

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND NATURE'S RIGHTS: EMERGENCIES  
AND POSSIBLE DIALOGUES

*EDUCAÇÃO AMBIENTAL E DIREITOS DA NATUREZA: EMERGÊNCIAS E  
DIÁLOGOS POSSÍVEIS*

*EDUCACIÓN AMBIENTAL Y DERECHOS DE LA NATURALEZA:  
EMERGENCIAS Y POSIBLES DIÁLOGOS*



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**ABSTRACT:** This article is located in the field of ecopolitics approaches, in the Latin American context, of critique of Education and Environmental Law, and proposes an approximation of Education with the Rights of Nature, whose base lies in the recognition of nature as a subject of rights and societies of good living. The study is characterized as a hypothetical-deductive theoretical essay with a literature review and data analysis through legal norms. Its main objective is to investigate whether recognizing the Rights of Nature can contribute to constructing theoretical and practical proposals for Critical Environmental Education.

**KEYWORDS:** Critical Environmental Education. Ecopolitics. Nature's Rights

**RESUMO:** *O presente artigo situa-se no campo das abordagens de ecopolítica, no contexto latino-americano, de crítica à Educação e ao Direito Ambiental e, propõe uma aproximação da Educação com os Direitos da Natureza, cuja base situa-se no reconhecimento da natureza como sujeito de direitos e das sociedades do bem viver. O estudo caracteriza-se como um ensaio teórico hipotético-dedutivo com revisão bibliográfica e análise de dados através de normas jurídicas. Tem como objetivo central indagar se o reconhecimento dos Direitos da Natureza pode contribuir para a construção de propostas teóricas e práticas de uma Educação Ambiental Crítica.*

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** *Educação Ambiental Crítica. Ecopolítica. Direitos da Natureza.*

**RESUMEN:** *Este artículo se ubica en el campo de los enfoques de ecopolítica, en el contexto latinoamericano, de la crítica a la Educación y el Derecho Ambiental, y propone una aproximación de la Educación a los Derechos de la Naturaleza, cuya base radica en el reconocimiento de la naturaleza como sujeto de derechos. y sociedades del buen vivir. El estudio se caracteriza por ser un ensayo teórico hipotético-deductivo con revisión bibliográfica y análisis de datos a través de normas legales. Su principal objetivo es investigar si el reconocimiento de los Derechos de la Naturaleza puede contribuir a la construcción de propuestas teóricas y prácticas para la Educación Crítica Ambiental.*

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** *Educación Ambiental Crítica. Ecopolítica. Derechos de la Naturaleza.*

## Introduction

Different theoretical and practical approaches guide the discussion on Environmental Education. The cross-cutting nature of the environmental issue reveals a common axis in identifying crises and collapses experienced in the contemporary world, with multiple causes in the relationship between humans and nature. The ways in which nature is appropriated, economic production, and waste disposal in the industrial production system reveal the conflicts and inequalities existing in the relationships between nature and society.

Brazil is experiencing a profound political, epidemiological, and ecological crisis. The commodification of nature and the re-primarization of the economy with the advancement of forest and mineral extraction have been favored by the deregulation and flexibilization of environmental regulations, the dismantling and discouragement of the actions of public servants and ecological agencies that make up the SISNAMA (National System of the Environment).

As a result of the intensified anti-ecological policy over the past four years, several elements can be highlighted, such as the defunding of the environment, i.e., a drastic reduction in public budgets; systemic institutional disarray; Brazil's assumption of an international pariah position; the absence of democratic debate on the Brazilian environmental agenda; the increase in deforestation and wildfires in all biomes, particularly the Amazon biome. These conjunctural elements, disseminated in the media and the result of academic analyses, reveal what may constitute a hegemonic socio-economic system of nature destruction.

The country has undergone a profound regression in socio-environmental policies and norms, characterized by a lack of systematic application of environmental standards resulting from historical struggles. There has been an approval of environmental deregulations through federal executive acts without due debate with civil society represented by councils (which, in turn, have been dismantled) and without respect for the 1988 Federal Constitution. This harmful trend is manifested in the National Congress through the advancement of legislative bills proposing setbacks in the fields of environmental licensing, forest protection, conservation units, indigenous lands, and mining.

In this context, this article stems from research conducted in the Eco-Phenomenology, Sustainability Science, and Law Research Group, particularly in the research strand of Critical Environmental Education and the Rights of Nature. This work is characterized as a hypothetical-deductive theoretical essay with a literature review and data analysis through legal norms, proposing a perspective of Environmental Education based on the Rights of Nature.

The article's main objective is to inquire whether the recognition of the Rights of Nature can contribute to the development of theoretical and practical proposals for Critical Environmental Education in a context where the planet faces crises, collapses, ecological limits, and profound socio-economic inequalities.

There is a need for societies to advance ecopolitically to promote structural changes. In this regard, Education and the Rights of Nature can point the way towards communities focused on good living and curbing nature's destructive processes.

The theoretical categories used for the analyses articulated here are situated in the realm of Critical Environmental Education, the Rights of Nature, societies of "good living," ecopolitics, and critical and decolonial Latin American thought. To this end, there is a contextualization of the global scenario regarding the civilizational crisis, which results nationally in predominantly conservative, reproductive, uncritical, and normative Environmental Education.

Another form of Education and another form of Law are necessary to address the present and future crises. As noted by the centenarian Edgar Morin (2003), teaching about the human condition and terrestrial identity is essential to confront uncertainties. A change in mentality is needed to generate reconnections between society and nature, with the community recognizing itself as part of nature.

It is evident that dominant Education and Law are anthropocentric and stem from the pragmatic perspective of commodifying nature and privatizing life. However, ruptures in this hegemony and the emergence of other paradigms aimed at reconstruction are already underway in various parts of the planet. The incorporation of ecocentrism as public policy and educational theory/praxis through the recognition of nature as a subject of rights has promoted a decolonial shift<sup>2</sup>, in analogy to the expression used by Aníbal Quijano (2000, p. 16).

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<sup>2</sup> "The decolonial turn that Latin American experiences have generated in the juridic-political field has facilitated an alignment between constitutional theory and practice, a phenomenon more pronounced in the Andean region (particularly Bolivia and Ecuador), where the indigenous population is notably larger and shares common roots dating back to pre-colonial Incan times. In this region, one can observe a distinct rationality of resistance, different from that produced in Eurocentric modernity, and this peripheral rationality from the South, characterized by its worldview, has influenced new legal trends and institutional frameworks" (WOLKMER; WOLKMER, 2017. p. 239, our translation).

## Environmental Collapse, Ecocivilizational Crisis, and Planetary Boundaries

The scientific recognition of a systemic crisis in which the destruction of nature is accelerating to the point of breaking through the planet's boundaries or limits and approaching a point of no return<sup>3</sup> is something humanity is already experiencing.

The industrial era and the rapid growth of economic development since World War II have revealed the contradictions of unequal development models in various parts of the planet. The so-called biophysical limits of the earth or planetary boundaries show systemic circumstances on a global level, but at national and regional scales, there are different data and social perceptions of the effects of these limits. This problematization leads to the debate and recognition of environmental conflicts and injustices.

Planetary boundaries are a concept proposed by a group of scientists led by Johan Rockström of the Stockholm Resilience Centre and Will Steffen of the Australian National University. In 2009, the group proposed an interpretation called planetary boundaries to the international community. This proposal is based on scientific research that points out that since the Industrial Revolution, human actions have been the main driver of environmental transformation on the planet. The group of scientists points out that if anthropocentric activities exceed certain limits identified as planetary boundaries, there is a risk of irreversibility of these processes, affecting all species and forms of life on the planet.

Scientists have identified nine Earth system boundaries: 1. climate change; 2. loss of biosphere integrity (loss of biodiversity and species extinction); 3. stratospheric ozone depletion; 4. ocean acidification; 5. biogeochemical flows (phosphorus and nitrogen cycles); 6. land system change (e.g., deforestation); 7. freshwater use; 8. atmospheric aerosol loading (microscopic particles in the atmosphere that affect climate and living organisms); 9. introduction of novel entities (e.g., organic pollutants, radioactive materials, nanomaterials, and microplastics). It has surpassed the boundaries described in items 1, 2, 5, and 6 (ROCKSTRÖM *et al.*, 2009, p. 8-9).

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<sup>3</sup> "Between 2019 and 2020, there was an increase in deforestation in the Legal Amazon in comparison to the same period of the previous year, with July 2020 recording 1.654 km<sup>2</sup> deforested, according to data from INPE (National Institute for Space Research). Approximately 17% of the entire forest coverage has already been deforested, equivalent to 700.000 km<sup>2</sup> of its area. Climatologist Carlos Nobre warns that if this pace of devastation continues, the "point of no return," meaning the point at which the forest can no longer regenerate in the face of the damage it has endured, could be reached within 15 to 30 years" (ALBUQUERQUE, 2021, our translation).

In this context, a question arises: what kind of Environmental Education can confront such a scenario, one marked by collapses, planetary boundaries, and profound socio-environmental injustices?

Various reports from the United Nations (UN) highlight the correlation between education and the advancement of the sustainability agenda. Among these, the information *Resilient People, Resilient Planet: A Future Worth Choosing* (UN, 2021, p. 30-32) stands out as an effort to prevent the occurrence of planetary boundary breaches.

Understanding the crisis, identified in various ways as environmental, ecological, civilizational, or ecocivilizational, involves the pedagogical process in which formal environmental education is one of the gears that must continue in all spheres of non-school environments in a continuous and cross-cutting manner. But beyond rationality about these complex issues, the realm of individual and collective perception and feeling presents itself as interconnected and relational. Recognizing the ecocivilizational crisis (LEFF, 2014), along with struggles, resistance, and re-existence processes, can mitigate the ongoing environmental collapses (MARQUES, 2018).

How can one position oneself politically or ecopolitically from the local to the global dimension? In the Latin American context, ecopolitical thought lies within the realm of recognizing environmental conflicts and injustices, where Critical Environmental Education also dialogues with this perspective. As Layrargues (2018, p. 35, our translation) points out when identifying three political-pedagogical profiles within Environmental Education:

Supported by the perspective of state ideological apparatuses, the conceptual framework of the political-pedagogical macro-trends of Environmental Education is an analytical framework through which it is possible to establish a typology of the different intentions present in each macro-trend, divided by the conservative ideological stamp of social reproduction or the subversive one of social transformation. The field of Environmental Education, from the perspective of its political-pedagogical macro-trends, is demarcated into three profiles: Conservationist, Pragmatic, and Critical. Each macro-trend has its characteristics, depending on the intentions that inspire its practices. Thus, each one has a central key theme in the pedagogical act, although it is not specific to it: any theme can belong to the domain of any macro-trend. But, in general terms, the central key theme that ideally belongs to the Conservationist perspective revolves around the defense of Life, Nature, ecosystems, forests and rivers, protected areas and Conservation Units, agroecology, and ecotourism. From the Pragmatic perspective, the central key theme that stands out revolves around private Environmental Management, Industrial Ecology, Recycling, technological innovations, Sustainable Development, Consumption, and Green Economy. As for the Critical perspective of Environmental Education, the central key theme revolves around Political Ecology, Popular Education, Conflicts, and Socio-environmental Injustice.

Ecopolitics, situated as a critical, contestatory, and emancipatory thought in the processes of struggle and the conquest of rights in a Latin American context, recognizes disputes, inequalities, and socio-environmental conflicts. As Little (2006, p. 2, our translation) points out about the subject, political ecology "has emerged as a new field of research that combines the focus of human ecology on the interrelationships that human societies maintain with their respective biophysical environments with concepts from political economy that analyze the structural power relations between these societies." And, as noted by the prominent Alimonda (2017, p. 43, our translation), political ecology is a cutting-edge political-intellectual elaboration that *"attempts with anguish to respond to the tremendous challenges that the times present to the peoples of our continent, recognizing the inescapable need to criticize the civilizational presuppositions of conventional modernity and development."*

### **The connection between Environmental Education, the Rights of Nature, and the concept of "*bem viver* (good living)"**

The identification of education in environmental issues as an essential factor for processes of social transformation has been institutionally recognized since the 1970s, with the creation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) of the United Nations (UN). The first international meetings to address the environment as a Human Right took place in 1972 in Stockholm, where the Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment established in principle 19 the indispensability of education to address environmental issues:

Efforts are indispensable for environmental education, targeting the younger generations and adults while also paying due attention to the less privileged sectors of the population. These efforts should lay the foundation for an informed public opinion and encourage individuals, businesses, and communities to responsibly protect and improve the environment in all its human dimensions. It is equally essential that mass media refrain from contributing to the deterioration of the human environment and, instead, disseminate educational information highlighting the need to protect and enhance it, allowing humanity to develop in all aspects (ONU, 1972, our translation).

Historically, Brazil has participated in and ratified protective norms related to the environment, including those concerning Environmental Education. In the same decade of the 1970s, in 1977, a specific meeting was held in Tbilisi, Georgia, promoted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), to discuss and approve the

foundations of Environmental Education. The goals of Environmental Education, present in Recommendation No. 2, are noteworthy:

- a. To help individuals and communities understand the existence and importance of economic, social, political, and ecological interdependence in urban and rural areas;
- b. To provide all people with the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, values, active interest, and attitudes needed to protect and improve the environment;
- c. To induce new forms of behavior in individuals, social groups, and society as a whole regarding the environment (ONU, 1977, our translation).

The history of Environmental Law in Brazil has been constructed based on the interrelationships between international and national aspects, reflecting the basis for discussions in domestic laws, such as the case of Law 6.938/81 - the National Environmental Policy Law, which incorporated the value of Environmental Education as a principle in Article 2, X, expressly stating that it aims to provide "environmental education at all levels of education, including community education, to enable active participation in environmental protection."

With the process of democratic opening and the promulgation of the 1988 Constitution, Article 225, which deals with the environment, brings Environmental Education as a responsibility of the government to effectively implement it, according to the wording of paragraph 1, VI: "to promote environmental education at all levels of education and public awareness for environmental preservation."(our translation).

This constitutional norm was regulated by Law 9.795/99 (National Policy of Environmental Education in Brazil) and by Decree 4,281/2002. Furthermore, it is present in other federal education norms, such as the Law of Guidelines and Bases of Education, and state and municipal norms in Brazil.

The discussion and institutionalization of Environmental Education in Brazil began to expand in the 1990s, coinciding with the United Nations Conference on Environment and Sustainable Development (UNCED), held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. At the same time, a parallel event organized by social movements and civil society organizations led to the creation of the Brazilian Network of Environmental Education (REBEA), composed of educators and institutions related to education.

During this occasion, the First National Meeting on Environmental Education was held, and the Treaty on Environmental Education for Sustainable Societies and Global Responsibility was developed, becoming a reference document in the field. Other essential documents were also approved during Rio/92, reinforcing the intentions to achieve sustainability, with education playing a prominent role in these processes, such as the Earth Charter and Agenda 21.



In 1997, the International Conference on Environment and Society: Education and Public Awareness for Sustainability occurred in Thessaloniki, Greece. During this event, it was recognized that the implementation of Environmental Education had been insufficient up to that point. The work of the United Nations has been driving systematic and successive agendas related to Human Rights, the Environment, and Environmental Education, such as the Millennium Development Goals and the current Sustainable Development Goals.

These are brief contextual lines about the historical, institutional, and regulatory trajectories in the debate on Environmental Education. However, beyond international and national regulations on Environmental Education, there are multiple theoretical and practical approaches based on local experiences applied in formal and non-formal education spaces.

Approaches like critical, transformative, emancipatory, popular, citizen-based, political-pedagogical practice, participatory, democratic, and solidarity-based, among others, permeate some normative processes and, even more so, the experiences in the world of multiple and diverse realities in which such practices develop. The relationships between society and nature are situated in a space where everyday life unfolds, with potential regional, national, and global repercussions. The relational complexity reveals the challenges in processes of awareness-raising and education across various political, social, economic, cultural, and ecological spheres that impact individuals, collectives, and the global context.

Environmental Education, viewed as a tool serving economic systems and state apparatuses, takes on a reproductive, reformist, and subservient bias to capital, becoming mere environmental training (LAYRARGUES, 2018, p. 13). Without a connection between production and the environment, the efforts of Environmental Education cannot be sustained (FOLADORI, 2018, p. 55).

Critical Environmental Education must confront economic and social structures. In this sense, "simply perceiving and sensitizing to environmental issues and increasing technical competence aimed at their resolution do not represent a qualitative increase in consciousness and the exercise of ecological citizenship" (LOUREIRO, 2011, p. 96, our translation).

There are various criticisms of how the training and practices of such educators have been observed in processes of social transformation. It is observed that the complexity of the so-called environmental, socio-environmental, civilizational, and planetary crises is deepening in the contemporary world and, particularly, in Brazil. Given this context, it is essential to question the role of Environmental Education in the face of environmental crises and collapses. Consequently, it is crucial to investigate the causes and consequences of educational processes

in the lives of learners in educational systems and the practices and experiences beyond schools and universities.

Such discussions are embedded in broader and more complex spaces where ecological and educational policies represent significant theoretical contributions for the critique of their foundation, operationalization, and implementation as a human right and public policy. The urgency of critical Environmental Education is undeniable. The theoretical and conceptual contributions of Paulo Freire's thinking and the so-called Freirean studies that followed his legacy have sought to be updated and reinvented in the face of contemporary challenges.

In this sense, the dialogue about producing dynamic knowledge that constantly questions itself is present in understanding socio-environmental realities in educational processes (FREIRE, FAUNDEZ, 1985). Some fundamental concepts in Paulo Freire's work can strengthen the construction of Environmental Education in practice, such as lovingness, dialogicity, thematic investigation, coding-decoding, and problematization (SAITO *et al.*, 2014, p. 7).

In the face of both old and new ecological challenges, pedagogy and all those involved need to cultivate an attitude of openness, sensitivity, and critical thinking to understand and build meanings of coexistence on the planet from a citizen and solidarity perspective.

Within the school context, conventional methodologies do not provide adequate solutions for understanding thinking and acting in the face of local to planetary challenges. In this sense, pedagogical practices that encourage the articulation of systematic thinking/acting have been developed based on eco-pedagogical projects and activities based on generative themes.

Participatory action methodologies such as action research have been experimented with in the field of Critical Environmental Education, informed by various philosophical lines aimed at intervening. One of its conditions is the participation of the subjects involved in the educational practice in which knowledge about their reality is produced (TOZONI-REIS, VASCONCELLOS, 2014, p. 117-9).

In line with Guimarães' view (2004, p. 32-3, our translation), Critical Environmental Education aims to "overcome paradigmatic traps and promote an educational process in which, in this exercise, we, learners and educators, are forming ourselves and contributing, through the exercise of active citizenship, to the transformation of the serious socio-environmental crisis we are all experiencing".

Building on the discussion above on Critical Environmental Education, one can see the possibility of dialogue with the concept of the Rights of Nature in spaces and territories of the good life.

Historically, Brazilian law considers the environment as an object/resource; it protects individual property, encouraging productivity that exploits natural elements without considering their intrinsic values, the multidimensional impacts of economic projects, and the capacity of environmental "resources" to recover. In this context, the regulations on Environmental Education being constructed in Brazil since the 1988 Constitution are situated.

However, other socio-political and legal imaginaries have been constructed worldwide, particularly in Latin American experiences. As Acosta (2016, p. 127, our translation) points out:

Adopting the pioneering definition that Nature is a subject of rights constitutes a cutting-edge response to the current civilizational crisis – and as such, it has been accepted by broad segments of the international community who are aware that it is impossible to continue with a predatory model of society based on the struggle of human beings against Nature.

The ethics of "*buen vivir*" (good living) alls the imaginaries of living well, which not only express their ways of being from within the cosmos and the Earth but also establish practices of coexistence and transformation of the places where they live, combining ecological conditions of the territory with the art of cultural management of nature.

The foundation of the Right of Nature derives from the right to existence with a strong sense of intrinsic value and the community of life. Various sources of inspiration for the Rights of Nature have been translated into documents, principles, ethical formulations, international declarations, constitutions, and even a papal encyclical. Here are some of these legacies: the Earth Charter, whose project began as a United Nations initiative but developed and concluded as a global civil society initiative. In 2000, the Earth Charter Commission, an independent international entity, completed and released the document as the Charter of the People; from Pope Francis's *Encíclica Laudato Si* in 2015; the World Declaration on the Environmental Rule of Law by the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) in Rio de Janeiro in 2016, whose principles include: responsibility for the protection of nature; the right to have nature; *in dubio pro natura*; ecological sustainability and resilience; intergenerational equity; gender equity; participation of minorities and vulnerable groups; indigenous and tribal peoples; non-regression and progression.

In the Latin American context, the Andean cosmovision of Pachamama (Mother Earth) is linked to the notion of good living and a planetary ecology that regulates the cycles of life. Regarding the relationship between education and good living, Krenak (2020, p. 19, our translation) points out that the goal is to "educate human beings to inhabit a living Earth," but there are many challenges in the present, including the question: "how, within this mark of inequality, are we going to produce a sustainable situation?"

In Brazil, our law is environmental, not of nature. The hegemonic economic system creates norms to "contain" depredation but aims to disrespect it to operate at full steam. However, the elements brought by the new Latin American constitutionalism inspire the interpretation of our Constitution, which, along with the perspective of integral sustainability, leads to respect for the biophysical limits of the planet and can strengthen the care and coexistence between human and non-human beings.

Law plays a creative role in changing realities. The plural perspective of the numerous ethnic biases that make up Brazilian society must be considered in constructing law for the socio-biodiversity of nature. The rights of nature operate from a perspective of valuing common goods restoring ecosystems and communities; thus, 'the General Theory of the Rights of Nature is based on the principle of Harmony with Nature, Interdependence, Reciprocity, Complementarity, and Community-Making' (GIFFONI *et al.*, 2020, p. 24-5, our translation). The authors continue, stating:

In this landscape, we bet on the hypothesis of a theory of the rights of Nature that must be constructed based on a rationale that recognizes, first and foremost, in the national legal system, Nature as a Subject of ownership and thus, Plural Jurisprudence presents itself as the scenario for a new hermeneutics capable of encompassing the theoretical and practical conditions of the rationale given here (GIFFONI *et al.*, 2020, p. 26, our translation).

The term *Bem Viver* (translation of *Sumak Kawsay* from the indigenous *Quéchua* language) in the Constitution of Ecuador, approved in 2008, is present in more than twenty constitutional provisions, presented as a holistic concept that underlies aspects of social, economic, cultural, and political life, with a perspective of "citizen coexistence in diversity and harmony with nature" (CORTEZ, 2009, p. 1, our translation).

The 2008 Constitution is a milestone not only for Ecuador but also for the history of Latin American constitutionalism because it breaks with Eurocentric paradigms and "for the first time, places the concept of indigenous traditions as the basis for the organization and

legitimation of political life" (CORTEZ, 2009, p. 2, our translation). This change is centered on the valorization of diversity and harmony with nature.

Genealogically, as Cortez (2009, p. 2-3) puts it, "*Bem Viver*" breaks with a colonial power matrix (discourses that served to design and manage ways of life that conformed to Western criteria of civilization and neocolonialism, promoting discursive ruptures. Normatively, "*Bem Viver*" is a concept in construction, but its contours can be felt through an intense relationship with nature and the sociocosmic order, founded on a holistic, relational, reciprocal, and complementary relationship with the whole.

Various Western perspectives (philosophical, religious, and legal) assume other approaches to "*Bem Viver*" in a communal dimension, for example, the notion of justice in the West and the notion of reciprocity in Andean traditions, where for the latter, it is a 'complementary correspondence of acts and consequences,' resulting in "a certain balance and community cohesion" (CORTEZ, 2009, p. 7, our translation). As Acosta (2016, p. 40, our translation) summarizes:

*Bem Viver* is a philosophy of life that opens the doors to constructing an emancipatory project. A project that, by having added stories of struggles, resistance, and proposals for change and by drawing from local experiences to which contributions from various latitudes must be added, positions itself as a starting point for establishing democratically sustainable societies.

Legally, there have already been several cases of recognition of the Rights of Nature, either through Constitutions, as in the Latin American experiences of Ecuador and Bolivia; through sub-constitutional norms; declarations of principles, or judicial decisions, as occurred in Colombia, where the *Atrato* and Amazon rivers were recognized as subjects of rights.

### Final considerations

This study highlights the importance of questioning environmental pedagogical conservatism through possible connections between Nature's Rights and the Critical Environmental Education field through theoretical and methodological constructions that align with ecopolitics addressing socio-environmental conflicts and injustices.

In this regard, anthropocentric environmental legal normativism and the institutionalization of uncritical Environmental Education are insufficient to prevent the deepening of crises and the accelerated and destructive reproduction of capitalist processes. A historically situated Environmental Education within a Latin American context, critical of the

struggles and confrontations against the contradictions of capitalism and its various forms of injustice related to gender, class, race, age, and place of birth, aligns with an inclusive conception of social and biological diversities.

The Rights of Nature proposes a break from anthropocentrism and challenges humans to relate to nature and different species more carefully and in a coexistent manner. The Rights of Nature fall within intergenerational and interspecies solidarity rights.

Questioning Environmental Education, critical of the hegemonic economic system, locally situated but with a planetary dimension, transformative of individuals and society towards life in ecological territories and *'buen vivir'* (good living), is an imaginary concept with better conditions to confront systemic crises. In this journey, there is an urgency to decolonize Environmental Education to address collapses, emergencies, and planetary limits. An education that makes conflicts, injustices, and socio-environmental inequalities visible and confronts them, thus being present in the political and normative framework of Environmental Education.

The relationships between humans and nature can reveal various facets of admiration, fear, domination, and coexistence. The Rights of Nature show fields of struggle and disputes, historical recognitions, and the expansion of rights, complexities in their understanding and implementation, and deep dialogue with ecological justice and pedagogical transformation.

In this proposal, an education based on the Rights of Nature reveals relational legal possibilities based on feeling-thinking, reciprocity, and the construction of spaces for *'buen vivir'* where the physical and institutional limits of school and society are overcome to restore the community in perspectives of intergenerational and interspecies solidarity.

There is a sense of hope in pedagogy that teaches, feels, and learns that nature is a subject. The expansion of this methodological horizon deeply resonates with interculturality, de-patriarchalization, the planet, ecocentrism, and feminism. The present and future challenges reveal the urgency of building economic systems linked to ecological systems and their biophysical limits. In this context, there is a demand for just ecological transitions to promote and potentiate change.

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