

# Epidemiological dynamics of an urban Dengue 4 outbreak in São Paulo, Brazil

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**Background** Dengue studies at the urban scale are scarce and required for guiding control efforts. In Brazil, the burden of dengue is high and challenges city public health administrations with limited resources. Here we studied the dynamics of a dengue epidemic in a single city. **Methods** Serum samples from dengue suspected cases were collected and tested, from December 2012 and July 2013 in Guarujá, Brazil. We use incidence series analysis to provide a detailed view of the reproduction number dynamics and a Bayesian analysis to infer the spread of the serotype using geographic and temporal data. **Results** We obtained nucleotide sequences from 354 envelope genes and georeferenced 286 samples during the course of the outbreak. Serotype 4 was responsible for the epidemic. We identified at least two major lineages that overlapped in distribution. We observed high Reproduction numbers and high cladogenesis prior to the escalation of clinical case notifications. Three densely populated non-adjacent neighborhoods played a pivotal role during the onset and/or course of the epidemic. **Discussion** Our findings point to high dengue virus transmission with a substantial proportion of unapparent cases that led to a late recognition of an outbreak. Usually source reductions initiatives tend to be insufficient once an epidemic has been established. Nevertheless, health authorities in Guarujá prioritized vector control on specific places with clusters of georeferenced viremic patients, which appear to have diminished the epidemic impact.

1 **Epidemiological dynamics of an urban Dengue 4 outbreak in São**

2 **Paulo, Brazil**

3

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**23 Abstract****24 Background**

25 Dengue studies at the urban scale are scarce and required for guiding control efforts. In  
26 Brazil, the burden of dengue is high and this challenges city public health administrations  
27 with limited resources. Here we studied the dynamics of a dengue epidemic in a single city.

**28 Methods**

29 Serum samples from dengue suspected cases were collected and tested, from December  
30 2012 to July 2013 in the city of Guarujá, Brazil. We use incidence series analysis to provide a  
31 detailed view of the reproduction number dynamics and a Bayesian analysis to infer the  
32 spread of the serotype using geographic and temporal data.

**33 Results**

34 We obtained nucleotide sequences from 354 envelope genes and georeferenced 286  
35 samples during the course of the outbreak. Serotype 4 was responsible for the epidemic.  
36 We identified at least two major lineages that overlapped in distribution. We observed high  
37 reproduction numbers and high cladogenesis prior to the escalation of clinical case  
38 notifications. Three densely populated non-adjacent neighborhoods played a pivotal role  
39 during the onset and/or course of the epidemic.

**40 Discussion**

41 Our findings point to high dengue virus transmission with a substantial proportion of  
42 unapparent cases that led to a late recognition of an outbreak. Usually source reductions  
43 initiatives tend to be insufficient once an epidemic has been established. Nevertheless,  
44 health authorities in Guarujá prioritized vector control on places that concentrated  
45 georeferenced viremic patients, which appear to have diminished the epidemic impact.

46

47 **Introduction:**

48

49 The dengue viruses exist as four antigenically distinct serotypes named DENV-1,  
50 DENV-2, DENV-3 and DENV-4. Dengue fever (DF) is a disease caused by any of the DENV  
51 (Chen & Vasilakis 2011). There is an estimate of 390-million (95% credible interval 284–528)  
52 dengue infections worldwide per year, of which 96 million (67–136) show any level of  
53 clinical or subclinical severity (Bhatt et al. 2013).

54 Dengue is endemic in Brazil. This means that the disease occurs every year, usually  
55 during the wet season when *Aedes* mosquitoes' population sizes are high and the rainfall is  
56 optimal for breeding. People provide the mosquitoes not only with blood meals but also  
57 water-holding containers where the mosquitoes lay their eggs. In addition, this country is at  
58 periodic risk for epidemic dengue (*i.e.*, when large numbers of people become infected  
59 during a short period), which requires a coincidence of large numbers of vector mosquitoes  
60 and large numbers of people with no immunity to one or more of the four serotypes (CDC  
61 2015).

62 Dengue virus serotype 4 (DENV-4) reemerged in the northern Brazil in 2010, 28 years  
63 after it was last detected in the country in 1982, and has been responsible for several  
64 outbreaks since then (Nunes et al. 2012). In 2013, 1,468,873 million dengue cases were  
65 reported countrywide, including 6,969 severe cases and 545 deaths. These numbers entail a  
66 challenge for public health authorities, which in a timely manner need to allocate resources  
67 and trained personnel to try diminishing the health impact of the disease. Programs to  
68 control populations of mosquitoes strain public resources, especially in resource-limited  
69 settings (Shepard et al. 2011; Stahl et al. 2013). In this context, understanding epidemic

70 spread in urban settings is crucial because the results may guide the allocation of scarce  
71 resources toward future vector control.

72 The spatiotemporal patterns of dengue spread in Brazilian settings are limited and  
73 mostly based on serological prevalence and incidence data (Barreto & Teixeira 2008;  
74 Teixeira Mda et al. 2002; Teixeira et al. 2013). Some recent studies address this topic in a  
75 larger scale (Nunes et al. 2012; Nunes et al. 2014). So far, only one work addresses the  
76 spatial dynamics of an urban dengue outbreak in the city of São Jose de Rio Petro using viral  
77 genetic data (Mondini et al. 2009). These studies are imperative because socio-demographic  
78 and ecological factors affect diffusion dynamics (Cuong et al. 2013; Jeefoo et al. 2011;  
79 Raghvani et al. 2011; Rasmussen et al. 2014; Schreiber et al. 2009; Vazquez-Prokopec et al.  
80 2010). In the present work we describe an outbreak of DENV-4 during 2013 in the city of  
81 Guarujá, Brazil, following Bayesian phylogenetic analysis of envelope gene sequences. Our  
82 results emphasize the importance of real-time follow up and guided actions to achieve  
83 better control during epidemics.

84

## 85 **Methods:**

86

### 87 Study Site

88

89 Guarujá ( $23^{\circ} 59' 37''$  S  $46^{\circ} 15' 23''$  W) is a coastal city in Santo Amaro Island,  
90 situated at the shore of the State of São Paulo, Brazil (Fig. 1A). The city is embedded in a  
91 tropical rain forest. It has a tropical humid climate that is characterized by having high  
92 average air temperature and rainfall. The average annual temperature is  $24.7^{\circ}\text{C}$  (Min  $18^{\circ}\text{C}$   
93 | Max  $31.3^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) and the annual rainfall is 3,400 mm; February is the wettest month (average

94 rainfall of 413 mm) and August is the driest one (average rainfall of 156 mm). The city main  
95 economic sources are seasonal tourism and port related activities. The estimated  
96 population in 2013 was 306,683 and the human population density was around 2,000  
97 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>. Official dengue figures by the Epidemiological Surveillance Center of  
98 the State (CVE) date back to 1997 and sum 24000 total cases up to 2012. There is no  
99 detailed information concerning the previous exposure to distinct DENV serotypes and the  
100 municipality relies on the surveillance by the Adolfo Lutz Institute (The Central Public Health  
101 laboratory from The State of São Paulo).

102

103 Sample Collection:

104

105 In late 2012, our group at University of São Paulo joined efforts with the Guarujá  
106 Municipality's office of epidemiological surveillance and with a local clinical laboratory  
107 analysis center (Itapema) to map the incidence of dengue in the city and obtain viral genetic  
108 data. Both institutions contributed with the collection of samples citywide and by  
109 performing preliminary immunochromatographic diagnostic tests for dengue (Kassim 2011).

110 Patients of any age with symptoms and signs of dengue disease that were examined  
111 in Primary Health or Emergency Care Units and tested positive for IgM and/or NS1 were  
112 considered for the study. Symptoms included fever, frontal or retro-orbital headache,  
113 severe pain (muscles, bones, legs, joints, lower back or abdominal), nausea, vomiting, taste  
114 disturbance and anorexia. Signs included high fever (usually between 38.5 and 41°C)  
115 persisting for 24 hours, rash, hemorrhagic manifestations, hypotension and narrow pulse  
116 pressure.

117

118 Ethics Statement

119

120 The Ethical Review Board of the Biomedical Science Institute at University of São  
121 Paulo approved this study (Statement 933/CEP). All adult subjects provided an informed  
122 written consent, and a parent or guardian of any child participant provided the written  
123 informed consent on their behalf.

124

125 Molecular Testing

126

127 Viral RNA was extracted from serum samples with the QIAmp viral RNA mini kit  
128 (Qiagen, Venlo, Limburg, Netherlands) and the complementary DNA was synthesized using  
129 the SuperScript® VILO™ cDNA Synthesis Kit (Life Technologies, Carlsbad, California, United  
130 States). The GoTaq® Green Master Mix (Promega, Madison, Wisconsin, United States) was  
131 used for PCR amplifications of the envelope gene using the primers of (Bennett et al. 2003).  
132 The ExoSAP-IT reagent was used for PCR Product Cleanup (Affymetrix, Santa Clara, California,  
133 United States) and the sequencing reaction was performed using the BigDye® Terminator  
134 v3.1 Cycle Sequencing Kit (Life Technologies). Sequencing reaction products were purified  
135 using the BigDye XTerminator Purification Kit (Life Technologies) and sequenced on an ABI  
136 PRISM® 3130 Genetic Analyzer (Life Technologies). Contigs were assembled using the  
137 program Codon Code aligner.

138

139 Genetic Analysis

140

141 Sequences were aligned using Muscle 3.8.31 (Edgar 2004a; Edgar 2004b) followed by  
142 visual inspection and manual editing with Mesquite 2.75 (Maddison & Maddison 2014).  
143 Polymorphisms were analyzed with DNASP 5 (Librado & Rozas 2009). The Tajima D statistic  
144 test was used to evaluate deviations from the neutral expectation of molecular evolution  
145 (Tajima 1989). The package HyPhy v2.2 was used to screen for recombination (SBP-Single  
146 Breakpoint Recombination and GARD-Genetic Algorithms for Recombination Detection) and  
147 for positive selection; the dengue strain H780090 isolated in Boa Vista, RR-Brazil (29 of  
148 November of 2010) was used as a reference for selection analysis. Both genealogy-based,  
149 codon-site models Single Likelihood Ancestor Counting (SLAC) and the Fixed Effects  
150 Likelihood (FEL) methods were used to estimate the non-synonymous (dN) and synonymous  
151 (dS) rates of substitution (Delpont et al. 2010; Kosakovsky Pond & Frost 2005; Pond et al.  
152 2005).

153

154 Phylogenetic analysis

155

156 The sequences obtained in this study were combined with a DENV-4 database from a  
157 previous study (Villabona-Arenas & Zanutto 2011) to identify the genotype. This was  
158 achieved using high-throughput clustering with the UCLUST algorithm in the package  
159 USEARCH (Edgar 2010).

160 The JModeltest software was used for the statistical selection of the best-fit model  
161 of nucleotide substitution under the Akaike information criterion (Darriba et al. 2012;  
162 Guindon & Gascuel 2003). Sequences were dated according to the day of sampling and used  
163 for phylogenetic reconstruction and the estimation of the rate of evolutionary change ( $\mu$ )  
164 (subs/site/year) using Bayesian Inference (IB) in Beast v2.3.1 (Bouckaert et al. 2014); the

165 tree prior was a Birth-Death with Serial Skyline Sampling (BDSKY) (Stadler et al. 2013) (See  
166 Table S1 for parameterization). A Bayesian maximum clade credibility (MCC) tree was  
167 inferred from a set of plausible trees sampled at the stationary phase of four independent  
168 Markov Chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) runs with 200 million generations each using a relaxed  
169 (uncorrelated lognormal) molecular clock (Drummond et al. 2006). The convergence of  
170 parameters was assessed using Tracer v1.6 program  
171 (<http://tree.bio.ed.ac.uk/software/tracer/>) until all parameters estimates showed Effective  
172 Sample Size (ESS) values over 200.

173

174 Time-varying reproduction numbers

175

176 We used the approach of Cori et al. to estimate the instantaneous reproduction  
177 number using the R-package EpiEstim (Cori et al. 2013; Salje et al. 2012). The method  
178 requires incidence data and a serial interval distribution (a gamma distribution with shift 1)  
179 that describes the time between the onset of symptoms in a primary case and the onset of  
180 symptoms of secondary cases. We used the weekly notifications from the municipality's  
181 office of epidemiological surveillance for the epidemiological year of 2012-2013 (daily data  
182 was not available) and a serial interval distribution that reflected previous estimates of the  
183 dengue incubation period (Table S1); the outcome of a censored Bayesian time-to-event  
184 model estimated the dengue intrinsic incubation period (the time between a human being  
185 infected and the onset of symptoms due to the infection) around six days (95% CI 3 -10  
186 days) and the best-fitting temperature-dependent extrinsic incubation period around 6.5  
187 days (95% CI 2-15 days) at 30°C (Chan & Johansson 2012). The analysis took into account the  
188 uncertainty in the serial interval distribution by integrating over a range of means and

189 standard deviations of the serial interval (the mean and standard deviation were allowed to  
190 vary according to truncated normal distributions, Table S1) (Cori et al. 2013). We used a  
191 gamma prior distribution (Table S1) for the reproduction number that includes previous  
192 estimates (between 1.33 and 11.6) (Halstead 2008).

193

194

195 Spatiotemporal dispersion pattern

196

197 In order to find the most parsimonious set of rates explaining the diffusion process  
198 along the sampled trees for a geolocated dataset, we used the Bayesian stochastic search  
199 variable selection (BSSVS) approach as implemented in Beast v2.3.1 (Bouckaert et al. 2014).

200 The method assumes exchange rates in a continuous-time Markov chain (CTMC) to be zero  
201 with some prior probability (Lemey et al. 2009) and performs ancestral reconstruction on a

202 single character, which represents the location of the taxa. Sampled taxa are associated

203 with locations and the ancestral states of the internal nodes in the sampled trees can be

204 reconstructed from the taxon locations; because the sampled trees are in units of time we

205 can reconstruct the diffusion over time by following character transformation over the

206 branches. Locations were represented by discrete groups of adjacent neighborhoods

207 (discrete phylogeography) and a Bayes factor (BF) test was run to identify the rates

208 contributing to the migration path with the software Spread v1.0.4 (Bielejec et al. 2011).

209 The number of neighborhoods was reduced to a maximum of 10 localities (chosen by

210 vicinity a by number of samples reported) in order to diminish sample-size bias

211 (disproportionate sampling can strongly bias phylogeographic analyses because over

212 sampled populations will more likely to be inferred as source populations).

213

214 **Results:**

215

216 Sampling

217

218 The year 2013 coincided with a steep rise in the confirmed cases of dengue fever in  
219 the State of São Paulo (Fig. 1B). Public Health authorities of Guarujá reported a total of 1805  
220 autochthonous dengue cases during this year.

221 We studied 505 PCR dengue-positive patients during the study in Guarujá. These  
222 samples were collected between December 2012 and July 2013. Serotyping determined 10  
223 (1.9%) to be DENV-1, eight (1.5%) to be DENV-2, two to be DENV-3 (0.4%) and 505 to be  
224 DENV-4 (96.2%). DENV-4 was relatively new to the country and outbreaks had been  
225 reported throughout the country since it was first detected in Brazil in 2011. Preliminary  
226 results reporting the documentation of the co-circulation of the four serotypes was  
227 published elsewhere (Villabona-Arenas et al. 2014).

228 Complete envelope (E) gene sequences were obtained for 354 DENV-4 (1485 bp-  
229 long). The remaining DENV-4 was not processed due to technical problems (*e.g.*, did not  
230 yield sufficient viral RNA). These sequences were deposited in GenBank under the  
231 accessions KP703864 - KP704217.

232

233 DENV-4 genetic diversity

234

235 A total of 109 sites (7.3%) of the envelope gene were polymorphic; 32 sites (2.1%)  
236 fell in the first and second codon position and 77 (5.2%) fell in the third codon position.

237 There were a total of 95 haplotypes and 75 of them represented one unique sequence; the  
238 three most frequent haplotypes had 119 (34%), 38 (11%) and 30 (8.5%) sequences  
239 (Haplotype diversity, the probability that two haplotypes drawn uniformly at random from  
240 the population are not the same, was 0.86). The Tajima's D value was of  $-2.56$  ( $P < 0.001$ ) ( $-$   
241  $2.48$  for the combination of both first and second codon positions,  $-2.26$  for the third codon  
242 position) evidenced an excess of low frequency polymorphisms relative to expectation,  
243 indicating population size expansions and/or purifying selection. In agreement with this, the  
244 overall rate of non-synonymous over synonymous changes  $dN/dS$  value of 0.15 (95% CI  
245 0.10-0.21) for the entire gene suggested purifying selection. A few codons, which fell in the  
246 central and dimerization gene domains, showed statistically significant purifying selection  
247 (codons 92, 133, 184 and 225) at the significant level of 0.05. Although a few sites  
248 experienced an elevation on  $dN/dS$  there was no statistical evidence for adaptive evolution.

249

250 Evolutionary history and epidemiological dynamics

251

252 The 354 DENV-4 local sequences fell into the Latin-American cluster of viruses of  
253 Genotype II together with other Brazilian samples (see Data S1).

254 The best-fit model of nucleotide substitution was Tamura-Nei (TrN) with invariables  
255 sites. The mean evolutionary rate was  $2.79 \times 10^{-3}$  substitutions per site per year (95% HPDs:  
256  $2.06 \times 10^{-3} - 3.77 \times 10^{-3}$  substitutions per site per year). The estimates for the epidemiological  
257 parameters were: the sampling proportion was 1.4% (95% HPDs: 0.03-3.1%), the infectious  
258 period was 6.7 days (95% HPDs: 5-10 days) and the origin of the epidemic was the 21th of  
259 December-2012 (95% HPDs: 16<sup>th</sup> December-2012 – 26<sup>th</sup> December-2012). Figure S1 show  
260 the extent to which prior information matched the posterior. Sampling from the prior

261 analysis indicated that the posterior and prior traces were the same and that the overall  
262 constraints were not forcing the results.

263 Fig. 2A shows the MCC tree with two clades early on in the epidemic. The mean time  
264 to the most recent common ancestor of these clades did not differ significantly, suggesting  
265 that both viral lineages diverged over similar time-scales, and then co-circulated.

266 The dynamic of  $R$  is presented in Fig. 2B. A value of the parameter  $R$  over 1.0  
267 indicates that the disease will be able to spread in a population. For the time series analysis,  
268 the estimates are high during the first four months of the year and the curve decrease  
269 rapidly by the end of April with values below 1.0 in May and June. We did not included the  
270 birth-death skyline plots because this reconstruction may be misleading around the time we  
271 had severe sampling issues (due to the switch to clinical diagnosis) and not enough  
272 phylogenetic diversity was observed within the sampled genetic data (du Plessis & Stadler  
273 2015); additional BDSKY analyses where sampling proportions were estimated in a piece-  
274 wise manner over six different intervals did not solve this. Moreover, these methods not  
275 always reconstruct complex dynamics when other factors such as seasonality, spatial  
276 structure and vector dynamics are not incorporated (Rasmussen et al. 2014)

277

278 Phylogeography of DENV-4 over the city

279

280 We were able to geolocate 286 patients (81%) (Fig. 1A) based on the addresses  
281 recorded by the Guarujá Municipal Health Department (Records were not available for the  
282 remaining patients); Figure 2B compares the actual number of official cases reported and  
283 our DENV-4 geolocated sampling. Our first geolocated sample was collected in January the  
284 2nd 2013 at the neighborhood Enseada. This location has a high number of residents

285 (20,883 based on the 2010 census records) and is home to the largest beach concentrating  
286 mostly residents. Pae-Cará together with its neighbor Itapema, are the neighborhoods with  
287 more residents (26,054 and 26,070 respectively) followed by Morrinhos (24,387), Enseada  
288 and Jardim Boa Esperança (20,753). The digital map was provided by the Municipality's  
289 office and represents the master plan for development and urban planning in the city.  
290 Figure 3 illustrates the overall discrete spatial diffusion over the urban area. These results  
291 were gauged from a full location-annotated MCC tree, available as Fig. 4, which evidenced  
292 an early widespread distribution of the virus in January. The introduction events into each  
293 discrete unit are depicted in Fig. 3A; these represent viral diffusion during the onset of the  
294 epidemic. These figures suggest that two localities, Enseada and Pae-Cará, were key virus  
295 sources. Later on, all regions become interconnected in terms of viral diffusion. The  
296 adjacent high-income, low-population density neighborhoods (Jardim Acapulco and  
297 Pernambuco) had no cases sampled. This is not explained by distance or lack of connection,  
298 because low-income areas nearby (the shantytowns in Mar e Céu, to the South, and  
299 Pereque Beach, to the North) had several cases during the epidemic. Bayes factor test of  
300 significant diffusion rates shows that another two localities (Morrinhos and Jardim Boa  
301 Esperança) played an important role during the course of the epidemic (Fig. 3B). The initial  
302 diffusion pattern reproduced to some degree the main access highways of the island: a  
303 north-south axis with Pae-Cará and a west-east axis over the littoral with Enseada. (Fig. 3C)

304

**305 Discussion:**

306

307 In the present study we described the outbreak of DENV-4 during 2013 in the city of Guarujá,  
308 Brazil. During the outbreak we documented purifying selection and found no statistical

309 evidence of adaptive evolution. Nonetheless, inferences about selection and rates drawn  
310 from the analyses should be interpreted with caution. The observed differences between  
311 our sequences may represent segregating sites in a population and under this scenario  
312 evolutionary rates can be overestimated and dN/dS ratios below one can be found under  
313 both negative and positive selection (Kryazhimskiy & Plotkin 2008).

314         On April 4th, the Public health authorities of Guarujá announced the epidemic alert  
315 (when a city reaches the incidence of 100 cases per 100 thousand inhabitants) and during  
316 this month they strengthened control measures. Confirmatory diagnoses for dengue  
317 became clinical (ignoring the possibility of other acute febrile illnesses) and the number of  
318 cases increased dramatically after the epidemic alert was announced.

319         The reproduction number dynamics (Fig 2B) and the timing of the coalescent events  
320 (concentrated around February) point to an epidemic that started much earlier than the  
321 case report records. A comparable observation was done in another Brazilian setting  
322 (Mondini et al. 2009): the epidemic peak by demographic skyline methods took place  
323 around two months before the epidemic peak by case report data. The authors argue that  
324 such finding resulted from an increase in false positives after the epidemic alert and we  
325 argue that in Guarujá the population awareness might have also contributed to a sudden  
326 increase.

327         Higher values in reproduction numbers (or relative genetic diversity estimates)  
328 preceding the peak of laboratory-confirmed cases may reflect virus population spread in a  
329 large unreported infected population. Dengue virus infection results in more asymptomatic  
330 cases than symptomatic ones and this difficult the early detection of increased incidence.  
331 This phenomenon has been documented for Brazilian urban settings (Endy 2002; Poblap et  
332 al. 2006; Teixeira Mda et al. 2002). The spatial diffusion analysis shows that when a

333 significant number of clinical cases began to appear, the virus was practically distributed  
334 throughout the city (Fig. 4). Moreover, by looking at the available data on dengue from 2012  
335 (Fig. 1C) it is clear that transmission is sustained all over the year. Following the dynamics of  
336 the reproduction number using incidence time series, we observed that the disease spread  
337 quickly during most of the observational period and decreased by the end.

338         During November of 2012, the city led the ranking of mosquito infestation in the  
339 State of São Paulo and the averaged Breteau index for *Aedes aegypti* during 2103 was high  
340 (3.12). Source reduction initiatives started in shantytowns during March but the flow of  
341 people and of mosquitoes from other areas may have offset their contribution. Municipality  
342 health authorities considered the use of massive insecticide nebulization when extensive  
343 symptomatic cases were recognized. The use of mosquito fogging trucks is not executed  
344 citywide because it is costly and relies on availability from the Adolfo Lutz Institute,  
345 therefore strategic areas have to be selected. The neighborhoods of Enseada, Paé-Cara and  
346 Morrinhos were selected because they reported higher numbers of reactive NS1 antigen  
347 results; four rounds of insecticide nebulization were applied during April and massive  
348 insecticide nebulization coincided with a rapid reduction in the number of cases over time.  
349 It may be argued that the outcome was due to the depletion of the susceptible population  
350 or only a change in seasonality(Egger et al. 2008). Nonetheless, Guarujá was among the  
351 municipalities (103 out of 429) that showed a statistically significant reduction of  
352 notification when comparing the figures of the previous epidemics (2010) and those of the  
353 State (a naïve-experienced population to DENV-4). Overall, this suggests that control  
354 strategy achieved some degree of control.

355

356           The research into their effectiveness of vector control is scarce and almost nothing is  
357 known about how well it reduces DENV transmission (Achee et al. 2015). The two high-  
358 income neighborhoods that had privately-owned and hired vector control services (as  
359 informed by the health authorities) showed a discontinuity when pinpointing the dengue  
360 incidence over the city. This suggests that control actions, when applied in a timely and  
361 sustained manner, are useful. Rapid and unplanned urbanization (*e.g.* shantytowns) has  
362 provided appropriate circumstances (high population density and high contact rates  
363 between humans and mosquitos) for substantial vector breeding in Guarujá and several  
364 municipalities of Brazil. For example, nearby cities, such as Santos and São Vicente (Fig 1B),  
365 also have important number of dengue notifications throughout the year and therefore a  
366 continuous flux of infected people and mosquitoes is expected. Under this scenario, city  
367 public health administrations with limited resources encounter a big challenge. In Guarujá,  
368 local authorities prioritized vector control based on georeferenced viremic patients and the  
369 epidemic of an expected higher magnitude. To achieve full control however, this may be not  
370 enough, but it is a first coherent step.

371

**372 Conclusion:**

373

374           Studying urban outbreaks is important; successful public health interventions require  
375 detailed knowledge of the disease dynamics and how it spread within the population. It is  
376 very difficult to stop dengue spread because *Aedes* mosquitoes bounce back to initial  
377 numbers after control interventions and because unapparent infections also contribute to  
378 DENV persistent circulation (Duong et al. 2015). Nonetheless, in the absence of a vaccine,  
379 source reduction initiatives and massive control actions are the options that city public

380 health administrations have. We have evidenced that a delayed response may result in an  
381 epidemic that grow beyond the capabilities of local health authorities but that sound efforts  
382 may diminish its effect.

383

384 **Acknowledgments:**

385

386 We thank all the participants in this study for generously helping us in this research.

387 We also thank all the medical staff and administrative staff from the Primary Health Care

388 Facilities, the Emergency Care Units and the ITAPEMA clinical laboratory analysis center who

389 have kindly assisted us by collecting blood samples from participants. We thank the Guarujá

390 Municipality's office of epidemiological surveillance for the discussions and the practical and

391 technical advice.

392

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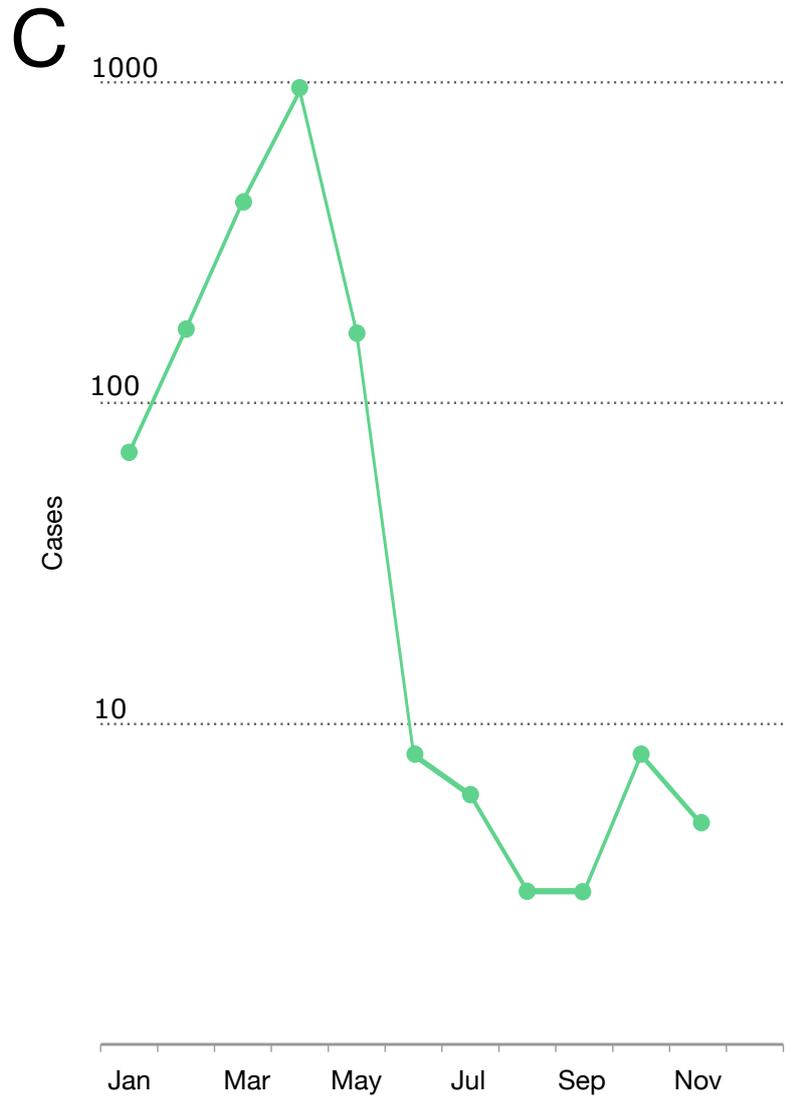
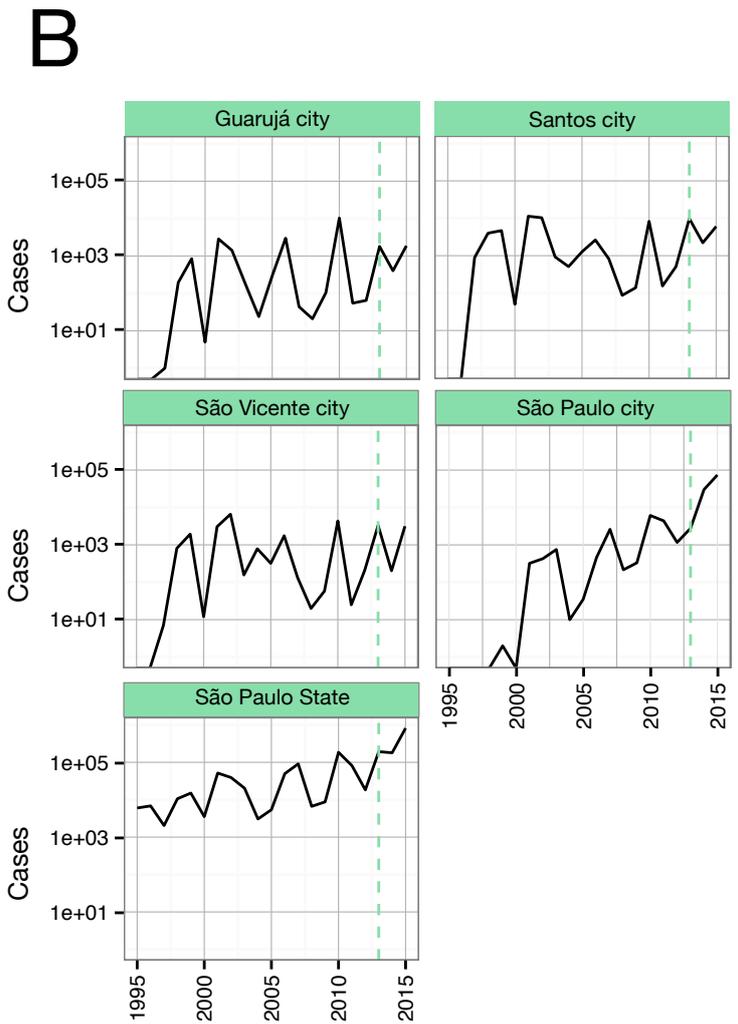
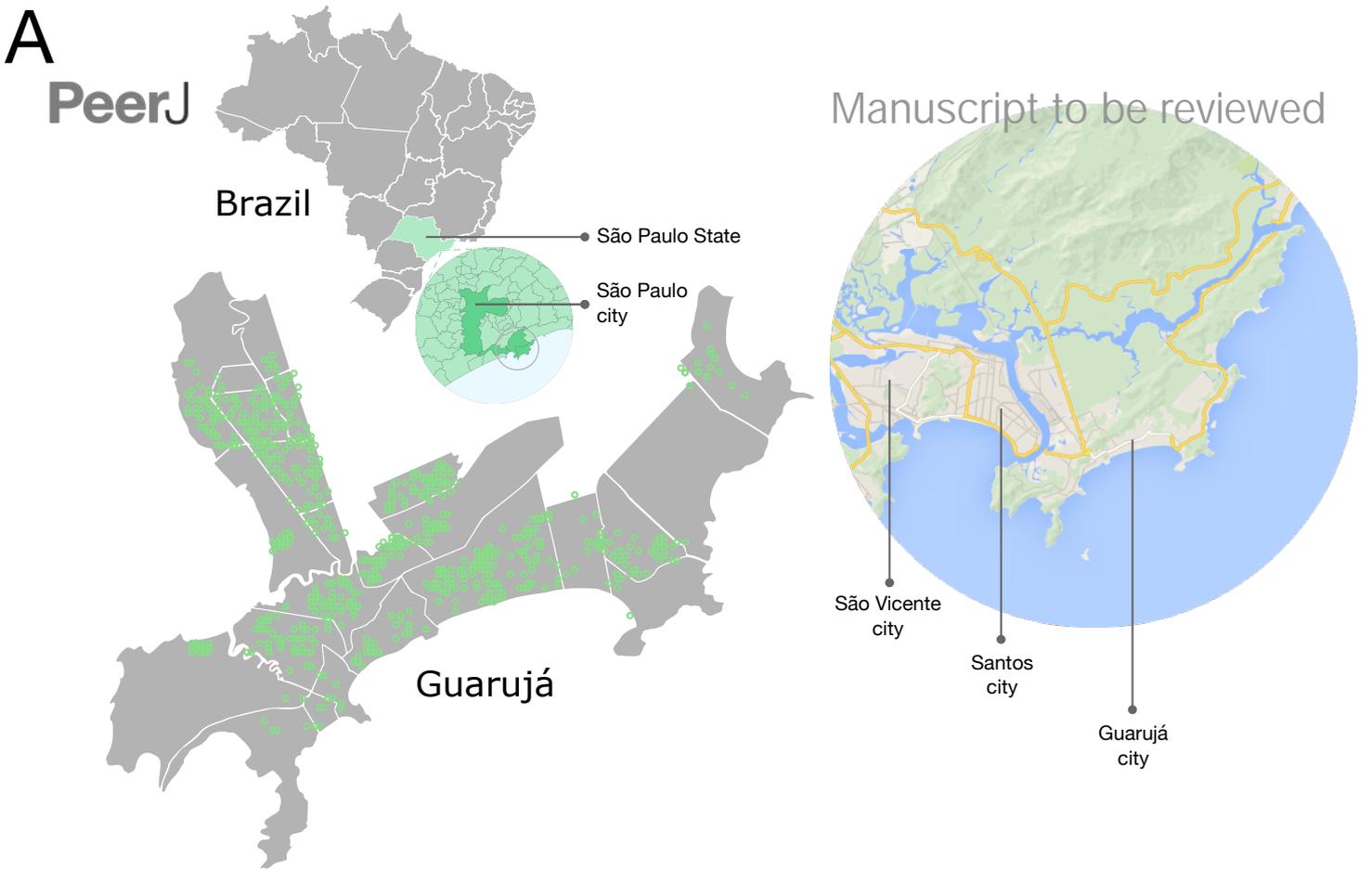
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**Figure 1**(on next page)

Epidemiological situation in the Municipality of Guarujá.

A) Map of Guarujá and nearby localities; georeferenced samples are plotted over the map (See File S1 for displaying in Google Earth). B) Yearly dengue notifications for the State of São Paulo and some municipalities; dotted line intersects 2013. Fisher exact tests and corrections for multiple comparisons (Bonferroni and Benjamini-Hochberg) were used to assess the significance of the reduction in the number of cases from the previous epidemic year; tests were done by municipality (n=429) and compared to the records for the State; Guarujá, São Vicente and São Paulo were among the municipalities (n=103) with a significant reduction of notifications ( $p < 0.05$ ). C) Monthly dengue notifications for the municipality of Guarujá during 2013.



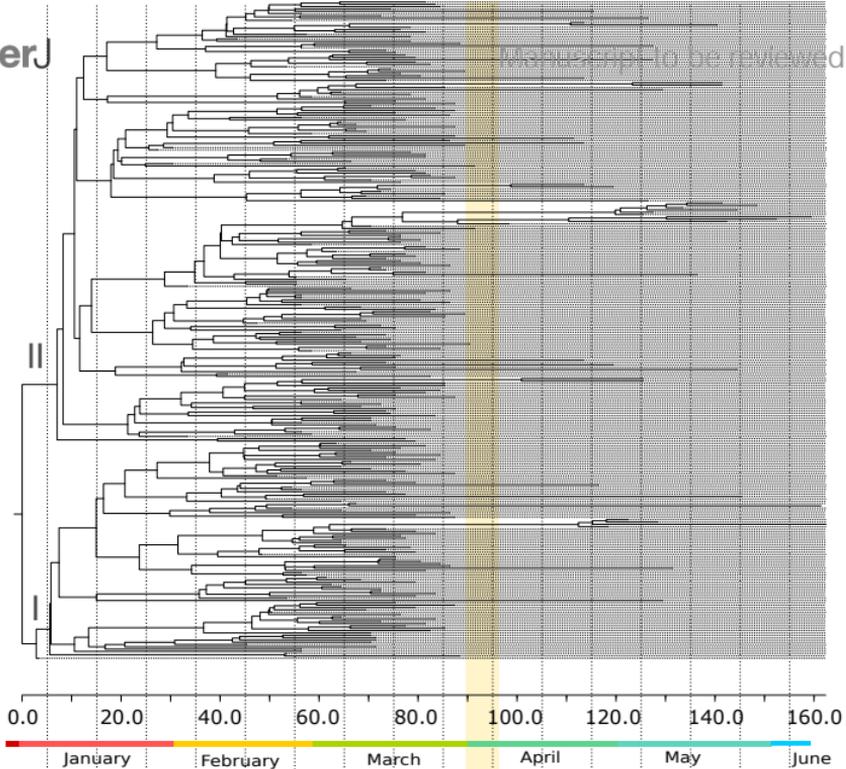
**Figure 2**(on next page)

Phylogenetic relationships and reproduction numbers of DENV-4 genotype II isolated in the municipality of Guarujá from January-June 2013.

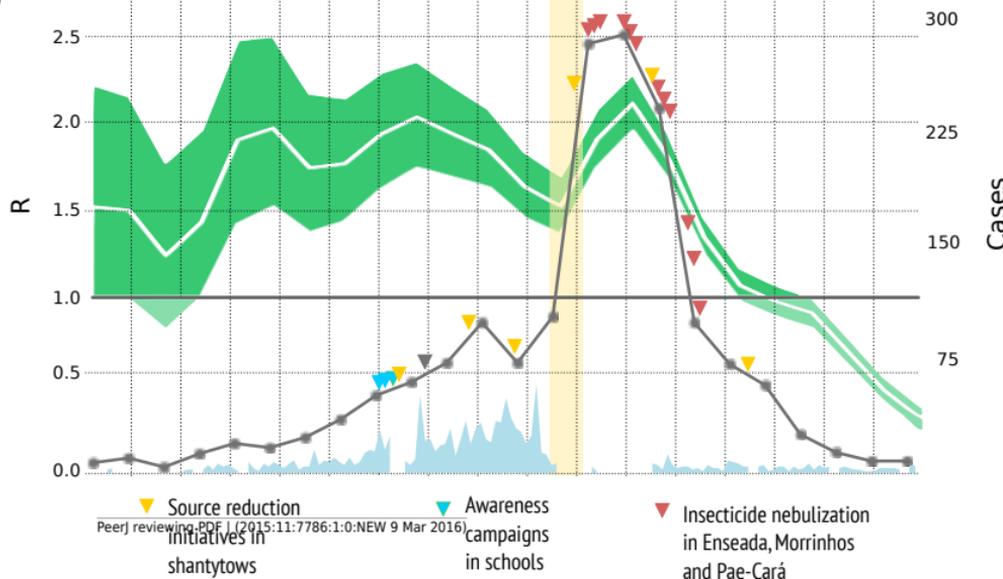
A) Maximum clade credibility (MCC) tree inferred using envelope gene sequences. Branch tips were removed for simplicity. B) Median estimates and 95% IC for the effective reproductive number using incidence time series data. For B and C official dengue reports done by epidemiological week and sampling done in a daily basis are presented. The band represents the period in which the epidemic alert was announced. The gray triangle informs when the neighboring city of Santos announced its own epidemic alert.

A

PeerJ



B

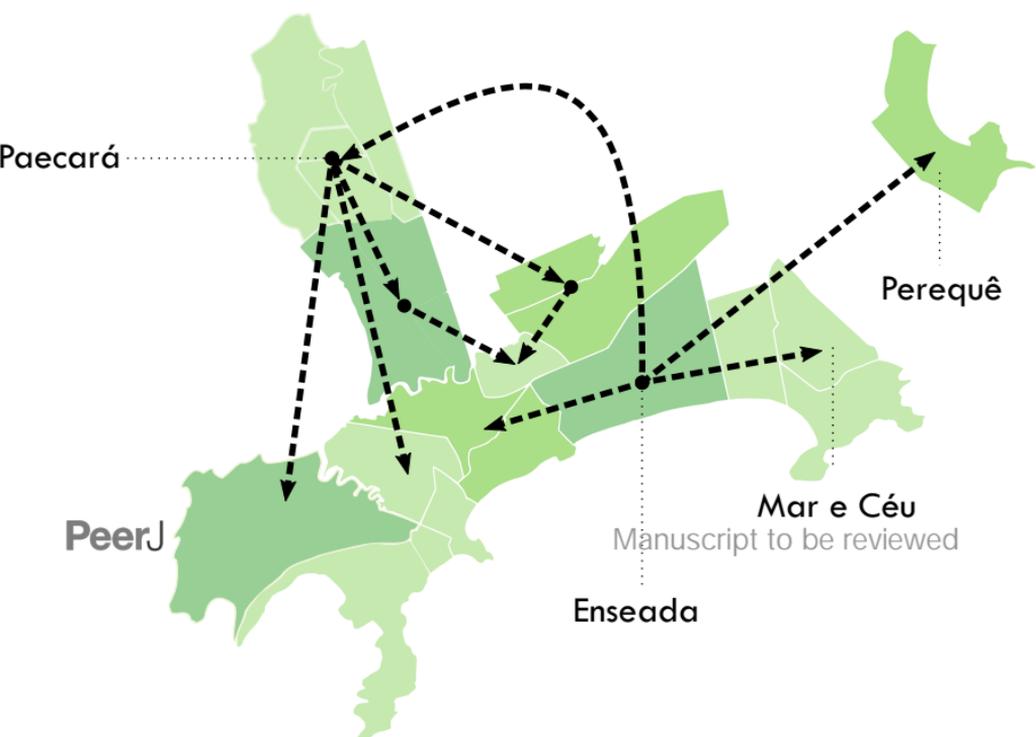


**Figure 3**(on next page)

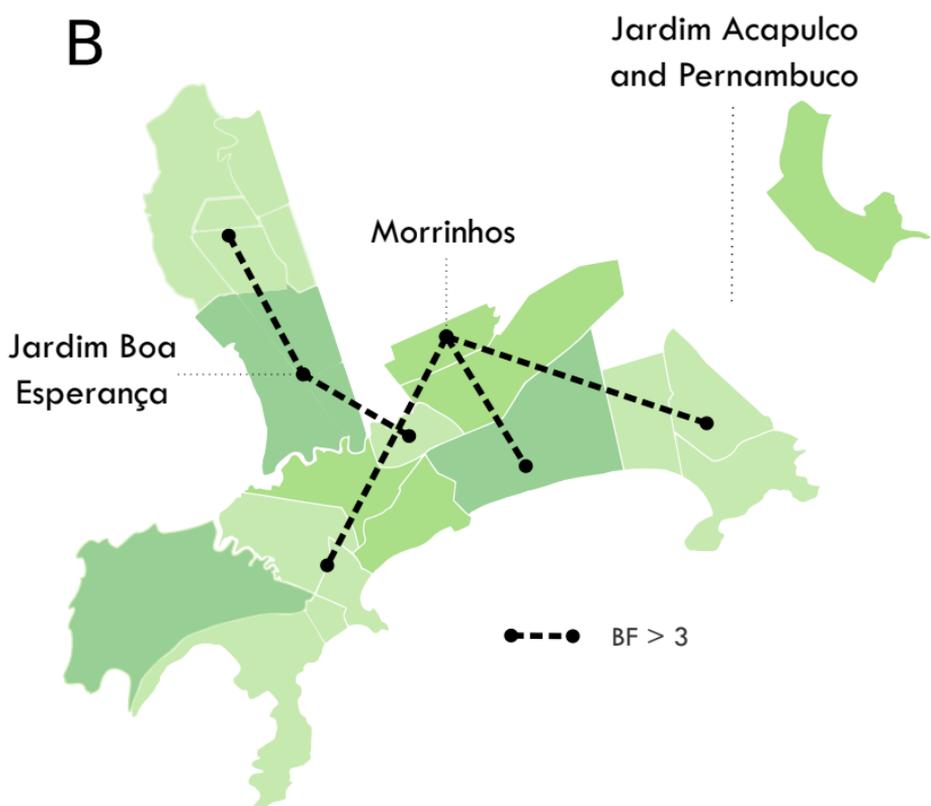
Diffusion of DENV-4 genotype II in the municipality of Guarujá from January-June 2013.

Discontinuous green areas represent discrete areas. A) Introduction routes into each area. B) Routes that best explain virus diffusion all over the city. The reconstruction was done following a location-annotated MCC tree available as Fig. 4. C) The main avenues and highways of Guarujá. Names are given for the areas that are quoted in the text.

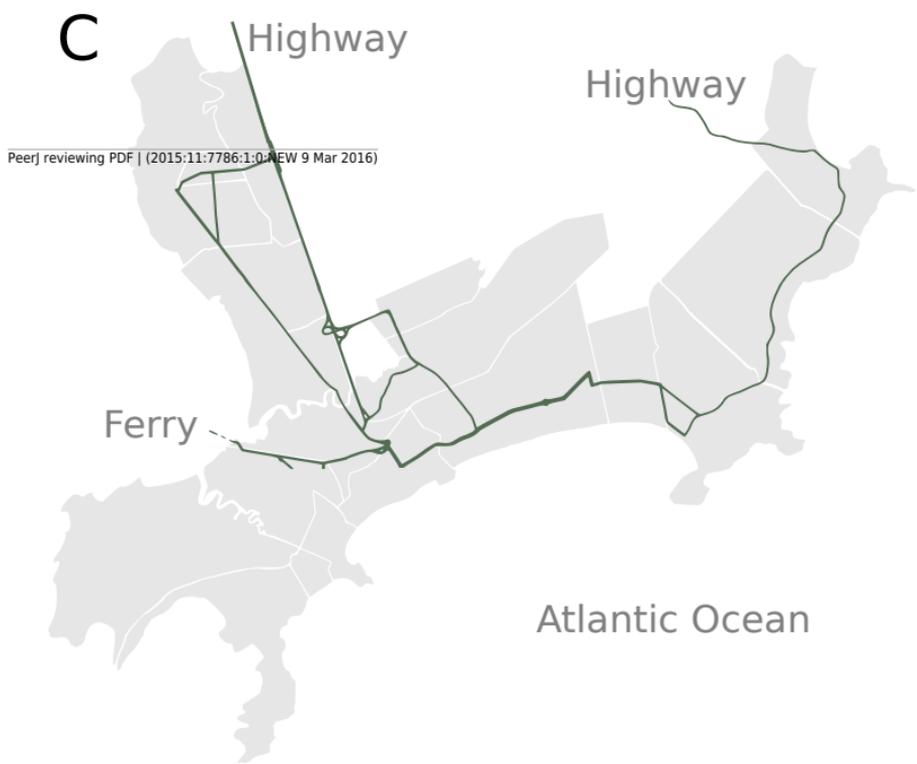
A



B



C



**Figure 4** (on next page)

Location-annotated Maximum clade credibility tree.

Branch color corresponds to locations; tips were removed for simplicity.

Location

- Cachoeira
- Enseada
- Jardim Boa Esperança
- Marinas
- Mar e Céu
- Morrinhos
- Paecará
- Perequê
- Santo Antonio
- Santa Rosa

