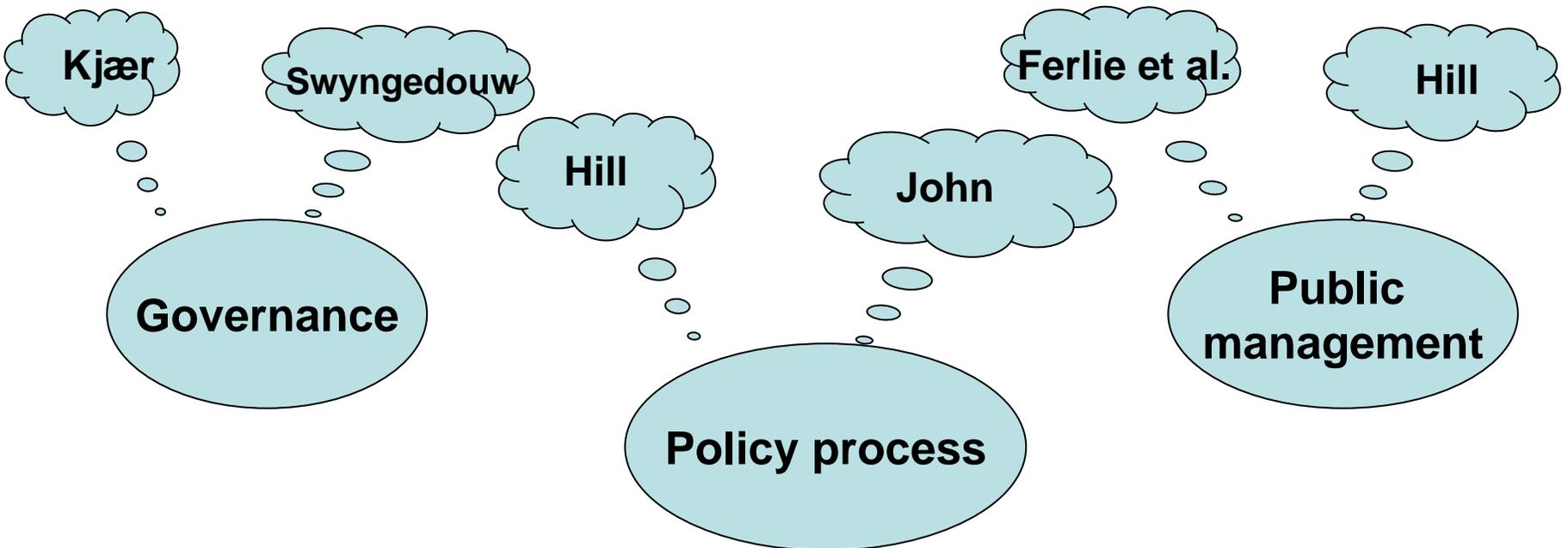
- Introduction
- Conceptual perspectives
- Water governance in Belo Horizonte
- Implications of the different conceptual perspectives for BH water governance
- Final remarks

# Introduction

- Governance is far from reaching a consensual concept both among scholars, providers, and multilateral international agencies.
  - Definition of governance as a political concept is controversial, depending on the public policy perspective involved and the social and political organisation of the society under analysis.
- Implications from different concepts of water governance.
  - e.g., role of the actors – or stakeholders – in the process.
- Could different outcomes from the institutional analysis be attained, depending on the school of thought the study is connected?
  - Different meanings of water governance in the city and in the conception of *learning alliance* and its expected results.
- The paper aims at highlighting the non-neutrality of the theoretical perspectives mobilised for the analysis of water governance.
  - The perspectives should be explicitly recognized for a clearer and more consistent approach to this issue in the project, also looking at the best strategies to shape the learning alliance framework in the city.

# Conceptual perspectives

- Roots of the lack of consensus on water governance: different school of thoughts in political science...



<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
“Old” governance	“New” governance
Governance-beyond-the state	
Governance	Institutionalism
Governance	New public management
Governance	State
Governance	Democratization

**Valuing participatory dimension as a way to control the free predominance of elite interests, strengthening democracy.**

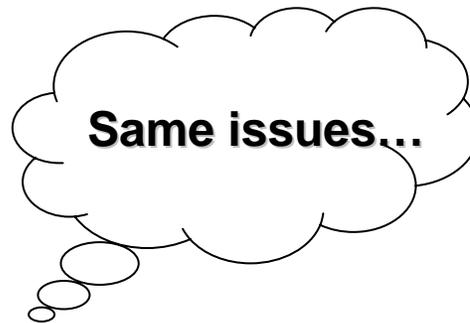
**vs.**

**State reform, reinforcing private sector participation and weakening the role of the state.**

**WB and IMF loan conditionalities**

- Governance:
  - “the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority in the management of a country’s affairs at all levels. Governance comprises the complex mechanisms, processes, and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, mediate their differences, and exercise their legal rights and obligations.”(UNDP 1997)
  - “the notion of governance is creating more ‘action space’ between government and civil society where the issues of transparent processes, accountability and community participation are taken more seriously.” (Harpham & Boateng, 1991)
- ✓ How different arrangements of mechanisms, processes, and institutions could enable different levels of citizen participation?
- ✓ What kinds of interests could be benefited depending on each “governance model”?
- ✓ What are the associations between forms of “differences mediation” and prevailing interests?
- ✓ Depending on the formulation of “**action space between government and civil society**”, in what degree, can the outcome of the process be the downsizing of the State and the “market control” of the decisions?

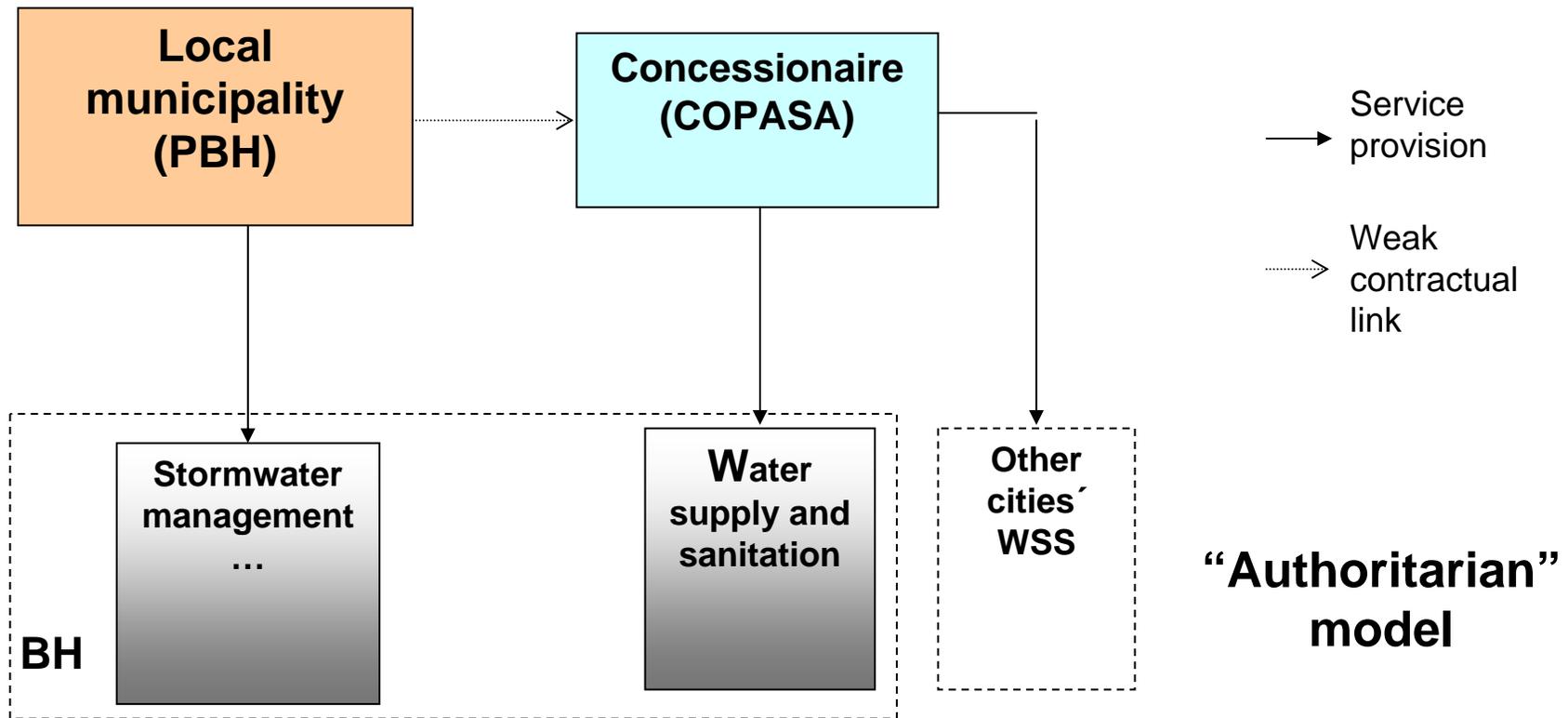
- **Governance:**
  - Different political regimes?
  - Theoretical traditions of citizenship?
  - Developed vs. “developing” countries.
    - e.g.: Brazilian democracy has just 22 years.
- **Water governance**
  - “sound water governance should be open and transparent, inclusive and communicative, coherent and integrative, and equitable and ethical.” (UNESCO, 2006)



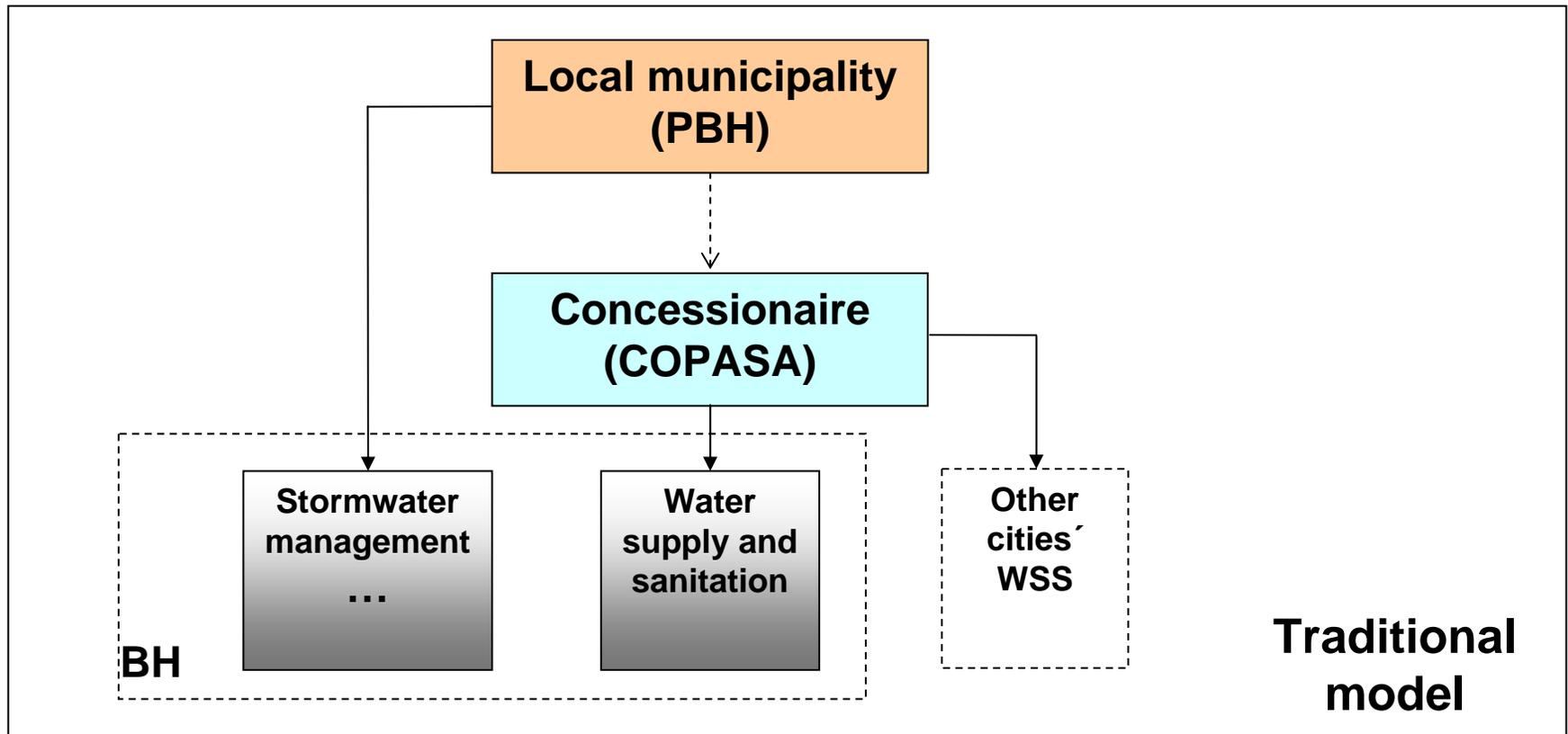
# Water governance in BH

- Combination of
  - municipal, state, and national governmental organisations;
  - specific and general legislation;
  - the role of the municipal legislative;
  - strategic plans (Municipal Sanitation Master Plan, Storm Water Management Master Plan, DRENURBS);
  - councils for popular participation;
  - participatory budget procedures...

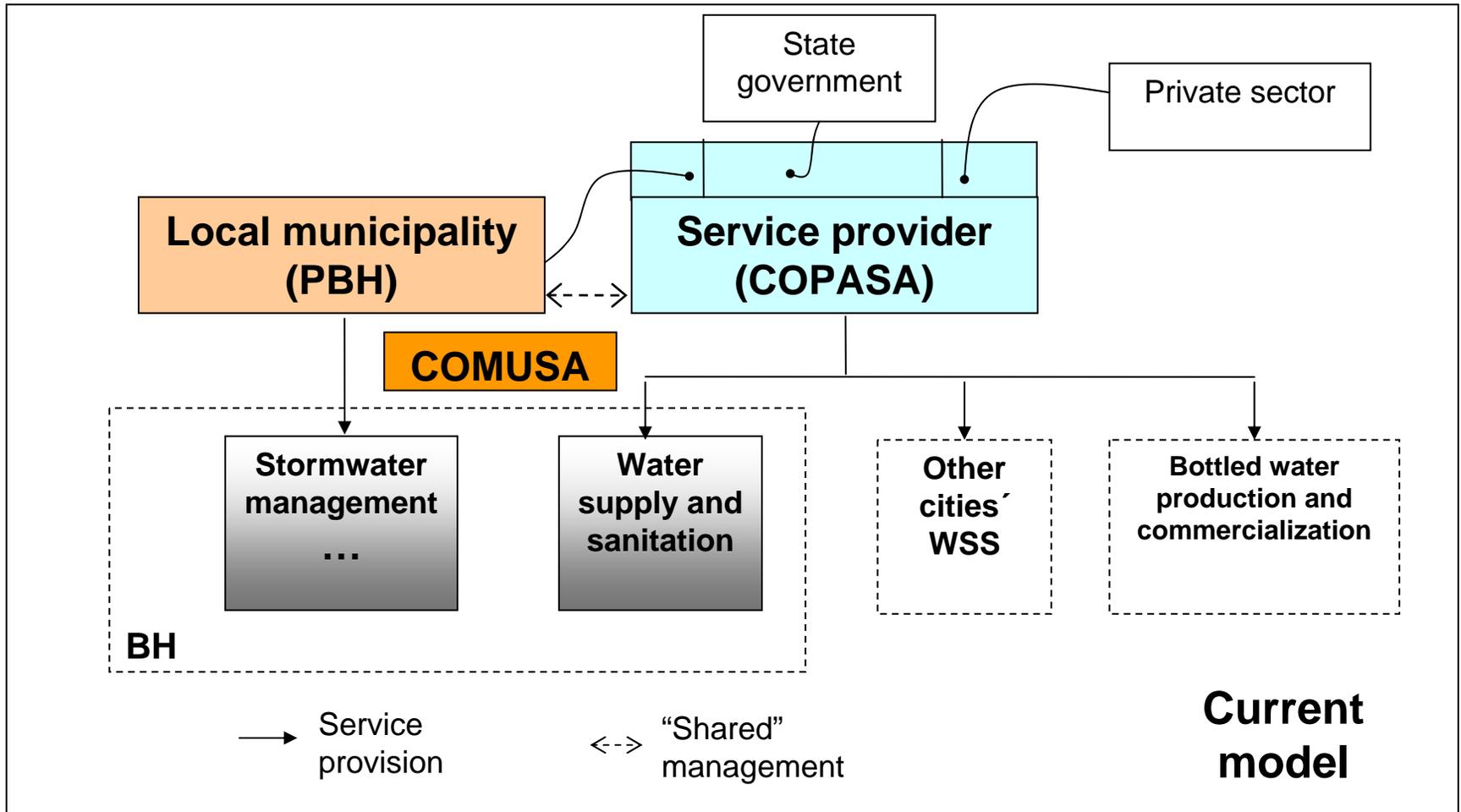
# Model 1



# Model 2



# Model 3



# Implications of different conceptual perspectives to BH

- Application of different views could deliver different outcomes
  - Why and how the changing process (Model 1 to Model 3, without experiencing Model 2) took place?
  - Losers and winners?
  - Prevailing interests?
  - Future for urban water “governance” and provision in the city?

# First approach

**Governance = a balanced structure between the state, the civil society, and the market**

- Are the three “partners” equitably represented in the governance structure?
  - State: responsible for the provision of part of the urban water complex, co-ordinate COMUSA, owns part of COPASA (municipality), owns the majority of COPASA’s actions (state government).
  - Private sector: present in the ownership of COPASA, represented in the COMUSA (association of building companies).
  - Society: seats in the COMUSA.
- Possible conclusion: apart from some necessary improvements, the model is well balanced between the three parts.
  - Extent of social control?
  - Degree in which the users are well served by the services?
  - Existence of channels for direct participation?
  - Policies integration?

# Second approach

## Emphasis on the dimension of social control

- Analysis concentrated in the structure, mandate, and functioning of the COMUSA and other formal (health, urban policy, environment councils, participatory budget policy) and informal participatory mechanisms.
- Identification of great advances in social control when an historical comparative perspective is employed, due to the new mechanisms implemented after the 2000's.
- But could see an eventual weak capacity of the users in influencing decisions in COMUSA, due to its composition.
- And, looking at the agenda of COMUSA's meetings, could eventually identify few moments of effective decision-making, weakening the character of controlling the free decision process of the governments.

# Third approach

## Broader political perspective

- Determinants of other external factors (*systemic conditions*)
  - external political factors;
  - the role of social movements;
  - national macro-economic policy
  - sector constraints in other political levels, above the municipal.
- Assessment
  - the state level and the recent changes in COPASA´s institutional profile;
  - federal level and the new legislation on the national policy for environmental sanitation;
  - global level and the policy of the international multilateral agencies, and international commitments such as MDGs.

- Opportunities and constraints to “good water governance”
  - lack of independent roles of the municipality and the state government (sharing the ownership of COPASA and participating together in COMUSA): barrier to an effective governance practice?
  - federal legislation for environmental sanitation: new opportunities for improving local governance but incoherencies between the new idealised model and the BH scheme, in the political, financial, participatory, and legal fields.
  - influences in the local water governance of international commitments by the Brazilian government (e.g. MDGs) and the national relations with international agencies?
- This approach does not exclude the formers, and could be integrated to them.

# Final remarks

- Further research developments:
  - In framing the theoretical framework of the analysis, need of clear identification of the different schools of thought applied to water governance, including their respective potential implications to their outcomes.
  - Balance of roles, power, interests and influences of the state, civil society and private sector in the BH water governance structure.
  - Empirical analyses of the nature of participation in the current water governance structure, assessing dimensions like entitlement, accountability, and legitimacy of the representation.
  - Analysis of how the participation deals with “less tangible” issues: drinking-water quality, risks, environmental impacts, intermittent water supply, and preventive maintenance.
  - Empirical analyses of the degree of integration, internally to the urban water sector and externally between urban water issues and other urban policies.
  - Analysis of the influence of the new COPASA governance, with more explicit private sector participation, on the BH water governance.
  - Analysis of the influence of the new national legal framework on the BH water governance, looking at necessary and desirable changes in the future.