

# ENVIRONMENTAL TRAINING



## Letter from the editor

The Decade of Environmental Education for Sustainable Development has joined the broad process generating environmental education in the region. Uruguay celebrated its First National Meeting on Environmental Education in April this year. Similarly, Guatemala has scheduled its First National Congress on Environmental Education, to be held on 19, 20, 21 and 22 July, with the central theme of "National Processes, Globalization and Environmental Education in the Context of Sustainable Development". At the same time, it will also celebrate the Tenth Anniversary of its National Environmental Training and Research Network.

From 26 to 29 October 2006, Argentina will hold the Second National Congress on Environmental Education in Chapadmalal, in the Province of Buenos Aires, organized by the Confederation of Education Workers of the Argentine Republic (CTERA) and the Network of Environmental Educators to promote and expand the construction of environmental education from the standpoint of environmental epistemology and pedagogy, as well as the ethic of sustainability, to reorient the education system and sustainable development in the country.

Within this broad process in favour of environmental education, the Fifth Iberoamerican Congress on Environmental Education, held in Joinville, Brazil, from 5 to 8 April 2006, brought together some 6,000 participants and was inaugurated by the Environment Minister of Brazil, Marina Silva.

The Congress was preceded by a meeting of the Latin American and Caribbean Environmental Education Programme (PLACEA), which agreed to invite the education ministries of the region to participate in this project and reiterated the decisions of the Forum of Environment Ministers in relation to this programme. A special session related to the Treaty on Environmental Education for Sustainable Societies and Global Responsibility, prepared and approved in Rio 92, was also held, and it included an evaluation and discussion of the Treaty, as well as the drafting of an open letter. A group of educators was formed to review and update the Treaty in preparation for Rio + 15.

The Congress organized three plenary addresses and 13 panel discussions by experts, where various current topics

were discussed. Several working groups on various problems were also established, and special note should be made of the Working Group on Universities and Graduate Study Programmes on Environment and Sustainable Development, which issued a Declaration on the University and Environment (page 6) and agreed to found an Iberoamerican Association of Universities and Graduate Study Programmes on Environment and Sustainable Development (page 7).

The Congress also convened the Third Symposium of Iberoamerican Countries on National Environmental Education Policies and Strategies. During this symposium, offers presented to host the next Congress were examined and it was decided that the Sixth Iberoamerican Congress on Environmental Education would be held in Argentina in 2008.

The Final Report with the agreements adopted at the different sessions and working groups, as well as the texts of the addresses and panel discussions at the Congress and documents approved by the working groups, may be consulted on the website of the Congress: [www.5iberoea.org.br](http://www.5iberoea.org.br). A selection of these addresses and papers will be edited and published by the Environmental Training Network as a book in its series, Latin American Environmental Thought.

Finally, this issue of *Environmental Training* includes announcements of graduate courses that will be given in the second semester of the year in the framework of the Network, as well as information of importance to our readers on various activities that will take place in the region in the fields of environmental training.

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# Activities in the Region

## **Fifteenth International Course “Agroforestry for Ecodevelopment”**

**3 to 23 September 2006, Chapingo, Mexico**

Agroforestry is an ancestral form of resource management transmitted from generation to generation by the native peoples of different parts of the world, many of whom are now peasant farmers. It has become a field of knowledge whose objective is to understand and apply these agricultural techniques to the development of sustainable systems that will enable us to meet the food needs of the present without compromising resources for future generations.

The objectives of this fifteenth course, organized in the framework of the Environmental Training Network for Latin America and the Caribbean, are to explain the concepts, principles and potential of agroforestry; to provide basic training for the management of diagnostic methodologies (analysis and planning); to design agroforestry technologies (implementation); and to analyse strategies for the dissemination of agroforestry programmes. The course is aimed at professionals of Latin America and the Caribbean with degrees in agronomy, forestry, livestock breeding, biological sciences, rural sociology and agricultural economics, linked to sustainable rural development.

The course will include individual study and work projects applicable to the participant's own locality.

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## **Eighth International Certificate Course on Coastal Area Management**

**23 October to 11 November 2006**

**San Patricio Melaque, Jalisco, Mexico**

The International Certificate Course on Coastal Area Management is an official academic programme of the Universidad de Guadalajara, incorporated into the activities of the UNEP Environmental Training Network for Latin America and the Caribbean. The course is given at the graduate level and is aimed at technicians of government agencies with responsibilities for the management of marine and coastal environments and resources, at teachers and researchers at academic centres dedicated to marine and coastal systems study and training, at entrepreneurs in industry and services, and at members of coastal communities and NGOs. Some of the objectives of this eighth certificate course are to provide the participants with knowledge on the coastal environmental complex, to present bases for integrated coastal area management and sustainable development, to develop analytical skills for

identifying and diagnosing development problems in coastal areas and to provide training for multidisciplinary efforts and teamwork.

The programme is divided into three modules: basic concepts, human impacts and interactions between uses and users in coastal ecosystems; information tools and bases for integrated coastal area management; and planning processes for integrated coastal area management.

This time, the certificate course will have a teaching staff with professionals from Canada, Cuba, Mexico and Spain.

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**<http://costera.melaque.udg.mx>**

## **Distance Course in Ecological Economics**

This course in ecological economics, incorporated in the UNEP Environmental Training Network for Latin America and the Caribbean, will be given virtually on the ECOPORTAL website ([www.ecoport.net](http://www.ecoport.net)). The course will last five months (beginning on 10 July 2006) and will consist of 10 modules, some of which are: the importance of ecoregions and the distribution of resources in the world; society-economy-nature relationships; depletable resources and their intergenerational allocation; development models; environmental problems and forms of production.

**Information and registration:**  
**<http://www.ecoport.net/content/view/full/25799>**

## **Fourth Brazilian Congress on Agroecology 16-18 October 2006, Belo Horizonte, Brazil**

The Fourth Brazilian Congress on Agroecology will be held in October in Belo Horizonte with the support of public and private institutions and the participation of 2,000 people, including researchers, teachers, scientists, students, technicians and farmers from various countries.

Under the theme “Building sustainable horizons”, the event is aimed at generating knowledge that contributes to the process of building a new agricultural paradigm based on ecological principles for ecosystem management of natural resources, to orient sustainable development strategies and practices for the rural areas.

Core themes at the Congress will be: the ethical, political, socio-cultural, economic and environmental aspects of sustainability. Some of the group themes within the core themes will be society and nature, rural development, natural resources use and conservation, and sustainable agroecosystem management.

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**[congressocba2006@emater.mg.gov.br](mailto:congressocba2006@emater.mg.gov.br)**



### **Fourth Latin American Congress on Agroforestry for Sustainable Livestock Production**

**24 to 27 October 2006, Varadero, Cuba**

This Congress will have lectures, roundtable discussions and oral presentations that deal with the following themes: agroforestry, food security and sustainability; conservation of biodiversity and sustainable management in agroforestry livestock systems; carbon sinks in agroforestry systems and its effect on climate change; inventory of agroforestry resources associated with animal production; reforestation with multipurpose trees as an alternative in the reclamation and rehabilitation of pastureland and other degraded areas; conservation and management of hydrographic basins with agroforestry systems; experiences and results of agroforestry use in animal production systems.

In the framework of the Congress, the Seventh International Workshop on "Trees and bushes in livestock raising" will be held, in addition to the Third Regional Meeting on White Mulberry Trees, the Fourth Regional Meeting on Outreach and Technology Transfer, the Fourth Symposium on Agroforestry Technologies, and the International Workshop on "Successful Producers in Agroforestry".

**Information:** [agroforesteria2006@indio.atenas.inf.cu](mailto:agroforesteria2006@indio.atenas.inf.cu)  
<http://www.cipav.org.co/cipav/seminars/cuba06octs.html>

### **Sixth Latin American Conference on Environment and Social Responsibility ECOLATINA**

**18 to 21 September 2006, Belo Horizonte, Brazil**

The central theme of this Conference in 2006 will be "Energy and Environment: the challenge we must face", which will be dealt with from social, economic, environmental and education standpoints. Latin American environmental authorities and experts will participate in the discussion and the presentation of various approaches to this theme.

ECOLATINA's objectives include discussing environmental issues and their interconnections with political, economic and social factors and providing a forum for innovative discussion, taking into account technological, business and governmental inclusion in the discussion and proposal of institutional structures for environmental and social management that will make natural resources available to future generations and improve everyone's quality of life.

Environmental Education will play an important role in the Conference, since a seminar on "Education for a Sustainable Society" has been organized and will deal with topics such as : the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, as pertinent to Latin America and the Caribbean; sustainability of education policies; education for integration and sustainable development of the Latin American countries;

education for business sustainability; education, citizenship and participation; and environmental education and knowledge; among other topics.

On the day following the seminar, a related education course will be given to the teachers of the Minas Gerais State Education Network to enable them to subsequently prepare a project to achieve cross-cutting and interdisciplinary curricula.

**Information:** [http://www.ecolatina.com.br/ecolatina/pt/template\\_principal](http://www.ecolatina.com.br/ecolatina/pt/template_principal)

### **Fourth Seminar on Political Ecology in Latin America and the Caribbean**

**17-20 July 2006, Cuba**

This Seminar will assess the results of the Fourth World Water Forum for Latin America and the Caribbean. It will also focus on agreements signed in Fortaleza, Brazil, and at the Policentre Forum of Caracas, as well as on other environmental issues of importance to the region.

At this event, there will be panel discussions on various themes agreed to at the Third Seminar in August 2004, such as political ecology: from the global level to the local level in the twenty-first century; the environmental legacy of the twentieth century in Latin America and the Caribbean; water for the market or water for life. Where are we headed after the World Water Forum?; the multiple facets of gender and ecology; biotechnology and transgenics; and the right side and the wrong side; among other themes.

There will also be a panel discussion on environmental problems in Cuba and a workshop on political ecology publications. Some electronic publications will be presented, as well as the books "Para una historia ambiental latinoamericana", by Guillermo Castro Herrera, and "Historia ecológica de Iberoamérica, de los mayas al Quijote" by Antonio Brailovsky.

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### **First Latin American Meeting on Water Management, 21-23 August 2006, Guatemala**

The Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales, Guatemala office, has organized this First Latin American Meeting on Water Management, which seeks to integrate a broad view of water, including all the sectors involved, users and suppliers of urban and rural sectors, both at national and international levels, and to encourage the exchange of experiences and the generation of proposals concerning problems and solutions related to the theme of water and sustainable development.

The meeting will revolve around the "governance of water" and the themes will be "The situation concerning water in Guatemala, decentralization and citizen participation" and "Economic and ecological valuation of water". There will be keynote addresses and roundtable discussion on the different themes.

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# Decade of Environmental Education for Sustainable Development

## **First National Congress on Environmental Education, 19-22 July 2006, Guatemala**

Some objectives of the Congress, whose theme is “National Processes, Globalization and Environmental Education in the Context of Sustainable Development”, are: to advocate a shared viewpoint based on participatory processes concerning the environment, natural resources and social problems; to publicize and analyse the National Strategy on Environmental Education in the current political framework and national priorities; to promote an information and environmental education centre; and to strengthen the existing documentation centres and networks.

Some of the agencies in charge of carrying out the organization of the Congress will make presentations on the following themes: National Policy on Environmental Education (Environment and Natural Resources Ministry); Environmental Education in the Education Reform Model (Education Ministry); National Strategy on Environmental Education (National Council on Protected Areas) and Analysis of environmental initiatives in Guatemala (FINEANS project).

There will also be working groups where the participants will be able to discuss themes such as: analysis of the current situation regarding Environmental Education in Guatemala; the environmental dimension as a crosscutting axis in study curricula; Environmental Education and citizen participation in multicultural and multilingual contexts.

**Information:** [educacionambiental@marn.gob.gt](mailto:educacionambiental@marn.gob.gt), [www.marn.gob.gt](http://www.marn.gob.gt)

## **Tenth Anniversary of the National Environmental Training and Research Network of Guatemala**

Last February, the National Environmental Training and Research Network (REDFIA) celebrated its tenth anniversary. REDFIA is a network that brings together a variety of organizations and institutions that work in environment-related areas in Guatemala.

In 1990, the National Environment Commission (CONAMA), together with the Education Ministry and some 40 organizations that worked in environmental matters in the country, established the basis for the National Strategy for Environmental Education in Guatemala, which was practically the point of departure for the creation of REDFIA. On February 1996, a letter of understanding was signed to establish the National Environmental Training and Research Network. The agreement was signed by representatives of CONAMA, Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala, Universidad del Valle de Guatemala, Universidad Rural de Guatemala, the Social Research and Studies Association and FLACSO, among others. In 2000, through a decree issued by the Congress of the Republic, the Environment and Natural Resources Ministry was created, replacing the National Environmental Commission and forming part of REDFIA in its capacity as the new environmental authority.

In the REDFIA organizational chart, the Board of Directors is the governing body and collegiate decision-maker. This Board is formed by university rectors, directors of research institutions and the Environment and Natural Resources Ministry. There is also a coordinator, designated by the Board of Directors, an Interinstitutional Committee and an Executive Secretary.

Some REDFIA work areas are capacity-building and training of specialists in various socio-environmental themes; research on various themes of interest and socio-environmental application; dissemination of socio-environmental issues, as well as studies and documents of interest; development of cooperation with national and international entities for conducting joint socio-environmental projects; follow-up on commitments signed at the Seminar on the university and its commitment to the environment.

The REDFIA has thus established bases to act as a suitable body for interinstitutional coordination of academia, research centres and government institutions to advocate and strengthen training, research and other activities of socio-environmental interest, helping to open up spaces for citizen dialogue and participation on matters of environmental interest; it promotes citizen participation in analysing and solving environmental problems; the adoption of new attitudes and behaviour by all the Guatemalan social sectors; and working with children and youth to establish a culture of dialogue and sound use of natural resources.

## **Second Congress on Environmental Education for Sustainable Development in the Argentine Republic, 26-29 October 2006, Chapadmalal, Buenos Aires, Argentina**

The Confederation of Education Workers of the Argentine Republic is convening this second congress to promote and expand the construction of Environmental Education in Argentina, to advocate the training and capacity-building of teaching staff in the education system and of social actors from the viewpoint provided by Latin American environmental thought, to promote the incorporation of complexity and environmental knowledge in the curricular content in higher education and to strengthen the Network of Environmental Educators in the Argentine Republic, among other objectives.

In the academic part, there will be keynote addresses, which will focus on the analysis of forms for rethinking the education system from the standpoint of environmental education, Latin American visions of environmental education and the perspectives of Environmental Education in Argentina. The seminar cycle includes particularly “Environmental education and health”, “Environmental Education and urban problems”, “Environmental Education, local development and environmental conflicts”, and “The environmental question, international conventions and cooperation”. Finally, a number of workshops will be held, including: “Environmental Education in communications media”, “Environmental Education, culture and art”, “Environmental Education and native peoples” and “Environmental Education, protected areas and tourism”.

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### **Ninth Paraná Meeting on Environmental Education, 1-3 September 2006, Paraná, Brazil**

One of the most important objectives of the Paraná Meeting on Environmental Education is dissemination of the principles and methodological bases necessary for good promotion of Environmental Education. The central theme of this Ninth Paraná Meeting is “Diversity, sustainability and cooperation in networks”, which is based on the idea that Environmental Education is a collective construction process whose elements emerge in networks of individuals who establish relationships revolving around a common objective.

The meeting is aimed at scientists, university professors and the network of secondary and preparatory education, professionals and citizens in general who are interested in the area of environmental education in Paraná. They will have an opportunity to present papers, disseminate ideas, concepts and viewpoints, and discuss Environmental Education policies in the state of Paraná.

**Information:** <http://web01.unicentro.br/ixepea/>

### **Cultivando Agua Buena Project. Itaipú Binacional**

The Itaipu binational dam is not only one of the world’s largest hydroelectric power plants, capable of generating 12,600 MW, it supplies 95% of the electric energy consumed in Paraguay and meets 24% of Brazil’s demand.

In the reservoir, which covers a total area of 1,350 km<sup>2</sup>—770 km<sup>2</sup> in Brazil and 580 km<sup>2</sup> in Paraguay— various environmental projects and activities in the framework of the programme called *Cultivando Agua Porã* are also being carried out in Itaipú. Although one of the priorities of the dam is to generate electric power, there is also room for citizen responsibility, Environmental Education, and sustainable economic, tourist and technological development, both in Brazil and in Paraguay. The phrase *Cultivando Agua Porã* is formed in three languages spoken in the Itaipú area of influence: *Cultivando* (Portuguese, in an effort to create awareness that water deserves the same care as soils, if you want to produce quality crops; *Agua* (Spanish); and, *Porã* (Guaraní, meaning good). The Programme has been in operation since 2003.

### **Inauguration of the Itajaí Environmental Education Centre in Santa Catarina, Brazil**

The Universidad del Valle de Itajaí, in Santa Catarina, Brazil, through its Environmental Education Laboratory (LAE), inaugurated a second environmental education centre, which forms part of the Coastal Communities Project, coordinated and carried out by the LAE in the states of Santa Catarina and Paraná. This Project, in turn, forms part of the activities being conducted in the broader programme of environmental monitoring in some Brazilian oil fields.

The environmental education centres are aimed at training environmental educators for community development through processes to build knowledge, understanding of concepts and recognition of values, which is intended to develop the skills and attitudes necessary to understand and appreciate the interrelationships between human beings, their cultures and their environment. They seek to promote ongoing discussion and to generate the conditions for action revolving around Environmental Education at all levels of society.

The Coastal Communities Project being carried out at these centres is a community Environmental Education procedure being conducted in the municipalities of Navegantes, Itajaí, and Balneário Camboriú, in Santa Catarina, and Paranaguá, Pontal do Paraná and Matinhos, in Paraná, in an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary manner. It targets seven schools in a network. A methodology for voluntary environmental monitoring in schools has been developed in these schools, and it focuses on education for research and the ongoing training of volunteer teachers. The objective is to insert Environmental Education in the school curricula through daily activities for observation, recording, reflection and action, both in the schools and in the communities. The activities by the two centres and the schools participating in the project revolve around the axis of “Human care and the place where you live”, based on universal ethical, aesthetic and humanistic values. There is also a mobile environmental education unit, which is a small laboratory for environmental education activities in the communities.

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# V Ibero-American Congress on Environmental Education

*This document, which synthesizes the challenge being faced in the future of the university as a critical institution of society and its environment, was presented in the framework of the Fifth Iberoamerican Congress on Environmental Education, held in Joinville, Santa Catarina, Brazil, from 5 to 8 April 2006.*

## **Declaration on the University and Environment**

We recognize the fundamental role that the universities of the region play in shaping our countries and forming our intellectual sectors.

We reaffirm the importance of Latin American public universities as spaces for social capillarity, for criticism and construction of alternatives. We recognize, however, that their principal error is a certain incapacity to develop Latin American thought, to link themselves to the social struggles that have enabled the advancement of our peoples, and to assume their commitment to the socio-environmental context in which they are situated.

This unending consideration of knowledge's significance for social demands has insistently come up against a discipline system of organization which, although it has attempted to respond to growing specialization, has ended up developing systems tightly closed off from exchange and collaboration among different fields of knowledge, from fragmenting and simplifying experiences and solutions that demand other epistemological treatment, other methodological approaches and other forms of assessing initiatives being constructed in this regard.

These organizational restrictions (institutional and curricular) have isolated the university from society, condemning it to internal apathy and abandoning it to a corporate culture that resists internalizing what is emerging as new, what is creative and what amounts to new partnerships among different fields of knowledge.

It is consequently urgent to develop new capillarity inside and outside the university, capable of expanding and pointing towards other cognitive and organizational dimensions as an open system without borders.

From an epistemological point of view, thinking and producing knowledge through a socio-environmental approach imply reconceiving the concept of life in the light of a new partnership with nature, science and culturally entrenched spheres of knowledge, which involves the recovery of an ethic for knowing how to care for and select the best conditions for life on the planet and in the universe.

From the perspective of social organizations, the university must promote and give priority to research, curricular degrees and interactive interventions with society that translate these new epistemological, methodological and socio-political orientations into new consortia among material practices, material appropriation processes and new symbolic interrelationships between culture and nature.

We dream and believe in the possibility of a university committed to its local and regional roots to reevaluate national, universal, multi, inter and transcultural exchanges; a plural, multi, inter and transcultural university supported by a new self-assessing and interactive pedagogy in its practices, capable of substantively contributing to the building of a new civilizing, inter, multi and transcultural approach. We need a university that seeks new partnerships in matters of a local, regional, national and transnational nature to sustain and enhance the feasibility of this new academic epistemology that will incorporate into its institutional identity the principles of reevaluation and democratization of knowledge concerning the nature and culture of each social group, people and nation, revitalizing them and returning their specificities to them.

On the basis of these premises, we consider it necessary to reconfigure our academic institutions from the following standpoints:

- To generate spaces for reflection on their own identity and the necessary support for the society to which they owe their existence.;

- To reconstruct forms of producing knowledge so they will have: cultural pertinence; valuation of our historical memory; openness to dialogue among spheres of knowledge; recognition of other forms of knowledge; creativity and innovation for working in contexts with resource limitations; and feedback and orientation aimed at Latin American thought;
- To recognize the ethical principles guided by respect for life and the environment; and
- To feminize our universities, strengthening the deployment of intelligence, intuition, creative imagination, protection, practicality and relations of respect among human beings, qualities forgotten by our machista traditions.

We consider it indispensable and urgent to develop forms of university collaboration aimed at institutional lessons for the following purposes:

- To learn how to build academic teams that venture beyond the boundaries of disciplines and different fields of knowledge;
- To share efforts of personal experience and theoretical approaches for training trainers;
- To generate new spaces for the incorporation of spheres of knowledge;
- To discuss and disseminate Latin America's own theoretical and methodological approaches. (The world has recognized the substantive contributions of liberation pedagogy, participatory action research, liberation theology, human-scale development, the biology of cognition, and environmental rationality, among many other approaches, even though many Latin American universities have not incorporated them); and
- To promote exchanges among researchers, students and officials of the various socio-environmental programmes emerging and consolidated in Latin America and the Caribbean, reinforcing the concepts of identity, solidarity and respect for diversity.

We believe it is possible to implement a programme of collaboration among our universities that would have, at least, the following objectives:

- To develop an environmentalized curriculum enhanced by social practice;
- To critically monitor the increasing socio-environmental conflicts on our continent, building capacities to anticipate future problems and disseminate forms of resistance and lessons generated by societies in movement;
- To establish our knowledge within a deep understanding of our identity, anchoring it to places, spaces and territories;
- To reconsider our academic work in order to move beyond the traditional division into teaching, research and outreach efforts;
- To commit our efforts to identifying and publicizing the sustainable forms of life that are offered by many grass-roots and community experiences, above all, those in the legacy from our native peoples;
- To combat the privatization and commercialization of knowledge, confirming its public nature as the common heritage of humankind; and
- To affirm the principle of the public university in opposition to the privatizing pressures of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization.

It is our dream and our belief that it is possible to advance from our situation, as universities, towards a Latin America and Caribbean where society will become "universitized"; because our universities have committed themselves to its struggles, its myths, its rites, its dreams and its environmental knowledge.



# V Ibero-American Congress on Environmental Education

## Association of Universities and Graduate Study Programmes in Environment and Sustainable Development

To follow up on agreements reached by the Working Group on Universities and Environment at the Fifth Iberoamerican Congress on Environmental Education, held in Joinville, the participants in the above-mentioned working group decided to create the Association of Universities and Graduate Study Programmes in Environment and Sustainable Development. Agreements on the structure and form in which this Association will operate is still being negotiated. Once consensus on these agreements has been reached, they will be announced on the website of the Environmental Training Network for Latin America and the Caribbean. At that time, interested academic institutions will be able to register and disseminate their related programmes, which will open up channels of communication among such institutions for future development of cooperation and exchange projects.

For further information, write to: [educamb@pnuma.org](mailto:educamb@pnuma.org)

## Bibliographical Note

### Equity and sustainable development. Reflections from the United States-Mexico Border, Jane Clough-Riquelme, Nora Bringas R. (eds.)

Environmental degradation has prompted a global debate on strategies to achieve a sustainable world. Global and regional visions and the interests expressed in this debate are extremely complex and diverse, which calls for a critical analysis of how the sustainable development agenda is conceived, how it is drawn up and how to implement it, in the light of the power strategies in the new geopolitical game of economic and ecological globalization.

The contradictions inherent in the search for sustainable alternatives can be seen in all their complexity at the Mexico-United States border. The industrial and developing worlds are intertwined along 3,000 kilometers in very localized places that express the realities of cities and regions from the coast of the Pacific Ocean to the Gulf of Mexico.

This book considers what implications can be drawn from the 2002 Sustainable Development Summit to solve the problems of equity and sustainable development in this border zone. Thinkers point to the fact that these subnational regions, in the circumstances of the industrial and developing worlds, clearly show the problems that arise in the current economic paradigm and the obstacles to achieving sustainable development.

Center for United States-Mexico Studies, University of California at San Diego, USA, 2006

## News in Brief

### Establishment of the Latin American and Caribbean Society for Environmental History

On 7 April 2006, the Latin American and Caribbean Society for Environmental History (SOLCHA, from its name in Spanish) was officially established. At an assembly including the participation of 46 academics and specialists of America and Europe (Spain and Italy), the by laws of the Society were approved and the Board of Directors was elected with the following members: Guillermo Castro, Panama; Michelin Cariño, Mexico; Regina Horta, Brazil; Claudia Leal, Colombia; and Reinaldo Funes, Cuba. To support the Board of Directors and assist in the organization of SOLCHA at the regional level, an 11-member Scientific Committee was created in compliance with the unanimously approved proposal of José Augusto Pádua.

In open voting, La Paz, México (2008) and Belo Horizonte, Brazil (2010) were selected as the venues for the two following meetings of the Society. Holding meetings every two years was another agreement adopted.

Finally, the Assembly discussed and approved the establishment of institutional relations with the European Society for Environmental History and the American Society for Environmental History.

### Latin American and Caribbean Water Prizes, PLACA 2006

The Water Center for the Humid Tropics of Latin America and the Caribbean announced this contest to recognize those who contribute to the conservation and protection of water resources in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Nominations for these prizes can range from individual persons to organizations, academic institutions or companies working to foster and disseminate activities related to water and environment.

The nomination deadline for the PLACA Water Prize 2006 and the PLACA Junior Water Prize (up to 18 years of age) is 30 July 2006.

Information: [www.cathalac.org](http://www.cathalac.org)





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