

EDITORIAL

August 2014: The World Health Organization-WHO rates the Ebola epidemics as a world health emergency and considers it the worst outbreak of the virus in history, since it was discovered in 1976.

The world health emergencies alternate from time to time and the incidence of the Ebola virus in the eastern region of the African continent has caused over a thousand deaths. In the first week of August alone, according to WHO, 108 new cases were confirmed and 45 deaths were recorded in the four countries most affected by the disease: Republic of Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Nigeria.

So far, the three known measures to control Ebola outbreaks – hospital infection control, knowledge by the community about infection risks and tracking those infected – do not seem to have been sufficiently applied.

The Ebola outbreaks started in 1976, in Nzara, in Sudan, and in Yambuku, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and later spread to other countries, especially to remote villages in Central and Eastern Africa, neighboring tropical forests. According to the WHO, the contact with infected chimpanzees, gorillas, bats, monkeys, porcupines and antelopes triggered the propagation to humans, who, in turn, can contaminate other humans, too. As a preventive measure, specialists also warn that animal products (blood and meat) must be well cooked before being eaten.

Albeit serious, the Ebola epidemic is usually restrained to the African continent and, in terms of prevention, to the adequate application of biosafety rules.

This has been the third emergency situation declared by the WHO, after the avian influenza (bird flu) in Asia, in 2009 and of poliomyelitis in the Middle East in May 2014.

The issue motivating us to bring this theme up to the editorial of the Revista A&S issue is the fact that, according to experts, the propagation of emergent diseases is closely associated to human interventions in the environment.

In a recent interview to the North-American media, an epidemiologist with the NGO EcoHealth Alliance who researches Ebola and other infectious diseases, Jonathan Epstein, stated that the greatest incidence of Ebola may be associated to the environmental impacts resulting from the agricultural expansion and of deforesting, making it easier for pathogens to move from animal hosts to people circulating in the world.

Eastern Africa, the region most affected by the epidemics, has experienced great environmental changes in the last years. The report elaborated by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), published in 2013, shows that, in Sierra Leone (the epicenter of the outbreak), climate change has caused seasonal droughts, strong winds, storms, landslides, heat waves, floods and changes in the rain pattern. WHO observes that a recent increment in infectious diseases seems to correspond to the increase in global temperatures, although it is not possible to prove a causal relationship between those facts.

Climate changes, negative environmental impacts resulting from deforestation in the region have an ever increasingly more important role in the recent outbreaks of infectious diseases such as Ebola and malaria, among so many others. The economic logic prevailing in the globalized society, based on the use of fossil fuels, is the central component in the greenhouse gas emissions that cause change in the planet temperature, resulting in the fragmentation and in the loss of vegetal cover of forests, where the animals hosting the Ebola virus live. In this context of change, the main carriers, bats, given the loss of their habitat, move to places where humans live. At the same time, the search for food by the poorest communities, going further and further into the forests, facilitates the exposition to the risks of being contaminated by the virus. Secular cultural practices, such as the funerals involving washing the corpses, also contribute to a greater dissemination of the disease.

Moreover, the globalization process has caused significant demographic changes that, added to the regional and ethnical conflicts in different regions of Africa, have fostered migrations from rural areas into towns and cities, which usually lack infrastructure for basic sanitation and adequate health services, resulting in serious public health problems.

What can thus be observed is the interrelationship of the socio-environmental theme with public health and food scarcity, which indicates the disaggregating component climate change may have in more uneven societies and with greater potential for being affected by infectious diseases. The current framework stresses the evidences that the environment is intrinsically related to the health of society; this should be the foundation for decision-making towards adopting larger-scale policies abiding by the logic of precaution, prevention and expansion of access to information, be it in the ambit of planetary organizations such as the WHO, be it by national and regional governments.

This issue of Revista A&S congregates thirteen articles, eleven of which in Portuguese, one in English and one in Spanish, which unfold in themes, such as biodiversity, energy and socio-environmental conflicts; community resilience, Amazonia, peoples, traditional communities and identities; environmental education, selective collection, reverse logistics; cities and environmental performance, social participation in committees.

Ricardo Abramovay presents an article based on the V Report of IPCC (2014), The main idea that guides this article is that in its chapter referred to Mitigation recognizes that inequality among countries in the occupation of carbon space persists. Remediating that inequality is obviously important but it cannot be the strategic focus of the G77+China. The author presents the reasons around which the most important task is not guarantee the developing countries the right to emit greenhouse gases (using the justification that, to date, the wealthier countries have done just that and, unless the poorer countries can do so too, there will be no expanded access to energy for them).

Welbson do Vale Madeira analyzes the aspects involving the Plano Amazônia Sustentável (Sustainable Amazon Plan) and other governmental programs directed to economic growth in the article *Sustainable Amazon Plan and uneven development*. The author argues that the Plan is subordinated to a capital accumulation logic, unevenly producing the benefits of development.

In the article *Proposal of a model to analyze the commitment with sustainability*, Sabrina Soares da Silva proposes the elaboration of a model that serves as a reference to guide studies in the environment area. This proposal is associated to the analysis of environment paradigms guiding individuals and teams as regards sustainability.

Flora Bonazzi Piasentin, Regina Helena Rosa Sambuichi and Carlos Hiroo Saito, discuss the environmental function of cultivating shade cocoa, and the economic advantages regarding the planters' preference concerning the management of this culture in the article *Local preferences regarding trees in the caca-Cabruça system in the Southeast of Bahia*.

Tatiana Parreiras Martins and Victor Eduardo Lima Ranieri, in their article *Agroforest systems as an alternative to legal reserves* assess agroforest systems as an alternative to recover forests and to use legal reserves, highlighting their possibilities and limitations for environmental conservation.

In the article *The construction of a hydropower plant and the reconfiguration of riverside dwellers' identities: a study into Salto Caxias – Paraná*, Giuliano Silveira Derrosso and Elisa Yoshie Ichikawa, discuss the compulsory displacement of riverside dwellers and its consequences due to the construction of the Salto Caxias Plant, through a study considering the reconstructions of their original identities.

In the article *Traditional peoples and communities: from protected areas to the political visibility of social groups having an ethnical and collective identity*, Marcelo Gustavo Aguilar Calegare, Maria Inês Gasparetto Higuchi and Ana Carla dos Santos Bruno discuss the aspects characterizing certain populations as “traditional peoples and communities” from the viewpoint of Decree n° 604/07.

Maria Cristina Carvalho Juliano and Maria Ângela Mattar Yunes, present a theoretical reflection on the social support networks and their ability to promote resilience, especially communitarian, in the article *Reflections on social support network as a mechanism to protect and to promote resilience*.

In the article *Influence of environmental factors on the distribution of families of aquatic insects in rivers in southern Brazil*, Vanessa dos Anjos Baptista, Michelle Bicalho Antunes, Alcemar Rodrigues Martello, Nicolás de Souza Brandão Figueiredo, Aline Monique Blank Amaral, Elisângela Secretti and Bruna Braun analyze the diversity of aquatic insects existing in a Neotropical basin from the perspective of specific environmental factors.

In the article *Environmental education in Chile, a still pending task*, Andrés Muñoz-Pedrerros analyzes the environmental education development process in Chile, from the perspectives of different institutions, such as the State, universities and NGOs, focusing its discussion on the change of the post-modern paradigm.

The article *Assessment of the Environmental and Economic Advantages of Implementing Reverse Logistics in the Pressed Glass Sector* evaluated the advantages from the economic and environmental point of view of adopting reverse logistics as a waste management policy. Geraldo Cardoso de Oliveira Neto, Maria Tereza Saraiva Souza, Dirceu da Silva and Leonardo Aureliano Silva conducted a case study, collecting quantitative and qualitative data from a company that adopted the practice.

Rafael de Araújo Arosa Monteiro, Evandro Mateus Moretto, Delhi Paiva Salinas and Catarina Sernaglia Gomes discuss how the environmental performance of the mu-

municipalities in the State of São Paulo is evaluated according to the criteria defined by the Green and Blue Municipality Program. The article *Environmental Performance and human development in the Paulista municipalities* aims to verify whether there is convergence between the environmental performance and the dimensions usually associated with the municipal human development.

Still regarding environmental public policies, the article *Analysis of people's participation in the Environment Municipal Committees of Mid-Piracicaba*, by Cristina Maria Soares Ferreira and Alberto Fonseca, analyses the processes of public participation in the environment municipal committees by means of qualitative researches, to assess the degree of effectivity and the quality of people's participation.

Lastly, Gina Rizpah Besen, Helena Ribeiro, Wanda Maria Risso Gunther and Pedro Roberto Jacobi, based on interviews with public managers of the São Paulo Metropolitan Region, analyze the impacts of the passing of the National Solid Wastes Policy (PNRS, in Portuguese) in the formal selective collection, in 2004, 2010 and 2013. The analysis developed in the article *Selective Collection in the São Paulo Metropolitan Region: impacts of the National Solid Wastes Policy* focuses on collective selection with the inclusion of collectors organized into cooperatives and associations.

The review of this volume is by Gabriela Marques Di Giulio on the book "Mudanças climáticas e as cidades: novos e antigos debates na busca da sustentabilidade urbana e social" (São Paulo: Editora Blucher, 2013), organized by demographer Ricardo Ojima and Geographer Eduardo Marandola Jr. The book aims to advance in the discussions on the human dimensions of global environmental changes, emphasizing the approach on climatic changes. The authors organized this compilation of articles of Brazilian researchers as to promote a reflexion on the complex relations established between cities, socioenvironmental and global environmental changes and the challenges to political and scientific agendas.

While concluding the editorial of this volume of *Ambiente e Sociedade/Anppas* we received with sadness the news about the passing away of our dear friend and professor Hector Leis at 71, in consequence of lateral miotrophic sclerosis on the 6th of September in Florianópolis. Hector Leis had a very important role in the creation of Anppas in 2000 and along its 14 years of existence, as well, as together with Lucia da Costa Ferreira and in the creation and as joint editor Pedro Roberto Jacobi of this journal from 1997 until 2011. He was professor at the Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, beloved by his students and colleagues and his work obtained relevant national and international recognition. His contributions in academic life were in several fields: international relations, political science, environmental sociology, and political philosophy, being considered as one of the most important diffusors of the institutional construction of interdisciplinarity in Brazil and Latin America. Together with Eduardo Viola they were pioneers in their analysis on environmentalism and his book *Modernidade Insustentável* is a reference on the reflection on environment and society in contemporaneity. This book was relaunched on September 17 in the edition *Annablume/Anppas* as a recognition of its importance, out of print for many years..

Hector, your friends and colleagues will miss you and your important contribution in the field of environment and society in Brazil will continue inspiring present and future generations.

We hope you enjoy your reading and thank each of you for multiplying the readers of Ambiente e Sociedade.