

GENDER AND ENVIRONMENT

The relationship between women and nature is not recent. Throughout the history of humanity, symbolism is very present within the ideas that bring female gender close to nature. However, we must acknowledge that the way in which women interact with the environment is an output of social relationships that pre-establish women's specific responsibilities given gender relationships. These relationships are socially constructed, and they differ with one another according to the social and economic class they are embedded in, apart from being reflected into the public and household tasks they have. Because of the contemporaneity of the issue, and as it is constant transformation, this editorial will tackle the theme of "gender and environment"; one of the best ways to begin is by the 20th principle of the Rio Declaration, 1992, which highlights women's importance in environment and development management.

Academic and international organisations production stress that women have undertaken, as a whole, management and support of natural resources that constitute the everyday life of community groups, villages, and of the world's most excluded sectors. Nonetheless, that participation goes beyond this reality. Women's role in society is multifaceted, not only in the duties that help nourish domestic social life, but in the public sphere as well. As fisherwomen, farmers, and so many other local scale producers linked to the environment, they contribute to the livelihood of their families and communities, developing a production dynamic, and their participation in the production chain. The United Nations has highlighted in innumerable documents women's role in managing natural resources, as well as key player in local, regional, and global initiatives. One of the UN documents with this vision is Agenda 21; it claims women's importance in sustainable development, suggesting governments to go further in implementing strategies that envisage their crucial role in the sociopolitical dimension of environmental matters.

Thus, women have a fundamental role in the enterprise of preserving natural resources, within a context of necessary advancements for more sustainable policies, facing the current consumption logic, and in such a direction that points out possible actions in which alternative proposals of sustainable consumption and waste reduction prevail.

In many environment related conferences they assume a leading role and bring the need to further participate of the decision making process.

However, in spite of stating the need for increasing empowerment, it has taken place in daily life very incipiently, and women are still significantly excluded from decision making processes related to environmental policies notwithstanding their close proximity with the environmental theme. Women's integration in formulating, planning, and execution of environmental policies is developing very slowly, despite the growing international recognition that without their full participation, it will not be possible to progress consistently and constantly into a society with a more sustainable *ethos*.

This reality translates itself into how gender relationships shape negotiating spaces and participation practices. For example, in the context of water resources, women's technical work is limited, many times, to passing information to other women, or to other functions related to distributing information, but not as opinion leaders. Hence, women are part of practices that look for the promotion of development, but they are not decision makers. In the Brazilian context, women's participation in the managing entities and participative collegiums is limited to logistics duties such as drafting of documents and technical reports. They also are hierarchically subordinated to other decision makers, as members of technical committees which set the grounds for the entities' final decisions. Female to male proportion is very low in charges such as facilitators and basin agency representatives, showing the subordination they suffer.

The lack of gender equity and equality is seen by multilateral organisms as an obstacle for achieving a more sustainable society based in principles that guarantee socio-environmental justice, fragile ecosystem recovery, environmental protection, and food security. Given that perspective, researchers' responsibility is to unravel exclusion and discrimination dynamics still present and promote their transformation to enable changes in the social structures that support them. We have already advanced a lot, but we still have a long way to go.

This volume of *Ambiente & Sociedade* brings 12 articles that contemplate topics of great relevance in the context of contemporary socio-environmental area of interest, like natural areas management and the importance of traditional local knowledge; social control in public policy in sanitation services; water governance; socio-environmental vulnerability in urban areas and agricultural, fishing, and foresting practices; farming of GMOs; organic diet; carbon market; and pedagogic practices for ecodevelopment. Closing this volume are two book reviews.

In the article titled "*Social identity, local knowledge and adaptive management by traditional communities of the babassu region in Maranhão*", authors **Roberto Porro** and **Noemi Sakiara Miyasaka Porro** evaluate the production strategies and the adaptive characteristics of agro-extractivist practices of certain traditional communities of Maranhão state, highlighting the interpretations, choices, and practices in the incorporation of cattle breeding by the peasants.

Authors **Patricia Costa Pellizzaro**, **Letícia Peret Antunes Hardt**, **Carlos Hardt**, **Marlos Hardt** and **Dyala Assef Sehli** analyze institutional compatibility among different countries and the guidelines recommended by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), by means of comparative analysis in the article "*Stewardship and Management of Protected Natural Areas: The International Context*".

Aiming to analyze urban transformations created from the functioning of the real estate market and its socio-environmental implications, the paper "*Urban and Environmental Transformations in Poor Areas of the Metropolitan Region of Recife (Brazil)*" from authors **Kainara Lira dos Anjos** and **Norma Lacerda** discusses the dynamism of that Market, using the Teimososa Brasília district as the study object.

Authors **Fernanda Alves Cohim Silva** and **Liliana Pena Naval** analyze experiences and strategies in social control of basic sanitation public policies, in their article "*A contribution to develop strategies to support the social control of sanitation activities*".

The expansion of sugarcane monoculture agriculture and its negative environmental impacts are addressed in the paper “*The environmental vulnerability and the territorial planning of the sugarcane cultivation*” by the authors **Carolina de Oliveira Jordão** and **Evandro Mateus Moretto**. The work analyzes environmental vulnerability in the spatial planning of that expansion, basing the study on the agro-environmental zoning of the sugar-alcohol sector of São Paulo.

The paper “*Peasant economies forestry industry and fires: socio-natural instabilities and agriculture as a mean of resistance*” by the author **Beatriz Eugenia Cid Aguayo** analyzes the incidence of forest fires and raises issues about socio-natural stability and territorial relationship between foresting industry and rural agriculture.

With the aim of evaluating the contributions of the pedagogical practices in ecodevelopment, authors **Isabel Jurema Grimm**, **Adriana Dias**, **Carlos Alberto Cioce Sampaio** and **Valdir Fernandes** performed an action research study in the education zone for Ecodevelopment of the Rio Sagrado Microbasin, in Morretes, PR, Brasil. The results of the socio-environmental transformations taken place in that territory are in the paper “*Interdisciplinarity and educational practices in eco-development: analysis of the experience of the Rio Sagrado micro-watershed – Morretes/PR*”.

Authors **Sara Gurfinkel Marques de Godoy** and **Sylvia Maria Sylvia Macchione Saes** discuss the evolution dynamics of the carbon markets, on the basis of a comparative analysis among different market structures, performances, limits, and potentials in their article “*Cap-and-trade and project-based framework: how do carbon markets work for greenhouse emissions reduction?*”.

In the paper “*The organic food market: a quantitative and qualitative overview of international publications*”, authors **Valéria da Veiga Dias**, **Glauco Schultz**, **Marcelo da Silva Schuster**, **Edson Talamini** and **Jean Philippe Révillion** proceeded to the surveying and bibliometric analysis of the publications referring the organic food market. On the basis of interviews and focal groups, the study discusses about the main themes related to the topic.

With the goal of exploring the reasons by which water and fishing resources management fell into crisis in the region, the paper “*What Lies Beneath: An Eco-Historical View of High Andes Water Pollution*” of the author **Heather Lee Williams**, discusses how the achievement of the autonomy of the villages and the activists self-governing of natural resources left the rural population more vulnerable to pollution caused by the extracting industry and increasing urbanization.

In the article “*Perceptions of Brazilian small-scale farmers about genetically modified crops*”, authors **Carla Almeida**, **Luisa Massarani**, and **Ildeu de Castro Moreira** analyze perceptions of small farmers in relation to GMOs and identify heterogeneous perceptions shaped by diverse factors, including economic matters and concerns regarding impact on human and environmental health.

Author **Rodrigo Constante Martins** tackles the issue of water governance under the perspective of difference and inequality of actors, in the article “*Boundaries between inequality and difference in water governance*”. Discussing hierarchy production within the governance arenas, the paper talks about practices that naturalize management unbalance.

In the review “*Water and sanitation services: views and experience*”, author **Mariana Gutierrez Arteiro da Paz** highlights sociopolitical aspects of sanitation services and

Léo Heller's e José Esteban Castro's position facing social limitations and public policies related to the sanitation system, in the book: *Política pública e gestão de serviços de saneamento*, 2013.

Regarding the review "*A contribution for understanding the genesis and the evolution of the environmental policy and management in Brazil*", author **Daniel Trento do Nascimento** critically exposes the vision of the authors Maria Augusta Bursztyn and Marcel Bursztyn about the construction of sustainability and the political grounds of environmental management, within their book *Fundamentos de Política e Gestão Ambiental: caminhos para a sustentabilidade*, 2012.

We wish everyone a good read, and count on your support to magnify the spread of the journal.

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