

APEXBRASIL AND COVID-19: HOW DID AN EXPORT AND INVESTMENT PROMOTION AGENCY COPE WITH THE PANDEMIC?

Germano Adolfo Gehrke
Desiree Caroline Monteiro Keverkamp
Roger Luiz Nascimento Oliveira

GRUPO DE TRABALHO: GT8: Estado, políticas públicas, democracia, participação popular e movimentos sociais

ABSTRACT

The Brazilian Trade and investment Promotion Agency (ApexBrasil) is the official institution responsible for export promotion, foreign investment attraction, and internationalization of Brazilian companies. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the agency has (i) revised its Strategic Plan 2020-2023 in three occasions, and (ii) continued to develop a series of actions towards its goals taking into account the adverse event. This article analyses ApexBrasil's procedures in both dimensions and concludes that the Agency was able to revise its Strategic Plan 2020-2023 responding to the unfriendly environment in a proactive way. It also concludes that its actions towards export promotion, foreign investment attraction and internationalization were aligned with contemporary theory defining resilience, ApexBrasil proposed events that helped companies in three functions of the ability to perform resilience, absorb, recover, and adapt to the critical situations created during the three years analyzed, in a timely and proportional manner. ApexBrasil did not perform the first function, planning and preparation, due to the uniqueness of the Covid-19 pandemic and impossibility to foresee its occurrence.

Palavras-chave: ApexBrasil. Covid19. Performance.

INTRODUCTION

The European Commission introduced in its 2020 Strategic foresight Report resilience as a new compass for EU policymaking. Resilience is defined as the "ability not only to withstand and cope with challenges but also to undergo transitions in a sustainable, fair and democratic manner". (European Commission, 2020).

Countries create institutions to promote exports and bring foreign investments. Promoting key business sectors abroad, conducting overseas marketing through, for example, advertisement or promotional events, or aiming the country to be known among investors and importers are actions taken by Export and Investment Promotion Agencies (EIPAs). (UNCTAD, 2009)

The Brazilian Trade and Investment Promotion Agency (ApexBrasil) is the official institution responsible for export promotion, foreign investment attraction, and internationalization of Brazilian companies. Created in 1997, it is a non-profit body, of private law, collective interest and public utility. Its mission is to promote exports, the internationalization of Brazilian

companies, and foreign direct investment, in support of national public policies and strategies, in order to contribute to the sustainable growth of the Brazilian economy, (ApexBrasil, 2022a)

Global shocks – pandemics, financial crisis, extreme weather and climate change, supply-chain disruptions, labor shortages, political unrest, are happening more frequently and on a broader scale, putting organizations to the test. (The Economist, 2021)

Based on the current health, geopolitical, trade, and cyber security environment of turbulence it is important to understand how policymakers cope to mitigate adverse conditions resulting from disruptions.

This paper has as objective to identify and qualify actions performed by ApexBrasil to increase own resilience and bring it to the organizations it serves during period of crisis, with focus on the Covid-19 pandemic timeframe, which started in March 2020 and lasted until May 2023, according to the World Health Organization.

ApexBrasil own resilience is verified by analyzing its own Strategic Plan 2020-2023, issued in 2019 and revised each year thereafter.

Resilience actions proposed by ApexBrasil to clients is presented during the years 2020 through 2023, and serves as base of analysis of how it built up resilience towards Brazilian companies involved in international business.

METHOD

This report is based on a case study approach where the Agency ApexBrasil is the individual unit to be analyzed.

Research is based on two data sources. ApexBrasil own resilience is verified by analyzing its Strategic Plan 2020-2023, issued in 2019 and revised each year thereafter. Resilience proposals to clients was checked by actions carried out by ApexBrasil along the timeframe of this study.

All data needed is available on ApexBrasil website, <https://www.apexbrasil.com.br>, in the transparency tab (Transparência e Prestação de Contas).

Once data was collected, a non-structured interview with a coordinator from ApexBrasil helped to interpret and confirm the relations between revisions taken on the Strategic Plan 2020-2023 and global disruptions, as well as the actions taken by ApexBrasil to help Brazilian companies deal with the Covid-19 pandemic.

Strategic Plan 2020-2023

Structured in three different levels (Society, Internal Processes and Sustainability), ApexBrasil's Strategic Plan 2020-2023 defines 12 objectives as illustrated by Figure 1.

Revisions produced in 2020, 2021 and 2022 totaled 35 changes to the original plan, 12 in year 2020, 22 in 2021 and 1 in 2022.

Figure 1. STRATEGIC MAP WITH OBJECTIVES

SOCIETY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 - Reinforce Brazil's position as a global business partner and publicize commercial opportunities in the country and abroad 2 - Generate business intelligence for markets opportunities and risks 3 - Expand the qualification of Brazilian companies and its competitiveness in the international market 4 - Introduce and expand the presence of Brazilian companies in the international market 5 - Expand the participation of Brazilian companies in global value chains by attracting foreign direct investments in priority sectors
INTERNAL PROCESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 - Networking with national and international strategic partners 7 - Improve customer journey and service, according to maturity level, sector and market it operates 8 - Carry out the digital transformation and consolidate a culture of innovation
SUSTAINABILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9 - Develop/support employees and leaders and ensure a fair and trusting work environment 10 - Evolve the maturity stage of Apex-Brasil in Governance and Compliance 11 - Provide and improve ICT solutions, meeting business and management needs 12 - Reduce expenses and increase revenue in a sustainable way

Source: Apex-Brasil (2022b), translated by author.

All 35 changes made to the original Strategic Plan 2020-2023 were checked and those produced as a response to the Covid-19 pandemic were selected and later confirmed during the interview with a coordinator from ApexBrasil.

ApexBrasil directions to clients

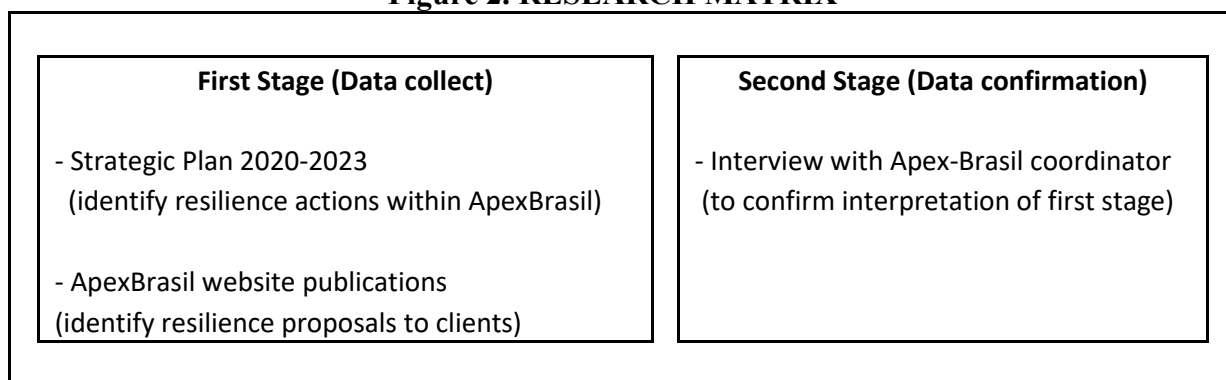
ApexBrasil contents are available at the institutional website apexbrasil.com.br and can be reached by a search feature. Directions and communication to clients proposed during the period of January 2020 to May 2023 were searched using the filter expression “Covid” and those results connected to resilience building were selected. Resilience building actions were considered those that warned and informed about the challenges imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic as well as actions related to the transition process and scenarios for the future.

Interview with ApexBrasil coordinator

An interview with a Coordinator from ApexBrasil allowed an adequate interpretation of the revisions to the Strategic Plan 2020-2023 and actions as a response to Covid-19 pandemic. The interview was built based on a non-structured questionnaire, where selected revisions and actions identified during the data collection process were certified as resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic.

The two stages of the research as well as the activity in each stage is presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2. RESEARCH MATRIX



Source: Elaborated by author

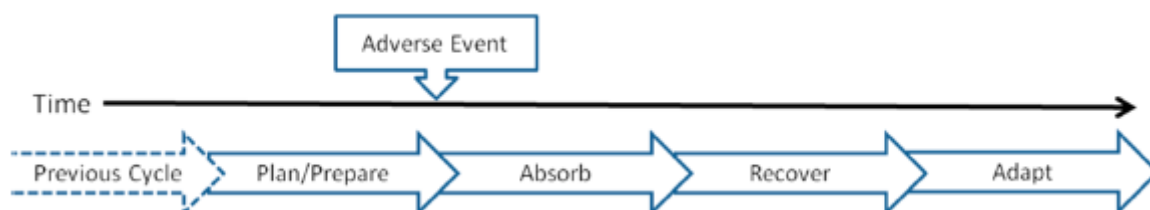
LITERATURE REVIEW

This work is based on theoretical pillars that contemplate i) resilience keeping in strategic planning and ii) the ability of a system to perform functions with respect to adverse events. While the theme of resilience keeping in strategic planning is applied to the capacity of ApexBrasil in revising its Strategic Plan for 2020-2023, the ability to perform functions with respect to adverse events is adopted to evaluate its actions towards its stakeholders.

Santos and Partidário (2009) highlight resilience’s potential and advantages for policy and planning processes. Among key guiding principles for a Systemic Thinking about resilience, the authors recommend i) to increase the System’s Capacity to Adapt or to Transform itself when crucial, ii) to shift minds and processes from “command-and-control” to “learn-and-adapt”. When planning for resilience, planning actors need to assume at least four different characteristics: anticipation, innovation, learning and communication.

Linkow et al (2013) posit that unprecedented losses associated with adverse events have focused attention on new approaches to mitigating damages. The authors define resilience as the ability of a system to perform four functions with respect to adverse events: (i) planning and preparation, (ii) absorption, (iii) recovery , and (iv) adaptation, as illustrated by Figure 3. Planning and preparation include a system design and operation decisions, with anticipation of adverse events. Absorption includes event recognition and system performance to maintain function. Recovery function uses data to track recovery progress and anticipate scenarios. Finally, Adaptation means changes to improve system resilience or design of a new system configuration, objectives, and decision criteria.

Figure 3. FOUR FUNCTIONS TO ADVERSE EVENTS CYCLE



Source: Adapted from Linkov et al. (2013)

Strategic planning for resilience keeping

Apex was created in 1997 as an Agency to foment Brazilian exports. Apex is an acronym for *Agência de Promoção de Exportação*. Later on the portfolio of the agency included the promotion of foreign investments in Brazil and modified its name to ApexBrasil.

ApexBrasil main business areas are business training for Brazilian companies, promotion of industry sectors, companies, building the Brazilian image and brand abroad, market intelligence, and foreign investment attraction.

One of the main initiatives of ApexBrasil in business training is the Export Qualification Program (PEIEX), which seeks to prepare Brazilian companies so that they can start the export process in a planned manner. Through PEIEX, professionals specialized in foreign trade guide entrepreneurs in the most suitable paths to the foreign market.

ApexBrasil also promotes business and enhances the country's image by facilitating Brazilian companies' access to international markets, diversifying export destinations, attracting investment and improving international perception of Brazilian companies, products and services. In 2021 alone, 6,392 Brazilian companies participated in fairs, prospective and commercial missions and business rounds promoted by ApexBrasil. Almost 40% were small and medium sizes companies (ApexBrasil, 2022c).

Revisions in the Strategic Plan 2020-2023

Strategic plans at ApexBrasil are proposed for a period of time of 4 years. The current plan (2020-2023) was published in November of 2019 and revised in September 2020, November 2021 and again in November 2022. A fourth revision of the plan was carried out on September 2023 and will not be considered in this paper as it came after the official end of the Covid19 Pandemic (May 2023).

Objectives are defined by goals and each revision might:

- exclude goals or include new ones,
- revise quantitative results that measure goals,
- include or exclude indicators (indexes) or

- include or exclude actions supporting goals achievement.

The number of changes proposed by year varied significantly along the three years, there were 12 in 2020, 22 changes in 2021 and only one change in 2022. Table 1 presents the number of revised positions per objective and per revision date. Objectives appear on a reduced form on Table 1. For full objective description please see Figure 1.

Table 1. NUMBER OF REVISIONS IN THE STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2023 PER OBJECTIVE AND PER YEAR

Objectives	Short Description	1st Rev. set/20	2nd Rev. nov/21	3rd Rev. nov/22	Total
Society					
1	Reinforce Brazil's position as Global Partner	1	3		4
2	Generate business intelligence	1	1		2
3	Expand qualification of Brazilian companies	1	6		7
4	Expand presence of Brazilian firms abroad	3	2		5
5	Integrate Brazilian firms in global value chains	1			1
Internal Processes					
6	Networking with strategic partners		3		3
7	Improve customer Journey	2			2
8	Carry out digital transformation and innovation	1	2	1	4
Sustainability					
9	Develop fair and trusting work environment		1		1
10	Improve governance and compliance				0
11	Provide ICT solutions				0
12	Reduce expenses and increase revenues	2	4		6
	Total	12	22	1	35

Source: Elaborated by the author, based on Strategic Plan 2020-2023 and revisions (2022)

From the total 35 changes proposed in the three revisions of the Strategic Plan 2020-2023, five were generated in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Change 1 – 2020 Revision – Inclusion of a goal on Objective 1

Objective: Reinforce Brazil's position as Global Partner

Goal included: To lead the Brazilian participation on Universal Expositions

Aim: Use the Brazilian Pavilion at Universal Exhibitions as a platform to promote the country's image, products, and investments opportunities.

Analysis: Due to Covid 19 pandemic and consequent one year delay of Dubai EXPO 2020, ApexBrasil set its role of leading Brazil's participation at the Universal Exposition.

Change 2 - 2020 Revision – Inclusion of a goal on Objective 3

Objective: Expand qualification of Brazilian companies

Goal included: Structure the E-commerce program, including awareness-raising, mentoring and trade promotion actions.

Aim: Promote the internationalization of Brazilian companies through sustainable insertion in international e-commerce and the improvement of digital presence.

Analysis: Even though e-commerce developments were already undertaken before 2020, pandemic and the consequent growth in this channel of distribution has brought the theme back to the strategic plan 2020-2023.

Change 3 - 2020 Revision – Revision of target on Objective 12

Objective: Reduce expenses and increase revenues

Goal revised: Growth rate of revenue generated by products and services

Aim: Measure adequately the evolution of own revenue obtained through the provision of ApexBrasil services.

Analysis: Growth in product and services revenues expected for year 2020 was revised to null in view of difficulties due to the first year of the Covid 19 pandemic.

Change 4 - 2021 Revision – Revision of goal on Objective 1

Objective: Reinforce Brazil's position as Global Partner

Indicator included: Number of image actions carried out by ApexBrasil

Aim: Monitoring actions that promote the image of Brazil abroad, actions promoted by ApexBrasil or carried out with associated entities.

Analysis: Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, actions promoting image of Brazil included invitation of buyers and stakeholders to major sport events such as Formula 1 and Indicar Series. Those events were replaced by "Casa Brasil", an exclusive and independent event highly regarded for the promotion of Brazilian productive sectors abroad. Markets where "Casa Brasil" was presented includes the United States, England, Portugal and Israel.

Change 5 - 2021 Revision – Inclusion of goal indicator on objective 3

Objective: Expand qualification of Brazilian companies

Indicator included: Number of companies served in the e-commerce program

Aim of the indicator: Indicator measures the number of companies served in the e-commerce program in the current year.

Analysis: Indicator is needed to measure the inclusion of the e-commerce program set in the 2020 Revision.

Scope of changes proposed on ApexBrasil’s Strategic Plan 2020-2023 revisions

Most changes proposed on the Strategic Plan 2020-2023 were on the dimension Society. These four changes are linked to the results of ApexBrasil towards its clients and stakeholders. By reaching these objectives, ApexBrasil will fulfill its mission and will be recognized by its customers and partners.

Table 2. CHANGES PROPOSED BY REVISIONS IN 2020, 2021 AND 2022 AS CONSEQUENCE OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC

	# of changes
Total changes proposed	35
Changes due to Covid	5
in Dimension Society	4
in objective 1	2
in objective 3	2
in Dimension Sustainability	1
in objective 12	1

Source: Elaborated by the author

There was no change proposed on the dimension Internal Processes. The Internal Processes are the basis for ApexBrasil’s actions. The group of objectives in this dimension focus on the development of people, the structuring and organizing of activities, and, and technology that support these processes. The Covid-19 pandemic, though, accelerated the process of training Brazilian companies in the PEIEX Program by using synchronous tools (Microsoft TEAMS) instead of face to face meetings. A change was not required on the Strategic Plan 2020-2023 revision as it was already contemplated in one of the goals set in 2019 for Objective 8, being “train and prepare employees, encouraging the development of skills for innovation and digital dexterity”.

One sole change was proposed in the dimension Sustainability, which concerns work environment conditions, governance and compliance, reducing expenses and increasing revenues. As the Covid-19 pandemic reduced economic activity in most sectors, a growth rate in revenues was not attainable in the year 2020.

Table 2 summarizes the proposed changes according to revisions in 2020, 2021 and 2022.

Apexbrasil actions towards resilience building at clients

For three years starting January 2020, ApexBrasil published 36 actions to its clients regarding the Covid pandemic, segmented as Absorb (16), Recover (10) and Adapt (10). Actions per

level is presented with the title information in Portuguese and translation of theme related to Covid-19 pandemic right below in English.

No action was identified on the Planning/Preparation level, probably due to the uniqueness of the Covid-19 pandemic and the impossibility to anticipate such an adverse event.

Absorb actions by ApexBrasil

Absorb actions were identified from March to December 2020. According to LINOW et al (2013), management during this period need to recognize the event and perform the system to maintain it functioning.

Table 3. ABSORB ACTIONS PRACTICED BY APEXBRASIL IN 2020 TO 2023

Date	Action
mar/20	Conexão Bruxelas - Março 2020 - Ano 3 - nº 3 Coronavirus: measures adopted by the European Union
apr/20	ApexCast 2 O relacionamento entre Brasil e União Europeia no contexto da Covid-19 Talk about the impacts of Covid-19 on the trade relationship between Brazil and the Europeans Union
apr/20	Conexão Bruxelas - Abril 2020 - Ano 3 - nº 4 The european agricultural sector in the coronavirus crisis
apr/20	Mercados Globais e Coronavírus - Relatório de Inteligência de Mercado - Edição 2 The study maps country's responses do covid-19
may/20	ApexCast 3 – Impactos da Covid-19 nas relações comerciais entre Brasil e Estados Unidos Manager at the ApexBrasil office in the US talks about impacts of Covid-19 on trade relations Brazil-US
may/20	ApexCast 5 - Impactos da Covid-19 no comércio Brasil-China Check out the impact of Covid-19 on Brazil's trade with China
may/20	ApexCast 6 - Impactos da Covid-19 no comércio Brasil-Rússia Head of ApexBrasil office in Moscow talks about impacts of Covid-19 on trade relations with Russia
may/20	Mercados Globais e Coronavírus - Relatório de Inteligência de Mercado - Edição 3 Brings together new analysis regarding the economic and commercial developments resulting from the pandemic
jun/20	ApexCast 10 – Conheça os impactos da Covid-19 no Oriente Médio Head of ApexBrasil office in Dubai talk about impacts of Covid-19 on Brazil's main trading partners in the Middle East
jun/20	ApexCast 8 – O Vale do Silício e a Covid-19 The impacts of Covid-10 on Silicon Valley
jun/20	ApexCast 9 – O comércio do Brasil com a América do Sul e os impactos da Covid-19 Impact of Covid-19 on Brazil's trade with South American countries
jun/20	Mercados Globais e Coronavírus - Relatório de Inteligência de Mercado - Edição 4

	Continues to monitor the economic and commercial developments resulting from the pandemic
jul/20	ApexCast 14 - O mercado brasileiro de equipamentos de segurança e a Covid-19 How Covid-10 pandemic impacts the Brazilian market for personal protective and safety equipment
oct/20	Conexão Bruxelas - Outubro 2020 - Ano 3 - nº 8 European leaders gather in Brussels to discuss Covid at the Eurean Council
dec/20	ApexCast 1 - Negócios internacionais de saúde em tempos de Covid-19 Talk about the Brazilian health sector in times of Covid-19
dec/20	TBT em Pauta - Dezembro 2020 - Ano 1 - nº 2 Technical barriers and the Covid-19 pandemic

Source: Elaborated by the author

Ten out of 16 actions were directed to specific markets, be it a group of countries (European Union, South America, Middle East) or important countries to the Brazilian foreign trade (United States, China, Russia) or even a prominent region (Silicon Valley). Remaining actions focused on sectors (agricultural, health) or technical issues influenced by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Recover actions by ApexBrasil

Recover actions were carried out from May 2020 to December 2022. At this point, system should change in order to recover previous functionality. Data is used to recover progress and anticipate recovery scenarios.

Recover actions were developed to different segments, with emphasis in the agricultural sector, with 4 actions. Support for digital opportunities also appeared in 4 events. The return to fairs and the reopening of the San Francisco office completes the picture.

Table 4. RECOVER ACTIONS PRACTICED BY APEXBRASIL IN 2020 TO 2023

Date	Action
may/20	Alerta 22/2020 – Oportunidades de exportação no contexto da covid-19: restrições de exportação em alimentos Possible export opportunities in view of potential shortages that may occur in markets affected by restrictions
may/20	ApexCast 4 - O setor farmacêutico brasileiro e a Covid-19 Investment attractions opportunities on the pharmaceutical sector under Covid-10
jul/20	ApexCast 13 – Como as startups brasileiras estão inovando durante a pandemia da Covid-19 How the Agency has been supporting Brazilian startups in some of the economic sectors impacted by Covid-19
aug/20	ApexCast 17 – A tecnologia aplicada ao agronegócio e a Covid-19 How agricultural production technology can benefit national exports and combat economic effects of the pandemic?
aug/20	ApexCast 18 – Conheça o Mapa de Oportunidades da Apex-Brasil The importance of digital agriculture for Brazilian foreign trade
jan/21	ApexCast 1 - temporada 2 – Os efeitos da transformação digital da Apex-Brasil e as perspectivas para 2021 President of ApexBrasil speaks about the services that emerged or were expanded during Covid-19 pandemic
mar/21	Abiarroz e ApexBrasil levam Brazilian Rice ao Rio Grande do Sul We are intensifying our contacts with exporters of processed rice to regain prominence in the global market.
apr/21	Escritório da ApexBrasil em São Francisco reabre suas portas em abril ApexBrasil reopened the office in San Francisco, it has been closed for the last two years during the pandemic.
apr/21	Expo2020Dubai chega ao fim e Pavilhão Brasil atingiu 2.123.953 visitantes em 6 meses de exposição The Dubai edition was scheduled to 2020, but due to health policies, it was postponed to ending in 2022
dec/22	Empresas brasileiras estimam US\$ 500 mil em negócios na Israfood 2022 The 2022 edition was first after the end of circulation restrictions in Israel resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Source: Elaborated by the author

Adapt actions by ApexBrasil

Adapt actions were first identified in June 2020 and went further to November 2022. This period requires changes to improve system resilience as well as design of new system configurations, objectives, and decision criteria.

Table 5. ADAPT ACTIONS PRACTICED BY APEXBRASIL IN 2020 TO 2023

Date	Action
jul/20	ApexCast 11 – O agronegócio brasileiro e a Covid-19 Segments that best adapted to the circumstances of the pandemic
feb/22	Agritalks: em Dubai, gestores públicos e privados e pesquisadores do agronegócio debatem soluções sustentáveis para o setor The pandemic anticipated the advancement of digitization in the world by 8 to 10 years
apr/22	ApexBrasil e Alibaba.com abrem inscrições para programa de aceleração em negócios digitais Landscape and behavior of B2B buyers has changed dramatically over the last decade, especially with the pandemic.
jun/22	BIF 2022: crises globais devem levar resiliência às cadeias mundiais de valor das empresas, afirma presidente da Mondelez no Brasil Heavily impacted during the pandemic and now by conflicts in Eastern Europe, the GVC had to be rethought
aug/22	Nearshoring e oportunidades para o Brasil After the peak of the pandemic, global business environment is in transition.
aug/22	Internacionalização via e-commerce é tema de painéis e palestras no E-Xport Meeting 2022 The atelier, found in the pandemic, aimed internationalization and entered the digital world.
aug/22	Série sobre Perspectivas Globais analisa oportunidades de comércio e de investimentos para 2023 The series looks at how major global events are likely to affect consumers, businesses and investors next year
aug/22	Tendências globais de investimento (Global Investment Trends) Director of UNCTAD discusses the international situation for foreign investments, including green finance
aug/22	Megatendências de consumo (Consumption Megatrends) After the peak of the pandemic, Euromonitor International's Research presents 10 major trends for the consumption
aug/22	Projeto da ApexBrasil em parceria com a ABVCAP e Israel Trade & Investment é premiado por órgão da ONU Governments seek investments/technologies to increase food security due to supply chain disruptions related to covid-19.

Source: Elaborated by the author

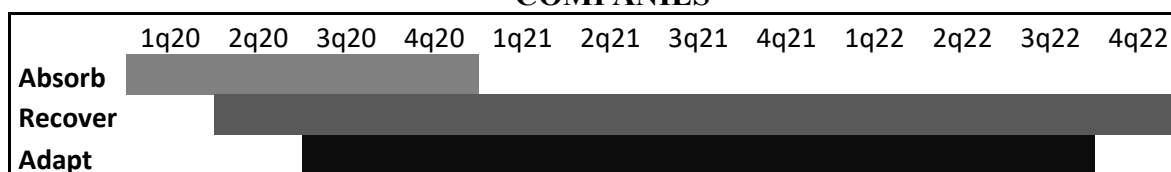
Ten actions marked the Adapt level of actions developed by ApexBrasil. Developments in the digitalization of trade and the new scenario in global value chains were equally addressed, with 3 events each. Scenarios for the future were also presented in three events, including trade and investment. One action related to the agricultural segment and how it adapted to the circumstances.

Scope of actions proposed by ApexBrasil to Brazilian companies

Actions proposed by ApexBrasil followed a logical sequence as it started with Absorb content, developed to Recover proposals and later to Adapt reports. Due to the uniqueness of the Covid-19 pandemic, the planning and preparation dimension were absent in the scope of propositions.

Figure 4 illustrates the chronology of actions, presented in quarters, from 2020 to 2022. The fact that Recover actions are still taking place in 4q2022 while none Adapt action was presented in that quarter. This is due to particularities of each segment. While some have adapted rapidly to the new conditions of the Covid-19 pandemic, others took a longer time. Interesting to remark that the first report on the Adapt dimension dates from May 2020, about the segments within the agricultural sector that best adapted to the changes imposed.

Figure 4. CHRONOLY OF PROPOSED APEXBRASIL ACTIONS TO BRAZILIAN COMPANIES



Source: Elaborated by the author

CONCLUSION

Did ApexBrasil adequately respond to the challenges imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic?

From the capacity to adapt its own Strategic Plan, ApexBrasil has been able to propose proactive changes to two objectives in the Society dimension, (i) Reinforce Brazil's position as a global business partner and publicize commercial opportunities in the country and abroad, and (ii) Expand the qualification of Brazilian companies and its competitiveness in the international market. It is therefore aligned with Santos & Partidário (2009) positions that consider (i) crucial that organizations increase the System's capacity to adapt and transform itself and, (ii) shift minds and processes from "command-and-control" to "learn-and-adapt".

Actions proposed by ApexBrasil performed the functions posited by Linkow et al. (2013) and contemplated timely moves in the dimensions Absorb, Recover and Adapt. Volume of actions was also proportional to each function except for the first one, Planning and Preparing, this

due to the uniqueness of the Covid-19 pandemic and the impossibility to forecast and prepare for such a disruption.

In both dimensions, internally and to its clients, ApexBrasil responded and delivered to the challenges faced by the Covid-19 pandemic.

REFERENCES

ApexBrasil. Quem somos. Retrieved from: <https://apexbrasil.com.br/br/pt/sobre-a-apex-brasil.html>. Access: 31 oct 2024.

ApexBrasil. Planejamento Estratégico Apex-Brasil 2020-2023. Retrieved from: <https://apexbrasil.sharepoint.com/sites/transparencia/Documentos%20Compartilhados/Formas/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2Ftransparencia%2FDocumentos%20Compartilhados%2FATOS%20NORMATIVOS%2FPlano%20Estrat%C3%A9gico%20Quadrienal%2FPlano%20Estrat%C3%A9gico%202020%2D2023%20%2D%201%C2%AA%20Revis%C3%A3o%2Epdf&parent=%2Fsites%2Ftransparencia%2FDocumentos%20Compartilhados%2FATOS%20NORMATIVOS%2FPlano%20Estrat%C3%A9gico%20Quadrienal&p=true&ga=1> Access: 22 dec 2024.

ApexBrasil. ApexBrasil – 25 anos. Retrieved from: <https://click.apexbrasil.com.br/mkt/siteapex/memoria/2022/livro25apexsite.pdf>

European Commission. 2020 Strategic Foresight Report. Retrieved from: https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/strategic-planning/strategic-foresight/2020-strategic-foresight-report_en . Access: 21 aug 2023.

LINKOV, I, EISENBERG, D.A., BATES, M.E., CHANG, D., CONVERTINO, M., ALLEN, J.A., FLYNN, S.E., SEAGER, T.P. Measurable resilience for actionable policy: ACS Publications, 2013.

SANTOS, F.T., PARTIDARIO, M.R. SPARK: Strategic Planning Approach for Resilience Keeping. *European Planning Studies*, Brussels, 2011.

THE ECONOMIST. Resilience Reimagined. Retrieved from: <https://impact.economist.com/projects/resilience-reimagined/reports/ExecutivePage/ECO062%E2%80%94Iron%20Mountain%20Report.pdf>

UNCTAD. Promoting Investment and Trade: Practices and Issues. Retrieved from: https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/diaepcb20099_en.pdf