

Amazonia's Manifesto and Letter to the World Teachers and to Young Adults

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Abstract

"What is in discussion is not only Amazonia's current role in political, economic, and scientific processes, but also its strategic insertion into the new political framework of a globalized world." (Marcílio de Freitas)

Why is Amazonia the last eco-cultural utopia of humanity? What problems does it pose to the world, and why is it important to humanity? Why does predatory capitalism have no theoretical and empirical scope to transform it into a sustainable environmental commodity? How can we protect it from human stupidity and market greed? How can it be developed sustainably for the benefit of Brazil and humanity? Through intersubjective approaches, these issues are analyzed in this manifesto.

Amazonia's Manifesto to the World Teachers

Amazonia is dying. That is why this letter is being sent to the teachers of the world.

Dear teacher,

I sent you this simple message from Amazonia. I assure you that there has never been a process of destruction of the planet and the Amazonia as intense and dramatic as that unleashed in the last decade. Amazonia is dying quickly. Governments, established authorities and enlightened social and economic sectors need to intervene in this process for its defense and sustainable use. My concern goes beyond institutional and political limits because the Amazonia belongs to us all and, certainly, constitutes the main material and symbolic heritage for our youth and subsequent generations. In a civilizing dimension, national, international and universal, which is only fully understood and apprehended by teachers at all levels of action in the category. I clarify that the inclusion of Amazonia in global processes encompasses broad and fundamental issues associated with the citizenship education of children and young adults. These issues embedded the globalization of sustainability into the economic, religious

and scientific foundations of Western civilization, generating new political and ethical perspectives. Perspectives that promote and value local enterprises are guided by an ethical system based on the structural reevaluation of notions of value and rights.

Value and right to life; intrinsic value of nature and environmental services; culture, nature and symbolic value; individual rights and environmental preservation; collective rights and diplomatic relations, among others, are controversial themes that move educational projects, research programs, public policies and international agreements.

Fellow teachers, attributing new interpretations to the foundations, explanatory meanings, and operational mechanisms associated with the notion of value also requires reviewing approaches and evaluations of human beliefs and desires. In this context, three classic categories: "truth value, utility value, and beauty value" have been subsumed by "life value, humanity value, culture value, nature value, and universe value," more complex categories with greater heuristic scope. This new configuration of universal history enhances the relationships between educational

programs, the ethics of sustainability, and the Amazonia, in a situation in which the globalization of hypocrisy and political barbarism has strengthened the importance of ethical processes and established sustainability as a universal paradigm.

The relationships between sustainability and the Amazonia raise surprises and contradictions, as illustrated below. Our position, as teachers, leads us to know that the interaction with a student in the classroom, with a pet or a plant grown in our home is a universal routine that is realized through different approaches and technical requirements. In general, this interaction is accompanied by moments of surprises, joys, happiness and also many concerns. These feelings are reinvigorated when this type of interaction extends to the limits of a school, a garden or a flock of animals. And it becomes a complex experience when it encompasses, in order, an innovative educational policy intertwined with proposals for the sustainable use of forests, rivers, fauna, and flora, or the skies and the cycles of nature. In contextualized form and with different degrees of difficulty, these challenges are routinely faced in teaching different subjects or in educational management under our responsibilities. We do not always have the ready and appropriate answers to different aspects of these cultural processes based on selective and ancient experiences. Cultural processes disseminated through singular and universal languages accessible to children and young people, from a perspective that simultaneously promotes life and nature. This example illustrates the relevance and pertinence of re-signification of the processes of full formation of children and youth when their relations with nature are considered.

This framework reaffirms the importance of the sustainability paradigm, articulating it with theological foundations centered on a full life, spiritualized and embedded in nature. This new universal civilizing dimension raises different challenges for Amazonia, placing it as a privileged and unique place in an ideologized, technological, and transcendental world. Its insertion into the relations of the creation myth of the world through the integral ecology advocated by Pope Francis adds new elements to the foundations of theology. It broadens the complexity of religious traditions and raises possibilities for the concept of sustainability to be extended to the spiritual dimension of the human being. Therefore, it is necessary that the sustainability of life be the main foundation of global governance and policy. At this point, the relationship between sustainability and spiritualized cultures and nature reaffirms the importance of the Amazonia.

There is another fantastic dimension of Amazonia that frightens predatory capitalism and arrogant governments. Rulers are passengers. The duration of a ruler's political power is brief. A politician who today leads a nation in the near future will die leaving legacies such as social and economic inclusion, prosperity, citizenship, peace and ecological preservation; or misery, unemployment, discouragement, war, ecological degradation and hopelessness, among others. Scenarios that mix the elements

present in these two political trends may also materialize. In none of these circumstantial scenarios have people denied the importance of nature in their lives and in their families.

However, the need for ecological preservation is not limited to a certain personal point of view or a political goal. It is part of a process that needs to transcend several generations on small and large spatial, local and planetary scales. This feature of sustainability is opposed to excessive concentrations of political and economic power, imperialist expansionism and wars of occupation led by the central countries. The dualities such as misery-wealth, citizenship-marginalization, enlightened-alienated, health-disease, war-peace, destruction-construction, degradation-preservation, scarcity-concentration, among others, always present in public policies, end up 'pushing' the unprepared and presumptuous rulers to promote predatory and unsustainable development.

Under these conditions, the economic pressure of transnational groups and the growing social inequalities in developing countries contribute to the degradation of natural environments and potentiate processes of rupture with the cycles of nature. It is interesting to observe the presence of these political elements in Amazonia, causing irreversible damage to its populations and ecosystems. This implies the urgency of the Brazilian state and international institutions to intervene in this process with programs that promote its economic development in an integrated way with nature and on a sustainable basis.

In the case of Amazonia, this also requires lasting alliances between science and technology and traditional regional knowledge, through the networks and platforms of knowledge societies. This situation reserves a special place for the development of bioindustry and the implementation of intercultural universities in the amazonian region, home to more than 385 indigenous peoples. The inseparability between nature and culture in Amazonia scares the global Market, which still considers it a warehouse housing an infinite set of disposable natural resources. The lack of public policies for this region aggravates this situation and contributes to its degradation, although the resilience of their traditional communities and their native peoples are reducing this process of ecological depreciation.

Dear teachers, the inclusion of Amazonia in Brazil's economic development policy, its internal integration through targeted productive agreements, and the creation of political conditions to ensure the sustainable financing of its development by its communities are urgent requirements. Prospects that would certainly secure its status as the world's largest center for sustainable development.

In fact, nature has moved away from human principles as the use of positivist science and technology has given a pragmatic and functional character to the mechanisms of economic development. Its incorporation (of nature) into public policies as a commodity or

object of “surplus value” contributed to its rapid depreciation and dehumanization. The possibility of socio-ecological destabilization of the planet requires reconciling people with nature, a world process that has Amazonia as its main material and symbolic reference.

Human well-being is also associated with the stability of life cycles on the planet, which, in turn, is very dependent on cultures and the preservation and sustainable use of the humid tropics, oceans and polar regions. Three ecosystems are interconnected and in rapid deterioration. The millennial perennality of these regions has been guaranteed and improved by the wisdom of their traditional populations through alliances shared with nature. The perversity of predatory capitalism has created ecological and civilized ruptures that are still insurmountable to the sustainable development of these regions. Their protections depend on practical actions by world political leaders to immediately stop their destruction, which are already in advanced stages. In this alarming scenario, workers, youth, societies, institutions, religions and governments committed to sustainability are called upon to defend the Amazonia and the planet.

Dear teachers, the Amazonia is an immeasurable treasure of

the Brazilian people and humanity. Its protection and sustainable use continue to be the greatest political and economic challenge for successive generations of Brazilians. Its destruction will have harmful and irreversible impacts on humanity. Under these conditions, it can become a tragedy for planetary ecological stability and the future of humanity. Therefore, how long will it continue guiding our conceptions and dreams for a sustainable world for everyone? One wonders: what would Brazil and the World be like without Amazonia? Life needs to be built on sustainable foundations. It is a breath in the time of History.

Conclusion

I call your special attention, teachers from Brazil and all countries! Finally, after this long exhibition, I suggest you to include the Amazonia in your school disciplines and in your incessant dialogues with the student in the classroom. Insist and popularize its importance for Brazil and the World. We need to protect it on a sustainable basis, because it is being transformed into smokes and fleeting memories. Discover the Amazonia. It is dying. Who will save it? We need to protect the future of our children. Amazonia is a key entity in this global process. Tomorrow *may be late*.



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