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Ecuador Field Experience

Title: Organizational Bust, 2000 to 2006: opportunities for Ecoressisters and Ecoalternatives

Chapter 6

In this chapter will go into more depth about the four organizations such as the ecoresisters, ecodependents, ecoentrepreneur and lastly the ecoimperalist. These groups main focuses on rely on fixing their countries health and wealth. They want to find ways of being alternative to fixing drilling and the impact that has made, protecting the biodiversity of the country and the people in it. These groups represent yet another alternative for organizing for sustainability. These groups will be further discussed in this chapter.

These groups were shutting down in 2000 and 2001. Funding for Ecuador’s environment from abroad took a sharp decline, which had a devastating effect on the Ecodependent groups. Many projects were coming to an end in Ecuador for many reasons. There was no funding coming in from the United states anymore causing projects to fail to relying on funds to make the projects grow. The reason funding started to decline in Ecuador was one, in 2000 financial crisis and dollarization, there was a loss of confidence in Ecuador's political economic system. Everything became more expensive and no one wanted to donate money to fund these projects because now they have to save to live. Second was the traumatic terrorist attack that happened in 2001 on the United States. The funding for Ecuador during this time diverted and now the funding went towards the middle east. 600 billion dollars spent on Iraq groups disappeared or downsized. They called this Bush's war. There were a couple groups that grew and one of them was Fundacion Jatun Sacha but the other groups that failed was USAID dutch project which boosted other groups ended in the 1990's.

The OCP pipeline was a major symbolic loss to the movement. This pipeline known as the Crude oil pipeline. In 2001 this pipeline would carry heavy crude oil from the rainforest town all the way to the pacific coast. This pipeline would go through an ecotourism destination as well as a major bird observatory. What eventually came out of the OCP pipeline was an ecofund, it is a 16.9 million fund to be used for biodiversity conservation in Ecuador through until 2022. The fund is known as (FAN) the national Environmental Fund). It is a non profit organization who manages the fund and how it works is proposals are submitted, the group evaluates, and distributes the funds if they agree. This pipeline took off but they were now cutting into reserves and the indigenous people were putting up a fight. The goal was to also extract petroleum. This pipeline caused a major fail in the environmental movement. Many foreigners were surprised by the development of the pipeline. The conflict of this pipeline is fossil fuels and climate justice/energy and pollution related to transport, oil and gas exploration and transport infrastructure networks.

Ecodpendent groups wanted to come up with strategies to cope with the funding bust they had to close up shop, downsize and try new strategies The first strategy was to shut down. A lot of groups began to lose funding from many people in the community some still thrived but they eventually had to shutdown due to lack of funding. The second strategy was to shift the agendas in order to keep the funding for the groups. This made a lack of confidence in many groups and they started to lose control over what they were able to do. Groups that needed funding were the groups who wanted to become bigger and have thousands of people joining them but other groups found out other ways for the decline they got together and started taking care of their own towns, picking up trash and cleaning up waste from the waterways and in return the money they made they gave it to the groups. The last strategy was Proyectismo and this where the groups demanded that projects were completed. Goals were set which was good because then things began to become accomplished but was there really any accomplishment or just a mess? If we go back to the beginning of this chapter there was already a divide taking place once funding started to cripple after the United States focused their attention on the middle east. Groups began to shut down some people even gave up. The last strategy is to generate a regular income. During this period Fundacion Natura which became Fundacion Natura Inc. they contracted with the city to manage municipal waste. Many people came together to start selling their own goods to people, organically grown bird and butterfly coffee as well as raising pigs and shrimp and cacao in 2006 they 870 volunteers generating over $350,000. You can have groups like these who generate their own funding in this way or they came together and started growing gardens. Many people came together during this as well as 1,000 school children who got an education. In 2003 they welcomed 2,400 ecotourist and 3,000 hikers.

In this chapter it discussed what needs to be changed and what changed overall in the past couple years. The one thing that I noticed is that the groups mentioned in the chapter are trying to find a way to save their country from mass destruction but the main goal is trying to save the planet. The country is in poverty but that doesn’t mean that our planet has to go down with it. The locals and citizens were the ones that came together and really have an impact on protesting mining and extraction. A lot of things that take place in Ecuador remind me of a lot that goes on here in America. This chapter has inspired me to really do an introspection of our own country and own environmental issues. If we just come together as a nation and really understand what issues we are battling maybe we can make a change not only for us but for our planet. We have policies here some states if you don’t recycle you will get a ticket on the spot. There need to be stronger rules and policies for how we live our everyday lives. Our country is very wasteful.

There are policies taking place such as not having the use of plastic straws and biodegradable containers and we are slowly working on getting rid of plastic bags. These are the small things that make a big impact. If we just continue to do small things they will eventually change the world. These organizations are trying to do that, they are trying to get as many volunteers as possible to change how they live. The sad thing is just like our government not everyone has a say no matter how many times they reach out or how big their voice is. The idigenous people made a protest on not having the OCP pipeline laid down because that is their land and their home, they stood up to fight for their home and their people and they in return got tear gassed and beat and arrested. I think we need to open our eyes and face the real problem and understand that if we don’t change how we live it's not going to get better it will just get worse. It seems that every couple months were told that something terrible is going to happen environmentally such as this winter we are going to have more snow than we have ever experienced and then hurricanes are more frequent than they used to be. I believe with our ways of living and how carefree we are more disasters are going to be expected.

*Lewis, T. L. (2016). Ecuador's environmental revolutions: ecoimperialists, ecodependents, and ecoresisters. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.*