

REFLECTIONS ON BIOECONOMY: THE 3RD WAY FOR BRAZIL?

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During the last decades, the global quest for development allied with new technologies has antagonized hunger and income concentration, resulting in nutritional insecurity and social injustice. This panorama reinforces the spread of diseases, violence, and the consequent destruction of biological diversity through the unbridled use of its natural resources.

The question is: why capitalism has not yet seen in environmental sustainability real sources of gain that justify the similarity with enterprises of extreme environmental impact? The answer turns out to be extremely simple: the bioeconomy needs to have in the intellectualization of society the scenario to become favorable. Currently, the culture disseminated by the new information channels, called “social networks”, advocates success in financial wealth and pleasure in immediacy (Desmurget, 2020). From a young age, young people have been suffering a kind of passive brainwashing, in which technology has been subliminally molding their character and weakening their intellectuality, making them intellectually fragile and without the capacity for real discernment. Today’s youth is no longer capable of constructive criticism on issues that are considered structural. They just live day to day, within an illusion of fragile and ephemeral happiness. This editorial does not intend to approach this subject in a playful way, risking being discredited by the most skeptical. On the other hand, it will strive to be based on tangible data.

The fact is that one cannot fight human nature, and among its main pillars are competitiveness and ambition. Trying to contain both characteristics would be simply a futile act, because human nature is the main guide. So, if you can’t fight it, why not use it as a tool to achieve our direct object: profit through sustainability?

Currently there are several possibilities in the bioeconomy branch that have the potential capacity to stand up to traditional income methods. We have an example in environmental sanitation. Tropical countries, being mostly of colonial origin, have tended to import sanitation methods from the invading countries. There is an issue not often discussed among the actors involved in the sanitation theme, which is the differences in climate and biodiversity of tropical and temperate environments. Temperate environments have a cold climate, lower primary productivity, and, therefore, less accumulation of organic matter, which, along with the human waste accumulated in water bodies, is called “sewage”. In tropical countries, however, these bodies of water naturally have a large primary production ratio, often exceeding the amount of sewage discharged into them (Silva and Esguícero, 2010).

On the other hand, tropical environments have greater biodiversity, enabling a greater capacity for self-depuration of the waste accumulated in aqueous environments. The solution would be only the rebalancing of these systems through the reintroduction of more sensitive autochthonous purifying microorganisms that, during unbridled occupation, no longer exist. The question is: wouldn't all the value added to sustainable rebalancing be a clear and consistent arm of the bioeconomy? The real question is: do we have enough intellectuality to understand and compare the gains from this new aspect? Are these initiatives the real development paths for tropical developing countries? What are the other economic potentialities that our tropical environment offers that can be capitalized on at real economic levels? Answer: only culture and education can generate these answers, and perhaps this is why they are so frowned upon by traditional Brazilian governance.

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