

Network action for systemic transformations

an
institutional
journey

instituto
arapyaú





Nara Guichon
Arraia (2019-2020)





Nara Guichon
Ancoradouro II (2020-2021)



The Arapyau Institute is a Brazilian philanthropic organization that works to drive the country's fair, inclusive, and low-carbon development. Our work is rooted in the conviction that the transformations necessary for Brazil's future depend on the ability to connect people, knowledge, and territories around a shared vision of prosperity and care for the planet.

We promote a nature-based agenda that integrates social, economic, and climate dimensions, mobilizing civil society, philanthropy, academia, and the public and private sectors around collective and lasting solutions. We believe that cooperation is the engine of change. Therefore, we foster networks and structural initiatives born from dialogue, active listening, and the joint construction of transformative agendas.

Our work combines a national strategic vision with territorial action, focusing primarily on the Amazon and Southern Bahia, regions that are emblematic of the country's climatic, environmental, and social future. In these areas, we work to strengthen sustainable production chains, restore landscapes, expand the bioeconomy, and promote the inclusion of traditional communities and peoples in development processes.

Alongside its partners, Arapyau seeks to create systemic and scalable solutions capable of inspiring public policies, guiding investments, and generating large-scale positive impact. In this way, we work to transform Brazil's future by uniting knowledge, collaboration, and a commitment to life.

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Philanthropy and its contribution to fostering networks for sustainable development

The great contemporary challenges — the climate crisis, social inequality, and the urgency for new cycles of prosperity — demand responses that transcend sectoral and institutional boundaries. Faced with complex problems, no organization moves forward alone. Collaborative networks have proven fundamental in articulating innovative solutions, rebuilding fragmented dialogues, and bringing about lasting impacts. In this context, philanthropy plays an essential

role by fostering and incubating these collective forms of action in the face of the challenges of our time.

This publication stems from the Arapyaú Institute's inquiries into questions such as: what have we learned, from an institutional perspective, as network fosterers? How can we share these lessons and better exercise our networking strategy in the fields of sustainable development and climate change?



Thus, this material invites you to explore the foundations, pathways, and lessons learned from the Arapyaú Institute's work within networks in these fields, including the institutional competencies acquired throughout this journey. It gathers perceptions and reflections built collectively, not as a formula to be followed, but as a living record of practices in constant motion and transformation.

The institute's networking efforts are configured as an impact strategy capable of generating lasting change by promoting cooperation between sectors that are not always aligned and strengthening resilience in contexts of uncertainty and polarization. Instead of seeking ideal consensuses, networks operate based on possible convergences, agreements that sustain common action and make collective construction viable, even amidst a diversity of visions and interests in complex themes.

The content presented here results from a process of listening and reflection on several networks fostered by Arapyaú throughout our history, such as: the Southern Bahia Regional Development Agency (ADR); Brazil Coalition on Climate, Forests and Agriculture; Connect Forest People Network (Rede Conexão Povos da Floresta); MapBiomass; Forest Peoples

Agroecology Network (Rede de Agroecologia Povos da Mata); Political Action Network for Sustainability (RAPS); and An Amazon Concertation (Uma Concertação pela Amazônia).

The reading is accompanied by works by textile artist Nara Guichon, who, since the 1980s, has created works intertwining threads, repurposed fibers, and images of the Atlantic Forest. Her poetics — centered on sustainability, reuse, and respect for nature — evokes the idea of the weave and interdependence that sustains both the living networks of nature and the human networks portrayed here.

More than a record of an institutional trajectory, this publication is an invitation to recognize the importance of collaboration, dialogue, and the building of bonds as the pillars of a collective future. By sharing what we have learned, we seek to inspire the philanthropic field and strengthen the confidence that it is possible to transform realities when different actors unite around a common purpose.

May this reading inspire the recognition of the power of networks as engines of transformation — and call upon us to continue together toward a more just, inclusive, and low-carbon future.

Enjoy the reading!

Renata Piazzon

CEO of the Arapyaú Institute

Lívia Pagotto

Institutional Director of the Arapyaú Institute

Débora Passos

*Planning and Governance
Director of the Arapyaú Institute*



Governing complexity: networks as a response to wicked problems

We live in a world where the new order is continuous and actively provoked disorder. In this context, the concept of wicked problems has been increasingly invoked to describe situations where there is clarity neither on the nature of the problem nor on the path to solving it. This makes the direction of effective solutions to these problems extremely difficult.

The dynamism of situations involving wicked problems imposes challenges in finding points of stability that

allow for an in-depth understanding. Generally, they involve different social groups with diverse interests — often diffuse and even contradictory. Solutions rarely satisfy all those affected, and the sensation is one of permanent chaos, generating behaviors that oscillate between absolute stress and total apathy, passing through attempts — generally frustrated — at rationalization, simplification, and the search for metrics that illusorily intend to guide decision-making and management processes.

Situations like these demand collective responses. It is within the diversity of interests, cultures, and knowledge that pathways, however temporary, are built for the crises emerging from apparent chaos. The diversity of those involved is also the fertile ground where solutions are tested, successes and failures are accumulated, and knowledge becomes shared heritage. As researcher Vitor Freire, Ph.D. in Strategy, defines it: “Hyper-complex situations are not solved; they are governed.”

The structuring of networks dedicated to themes of this nature has proven to be one of the most powerful choices for dealing with contemporary crises and opportunities. However, beyond being valuable instruments for facing wicked problems, networks are also complex in themselves, involving decision-making processes that are often slow, exhausting, and

challenging. It is no coincidence that network governance currently constitutes a frontier of knowledge in both academic and corporate fields.

Much of the learning regarding network structuring and management emerged from experience with independent certification systems such as the FSC (Forest Stewardship Council), created to ensure responsible practices in the use of natural resources, which became pioneering laboratories for collaborative governance. It was also during this period that the concept of wicked problems was consolidated in an attempt to understand and respond to highly complex social challenges. It was believed that performance evaluation systems would be capable of absorbing the diverse expectations of the multiple groups involved. However, even with the expansion of management

methods based on indicators — under the motto “you can only manage what you can measure” — it was realized that such models were insufficient for dealing with issues that require relational processes, continuous negotiation, and collective learning. Nothing could be more relevant today.

Today, global polycrises — climate, energy and food security, the depletion of natural resources (consuming resources faster than their regeneration capacity) — compounded by the geopolitical reflections of war and the weakening of multilateralism, continue to expand the frontiers of knowledge on how to govern hyper-complex problems. Artificial intelligence and the advancement of data management technologies will certainly bring new contributions, but they will not replace the need for human coordination, trust, and cooperation.



In this scenario, it is important to recognize the accumulated experience in multistakeholder movements, which have multiplied since the beginning of this century. This document is inspired by that trajectory and many of its pillars. Special mention goes to professionals who contributed to formatting the pillars of multistakeholder network management and who, even if indirectly, left their marks on some of the most relevant movements in Brazil and the world, such as: Grant Rosoman, Greenpeace activist; Michael Conroy, professor of economics at Yale and Austin Universities; Tasso Azevedo, founder

of MapBiomass; Stewart Begg, from the Swedish company SCA; Pavan Sukhdev, economist and coordinator of the TEEB program, a UNEP (UN Environment Programme) initiative; Ernst Ligteringen, from the GRI; Benjamin Cashore, professor of governance at Yale University; John Elkington, from Volans; among others.

With them, concepts such as Forming, Storming, Norming, and Performing were tested, describing the stages of forming multistakeholder networks aimed at specific situations, from improving forestry and agro-industrial practices to creating the reporting systems now widely disseminated. The

coherence between solid principles and the pragmatic activism of these and other pioneers showed that the search for consent, rather than consensus, is the most realistic and productive path forward in complex socio-environmental and economic negotiations.

Rather than naively believing in immediate trust between such diverse actors, these processes revealed that respect for distrust is a more realistic and natural step. Facing conflict with reverence for the diversity of opinions — and not as a confrontation or something to be eliminated — has become an essential condition for



collective progress. After all, conflicts are an intrinsic part of networks, expressing the plurality of visions and agendas that constitute their value.

The open and transparent coexistence between different perspectives has brought new meaning to the expression “conflict of interest.” Wicked problems are born precisely from these interests in tension, affecting each involved group in distinct ways and requiring approaches capable of handling this asymmetry.

It is in this spirit that this publication is situated. It represents a contribution from the Arapyau

Institute to this moment of increasing complexity. It is the result of long experience in fostering and incubating networks such as the Brazil Coalition on Climate, Forests and Agriculture; An Amazon Concertation (Uma Concertação pela Amazônia); Political Action Network for Sustainability (RAPS); MapBiomas; Connect Forest People Network, among others. The systematization of ideas presented here aims to inspire new leadership, strengthen collective capacities, and expand the transformative power of organized society toward the civilizational changes that the world, increasingly, seems to demand.

Roberto Waack

Chairman of the Board of the Arapyau Institute, a board member of MBRF, co-founder of the Brazil Coalition on Climate, Forests and Agriculture, and an Associated Fellow at Chatham House. He served on the boards of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI).

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part 1

A look at networks: from formation to performance



In the fields of sustainable development and climate change in Brazil, networks have established themselves as strategic spaces for learning, innovation, and advocacy. By bringing together different perspectives and experiences, they make it possible to view problems systemically, build shared solutions, and strengthen a culture of collaboration that transcends institutional and sectoral boundaries.

What are networks¹

Networks are groups of people and organizations with complementary roles that coordinate around convergent objectives.

More than just a form of cooperation, they are living structures of interdependence, where value lies in the relationship in the exchange of knowledge, in the trust built, in the constructive distrusts, and in the capacity to act in a coordinated manner when facing complex challenges.

This form of organization veers away from traditional hierarchical logic. Instead of depending on a single decision-making center, networks are structured horizontally, distributing power and responsibility among the nodes that compose them. The diversity of actors — local communities, civil society organizations, philanthropic institutes, governments, businesses, and academia — is the foundation of their strength and the source of their complexity.

There are different types of networks, depending on their purposes and the ways in which they mobilize resources, relationships, and knowledge to generate impact. While this framework is still evolving, it is possible to highlight some examples in light of philanthropy archetypes identified in a 2022² report by Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors. These examples include areas of focus such as strengthening individuals and organizations with transformative potential; generating knowledge and influencing public policy based on evidence; coordinating broad, multi-stakeholder coalitions around complex issues; and developing solutions internally by prototyping and refining programs in dialogue with users and local contexts.

1. This section was developed based on the article *Como atuar em rede para promover transformações sistêmicas*, available at <https://pagina22.com.br/2023/05/25/como-atuar-em-rede-para-promover-transformacoes-sistemicas/>
2. “Operating Archetypes: Philanthropy’s New Analytical Tool for Strategic Clarity” <https://www.rockpa.org/project/theory-of-the-foundation/philanthropy-operating-archetypes/>



How networks function

Operating in a network starts with the understanding that the great contemporary challenges cannot be solved in isolation.

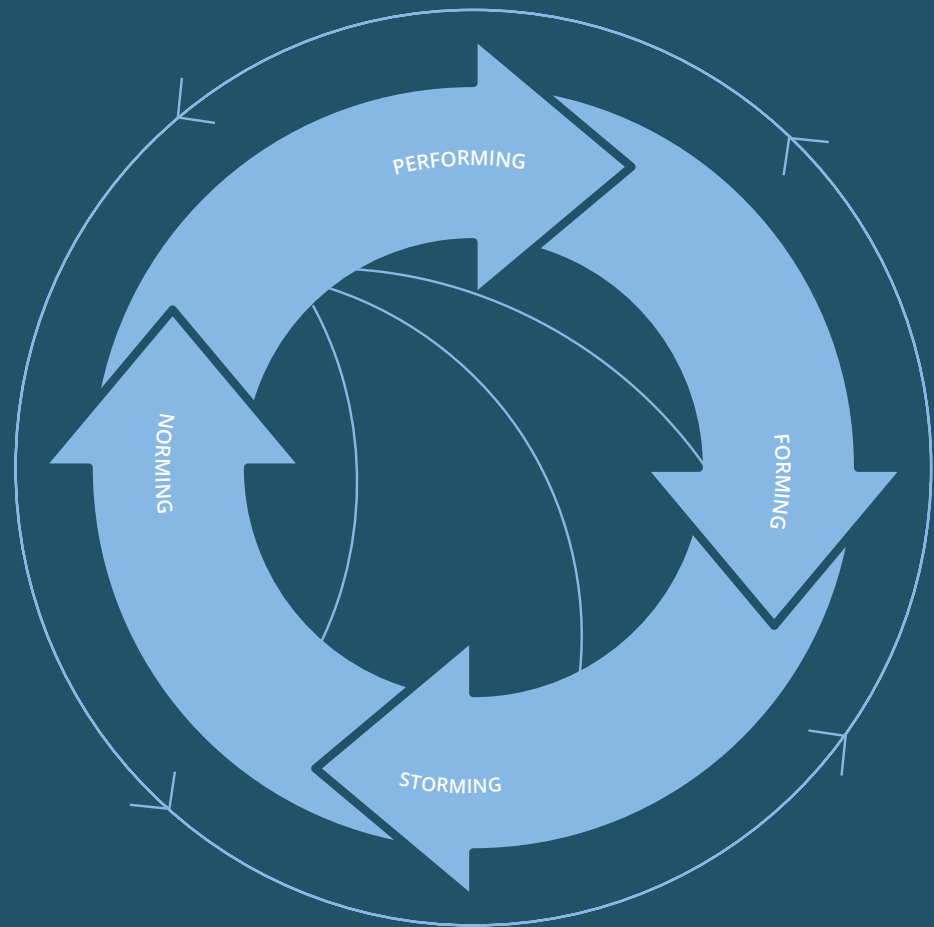
The climate, social, and economic crises of our time fall into the category of so-called wicked problems, as they are complex, ambiguous, and shifting problems without a single or definitive solution. Addressing them requires collective intelligence, coordination, and a continuous commitment to learning.

It is in this context that networks gain relevance as spaces for structured

collective action, capable of aligning purposes and transforming collaboration into concrete results. Their functioning is based on maturity cycles that describe the development of relationships and governance among participants.

The classic model proposed by Bruce Tuckman² — *Forming, Storming, Norming and Performing* — helps to understand this journey:

3. Tuckman, Bruce W (1965). "Developmental sequence in small groups". *Psychological Bulletin*. 63 (6): 384–399. doi:10.1037/h0022100. PMID 14314073.



Network action

development spiral

Forming: this is the moment when actors come together and align their purposes. The network begins to take shape, identifying strategic opportunities, roles, and common scopes. This phase is marked by the building of trust and the definition of a shared direction.

Storming: as interaction intensifies, divergences and disputes arise. This is a period of necessary adjustments and conflicts to clarify expectations,

negotiate differences, and structure governance rules and bodies.

Norming: the network's principles, values, and objectives are consolidated. Trust is strengthened, and more stable management and cooperation routines emerge. Leadership becomes more distributed and collaborative.

Performing: the network reaches maturity. Operations become

autonomous and participatory, with decentralized decision-making and a focus on collective results. At this stage, governance is solid, communication flows, and impact is amplified.

These stages do not occur linearly: networks oscillate between phases as they face new contexts and challenges. The key is that each learning cycle strengthens the group's adaptive capacity and expands its transformative potential.



Networks as instruments of transformation

The strength of networks lies in their ability to articulate different types of knowledge and resources around a common agenda, creating collaborative solutions for problems that transcend the boundaries of any single organization.

In the fields of sustainable development and climate change, this approach is essential. The transformations necessary to curb global warming, reduce inequalities, and promote new cycles of prosperity demand collective action, cross-sectoral coordination, and continuous innovation. No single actor — whether public, private, or from civil society — possesses the tools and legitimacy to promote such changes alone.

Operating in a network also creates the conditions for **collective impact**: when multiple organizations, instead of replicating isolated initiatives, align themselves around a shared vision and goals. This convergence boosts efforts, prevents overlaps, and expands the reach of results. More than just joining forces, networks produce a new type of **social intelligence** by combining technical knowledge, local experience, and


political will. They allow for the identification and utilization of so-called **“windows of opportunity”** — moments when the confluence of political context, accumulated knowledge, and social mobilization opens space for significant transformations.

Through collaborative governance — which balances centralization and decentralization — networks strengthen the civil society ecosystem, broaden social participation, and create democratic arenas for dialogue and the construction of convergences. In this process, coalitions also emerge, sharing values and beliefs on strategic themes and seeking to translate them into public policies. Such arrangements reinforce the legitimacy of collective agendas and increase the capacity to influence decisions that shape the future of territories and regions.

Working in a network means accepting the challenge of **dealing with diversity, conflict, and uncertainty**. It is to recognize that change is born from interaction and that interdependence is a strength — not a limitation. In times of uncertainty and urgency, networks offer a possible — and necessary — path for society to advance in an integrated, supportive, and transformative way. They are, in essence, fabrics of collaboration that make visible the power of the collective in motion.³

4. <https://pagina22.com.br/2023/05/25/como-atuar-em-rede-para-promover-transformacoes-sistemicas/>

Ways of working through networks: fostering and incubation



Working through networks is one of the most vivid expressions of how the Arapyaú Institute translates its mission into practice. Through networks, the Institute connects people, territories, and organizations around shared and collective purposes, advancing fair, inclusive, and low-carbon development.

The role of philanthropy in fostering networks

The experience of the Arapyaú Institute in fostering networks reveals the strength of an approach that combines strategic vision with collaborative practice. Over the years, the Institute has consolidated a distinctive way of operating: one that can articulate people, organizations, and agendas around shared purposes while also structuring concrete pathways for these networks to sustain themselves, mature, and expand their impact. This combination of articulation and implementation, cooperation and institutional structure, is what gives solidity to network-based action. By creating spaces of trust, Arapyaú contributes to strengthening collective intelligence and dialogue among different actors and sectors.

More than simply fostering networks, Arapyaú is dedicated to weaving relationships that evolve into pathways for collective action, connecting experiences, people, and organizations around shared purposes. This ability to unite diverse forms of knowledge and translate collaboration into concrete results makes the Institute an actor that

combines strategic vision with relational sensitivity. By strengthening ties and structures, Arapyaú helps ensure that networks not only flourish but remain alive, autonomous, and capable of generating lasting impact.

Working through networks means expanding the reach and legitimacy of transformative action. It means bringing agendas closer together, engaging partners from different sectors, and advancing initiatives with the potential for lasting impact. In territories, this approach translates into strategies that promote knowledge management and systematization, strengthen local capacities, and increase the influence of initiatives. These movements create the conditions for results to endure over time and take root within communities.

The field of meaning that underpins network-based work starts from an essential conviction: nothing is accomplished alone, especially when facing complex and intractable challenges such as those shaping the climate change and sustainable development agendas.

In response, Arapyaú's work with networks first emerged as a practice and, over time, consolidated as an institutional strategy — an expression of its vocation for collaboration and of a systemic intelligence aimed at transforming the country.

The work of the Arapyaú Institute: fostering and incubating networks

The trajectory of the Arapyaú Institute shows that fostering networks is one of the most powerful ways to generate collective impact. This work takes different forms and levels of intensity, which vary according to the stage of maturity, nature, and needs of each initiative.

For this reason, Arapyaú understands network fostering as a broad and dynamic process, encompassing everything from initial support for the creation and structuring of new networks to the consolidation of mature and autonomous arrangements.



Timeline

arapyaú's
network fostering
and incubation

2012

Participation in the creation
of the Political Action
Network for Sustainability
(RAPS)

2014

Support for the creation
of the Southern Bahia
Scientific and Technological
Park (PCTSul)

2015

Participation in the
conception of the Brazil
Climate, Forests and
Agriculture Coalition

Participation in the
conception of the Forest
Peoples Agroecology Network

2017

Incubation of the
MapBiomass network

Support for the creation
of the Southern Bahia
Regional Development
Agency (ADR)

2020

Incubation of An Amazon
Concertation (Uma Concertação
pela Amazônia)

2022

Incubation of the Connect
Forest People Network

Fostering networks consists of providing resources, tools, connections, and strategic intelligence so that a network can emerge, strengthen, and maximize its impacts. This support may take the form of institutional articulation, partner mobilization, collaborative financing, or technical assistance. Regardless of the modality, the focus is to create conditions for networks to sustain themselves and flourish, expanding the collective capacity to generate transformation.

Among the forms of support developed by the Institute is the **incubation of networks**, aimed at initiatives that are highly aligned with the Institute's strategy and have strong long-term impact potential. Incubation provides structure, management, knowledge, administrative support, and governance during the stages of network consolidation, including phases of pre-incubation, institutionalization, maturation, and management transfer.

Network incubation phases

Pre-incubation Phase

The purpose of each network is assessed in depth to understand its scope, complexity, and theory of change, thus identifying how Instituto Arapyaú can contribute through the incubation process. This process is co-designed with the network, clearly defining the format and duration of incubation before moving into subsequent phases.

The experience accumulated over the years in supporting networks demonstrates that there is no one-size-fits-all incubation model. Each network requires a tailored assessment of its context and level of maturity, enabling Arapyaú to define the most appropriate form of support to maximize the initiative's potential for success and sustainability.

Institutionalization Phase

At this stage, the network receives support to consolidate its management structures, establish financial controls, and strengthen and formalize governance practices, as well as the institutional structuring of

the organization. The process adopts a constructive and critical approach, aimed at building the institutional foundations necessary for the network to move forward with clarity, confidence, and autonomy.

Maturation and management transfer phases

Subsequent stages vary in depth and approach, depending on how Arapyaú can best catalyze the network's development. Throughout this journey, the focus lies on refining the network's impact vision, advancing institutional maturity in an integrated manner, expanding and diversifying sources of support, and strengthening internal capacities.

Once there is mutual understanding that the network has the necessary conditions to fully assume its operations, based on the initial agreement, the full transfer of management takes place. At this stage, the network operates autonomously and sustainably, supported by the structuring and capacity-building developed throughout the incubation process.

During incubation, Arapyau acts as a close partner, offering intelligence and infrastructure so that networks become increasingly mature and consolidated. This adaptive process respects the rhythm and purpose of each network while strengthening internal capacities, diversifying funding sources, and establishing solid and sustainable governance models.

This approach aligns with the operational archetypes identified by Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors: the Articulator (Campaign Manager) — which brings together diverse actors to implement complex and cross-sectoral solutions while creating collaborative financing vehicles —, and the Designer, which research,

prototypes, and develops initiatives based on a deep understanding of context and needs. Arapyau combines these two archetypes, expanding the potential for success of the networks and initiatives it supports.

Thus, by fostering and incubating networks, Arapyau strengthens the ecosystem of collaboration, creating synergies and learning processes that reverberate both within the networks themselves and within the Institute's institutional practice. Each incubated or supported network becomes, at the same time, a field of experimentation and a space for collective transformation, translating into practice Arapyau's mission to contribute to sustainable, fair, and low-carbon development.



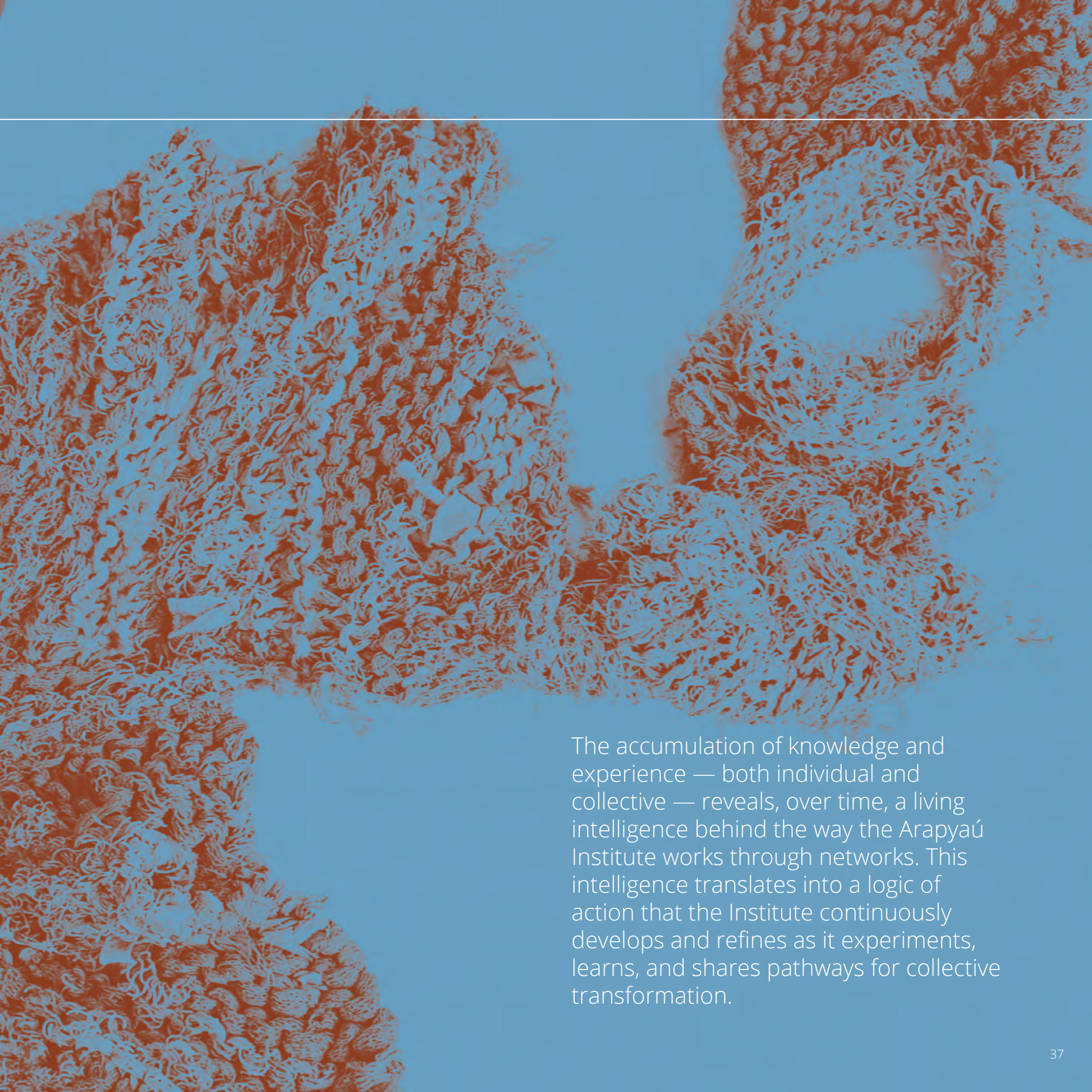
Summary table

networking fostered by Arapyauú


INITIATIVE	YEAR OF CREATION/ DURATION	MODE OF OPERATION/TYPE OF NETWORK	CORE PURPOSE
Political Action Network for Sustainability (RAPS)	2012–2024	Multi-party political engagement and leadership development network.	Strengthen democracy and sustainability through the training and support of political leaders.
Brazil Climate, Forests and Agriculture Coalition	2015	Multisector advocacy and technical public policy network.	Influence public policies on land use and climate, reconciling production, conservation, and social inclusion.
MapBiomass	2015	Collaborative network for data science and open technology.	Map and provide open data on land cover and land use in Brazil.
Forest Peoples Agroecology Network (Rede de Agroecologia Povos da Mata)	2015	Participatory network of family farming organizations.	Strengthen agroecology and develop credibility mechanisms for family, Quilombola, and Indigenous agriculture.
Southern Bahia Regional Development Agency (ADR)	2017	Territorial governance platform coordinating public policies and investments.	Promote a sustainable and inclusive development model for Southern Bahia.
An Amazon Concertation	2020	Network of knowledge, individuals, and institutions engaged in Amazon development.	Foster a space for dialogue and collaborative action to advance sustainable development in the Amazon.
Connect Forest People Network	2022	Community digital infrastructure and inclusion network.	Connect more than one million people from Indigenous, Quilombola, extractivist, and riverside communities in the Brazilian Amazon, promoting inclusion, security, and empowerment in beneficiary communities.

part 3

Institutional strengths in fostering networks

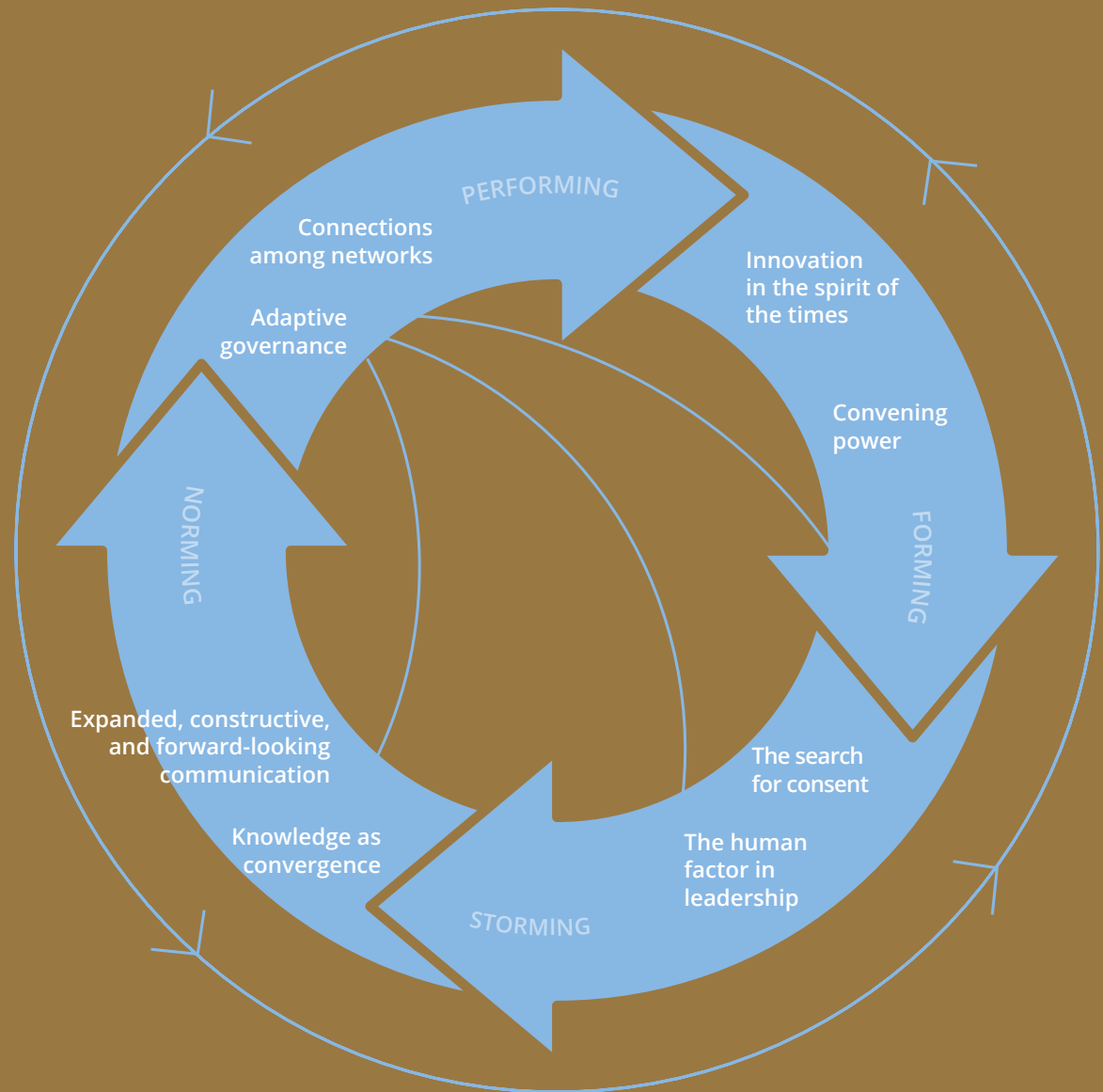


The accumulation of knowledge and experience — both individual and collective — reveals, over time, a living intelligence behind the way the Arapyaú Institute works through networks. This intelligence translates into a logic of action that the Institute continuously develops and refines as it experiments, learns, and shares pathways for collective transformation.



In this path, Arapyauú recognizes that its work with networks is sustained by a set of institutional strengths — capabilities and dispositions that express its principles in action.

These strengths guide the way the Institute mobilizes knowledge, relationships, and legitimacy to strengthen networks and drive lasting transformations.



Institutional strengths

The strengths that emerge from this ecosystem are:

- Innovation in the spirit of the times
- Convening power
- The search for consent
- The human factor in leadership
- Knowledge as convergence
- Expanded, constructive, and forward-looking communication
- Adaptive governance
- Connections among networks

Innovation in the spirit of the times

Innovation in the spirit of the times reflects the ability to recognize the signals of the present — trends, urgencies, and opportunities — and transform them into strategic action. This sensibility guides Arapyaú in identifying windows of social, environmental, and political transition and forming partnerships that gain relevance precisely at these critical moments.

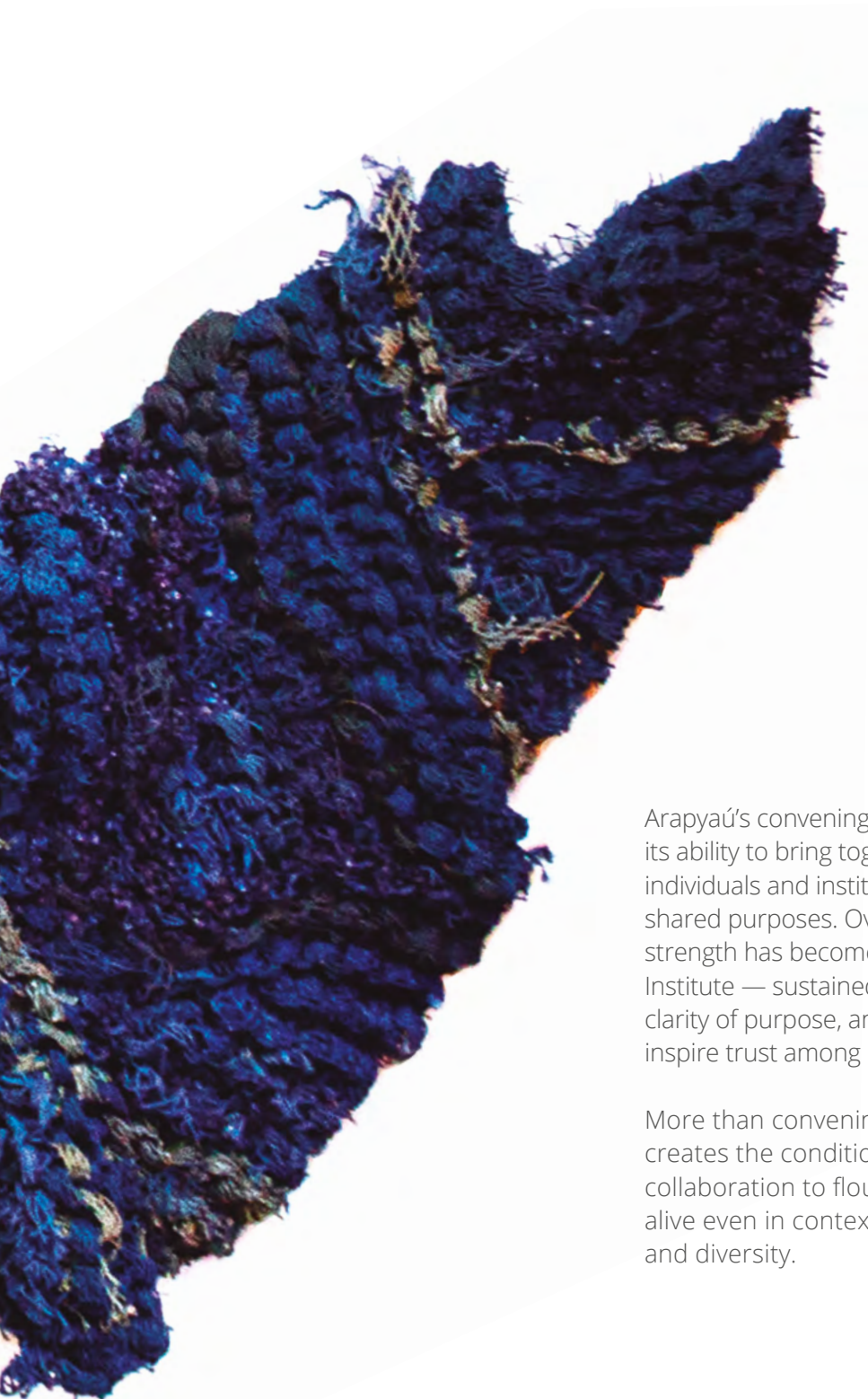
By supporting networks that arise both from intentional alliances and emerging opportunities, the Institute reaffirms its role as an articulator of transformation. The balance between planning and openness to the new is what enables Arapyaú to foster initiatives with real and lasting impact.

To this end, the Institute observes some essential criteria:

- **Connection with strategy** — alignment of the initiative with priority agendas (agri-food systems, restoration, and low-carbon development) and with the territories of action (the Amazon and the Atlantic Forest).
- **Capacity to scale impact** — potential to expand reach, strengthen autonomy, and ensure financial and institutional sustainability over time.



Convening power



Arapyaú's convening power reflects its ability to bring together diverse individuals and institutions around shared purposes. Over the years, this strength has become a hallmark of the Institute — sustained by credibility, clarity of purpose, and legitimacy that inspire trust among partners.

More than convening, Arapyaú creates the conditions for collaboration to flourish and remain alive even in contexts of complexity and diversity.

This power is expressed when the Institute:

- **articulates actors who would rarely encounter one another without the network;**
- **recognizes and values local leadership and territorial knowledge;**
- **mobilizes resources and energy around a shared vision.**

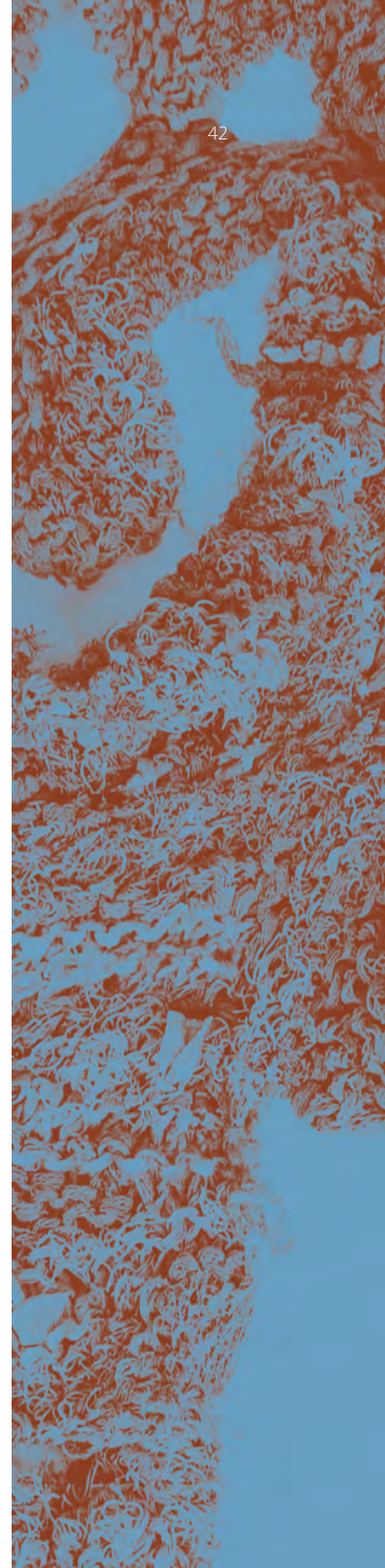
The search for consent

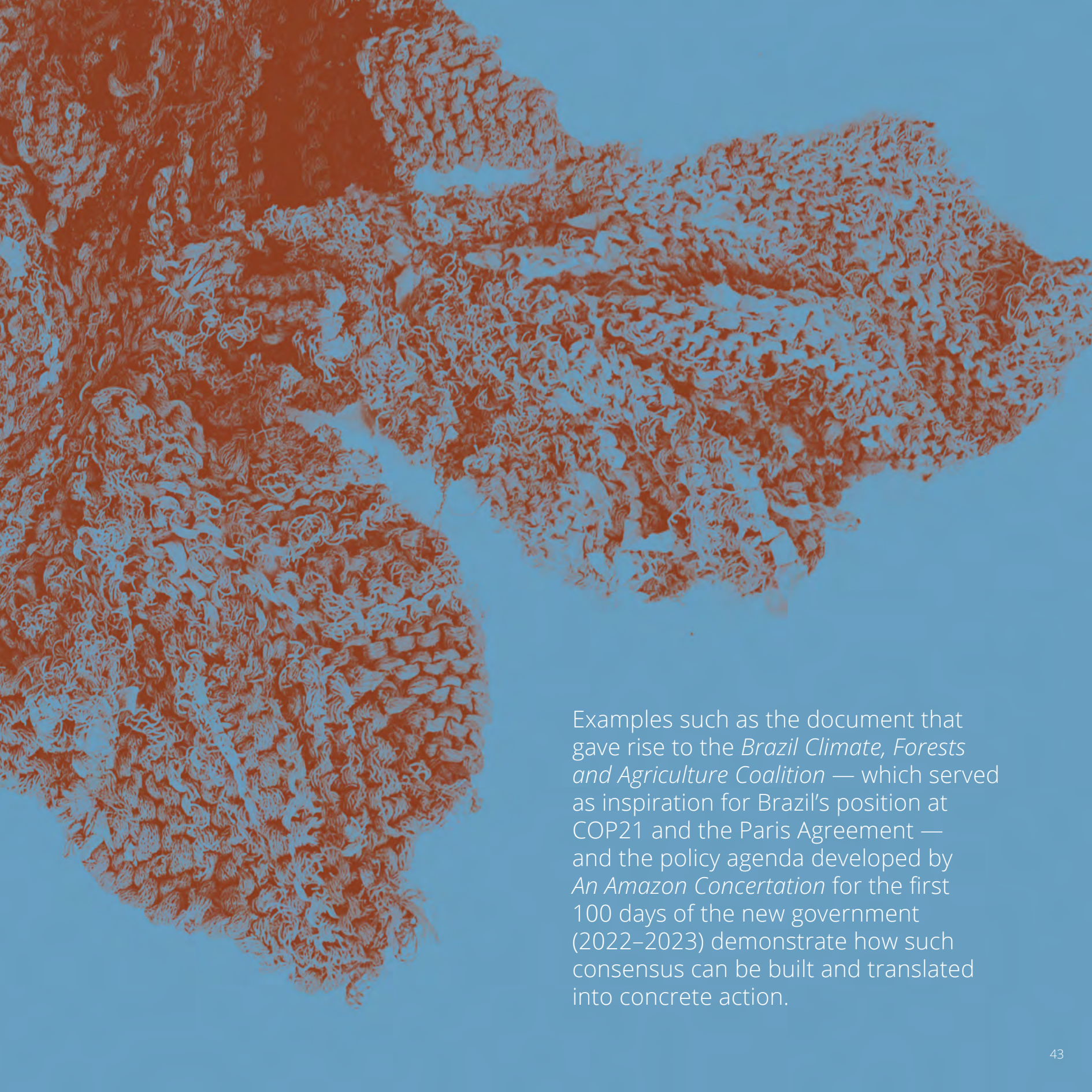
Diversity is a central value in Arapyau's approach to fostering networks. Experience shows that the goal is not to achieve absolute consensus but to build consent — workable agreements that sustain collective action even amid differences.

This practice requires listening, empathy, and relational leadership. It means recognizing that conflict is part of living processes and can be a source of collective maturation. Consent is built through time, dialogue, and the shared production of knowledge — elements that transform differences into convergence.

Key elements for building consent include:

- **The collective production of knowledge**, continuously built and shared, creating a common basis of understanding among actors;
- **Leadership with a strong human and relational dimension**, capable of listening, mediating, and maintaining engagement even in contexts of divergence;
- **Time as an ally**, understood as a decisive factor in the maturation of agreements, especially in processes that require meaningful deliverables within defined timelines.





Examples such as the document that gave rise to the *Brazil Climate, Forests and Agriculture Coalition* — which served as inspiration for Brazil’s position at COP21 and the Paris Agreement — and the policy agenda developed by *An Amazon Concertation* for the first 100 days of the new government (2022–2023) demonstrate how such consensus can be built and translated into concrete action.

Knowledge as convergence

Generating knowledge collectively is a starting point for engaging diverse perspectives, enabling new articulations, and producing convergence.

Participatory and integrative knowledge-production processes strengthen networks and can support the development of reference documents that:

- **Materialize shared and collectively constructed visions**
- **Value and connect existing knowledge and experiences**
- **Generate new knowledge and collective learning**
- **Link knowledge and action, guiding concrete proposals**
- **Integrate both rational and experiential dimensions of collective experience**

Expanded, constructive, and forward-looking communication

As important as the knowledge produced by networks is the way it is communicated. Choosing accessible, clear language with a narrative tone is a strategic decision that expands reach, facilitates engagement, and brings new audiences closer to complex issues. Communicating effectively is also a way of democratizing knowledge and strengthening the collective impact of initiatives.

Since one of the premises of fostering networks is the construction of convergence from diversity, it is

natural that different perspectives and priorities exist. It is precisely from the articulation of these differences that new syntheses and pathways for action emerge. Communication must therefore reflect this plurality — being constructed collectively, with diverse spokespersons and coherent messages capable of representing the network in its multiplicity. By narrating with clarity and diversity, communication becomes a tool for mobilization and inspiration, capable of translating complexity into movement and inviting other actors to join forces.

The human factor in leadership

In the search for consent, a human-relational intelligence in leadership stands out, one capable of productively mediating the “storming” phase of a network, when opposing positions and controversial issues may generate conflict and disputes over power and leadership. During a productive storming phase, purpose and the definition of core values begin to consolidate.

This leadership positions itself as a “sophisticated secretariat,” capable of connecting political and strategic aspects to operational action, placing relationships at the center through sensitivity and active listening.

This occurs not only in formal relational moments (forums, meetings) but especially in the spaces between them, behind the scenes: in scheduling, meeting minutes, the

psychological management of actors (creating emotionally safe space for disagreement), and bilateral conversations.

It is a form of adaptive leadership, capable of “mobilizing people to tackle tough challenges and thrive.”⁵ Inspired by evolutionary biology, the concept of adaptive leadership understands that successful adaptations allow systems to carry the best of their history (continuity) into the future (change).

Leadership is also considered a key variable for networks to achieve autonomy in the post-incubation phase. The major challenge lies in identifying and preparing leaders with this profile, who recognize themselves in this role, receive appropriate support, and fully assume these responsibilities.

5. Heifetz, R. A., Grashow, A., & Linsky, M. (2009). *The practice of adaptive leadership: Tools and tactics for changing your organization and the world*. Harvard business press.

Adaptive governance

Network governance is a process built progressively. In the early stages, flexibility and openness are essential, since rigid rules imposed too early can inhibit collaboration. More than formal structures, what sustains good governance are legitimacy, trust, diversity, and the commitment of the leaders involved.

Each network designs its own governance structure in alignment with its context, objectives, and stage of maturity. There is no single model, but certain arrangements tend to favor balance between strategic direction and practical action, such as:

- **Founders' group:** guardians of principles and values, without the need for frequent participation.
- **Executive group:** responsible for greater time commitment and focus on implementation.
- **Executive secretariat:** the link between strategic and operational dimensions, ensuring fluid communication and decision-making.





Connections among networks

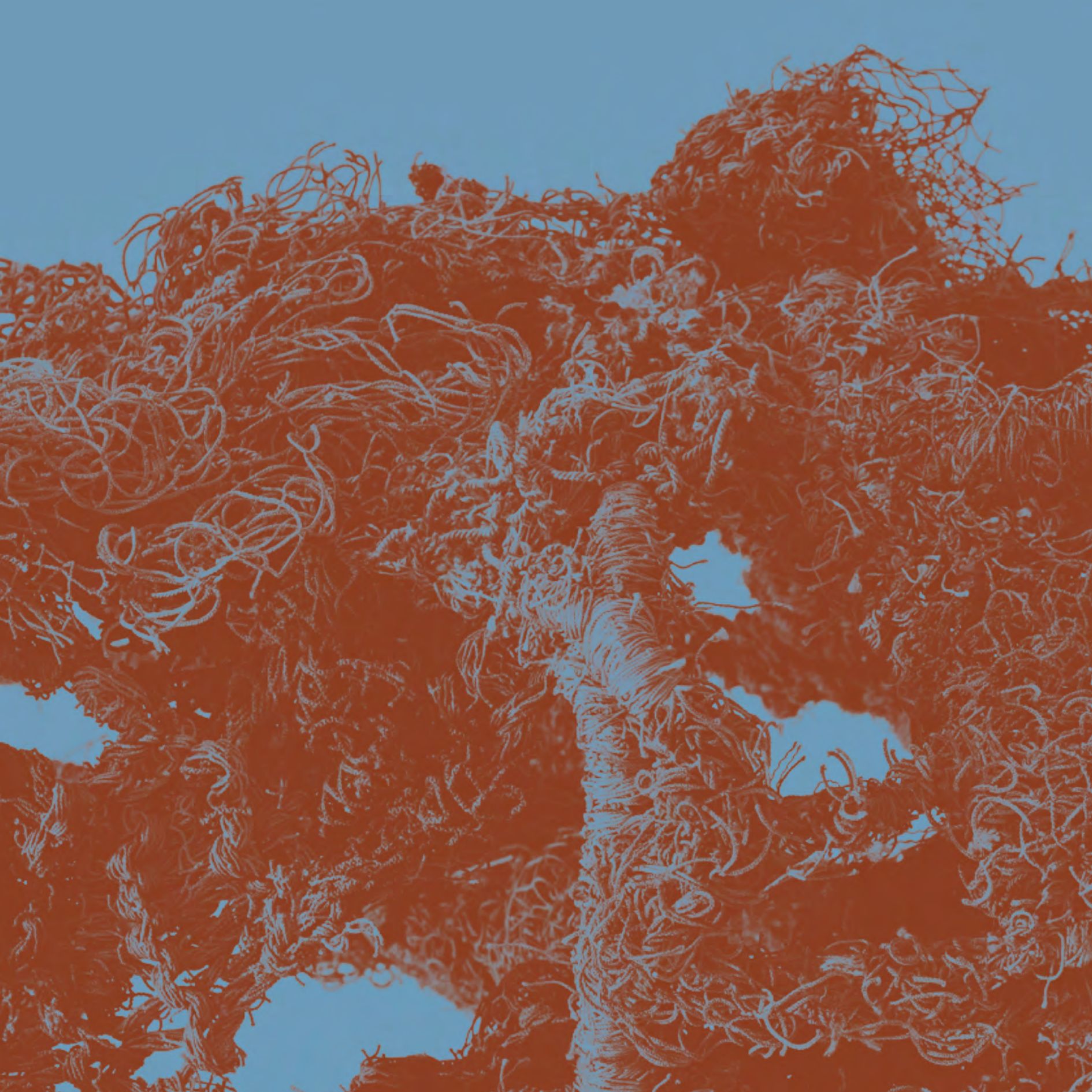
Networks supported by Arapyau often recognize the Institute as the “home of networks.” This unique position expands the potential for articulation among initiatives that share similar principles and challenges.

Even so, there is fertile ground for strengthening these connections, encouraging more frequent and structured exchanges that can generate learning and joint action. Recurring points mentioned by the networks include:

- **Support for training and preparing new leaders** capable of sustaining and renewing collective processes.

- **Maintaining the spirit of collaboration**, especially in contexts of competition for resources.
- **Exchanging best practices** in management, communication, governance, and fundraising.
- **Creating opportunities** for joint initiatives that expand the impact and visibility of shared agendas.
- **Support during leadership transitions**, reducing risks of discontinuity and strengthening the institutional sustainability of networks.

These aspects reveal a promising field for deepening Arapyau’s role as a connector of networks, not only fostering them individually but weaving links among them so that the network ecosystem becomes a more cohesive and resilient collaborative system.





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