



Organization of American States (OAS)

MUNUC 33



TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAIR LETTER.....	3
HISTORY OF COMMITTEE.....	5
TOPIC A: IMPROVING THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE.....	6
Statement of the Problem.....	6
History of the Problem.....	13
Past Actions.....	18
Possible Solutions.....	23
Bloc Positions.....	26
Glossary.....	29
Bibliography.....	31
TOPIC B: THE ROLE OF ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE IN THE AGE OF CLIMATE CHANGE.....	34
Statement of the Problem.....	34
History of the Problem.....	41
Past Actions.....	45
Possible Solutions.....	51
Bloc Positions.....	56
Glossary.....	60
Bibliography.....	62

CHAIR LETTER

Dear Delegates,

My name is Veronica Gonzalez, and I'm honored to be your committee chair for the MUNUC 33 Organization of the American States! MUN has been a part of my life since my first years in high school, and now, as a second year at the University of Chicago, I have continued pursuing my passion for understanding the world around me. While my course load is very STEM-heavy (being a Neuroscience major on the Pre-Med track), I have always had several other interests, which have led me to pursue learning more about public health and racial health inequities. Of course, outside of my academic interests, I am an avid reader (my reading interests range from personality types to horror to social activism), a tutor for middle schoolers, a violin and guitar player/teacher, and a crafter and painter.

If there is anything I have learned from my personal experience, my knowledge of my family history, and my awareness of the world we are living in, it is that opening a dialogue around the issues we will be discussing in this conference is a crucial first step towards creating successful responses to them. These topics will at times seem heavy, especially considering the weight that these may carry in the lives of those affected by both gender-based violence and climate change, but I have faith that you will all be impressive in your individual approaches towards creating meaningful solutions. Just by taking on this opportunity, you are taking brave strides towards transforming this space into a better world for the generations to come.

I know first-hand what it's like preparing for such a demanding conference, which is why I urge each and every one of you to reach out to me with any questions or hesitations that you may have about the topic, the conference, and even about my experiences at UChicago or college in general. I want this experience to be as rewarding and transformative for you, so I invite you to make the most of this chance. Again, I'm thrilled to meet and work with you all soon during MUNUC 33!

Sincerely,

Veronica Gonzalez

Chair, OAS

HISTORY OF THE COMMITTEE

The Organization of the American States is not only one of the most reputable regional organizations, but it is also the oldest of these, as well. The organization has its roots in the mid-20th century, with the Charter of the OAS being officially signed in 1948.¹ If its title was not sufficient in highlighting the group's recognition of regional cooperation, its treaty and purpose further hints at this fact. The OAS is deeply committed to promoting cooperative action in the face of economic, social, and political issues that may be perceived as either domestic or regional.² Of course, this is done respecting each of the 35 members' sovereignty, but nevertheless, the organization has set a standard of upholding peace and security while working to eradicate some of the region's greatest issues (e.g. systemic poverty) in the hopes of allowing all member nations to develop successful democracies.³ Thus, it is no coincidence that OAS prides itself on surrounding its work around the following four main pillars: democracy, human rights, security, and development.⁴ For the inter-American system, the OAS has proven to be a successful mediator in disputes between member nations, indicating its commitment to peace, but it has also been successful in granting the most vulnerable populations, such as indigenous groups or women and children, a voice in these dialogues.⁵

¹ OAS. "OAS - Organization of American States: Democracy for Peace, Security, and Development." Text, August 1, 2009. http://www.oas.org/en/about/who_we_are.asp.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ OAS. "OAS - Organization of American States: What We Do." Text, August 1, 2009. http://www.oas.org/en/about/what_we_do.asp.

⁵ Ibid.

TOPIC A: IMPROVING THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Statement of the Problem

Introduction to the Problem

Often, it is the most vulnerable members of a population that must bear the most hardships. Within most societies, regardless of their domestic income level, women and young girls are being subjected to a violation of their basic human rights in a way that does not discriminate on age, income or race: **gender-based violence (GBV)**. The **Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women** provides a comprehensive definition for gender-based violence, including within its threshold any act committed in “public or private life” that will result in the “physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering” of a woman, which includes acts of coercion or other acts that deprive a woman of her liberty.⁶ To more fully elaborate, the United Nations **Special Rapporteurs on Violence Against Women (SRVAW)** have often detailed in their reports that this term evidently includes a variety of crimes. Such injustices include family violence (i.e. domestic violence, dowry-related violence, etc.), violence in the community, and violence that is instigated by the state (i.e. against indigenous groups, against refugees or IDPs, etc.)⁷. Notice that women experience both **intimate partner violence** and non-intimate partner violence. In the Americas, however, intimate partner violence is the most prevalent form of violence that women experience.⁸ These are a few of the specific cases that are covered under this umbrella term of gender-based violence.

It is most necessary to recognize that gender-based violence fits within the intersection of a public health and human rights crisis. As briefly mentioned before, the Americas, which include Latin American and Caribbean nations, are particularly hard-hit by this crisis. It is estimated by the World Health Organization (WHO) that about 1 in 3 women (ranging from the ages of 15 to 49) have already

⁶ “General Recommendations Made by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.” Un.org, 2018. <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/recomm.htm>.

⁷ “The United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, Its Causes and Consequences,” n.d. <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Women/15YearReviewofVAWMandate.pdf>.

⁸ Ibid.

experienced some form of violence.⁹ The reasons for the prevalence of these crimes are complex, but often attributed to embedded ideologies in these societies towards gender. The enforcement of gender stereotypes perpetuates the experiences of discrimination that women in these regions must face. In Latin America and the Caribbean, these stereotypes may even be promoted by strong religious beliefs.¹⁰ These embedded ideologies also contribute to the extent that these incidents are often either socially silenced or tolerated. Additionally, what is most alarming about the perpetuation of these ideologies is that violence against women poses a serious threat to not only the human rights of a woman, but also the well-being of women. A comprehensive global and regional analysis from the WHO on the effects of experiencing violence indicated that compared to women who have not experienced intimate partner violence, those who have will demonstrate higher rates of health problems and risk behaviors.¹¹ For example, the likelihood that these women will suffer from depression doubles if they have experienced partner violence.¹² These risk factors especially demonstrate that the nature of this issue is interrelated with public health. To add to this, the levels of inequality and poverty that women in these regions experience also place these women at a risk of experiencing violence.

In an effort to put pressure on the initiatives being taken to combat gender-based violence, the UN Member States have included addressing this topic within their 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDG 5 largely addresses gender equality, but specifically, the Target 5.2 aims to eliminate any form of violence against women in both the public and private spheres. The nature of gender-based violence in the home and in the community is gaining attention, and with that have come initiatives to eliminate its prevalence. However, there are still a variety of barriers, including at the level of effective data gathering, that must be addressed to fully eliminate this threat.

⁹ Bott, et al. "Intimate Partner Violence in the Americas: A Systematic Review and Reanalysis of National Prevalence Estimates." *Revista Panamericana de Salud Pública* 43 (March 20, 2019): 1. <https://doi.org/10.26633/rpsp.2019.26>.

¹⁰ "The State As a Catalyst for Violence Against Women." Amnesty.org, March 7, 2016. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amro1/3388/2016/en/>.

¹¹ "Global and Regional Estimates of Violence against Women: Prevalence and Health Effects of Intimate Partner Violence and Non-Partner Sexual Violence," n.d. https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/85239/9789241564625_eng.pdf?sequence=1.

¹² Ibid.



Forms of GBV

A brief definition of the term “gender-based violence” has already been given, but it is also necessary to expand on the many forms that this type of violence may take. To reiterate, there are three general forms of violence against women:

1. Violence in Intimate Spaces (between intimate partners or within families)
2. Violence in the Community
3. Violence that is instigated by the state

Firstly, within intimate spaces, there exists intimate partner violence (also referred to as **domestic violence**) and violence against young girls (children). Intimate partner violence stems from the enforcement of gender-related power dynamics, in which the perpetrator (oftentimes male) commits acts of violence against a woman in order to enforce their authority. Cross-national studies

in Latin America show that the majority of physical abuse against women comes from husbands.¹³ Nevertheless, physical violence from a partner often comes alongside other forms of violence, such as psychological violence, as well. The intimidation and fear that victims experience as a result leads to the overbearing control of their freedoms and rights, thus making it more difficult for them to escape these situations and seek protection. **Economic violence**, which occurs when a partner monitors and controls a woman's access to money, is also not uncommon in these situations, but evidence supporting this violence is scarce compared to the forms previously mentioned.

Often, countries that experience high rates of intimate partner violence will most likely also experience high levels of violence against young women/girls. The frequency of one is correlated with the frequency of the other. The violence experienced by children includes labor and other forms of exploitation. Approximately 19.7 million adolescents (both male and female) between the ages of 5 and 17 in this region are economically active.¹⁴ Moreover, the International Program on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPECL) found that around 12.6 million of those children in the labor force are performing tasks that are considered forms of economic exploitation and violence.¹⁵ In the private sphere, social tolerance for violence against children leads to high rates of them becoming victims of other forms of violence or exploitation. Young women (ages 15 to 19 years old) also experience alarming levels of emotional violence, yet the numbers surrounding these incidents are not complete due to their subtlety and the difficulty young women face in seeking help against these behaviors.¹⁶

Next, within the community, women may also experience an abundance of violence in public spaces and in the workplace. Women are victims of violence outside of their homes, as they experience violence on public transport, in schools, hospitals, and other areas of the public sphere. It is undeniable that these incidents arise in part from a lack of perspective from women when it comes to urban planning, thus leading to a severe amount of cases in which women are deprived of their rights to autonomy, various freedoms, and security within public institutions.¹⁷ In some cases, the

¹³ "No More!," 2007. https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/2863/1/S2007616_en.pdf.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

perpetuation of social stereotypes around gender makes it difficult to even address this issue as incidents are often covered up or victims are dismissed and even blamed for such behavior. Trafficking is also prevalent in the region, and it consists of the commercialization of women's bodies as well as translocation of these women from their country of origin.¹⁸ This is not only illegal, but it blatantly violates the physical and emotional integrity of a woman.

Violence against women may also be instigated and upheld by the state in the form of **institutional violence**, and violence against indigenous women and/or women of afro-descendance. In a general sense, institutional violence refers to the ways in which states may have neglected to fight gender-based violence. A lack of sufficient economic and human resources prevent nations from being able to successfully uphold infrastructures that are mentioned in plans and programs to combat violence. For example, a study of Chile's infrastructure demonstrated its lack of specialized and efficient health care resources for victims of violence.¹⁹ A similar pattern is evident in other countries within the region, all of which also demonstrate administrative failures when it comes to investigation and legal processing of cases of violence. Negligence can also be considered a state-propagated crime, as indigenous communities experience extreme levels of social inequality (lack of access to political and economic resources), and indigenous women are 2.5 times more likely to suffer from violence compared to the rest of the national population.²⁰ These women will experience significant difficulties when it comes to seeking help.

Direct forms of violence perpetrated by state employees include those which alarmingly affect migrant women while in custody. Migrant women are especially vulnerable to experiencing various forms of violence due to their lack of documentation and, for some, their inability to speak the predominant language of their destination. These situations place migrant women in a position to also fall victim to prostitution and situations of exploitative labor. Finally, the state may also instigate violence against women in the form of **femicide**. Marcela Lagarde, a Mexican academic and notable feminist activist, defines femicide as occurring when the "silence, omission, negligence and the collusion of authorities in charge of preventing and eradicating these occur together in a criminal

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

manner.”²¹ In other words, femicide occurs when the state fails to guarantee a woman’s security, whether in her public or private spheres. Lagarde emphasizes the reason that femicide arises so often in a society is the complete exclusion of women and girls from the social sphere, as well as upholding ideologies of male supremacy.²²

Risk Factors for Victims and Perpetrators of Gender-Based Violence

Overall, women living in societies that experience high levels of gender inequality, with governments who neglect the healthcare and social services provided for women, are at risk to the dangers of gender-based violence. As mentioned previously, social and cultural attitudes towards women play a significant role in predicting the prevalence of violence.

Although it is evident that women of all classes of income, education level, and ages may experience violence, there are certain characteristics that may predispose them to a greater likelihood of exposure. For example, at the individual level, women who suffer from abuse during their pregnancy will most likely also be victims of intimate partner violence.²³ At the interpersonal level, women who have experienced abuse from a previous partner, as well as women with children who are not biologically related to their current partner, are also more likely to experience violence.²⁴ On the other hand, there are also risk-factors for predicting whether an individual may become a perpetrator of gender-based violence. Unemployment is a significant economic indicator of a possible perpetrator.²⁵ Also, excessive alcohol consumption and illicit drug use as well as gun ownership may also signify a perpetrator.²⁶ Note that none of these circumstances *necessarily* imply gender-based violence is occurring, but they are considered risk factors nonetheless. In addition to these, previous incidences of violence, in any form, against a woman are predictors of a perpetrator of violence.²⁷

²¹ Lagarde, Marcela, and De Los Ríos. “¿A Qué Llamamos Femicidio?,” n.d. https://xenero.webs.uvigo.es/profesorado/marcela_lagarde/femicidio.pdf.

²² Ibid.

²³ “Understanding and Addressing Violence against Women Femicide,” n.d. https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/77421/WHO_RHR_12.38_eng.pdf.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

Current Situation

It is clear that all regions of the Americas, to varying degrees, demonstrate significant levels of gender-based violence. Women are suffering at alarming rates and states are failing in their job to protect women's rights to safety, security, access to healthcare, and more. This is why experts often may term violence as an "epidemic" itself, because it is both a public health and human rights problem that must be addressed. The Americas experience the second highest prevalence rates of intimate partner violence, which is estimated at around 29.8%.²⁸ Governments in this region must do better to do all that is in their power to eradicate violence. With that being said, the perpetration of violence can be prevented within a society, though it will take the cooperation of multiple sectors and regions in order to protect women's well-being.



²⁸ "Global and Regional Estimates of Violence against Women: Prevalence and Health Effects of Intimate Partner Violence and Non-Partner Sexual Violence," n.d.
https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/85239/9789241564625_eng.pdf?sequence=1.

History of the Problem

Introduction: Regional and National Legislation Against Gender-Based Violence Situation

As of 2018, approximately 32 of the 33 countries (97%) within the Latin American and Caribbean region had ratified the most fundamental regional agreement to address gender-based violence, which is the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women, or better known as the Belém do Pará Convention.²⁹ This marked the beginning of a shift towards granting states the responsibility of combating violence, as it interfered with basic human rights, but this was only the beginning of eliminating violence against women. At the national level, much work remains, and the OAS' effort in researching, as well as supporting domestic changes, is of vital importance. Over time, countries in the Latin American and Caribbean region have steadily adopted legislation that targets gender-based violence in response to international agreements (such as CEDAW and the Belém do Pará Convention).

Before discussing these efforts though, it is important to recognize the distinction between different types of legislation that is being implemented at the regional level. This legislation is multi-tiered. Base-level laws are referred to as “**first generation**” legislation. These are surface-level protections which only address violence in the intimate/private spheres.³⁰ As of 2018, 21 countries in this region (64%) have solely enacted “first-generation” legislation, which protects women from interfamilial and domestic violence.³¹ Nevertheless, some countries in this region have begun integrating what is known as “**second generation**” legislation. These laws do more than “first generation” laws since they address violence in its diverse forms, as well as violence that may occur at the private, public, and even institutional levels (either from the action or inaction of the state).³² By enacting these types of laws, states become cognizant of the intersectionality of gender-based violence, which means that they are aware that the complexity of this issue calls for an increasingly complex and

²⁹ Essayag, Sebastián. 2018. “Políticas Públicas y Planes Nacionales de Violencia Contra Las Mujeres En América Latina y El Caribe ; Public Policies and National Plans on Violence against Women in Latin America and the Caribbean.” doi:10.5354/0719-6296.2018.51740.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

well-coordinated response at the national level. As of 2018, 13 of the 33 countries in this region (36%) have enacted such laws.³³

Even with such measures, the Belém do Pará Convention recognized that enacting legislation is not enough to fully abolish gender-based violence. States must do everything in their power, as soon as possible, to prevent, sanction, and eradicate all forms of violence against women. Following are case studies of countries at varying stages of achieving this goal, but each state demonstrates some learned lessons and strategies to combat violence as a result of their individual socio-political histories.

Case Study: Mexico

In 2016, at least seven women were victims of gender-related killings every day in Mexico.³⁴ Several regions of the country lack enforcement of laws, meaning that perpetrators of violent crimes such as femicide can act with impunity.³⁵ One of the country's advocacy and litigation groups for cases of femicide has somewhat improved the situation by increasing the accountability of perpetrators, however, this group reported that within the first six months of 2017, 800 women were murdered across Mexico but only 49% of the murders were investigated as femicide.³⁶ All this goes to show that Mexico's previous legislation, most prominently its General Law of Access for Women to a Life Free of Violence (GLAWLFV) from 2007, has failed to be enforced at the institutional level.³⁷

In recent years, Mexico has continued to experience one of the most publicized and alarming cases of institutional violence against women and girls. Mexican Attorney General Alejandro Gertz Manero

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ "The Long Road to Justice, Prosecuting Femicide in Mexico." UN Women, 2020.
<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/11/feature-prosecuting-femicide-in-mexico>.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ "Femicide and Impunity in Mexico: A Context of Structural and Generalized Violence Report Presented before the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, CEDAW Católicas Por El Derecho a Decidir (CDD) Comisión Mexicana de Defensa y Promoción de Los Derechos Humanos (CMDPDH) As Part of the Observatorio Ciudadano Nacional Del Femicidio (OCNF)," 2012.
https://www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/1085985/1930_1343058124_cddandcmdpdh-forthesession-mexico-cedaw52.pdf.

recently reported a 137% increase in femicide cases in their country within the past five years.³⁸ Even then, a number of factors, including the lack of a standardized reporting mechanism and social pressures against women, indicate that the actual rates of femicide may be higher. Human rights activists and other civilians have not gone without noticing this alarming trend, evident by the eruption of several protests within the past year against the government's inaction. Protests against the national government arose in August, October, and January of 2019, and again in February 2020 when women and allies went on strike as a result of government inaction over the gruesome murder of a young woman by the name of Ingrid Escamilla.³⁹ This widespread outcry against the Mexican administration is the result of a social atmosphere that is rooted in problematic beliefs on gender, including the romanticization of intimate partner violence (in media, for example).⁴⁰

A significant instigator of this nation-wide criticism towards the government arises from the disconnect between Mexico's progressive international rhetoric, such as their efforts in the United Nations, and their efforts to combat these issues at the domestic level. While several civil and international groups have urged the current administration to take action, the fact remains that this state must take this issue more seriously, which means initiating more comprehensive and widespread efforts to eradicate all forms of violence against women.

Case Study: Guatemala

Guatemala is a significant example of the discrepancy between enacting national legislation, and effectively implementing them. In 2008, Guatemala ratified the Law Against Femicide and Other Forms of Violence Against Women. Since then, violence rates against women have not decreased and the country is still ranked with having among the highest rates of violence and femicide in its region.⁴¹

³⁸ Carmen Morán Breña. "Un Brutal Femicidio En México Cuestiona La Filtración de Imágenes Que Hace La Policía." EL PAÍS. Ediciones EL PAÍS S.L., February 12, 2020.

https://elpais.com/sociedad/2020/02/11/actualidad/1581458921_638096.html?rel=str_articulo#1582057787912.

³⁹ "In Mexico, Women Go on Strike Nationwide to Protest Violence." The New York Times, March 9, 2020.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/09/world/americas/mexico-women-strike-protest.html>.

⁴⁰ "Mexican Government Paralyzed in the Face of a Wave of Femicides | Human Rights Watch." Human Rights Watch, March 3, 2020. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/03/03/mexican-government-paralyzed-face-wave-femicides#>.

⁴¹ "Mayan Women In Rural Guatemala Seek Justice to End Violence." UN Women | UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, 2019. <https://unf.unwomen.org/en/news-and-events/stories/2018/03/mayan-women-in-rural-guatemala-seek-justice-to-end-violence>.

Institutional inequality and ingrained discriminatory social ideologies prevent women, especially indigenous women and those living in rural areas, from receiving equal treatment on a personal and public level. 43% of Guatemala's total population is composed of indigenous groups.⁴² Even then, these women experience a substantial amount of social exclusion, meaning that they have limited access to educational, financial, and medical services compared to their non-indigenous counterparts.⁴³ This leaves indigenous and rural-living women most vulnerable to violence, which is why several of Guatemala's initiatives against violence have focused on the empowerment of indigenous women.

One such program is the Women's Justice Initiative (WJI), which was developed in 2016 with the funding from the UN Trust Fund and aims to prevent violence against women. The WJI brings significant support to indigenous women in several rural areas in the form of legal literacy courses as well as legal outreach, all of which are offered in these women's native language⁴⁴. Essentially, the WJI grants these women the tools and resources that they have a right to, but were previously deprived of due to geographic, economic, and even language barriers. This allows survivors of gender-based violence to reach out for support and seek justice for the crimes committed against them. In just the first year that the program was enacted, the WJI saw an increase of 145% in the number of women filing complaints against their perpetrators.⁴⁵ Programs such as the WJI are transformative for combating violence in rural communities.

Case Study: Brazil

A study from 2015 found that there were approximately four deaths of women per day in Brazil⁴⁶, which speaks to the level of violence that exists in Brazil. These alarming rates of female deaths, most resulting from violence, were partly perpetuated by the adherence of Brazil to insensitive

⁴² "Guatemala." UN Women | Americas and the Caribbean, 2015. <https://lac.unwomen.org/en/donde-estamos/guatemala>.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ "About Us | Women's Justice Initiative." Womens-justice.org, 2020. <http://womens-justice.org/who-we-are/about-us/>.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ De Avila, Thiago Pierobom. "Facing Domestic Violence Against Women in Brazil: Advances and Challenges." *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy* 7, no. 1 (March 1, 2018): 15. <https://doi.org/10.5204/ijcjsd.v7i1.397>.

understandings of gender in the early part of the 21st century. Even though Brazil has ratified both CEDAW and the Belém do Pará Convention, Brazil failed to implement the aims of these documents. In 2001, the OAS convicted Brazil for its failures to implement efforts to decrease intimate partner violence.⁴⁷ The conviction led to the development of a transformative piece of legislation called the Maria da Penha Law (MPL),⁴⁸ and this completely shifted discussions around gender equality and violence. MPL recognized the need for intersectional and coordinated policies (including the fields of criminal justice, law enforcement, social assistance, education, finance, and housing) to effectively decrease the levels of violence that were surging in the country. Social and educational campaigns for the public were also introduced as a part of this legislation. Most notably, the law enacted what is known as an **intervention order**, which must legally grant victims immediate assistance in getting them out of their residence, suspending any access to the victim and their children, along with other measures to support the victim as they request it. The MPL is a comprehensive and effective legislative effort that lays groundwork for developing additional programs which aim to eradicate violence against women.

Conclusions

Latin American and Caribbean countries share a history of upholding certain beliefs about gender that are now starting to be questioned, especially if these beliefs are perpetuating instances of violence or making certain women more vulnerable to violence. However, each of these case studies indicate that even at the national level, it is not enough for the state to enact legislation that aims to decrease the effects of holding these beliefs. In most cases, this action marks only the beginning of granting women the right to liberty and life. Historically, several countries in this region have failed to enforce and implement efforts beyond these laws. From here, it is necessary that each state not only evaluate its nation-wide efforts in combating violence to improve their effectiveness, but states must also begin to enact efforts that shift away from upholding harmful ideologies about gender.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

Past Actions

Introduction

The number of regional or international agreements and actions that have been passed to eliminate the different forms of GBV is expansive, and while it cannot all be discussed in this section, a number of the most prominent documents will be summarized. As it will become evident, most of these documents build off of one another, so each agreement provided a distinct advancement in the effort to eliminate violence. However, it is important to remember that these documents are completely foundational. Keep in mind that legislation is not at all the only form of action that must be taken to eradicate violence.

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

The UN General Assembly adopted the **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)** in 1979, making it one of the first international treaties (it has been ratified by over one hundred nations) to delineate the need to grant and protect the human rights of women.⁴⁹ The document gives definitions for what is meant by granting 'equality' as well as what is considered 'discrimination.' CEDAW is concerned with discussing the civil and legal rights of women, as well as touching upon the effect of culture on gender relations.⁵⁰ However, it was not until the passage of CEDAW General Recommendation 19 in 1992 that this document addressed the issue of gender-based violence and recognized GBV as a form of discrimination, too.⁵¹ This allowed CEDAW to set the backdrop for future provisions that begin to understand GBV as a human rights issue.

⁴⁹ "OHCHR | Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women." Ohchr.org, 2019. <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CEDAW.aspx>.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ "The United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, Its Causes and Consequences," 2009. <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Women/15YearReviewofVAWMandate.pdf>.

Vienna Declaration and Program of Action

While CEDAW recognized that GBV is a form of discrimination against women, the **Vienna Declaration and Program of Action**, which resulted from the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights, explicitly noted that GBV is a complete violation of the human rights of women.⁵² The Vienna Declaration recognized the need to eliminate violence in both the private and public spheres, and it provided initial guidance in how to do so.⁵³ The document also spurred the use of new and existing aspects of the UN framework to guarantee these rights.⁵⁴

Declaration of the Elimination of Violence Against Women (DEVAW)

Also in 1993, the UN General Assembly adopted an essential and powerful resolution known as the **Declaration of the Elimination of Violence Against Women (DEVAW)**.⁵⁵ This document provides one of the most comprehensive definitions of GBV.⁵⁶ DEVAW also discusses the role of national bodies along with the United Nations in combating violence. The national preventative measures that DEVAW highlights include improving efforts to investigate incidents of violence against women, developing proper infrastructure (legal, administrative, cultural) to eliminate violence, as well as implementing trainings for law enforcement to be prepared to deal with these cases of GBV.⁵⁷

Establishment of the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women (SRVAW)

Within the United Nations, it was not until the early 1990s that agreements were being reached that explicitly addressed the human rights aspects of gender-based violence. At this point in time, the legislation that addressed this complex issue (i.e. CEDAW and the Vienna Declaration) was in the early stages of development, so it was necessary to appoint a position that aided in this endeavor. Guided by the recommendations of the Vienna Declaration, the **Commission of Human Rights (CHR)** passed a mandate in March of 1994 that directly aimed to integrate the human rights

⁵² "The United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, Its Causes and Consequences," 2009. <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Women/15YearReviewofVAWMandate.pdf>.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ "DEVAW." Stopvaw.org, 2018. <https://www.stopvaw.org/devaw>.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

mechanisms of the United Nations with those of women's rights so that the causes and results of GBV could be properly addressed.⁵⁸ With the passage of this mandate came the appointment of the **Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women (SRVAW)**, which is a demanding role that is designated to a single individual. This role is acquired by appointment. This individual handles the responsibility of consulting and working with national governments, UN bodies, NGOs, and researchers to eliminate GBV.⁵⁹ In addition to this, the rapporteur conducts and produces a variety of reports at both the national and international level to address any concerns or trends they find regarding the actions (or inactions) being performed to address this issue.⁶⁰

Belém do Pará Convention

All of the previous comprehensive agreements recognized that GBV is an outright violation of the rights of its victims, but it was not until the passage of the 1994 **Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women, or Convention of Belém do Pará**, was passed that acts of violence against women were criminalized.⁶¹ It is a legally binding treaty, and only one other treaty like it exists in the world. Out of all member nations of the Organization of the American States, all but two countries (United States of America and Canada) are **states parties**, meaning that within these two outlier nations, the convention is not yet legally binding.⁶² Further, this indicates that because the U.S. and Canada have not ratified this convention, they are not legally obligated to criminalize GBV, though they have both already done so through other measures. This convention has been especially essential in providing nations of the Americas with guidelines on how to improve the rights of all genders, but it has also aided in simply raising awareness on the severity of violence on the basis of gender.

⁵⁸ "The United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, Its Causes and Consequences," 2009. <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Women/15YearReviewofVAWMandate.pdf>.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Richard. "Belém Do Pará Convention." Tackling Violence against Women, May 4, 2016. <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/vaw/regional/the-americas/convention-belem-do-para/>.

⁶² Ibid.

National Actions

In the past, countries have implemented awareness campaigns to make the public aware of the dangers of gender-based violence. For example, under the recommendation of CEDAW, Ecuador's "National Plan to Eradicate Gender-Based Violence against Women and Girls" was established under their government's National Wellbeing Plan.⁶³ As part of this national initiative, Ecuador launched a variety of public campaigns to address violence, one of them being called "Reacciona Ecuador, el **Machismo** es Violencia" ("React Ecuador, sexism is violence").⁶⁴ Guatemala was able to implement a similar initiative, but with the additional step of translating all campaign materials into indigenous languages to take into account the multi-ethnic makeup of its land.⁶⁵ Similarly, and more recently, the Department of Justice and Equality of Ireland (though this nation is not a member of the OAS) has found success in launching a nationwide television, radio, and social media campaign that aims to make victims of violence aware of the support systems available to them.⁶⁶ This campaign has found success because it directly collaborates with front-line services for victims and it is an example of an initiative that supports victims in their access to care.

On another note, reforms in national justice systems have also improved dealings with cases of gender-based violence. Ecuador's Justice System has implemented organs and protocols that specifically deal with cases of violence against women.⁶⁷ The system includes management of and expert evaluation of such cases throughout the nation, and it even accounts for what must be done in the case that a district has not yet employed such a unit. Guatemala has introduced a similar expansive framework to support access to a justice system that has been adequately sensitized for crimes of violence. Several departments around the state have implemented two different courts to hear trials on such crimes, the **Criminal Courts of First Instance for Crimes of Femicide and other**

⁶³ Effective Law and Policy on Gender Equality and Protection from Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Disasters Ecuador Country Case Study," 2017. https://redcross.eu/uploads/files/Positions/Humanitarian%20aid/SGBV%20in%20disasters/Gender%20SGBV%20Report_%20Ecuador%20HR.pdf.

⁶⁴ "A/HRC/WG.6/13/ECU/1 - E - A/HRC/WG.6/13/ECU/1." Undocs.org, 2020. <https://undocs.org/A/HRC/WG.6/13/ECU/1>.

⁶⁵ Essayag, Sebastián. 2018. "Políticas Públicas y Planes Nacionales de Violencia Contra Las Mujeres En América Latina y El Caribe ; Public Policies and National Plans on Violence against Women in Latin America and the Caribbean." doi:10.5354/0719-6296.2018.51740.

⁶⁶ "Gov.ie - Department of Justice and Equality Launches Campaign Reaching out to Victims of Domestic Abuse." gov.ie, 2020.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

forms of Violence against Women and the Criminal Court for Femicide Offenses and other forms of Violence against Women.⁶⁸ Its **Institute of Public Defense (IDPP)** has worked to raise awareness on such cases of violence and has provided free legal assistance in over 50,000 cases, all of which were ensured to be culturally sensitive.⁶⁹ This means that all personnel on the case were trained to deal with individuals belonging to certain ethnic groups (such as indigenous groups), and all individuals who sought it were also granted interpreters to ensure their understanding of procedures.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

Possible Solutions

Introduction

With the guidance of international doctrines and recommendations, nations within Latin America and the Caribbean must work to implement solutions that are comprehensive and intersectional. There currently exist solutions that have seen success in some countries. These actions are not only rooted in the enforcement of legislation, but also in actions from the state that demonstrate that they are doing everything in their power to combat gender-based violence. The first three of the following sections directly address a few of the central themes around violence intervention strategies, which are named in parenthesis.

Awareness Campaigns (Prevention)

Gender-based violence, and even gender inequality, is rooted in certain prejudices and stereotypes on gender. Such beliefs especially perpetuate certain problematic gender roles in Latin American and Caribbean nations, thus part of the effort to eliminate GBV must aim to also minimize and even combat upholding these beliefs. Changes in socio-cultural patterns can be influenced by public awareness, which is why several entities have urged nations to adopt awareness campaigns in the fight against GBV. Awareness campaigns are a leading example of how the public must be made aware on the fact that violence against women and girls is a direct violation of their human rights.

Improving Access to Care (Care)

Several of the obstacles that women and girls must face in order for them to achieve equal rights are related to violations and abuses within the nation's healthcare system. Often, a victim of violence struggles to seek out help due to corruption within a nation's health infrastructure. One measure to combat abuses within such health-care systems is improved access to patient confidentiality.⁷⁰ Without this protective measure, women may be afraid to reach out for the care they require, which further perpetuates institutional violence (violence at the hands of the state). Also, it is essential that

⁷⁰ "The State As a Catalyst for Violence Against Women." Amnesty.org, March 7, 2016. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amro1/3388/2016/en/>.

nations equip their health-care systems with professionals and personnel that can effectively support victims of any form of violence.⁷¹ This staff should receive sensitizing training in order to fulfill this measure.



Law Enforcement and Legislative Protections (Punishment)

In terms of legislative strategies to address GBV, some of the most prominent solutions that should be pushed within each nation include: increasing the severity of punishment against perpetrators of GBV, improving legal protections for survivors, and implementing specialized units in justice and law enforcement (police) that are trained to deal with violent crimes.⁷² It is recommended that for legal procedures, nations work to provide victims/survivors of violence with free legal aid, free court support and guidance, as well as free access to any necessary translation and interpretation services needed for those who may experience a language barrier in achieving justice.⁷³

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Essayag, Sebastián. 2018. "Políticas Públicas y Planes Nacionales de Violencia Contra Las Mujeres En América Latina y El Caribe ; Public Policies and National Plans on Violence against Women in Latin America and the Caribbean." doi:10.5354/0719-6296.2018.51740.

⁷³ Esa, St. "Handbook for Legislation on Violence against Women Asdf Department of Economic and Social Affairs Division for the Advancement of Women," n.d. <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw/handbook/Handbook%20for%20legislation%20on%20violence%20against%20women.pdf>.

Improving Research on GBV

Besides the solutions that have been previously presented, there are various other possible solutions that can be developed and implemented. These include the need to improve the methods of research that are used to understand the scope of gender-based violence and even to understand the effectiveness of other solutions. For one, it is necessary to improve cross-cultural methods of measuring women's understanding on different forms of violence.⁷⁴ Surveys on this topic must be more comprehensive by including more than one question that addresses the lifetime prevalence of violence.⁷⁵ This would help create more consistent results because it would be easier to determine the different understandings of certain terms. Even beyond this, however, is that there is a necessity to research the various *risk factors* that help predict both perpetrators and victims of GBV.⁷⁶ This research must go beyond the individual level, and must detail risk factors at a community and even institutional level for both the perpetrators and victims.

⁷⁴ "IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN: A Comparative Analysis of Population-Based Data from 12 Countries," n.d. <https://www.paho.org/hq/dmdocuments/2014/Violence1.24-WEB-25-febrero-2014.pdf>.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

Bloc Positions

The severity and causes of GBV varies among the Member States of the OAS. Nevertheless, all but one Member State of the OAS adopted the Belém do Pará Convention, which calls on these states to adopt and implement, by all possible means, plans to prevent, punish and eradicate GBV. Nations therefore have the responsibility of aligning their actions with such international agreements in order to maintain consistency in their policies. While in recent years, there have been improvements on a country-by-country basis to address this issue, there is much work left to be done. There are a variety of approaches that countries are taking to combat this problem.

Countries Solely Reliant on First-Generation Laws

Countries in the Latin American and Caribbean have generally focused greatly on passing laws that protect women in the private (intimate and domestic) sphere. Recall that earlier, these laws were called first-generation laws. While such laws are not detrimental to a nation, it is important for countries to move beyond such legislation and towards implementing laws that protect women from all forms of violence, including in the public sphere. Currently, 73% of the nations in the Latin American and Caribbean region rely exclusively on these first-generation laws.⁷⁷ This makes up a total of 24 out of the 33 countries in this region who rely solely on this type of legislation, some of which are the following countries: Brazil, Costa Rica, Chile, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Haiti, Jamaica, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay.⁷⁸ All of the member states of the Caribbean subregion (Antigua & Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent & the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad & Tobago) are also reliant solely on first generation laws, though they have made promises to expand protective measures for victims of sexual violence.⁷⁹ In regards to legislation-making, these countries must focus on becoming more consistent with the Belém do Pará Convention by passing laws that take into consideration the diverse forms of violence within the private and public spheres that women may experience.

⁷⁷ Essayag, Sebastián. "From Commitment to Action: Policies to End Violence Against Women in Latin America and the Caribbean. Regional Analysis Document." 2017.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

Countries with Second-Generation Laws

In line with the provisions of the Belém do Pará Convention, a number of the countries in this region have pushed to implement more comprehensive legislation to protect women from violence in its various forms. Recall that these laws are referred to as second-generation laws. In the Latin American and Caribbean region, 27% of them have pushed for and adopted second-generation legislation.⁸⁰ These countries include Mexico, Argentina, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Bolivia, and Panama.⁸¹ The United States and Canada, though not a part of the Latin American and Caribbean region, have also implemented second-generation laws. These countries should focus on boasting the effectiveness of these efforts by working to be transparent about research surrounding this legislation as well as continuing to regulate these second-generation laws.

Criminalizing Femicide

In the same way that first and second-generation laws protect women against violence, Member States of the OAS must make it a priority to similarly protect women by criminalizing femicide. As of 2016, 15 countries (Brazil, Chile, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Dominican Republic and Venezuela) have passed legislation that criminalized femicide.⁸² Argentina has also legally criminalized any homicide that is committed on the basis of gender.⁸³ These nations must push to emphasize that national plans must include aims to criminalize femicide to those countries who have not yet done so.

National Action Plans

Each Member State in the OAS has developed its own national action plan, which include specific aims to adopt certain policies and actions that combat and eradicate GBV. These action plans are

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

carefully planned and developed on a country-by-country basis, thus, each state may have a unique approach to their plans. The focus within these plans can be considered in five different categories.

First, 15 of the 33 countries in the Latin American and Caribbean region (Haiti, Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Paraguay and Nicaragua) currently have specific and comprehensive national action plans, and some may be in the process of updating these.⁸⁴ These plans broadly address any form of violence and promote inter-institutional coordination to include a variety of strategies and measurable goals to analyze progress. Guyana and Panama have national action plans that focus mainly on addressing domestic violence.⁸⁵ Countries such as Bahamas, Jamaica, Grenada, Belize, and Uruguay have developed national action plans that focus on gender-based violence, but not necessarily domestic violence.⁸⁶ Countries such as Cuba, Bolivia, Venezuela and Barbados are more focused on promoting and implementing plans that address gender equity and equality.⁸⁷ Trinidad & Tobago and St. Lucia do not currently have a national action plan to address violence.⁸⁸

Education

One key aspect to preventing violence on the basis of gender is to create a society that deeply educates on gender. While this is a more long-term solution, several countries on a global level have benefitted from designing education systems that undo patriarchal beliefs and stereotypes.⁸⁹ Instead, these countries have transformed their public curriculums to promote messages that are free of sexist or discriminatory ideas while teaching material that improves awareness on violence against women. In addition to this, countries such as Honduras, Guatemala, and Paraguay, which have a large population of indigenous groups, should seek to include the plights of indigenous women and girls against violence within these educational messages.⁹⁰ This support and inclusion can take the form of promoting translation of materials into indigenous languages.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

Glossary

Commission of Human Rights (CHR): A U.N. body whose role was to consider and make recommendations on issues pertaining to human rights, although it became the Human Rights Council in 2006

Convention of Belém do Pará or Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women: A legally binding international treaty which criminalized acts of violence against women

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW): An international treaty ratified by over a hundred nations that discussed the civil and legal rights of women

Declaration of the Elimination of Violence Against Women (DEVAW): an internationally accepted document which provides comprehensive definitions of gender-based violence and discusses the role of national bodies along with the United Nations in combating violence

Domestic violence: Violence or abuse in a domestic setting (within a home); interchangeable with *intimate partner violence*

Economic violence: Occurs when a partner monitors and controls the other partners access to money

Femicide: The murder of a girl or woman, usually by a person of different gender or by an institution

“First generation” legislation: Surface-level protections which only address violence in the intimate/private spheres

Gender-based violence (GBV): Intentional violence against an individual solely based on their gender identity

Institutional violence: Violence that results from the actions or inaction of the state

Intervention order: An order that must legally grant victims immediate assistance in getting them out of their residence

Intimate partner violence: A form of domestic violence in a verbal, mental, or physical form that is committed by a former or current partner against the other partner

Machismo: A sociocultural term in Hispanic culture that usually refers to a set of beliefs in male-dominance (a form of sexism)

“Second generation” legislation: Laws that do more than “first generation” laws since they address violence that may occur at the private, public, and even institutional levels

States parties: A country or party which adheres to a certain convention

U.N. Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women (SRVAW): A role assigned to a single individual with the responsibilities of consulting and working with national governments, UN bodies, NGOs, and researchers to eliminate GBV

Vienna Declaration and Program of Action: A declaration that resulted from the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights which recognized the need to eliminate violence in both the private and public spheres

Bibliography

"A/HRC/WG.6/13/ECU/1 - E - A/HRC/WG.6/13/ECU/1." Accessed September 7, 2020. <https://undocs.org/A/HRC/WG.6/13/ECU/1>.

Bott, Sarah, Alessandra Guedes, Ana P. Ruiz-Celis, and Jennifer Adams Mendoza. "Intimate Partner Violence in the Americas: A Systematic Review and Reanalysis of National Prevalence Estimates." *Revista Panamericana De Salud Publica = Pan American Journal of Public Health* 43 (2019): e26. <https://doi.org/10.26633/RPSP.2019.26>.

"Department of Justice and Equality Launches Campaign Reaching out to Victims of Domestic Abuse." Accessed September 7, 2020. <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/8ee32e-department-of-justice-and-equality-launches-campaign-reaching-out-to/>.

"DEVAW." Accessed September 7, 2020. <https://www.stopvaw.org/devaw>.

Essayag, Sebastián. "Políticas públicas y planes nacionales de violencia contra las mujeres en América Latina y el Caribe." *Revista Estudios de Políticas Públicas; Vol. 4 Núm. 2 (2018): julio - noviembre 2018; 110-127*, November 30, 2018. <http://revistaschilenas.uchile.cl/handle/2250/33706>.

"Facing Domestic Violence Against Women in Brazil: Advances and Challenges | International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy." Accessed September 7, 2020. <https://www.crimejusticejournal.com/article/view/891>.

"Femicide and Impunity in Mexico: A Context of structural and Generalized Violence." *CEDAW*, July 7, 2012. https://www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/1085985/1930_1343058124_cddandcmdpdh-forthesession-mexico-cedaw52.pdf.

"General Recommendations Made by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women." Accessed September 7, 2020. <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/recomm.htm>.

Human Rights Watch. "Mexican Government Paralyzed in the Face of a Wave of Femicides," March 3, 2020. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/03/03/mexican-government-paralyzed-face-wave-femicides>.

"In Mexico, Women Go on Strike Nationwide to Protest Violence - The New York Times." Accessed September 7, 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/09/world/americas/mexico-women-strike-protest.html>.

"Ingrid Escamilla: Un Brutal Femicidio En México Cuestiona La Filtración de Imágenes Que Hace La Policía | Sociedad | EL PAÍS." Accessed September 7, 2020. https://elpais.com/sociedad/2020/02/11/actualidad/1581458921_638096.html.

- Lagarde, Marcela, and de los Rios. "¿A Qué Llamamos Femicidio?," 2005. https://xenero.webs.uvigo.es/profesorado/marcela_lagarde/femicidio.pdf.
- "No More!," 2007. https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/2863/1/S2007616_en.pdf.
- "OHCHR | Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women." Accessed September 7, 2020. <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CEDAW.aspx>.
- Organización Panamericana de la Salud. "Violence Against Women in Latin America and the Caribbean: A Comparative Analysis of Population-Based Data from 12 Countries," 2012. <https://www.paho.org/hq/dmdocuments/2014/Violence1.24-WEB-25-febrero-2014.pdf>.
- Organization, World Health. *Global and Regional Estimates of Violence against Women: Prevalence and Health Effects of Intimate Partner Violence and Non-Partner Sexual Violence*. World Health Organization, 2013. <https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/85239>.
- ReliefWeb. "Effective Law and Policy on Gender Equality and Protection from Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Disasters – Ecuador Country Case Study - Ecuador." Accessed September 7, 2020. <https://reliefweb.int/report/ecuador/effective-law-and-policy-gender-equality-and-protection-sexual-and-gender-based>.
- Richard. "Belém Do Pará Convention." *Tackling Violence against Women*, May 4, 2016. <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/vaw/regional/the-americas/convention-belem-do-para/>.
- UN Women | Americas and the Caribbean. "Guatemala." Accessed September 7, 2020. <https://lac.unwomen.org/en/donde-estamos/guatemala>.
- UN Women. "Handbook for Legislation on Violence against Women." Accessed September 7, 2020. <https://www.unwomen.org/digital-library/publications/2012/12/handbook-for-legislation-on-violence-against-women>.
- UN Women. "The Long Road to Justice, Prosecuting Femicide in Mexico." Accessed September 7, 2020. <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/11/feature-prosecuting-femicide-in-mexico>.
- UN Women | UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women. "MAYAN WOMEN IN RURAL GUATEMALA SEEK JUSTICE TO END VIOLENCE." Accessed September 7, 2020. <https://unwomens.org/en/news-and-events/stories/2018/03/mayan-women-in-rural-guatemala-seek-justice-to-end-violence>.
- "The United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, Its Causes and Consequences," n.d. <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Women/15YearReviewofVAWMandate.pdf>.
- WHO. "WHO | Understanding and Addressing Violence against Women." Accessed September 7, 2020. https://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/topics/violence/vaw_series/en/.

Women's Justice Initiative. "Women's Justice Initiative - Who We Are." Accessed September 7, 2020.
<https://womens-justice.org/who-we-are/>.

TOPIC B: THE ROLE OF ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE IN THE AGE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Statement of the Problem

Introduction to the Problem

Of the number of pressing matters that global society must confront, the United Nations proclaims that climate change is one of, if not the most, urgent area of concern.⁹¹ The effects of global warming are becoming undeniable, with irreversible changes such as ocean acidification and extreme weather conditions piling up on one another which devastates the most vulnerable populations.⁹² The reality of the situation, however, is that the model of “**exponential consumption**”, which influences a large portion of world leaders’ decisions, is mostly to blame for this evolving catastrophe, as put by global systems analyst Rodrigo Castro.⁹³ The problem with this philosophy of governing is that “we live in a finite world,” but act as if the earth’s resources are infinite.⁹⁴ Thus, immediate decisive actions must be taken to mitigate and adapt to the changing climate by developing systems that operate sustainably.

When it comes to conversations on human relationships to natural resources, Central and South America become titular characters. Their resource-rich land is home to nearly half of all tropical forests, a third of all freshwater reserves, and a quarter of all arable land, along with other diverse ecosystems.⁹⁵ However, due to this wealth in **biodiversity**, this region has also fallen victim to foreign **extractivism** that leaves countries economically dependent on foreign entities while having fewer resources to distribute to their own citizens at national and even local levels.⁹⁶ Even then, extreme resource extraction activities have left this region responsible for nearly a third of carbon

⁹¹ “The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2019.” Text. Accessed August 7, 2020. https://www.un-ilibrary.org/economic-and-social-development/the-sustainable-development-goals-report-2019_55eb9109-en.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Castro, Rodrigo, Peter Fritzson, François Cellier, Safa Motesharrei, and Jorge Rivas. “Human-Nature Interaction in World Modeling with Modelica,” 2014. <https://doi.org/10.3384/ECP14096477>.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ “Environmental Governance in Latin America | Fabio De Castro | Palgrave Macmillan.” Accessed August 7, 2020. <https://www.palgrave.com/gp/book/9781137505712>.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

emissions, increasing rates of resource degradation, and huge losses in biodiversity.⁹⁷ In recent decades, these changes in climate have generated great risks and hazards for the most vulnerable and exposed populations in Latin America and the Caribbean.⁹⁸ And due to economic interdependence on a global level, these hazards have created a web of effects in the economies and societies of these countries that are now nearly inescapable. The effects felt by climate change are only projected to get worse in the coming years.⁹⁹

Biodiversity & Environmental Degradation

Heraldo Muñoz, a United Nations Assistant Secretary-General, proclaims that “Latin America and the Caribbean have one of the greatest endowments of natural capital in the world.”¹⁰⁰ Six of the most diverse ecosystems in the world- Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru and Venezuela- are housed in this region.¹⁰¹ This makes the environment one of the richest areas of contribution to the economies of the countries in this region in more ways than one. Tourism and visitations to national parks in the region, of which there are plenty, constitute one of these sources of revenue for countries. For example, Mexico gains at least \$3.5 billion USD a year solely from visitations to its Protected Areas.¹⁰² The agriculture sector of this region is also one of the major contributors to these economies and it is evidently reliant on the abundant natural resources available.¹⁰³ Nevertheless, this commodification of the environment has had drastic side effects.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Climate and Development Knowledge Network. “What’s in It for Latin America.” Accessed August 7, 2020. <https://cdkn.org/resource/whats-in-it-for-latin-america/>.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ UNDP. “UNDP Report: Latin America and Caribbean Are ‘Biodiversity Superpower.’” Accessed August 8, 2020. <https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2010/12/02/amrica-latina-y-el-caribe-superpotencias-de-biodiversidad.html>.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid.



While the politics and economies of Latin American and Caribbean countries have seen dramatic shifts within the past few decades (such as rising trends in **democratization** and **left-wing** establishments), their governance over the environment has taken a contradictory turn. On one hand, activities to redistribute wealth and alleviate poverty in countries have gained significant progress since the start of the new millennium.¹⁰⁴ In Venezuela, poverty rates halved between 1999 (16.6%) and 2011 (7%) since the election of Hugo Chávez.¹⁰⁵ Argentina saw drastic drops in urban poverty between 2003 (54.7%) and 2011 (6.5%).¹⁰⁶ In Bolivia, Alicia Bárcena Ibarra, who is the executive secretary of the U.N. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, stated that within the past decade, the wealth gap between its richest and poorest constituents has narrowed.¹⁰⁷ However, this economic and social progress has been fueled by cultivating revenue through even more drastic practices of resource extraction.¹⁰⁸ Thus, while Latin American countries

¹⁰⁴ Hogenboom, Barbara. "Depoliticized and Repoliticized Minerals in Latin America:" *Journal of Developing Societies*, June 29, 2012. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0169796X12448755>.

¹⁰⁵ Klein, Naomi. *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate*. Simon & Schuster, 2014.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

have agreed to several international initiatives to protect the environment, they continue to prioritize social and economic development over the degradation of its natural resources.

As renowned author and social activist Naomi Klein puts it, the toxic mentality that global systems undertook as extractivism fueled economic growth was the idea of nonreciprocal taking.¹⁰⁹ Capitalism and industrialization work hand in hand to deplete the earth of its coal, forests, and streams for the sake of never ending economic expansion. However, in this system where there is an extractor, there also exists land and people who live in these **sacrifice zones** and are exploited of their resources, which is a practice that is undeniably intertwined with imperialism.¹¹⁰ Thus, in regions especially such as South and Central America, power and progress come at the expense of these sacrifice zones and represents the harmful mentality that has built the contemporary world. Environmentalists and politicians alike must work to dismantle this mindset.

Impacts on Health and Well-Being

The development of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals shifted global conversations on our changing climate towards emphasizing the need for solutions that integrate health as an indispensable right for all.¹¹¹ Goal 3 itself states the intent and aim to provide good health and well-being for people of all ages.¹¹² Increasing rates of **El Niño events** (generally: a dramatic reorganization of the atmosphere which leads to climatic shifts and triggers extreme weather events) due to climate change is continually posing the greatest barrier towards achieving these goals.¹¹³ What's worse is that there is evidence that these events, which are bound to see disastrous socioeconomic consequences, will double in occurrence within the coming years if changes are not made.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ "About the Sustainable Development Goals." United Nations Sustainable Development, 2020. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Cai, Wenju, Simon Borlace, Matthieu Lengaigne, Peter van Rensch, Mat Collins, Gabriel Vecchi, Axel Timmermann, et al. "Increasing Frequency of Extreme El Niño Events Due to Greenhouse Warming." *Nature Climate Change* 4, no. 2 (February 2014): 111–16. <https://doi.org/10.1038/nclimate2100>.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

Climate change and the extreme weather events (EWEs) that are triggered by it should raise concern because of how intimately they are directly and indirectly affecting both social and environmental health determinants.¹¹⁵ These include basic access to clean air and water, as well as secure access to food and shelter.¹¹⁶ The WHO estimates that global warming and EWEs are expected to trigger an annual increase in over 250,000 deaths from malnutrition, malaria, diarrhoea, and heat stress between 2030 and 2050.¹¹⁷ The most vulnerable nations, for example those in the Latin American and Caribbean region who are already ill-equipped with the proper health infrastructure, will suffer the most dire consequences despite contributing the least to climate change in comparison to industrialized countries.¹¹⁸

The health impacts of the changing climate on Latin American countries are influenced by a web of factors that can be described by a model known as the Drivers-Vulnerabilities-Actions model.¹¹⁹ In a broad sense, this model describes the extent of health impacts on a population based on a variety of factors. The model demonstrates clearly how this system of interactions between the environment and society is driven by both external (uncontrollable variables like EWEs) and internal (controllable variables and values like policies on human safety and investment in health infrastructure) factors.¹²⁰ The vulnerability of a population is also demonstrated in this model based on the geographic exposure of a person and the **adaptive capacity** of a person.¹²¹ All in all, these drivers and vulnerabilities shape the decisions that are made at the local and national level to impact health.

It is evident that the environment has a huge impact on the socioeconomic processes of a population, which is why there are concerns for the stability of this entire interrelated system if measures are not taken to mitigate the effects of our changing climate. Researchers have determined that countries in this region who have suffered the least from direct impacts on human

¹¹⁵ "Climate Change and Health." Accessed August 9, 2020. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/climate-change-and-health>.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Nagy, Gustavo J., Walter Leal Filho, Ulisses M. Azeiteiro, Johanna Heimfarth, José E. Verocai, and Chunlan Li. "An Assessment of the Relationships between Extreme Weather Events, Vulnerability, and the Impacts on Human Wellbeing in Latin America." *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 15, no. 9 (September 2018). <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph15091802>.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Ibid.

health and well-being are also those who had higher expenditures on public health, particularly Chile, Uruguay, Costa Rica, Panama, Argentina, Paraguay, Brazil, and Mexico.¹²² This is not to say that higher investments in health infrastructure lead to fewer impacts on health, as Honduras and Nicaragua demonstrate, since these impacts are also driven by uncontrollable factors such as geographic location and their exposure to EWEs.¹²³ However, it is safe to say that the health impacts of climate change have the potential of only getting worse in coming years, especially for those populations who have the least power to control it.¹²⁴ While developing solutions to this crisis, it is important to keep in mind that there are two sides of risk management: reducing the vulnerabilities of populations and at the same time increasing the ability to adapt to disasters.

Current Situation

It is no question now that governments in the Latin American and Caribbean region are often ignoring the consequences, both economically and socially, of its reliance on extractivism on its people. From dire health consequences to economic disempowerment, the situation brought on by humans exerting the earth of its resources is escalating quickly and without remorse. Altogether, these unsustainable actions have triggered tense social conflicts in the region.¹²⁵

Resistance has risen in the form of protests and initiatives against national governments and large corporations who repress the dialogue between the public and those in power, thus harming the process of local democracy.¹²⁶ For example, in Rio de Janeiro, the Environment Institute (INEA) attempted to remove certain areas of the population (a process called **zoning**) from their homes in an attempt to reduce the risk of disasters.¹²⁷ Several homeowners refused to evacuate and others similarly protested the establishment because these decisions were made without any public

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ "Environmental Governance in Latin America | Fabio De Castro | Palgrave Macmillan." Accessed August 7, 2020. <https://www.palgrave.com/gp/book/9781137505712>.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Esteves de Freitas, Leonardo, Annita Vicente Neves, Sandro Schottz, and Ana Luiza Coelho Netto. "Conflicts After the Tragedy in the Mountains of the State of Rio de Janeiro in 2011: The Relationship Between Residents of Córrego d'Antas and the Zoning of Evacuation Areas for an Adaptation to Climate Change." In *Climate Change Adaptation in Latin America: Managing Vulnerability, Fostering Resilience*, edited by Walter Leal Filho and Leonardo Esteves de Freitas, 387–98. Climate Change Management. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-56946-8_23.

input.¹²⁸ In the Amazon, tensions and violent conflicts over oil have arisen between extractivists and indigenous groups as indigenous land is being exploited of its resources and populations are being left vulnerable to displacement, poverty, and water contamination.¹²⁹ These are only a few of the countless examples of resistance from rural communities, indigenous groups, and environmental activists in the region who are urging to safeguard their people and their land. The calls and pleas of these groups must be heard. Urgent action must be taken to eliminate these practices of exploitation and protect the environment and its inhabitants from the changing climate for the sake of global security.



¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Vasquez, Patricia I. *Oil Sparks in the Amazon : Local Conflicts, Indigenous Populations, and Natural Resources*. University of Georgia Press, 2014. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt46n84z>.

History of the Problem

Indigenous Origins

Centuries before colonization, South and Central America were populated by a diversity of distinct cultures that built intimate relationships with nature. The knowledge that these original populations held about the rich ecosystems that surrounded them carefully shaped their societies, technologies, and even their beliefs.¹³⁰ These vast groups developed complex, sophisticated, and what we would label today as 'sustainable' societies by making the most of the various land and water resources available in these areas due to its ecological diversity.¹³¹ That is, until this was all destroyed by the implementation of what political ecologist Héctor Alimonda radically puts as an "economy of robbery" ("economía de rapiña") which has become increasingly popular since the early twentieth century.¹³² Fittingly, American anthropologist Eric Wolf referred to this period as the "Great Dying."¹³³ These labels invite a glimpse into this period of both inquisition and exploitation of Latin American resources and populations that remains unparalleled in scope nor in cruelty.

The ramifications of these actions were insufferable, and on a basic level, they are still being felt today by modern society. As a result of the arrival of European **conquistadores** around the 1500s, the numbers of native populations in the Americas dropped by nearly 80%.¹³⁴ This merciless depopulation of native societies, which resulted from the introduction of infectious diseases and various methods of resource exploitation (mining), and generated dramatic ecological and demographic changes in the region.¹³⁵ Resource extraction expanded in multiple stages. First, silver and gold mining expanded and was possible by new mining techniques in regions such as Potosí (in Bolivia), Zacatecas (in Mexico), and Minas Gerais (in Brazil).¹³⁶ Later, countries began to export other commodities such as sugarcane, coffee, rubber, oil, and more, all for the benefit of other global

¹³⁰ Alimonada, Hector. "La Naturaleza Colonizada. Ecología Política y Minería En América Latina." Accessed August 16, 2020. http://www.clacso.org.ar/libreria-latinoamericana/libro_detalle.php?id_libro=638.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Europe and the People Without History. Accessed August 16, 2020.

<https://www.ucpress.edu/book/9780520268180/europe-and-the-people-without-history>.

¹³⁴ "Environmental Governance in Latin America | Fabio De Castro | Palgrave Macmillan." Accessed August 7, 2020.

<https://www.palgrave.com/gp/book/9781137505712>.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

economies while their own populations were left with pollution, environmental degradation, and displacement of native communities.¹³⁷

Despite such destruction, resistance to these economies rose and many reactionary environmentalist movements became increasingly popular as the effects of this extraction began to hit the communities in this region even harder. Environmentalist movements from Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) distinguish themselves from movements in other countries because of their loyalties to its roots as they draw from and respect the sustainable ideologies of indigenous populations.¹³⁸ The survival of indigenous knowledge, even in the face of industrialization, gave environmentalists a foundation upon which to resist unsustainable practices. While these are the voices and ideas that can inspire progress away from environmental abuses, they were not always the voices heard by governments until the late 1900s.¹³⁹

Regional & International Agendas

By the second half of the twentieth century, efforts to make environmental practices more sustainable surged on an international and regional level. On an international scale, the 1972 U.N. Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm proved to be a significant turning point in global environmentalism.¹⁴⁰ The conference resulted in the implementation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), of which the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean became an active body responsible for acting “as a catalyst, advocate, educator and facilitator to promote the wise use and sustainable development of the global environment”.¹⁴¹ Nearly a decade later, inspired by this movement towards sustainable development, LAC governments and universities implemented the Environmental Education Network, which sought to “green” out research and teaching practices by promoting a sustainable understanding of the environment in

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Gray, Mark Allan. “THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME: AN ASSESSMENT.” *Environmental Law* 20, no. 2 (1990): 291–319. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43265919>.

¹⁴¹ Environment, U. N. “Our Work in Latin America and the Caribbean.” UNEP - UN Environment Programme, October 24, 2017. <http://www.unenvironment.org/regions/latin-america-and-caribbean/our-work-latin-america-and-caribbean>.

education.¹⁴² Despite these strides, national sentiments towards environmentalism remained focused on finding a balance between implementing sustainable yet expanding economies.

While national governments in LAC maintained their priorities in alleviating poverty via economic expansion, they also started to manage their natural resources strategically by implementing new programs and laws that promoted a concept known as **ecodevelopment**. This understanding of the economy was guided by the idea that any aims for development must also be integrated with the intent to respect the natural ecosystems that house diverse, local societies.¹⁴³ In the 1970s and 1980s, this idea inspired several officials and academics to rethink the economic and social policies of LAC countries. Furthermore, Article 30 in the UNEP Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of the States (implemented in 1974) also pushed countries to take responsibility for their carbon footprint by reminding them that “The protection, the preservation and betterment of the environment for current and future generations is the responsibility of all States.”¹⁴⁴ In the coming decades, LAC countries participated in producing and agreeing on more treaties such as the Convention on Climate Change and Convention on Biodiversity, both of which were signed in 1992 to control carbon emissions and protect biodiversity.¹⁴⁵ While these efforts proved to be historic, they were met with great criticism from opposing movements who believed the actions of LAC countries were not urgent nor demanding enough.¹⁴⁶

Rise of Reactionary Movements

Popular environmentalism, or environmentalism for the poor and indigenous, gained momentum in reaction to LAC governments’ ecodevelopmental ideas.¹⁴⁷ Most of all, popular environmentalism is a movement that aims to reject extractivism at its roots, which requires completely opposing the idea

¹⁴² Guni Network. “Higher Education, Environment and Sustainability in Latin America and The Caribbean,” May 12, 2015. <http://www.guninetwork.org/articles/higher-education-environment-and-sustainability-latin-america-and-caribbean>.

¹⁴³ “OECD Glossary of Statistical Terms - Eco-Development Definition.” Accessed August 16, 2020. <https://stats.oecd.org/glossary/detail.asp?ID=710>.

¹⁴⁴ “Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States - Main Page.” Accessed August 16, 2020. <https://legal.un.org/avl/ha/cerds/cerds.html>.

¹⁴⁵ Unit, Biosafety. “Climate Change and Biodiversity,” August 14, 2020. <https://www.cbd.int/climate/>.

¹⁴⁶ “Environmental Governance in Latin America | Fabio De Castro | Palgrave Macmillan.” Accessed August 7, 2020. <https://www.palgrave.com/gp/book/9781137505712>.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

that LAC countries must provide its resources for the good of the global economy (this is known as the **commodification** of resources).¹⁴⁸ In general, this movement is guided by indigenous communities and allies (such as NGOs and activists) who often insert themselves directly into local conflicts with the aim of either halting or gaining justice for environmental damages.¹⁴⁹ For example, these groups protect sacred lands (rivers, monuments, hills, etc.) by fighting for territorial rights, halt extractivist activities (such as mining), or they seek reparations for any damage inflicted on indigenous lands.¹⁵⁰ Modern activities of these groups include creating networks of information for environmental justice movements around the world and regionally. Such networks include those found at the Latin American Observatory of Environmental Conflicts (OLCA), the Movement of People Affected by Dams in Brazil, the Observatory of Mining Conflicts in Latin America, and so on.¹⁵¹

Nevertheless, the ideologies of popular environmentalism (from the indigenous and poor populations) and eco-developmentalism (from the governments) seemed to be on opposite sides of a spectrum of environmentalism. **Ecosocialism** is a set of ideas that critiques both of these movements. This movement grows from similar sentiments as its environmentalist predecessors while promoting the ideology of *buen vivir* which originates from a Andean indigenous principles that aim for coexistence with nature.¹⁵² The Bolivian and Ecuadorian constitutions indoctrinated the concept of *buen vivir* as an ecological aim, though the actual implementation of this ideal has proven to be difficult for these countries.¹⁵³ Nevertheless, ecosocialism and its embrace of *buen vivir* has found a legitimate place in the defenses of several climate justice movements, leading to campaigns for international proposals that protect LAC's natural resources and will steer LAC countries away from its dependence on capitalism.¹⁵⁴ Thus, environmentalism in LAC has been influenced by a few powerful economic and social theories, most of which aim to find an alternative to extractivism in the hopes of protecting its diverse lands and people.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Foran, John. "Notes on Transition Towns, Degrowth, Buen Vivir, Ecosocialism and How to Get There," 2020.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

Past Actions

Global Discourse

Even though scientists have long been aware of the effects of large-scale greenhouse gas emissions, it was not until the early 1980s that the international community began to feel the urgency to legally address global warming.¹⁵⁵ Since then, a remarkable evolution of the international legal climate change regime has developed, meaning that as the situation has evolved, global responses to this situation have also evolved accordingly. In the mid-1980s, the efforts of a few Western scientists to get climate change on the international agenda began to pay off.¹⁵⁶ That and the growing public concern about environmental issues catalyzed the intergovernmental cooperation efforts to address this issue, which is represented by the UN General Assembly's statement in 1992 that climate change is "a common concern for mankind".¹⁵⁷

All of these events culminated in the development of a new treaty that established the initiation of international cooperation in environmental issues. In 1990, the **Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC)** began planning for a **Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC)**, which was eventually adopted in 1992 at the Rio UN Conference on Environment and Development.¹⁵⁸ Essentially, the FCCC became known as a 'constitution' for the international regime on climate change, but all it did was set a precedent for the future agreements.¹⁵⁹ While the convention established a basic framework for future work that included some plans on the financial and implementation mechanisms of these agreements, it also failed to resolve any differences that countries may have had due to the convention's ambiguity.¹⁶⁰

The FCCC required much more elaboration and substance than it initially had. Therefore, the convention was substantiated by the provisions of the **Kyoto Protocol**, which set requirements for

¹⁵⁵Bodansky, Daniel, and Lavanya Rajamani. "The Evolution and Governance Architecture of the United Nations Climate Change Regime." SSRN Scholarly Paper. Rochester, NY: Social Science Research Network, November 14, 2016. <https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=2168859>.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

industrialized nations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.¹⁶¹ The protocol provided a settlement of several differences among countries, as its strictness of limitations was accepted by the U.S., its flexibility in mechanisms (how these limitations were enforced) was accepted by the EU, and developing countries agreed because they were largely exempt from these limitations since they did not contribute a large proportion of emissions in the first place.¹⁶² Since its adoption, the Kyoto Protocol has seen a significant downturn of commitment as it has lost support from several developed countries such as the U.S.¹⁶³

Thus, following the end of the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol (around 2012) the international community began its negotiations to extend the second commitment period of the Protocol through 2020, but this time, with less international cooperation or support.¹⁶⁴ However, it was also agreed that the Kyoto Protocol's commitment period would not be extended past 2020, which meant the international community had to come up with a plan to address climate change past this time frame. Discussions around these plans, which began in 2015, led to the development of the ambitious **Paris Agreement** under the FCCC. This agreement includes legally-binding commitments for *all* countries, along with a mechanism of transparency to keep these countries accountable to their obligations.¹⁶⁵ This means that countries will be required to give progress reports on their emission reduction commitments every five years.¹⁶⁶ In short, the Paris Agreement shifted the climate change regime and has created a new precedent for future intergovernmental agreements.

Regional and National Progress

Early on in intergovernmental discourse, some recurring patterns in negotiations become evident in the international climate change regime. One of the patterns that was most common was that there

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Gabreldar, Bushra. "FUELING HUMAN PROGRESS: Climate Change and the Future of Renewable Energy." *Harvard International Review* 39, no. 2 (Spring 2018): 18.

<http://proxy.uchicago.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=f5h&AN=129196180&site=eds-live&scope=site>.

was an evident division between developed (industrialized) and developing countries over the responsibilities that should be taken by each as they address climate change.¹⁶⁷ Developing countries such as those in LAC believe that industrialized nations should bear most of the responsibility for dealing with global warming since they produce the majority of greenhouse emissions.¹⁶⁸ On the other hand, developed countries such as the U.S. believe that developing countries cannot be completely exempt from partaking in the solutions to combat climate change.¹⁶⁹ While developed countries are responsible for a large portion of greenhouse gas emissions, LAC (and other developing nations) must play their part in this universal struggle, even if their approach looks different than it may for industrialized countries.

In the same way that international cooperation has seen great progress in recent decades, regional cooperation among Latin American countries has also facilitated a shift in environmental policies. There currently exists a large system of regional laws and regulations that are necessary to ensure coordination in environmental protection efforts, especially with the hopes of holding these countries accountable for implementing the terms of ratified international agreements.¹⁷⁰ These regional systems allow countries to regulate the usage of natural resources such as water, forestry, and mineral resource extraction.¹⁷¹ Also, these systems aid in punishing nations who fail to comply with the terms of their agreements.¹⁷² From this, it is evident that some LAC countries implement regional environmental plans more faithfully than others. To manage the success of implementation, legal provisions including mandatory environmental impact assessments (EIAs) that are an evaluation of the environmental consequences, both good and bad, of a plan, policy or program, have been introduced to keep nations in check.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁷ Bodansky, Daniel, and Lavanya Rajamani. "The Evolution and Governance Architecture of the United Nations Climate Change Regime." SSRN Scholarly Paper. Rochester, NY: Social Science Research Network, November 14, 2016. <https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=2168859>.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Mata, Luis, et al. "Latin In America.: IPCC, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change." Climate Change 2001: Impacts, Adaptation, and Contribution of Vulnerability, January 1, 2001, 693–734.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

While national and regional legal mechanisms are in place to protect the environment, these governments still require the direct and indirect support of NGOs within their countries to push towards progress in developing sustainable policies. Some NGOs have worked to pressure Latin American countries into protecting the earth by putting stricter bans on toxic waste and certain harmful pesticides, eliminating incentives for deforestation activities, and even forming new national parks and reserves (Ex: Greenpeace, Rainforest Action Network, Pesticide Action Network).¹⁷⁴ The actions of these organizations has led to a shift in the attainment of funding and loans from international banks. For example, Brazil could not gain access to loans or the global market without explicitly agreeing to curbing deforestation in the Amazon.¹⁷⁵ Other NGOs, such as Conservation International and the International Union for Conservation of Nature, have become directly involved with more local environmental organizations by providing financial and technical assistance on projects dealing with land conservation and preventing further environmental degradation.¹⁷⁶ Despite such regional progress, these historic efforts generally simply provide 'patch up' solutions that fail to address the true underlying and complex causes of extreme resource degradation: systemic poverty and the unsustainable development of the economy.

Alternative Solutions from Locals

On the surface, every country in LAC has progressed in its public promises to promote more sustainable development. However, beneath the surface, it is evident that several LAC economies are becoming dependent on a global market that has forced dramatic changes in these nations' territories, particularly due to an increase in foreign investment dedicated towards natural resource extraction.¹⁷⁷ Indigenous and peasant communities, those who directly see and experience the destruction caused by these activities, have reacted to these powerful entities by forming powerful and important initiatives to protect their lands and livelihoods.

Often, local initiatives directly counter the large-scale institutional policies that are imposed upon them by creating alliances of solidarity among one another so that they can create spaces for

¹⁷⁴ Kaimowitz, David. "The Political Economy of Environmental Policy Reform in Latin America." *Development and Change* 27, no. 3 (1996): 433–52. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7660.1996.tb00598.x>.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Barkin, David, and Blanca Lemus. "Local Solutions for Environmental Justice," 257–86, 2016. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-50572-9_11.

themselves and be heard.¹⁷⁸ These groups have proven capable of offering alternative approaches to governance that allow for truly sustainable engagement with the land and resources around them.¹⁷⁹ These indigenous initiatives, which “stem from state repression” (in the words of the director of Central Intelligence), will intensify and prove to be one of the central challengers that national governments must face in the coming decades.¹⁸⁰ Indigenous communities will soon also be protected under international law, which includes the acknowledgment of their territorial rights and self-determination under the OAS’s draft of the American Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.¹⁸¹



These movements are not particular to any single country in this region as they have arisen throughout LAC. In Mexico, the activities of indigenous groups have increased gradually and several of their efforts have focused primarily on their rights to control and have access to water resources.¹⁸² This has included attempts to oppose any large-scale construction of dams that impede access to water for local communities along with the implementation of water-saving technologies

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Ibid.

that are low-cost but innovative.¹⁸³ The Mexican government has reacted by prohibiting the use of some of these technologies, most likely due to their fears that these communities will become too self-reliant. In South America, there has been a growth in collectivization movements that promote strategies inspired by *buen vivir*. Such efforts include the Landless Workers Movement of Brazil, the Mapuches in Chile, the Network of Environmentally Affected Peoples, and more, all of which help protect these lands and communities from foreign encroachment.¹⁸⁴ It is through engagement with these types of local efforts that environmental governance might find greater success in the future.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

Possible Solutions

Introduction

Climate change demands an approach to environmental governance that is cross-sectoral and that involves collaboration among multiple groups and countries in this region. The issue at hand is already so complex, and the solutions to address it will require more than just setting up protections and mitigation strategies. It will take a transformation of society itself, because every human activity affects the earth in one way or another; society and nature are inherently interdependent.¹⁸⁵ Nevertheless, both short and long-term, as well as global and local-scale approaches will need to be taken to address this rapidly evolving situation.

Disaster-Risk Management

The situation for certain LAC countries is evolving rapidly, so at the same time that we address the need for long-term systemic changes in our interactions with the environment, it is also necessary to begin to implement short-term solutions to protect the most vulnerable populations from extreme weather events. This may take the form of developing disaster-risk management strategies and plans. The UN's Sustainable Development Goal 13 directly addresses this by urging the need to "strengthen [the] resilience and adaptive capacity to climate related hazards and natural disasters".¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁵ Kronik, Jakob Verner, Dorte. Indigenous Peoples and Climate Change in Latin America and the Caribbean. Directions in Development - Environment and Sustainable Development. The World Bank, 2010. <https://doi.org/10.1596/978-0-8213-8237-0>.

¹⁸⁶ "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development ... Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform." Accessed August 24, 2020. <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld/publication>.



There are a variety of approaches that can be taken by LAC nations to protect their most vulnerable. Researchers Gustavo J. Nagy and his collaborators led a study in which they analyzed the relationship between several Latin American communities and the extreme weather events they may experience.¹⁸⁷ In their report, the researchers urge the adaptation of a variety of short-term solutions that will aid these populations in building resilience against climate disasters. Firstly, they encourage LAC countries to work to identify which populations are at the greatest risk to these disasters.¹⁸⁸ This can be done by improving the capacity of healthcare facilities so that they are prepared to take in victims of climate disasters, or countries can also aim to spearhead large-scale public information campaigns that acknowledge the inequalities present in health and social systems.¹⁸⁹ Secondly, the approach that these countries then take to address the vulnerabilities of these populations should be integrated. This means that their approaches should aim to consolidate the resources they have available. For example, governments should create partnerships between

¹⁸⁷ Nagy, Gustavo J., et al. "An Assessment of the Relationships between Extreme Weather Events, Vulnerability, and the Impacts on Human Wellbeing in Latin America." *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 15, no. 9 (September 2018). <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph15091802>.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

meteorological and health departments in order to maintain a strong forecasting/early-warning system against extreme climate disasters.¹⁹⁰ Nagy and his collaborators also allude to what was mentioned in earlier paragraphs, which is that these efforts must be accompanied by changes at the structural level, particularly in terms of the need for investments in public health systems, greater health insurance coverage, and addressing systemic poverty in general.¹⁹¹

Biodiversity-Based Mitigation Strategies

The biodiversity in Latin America and the Caribbean is abundant, covering a range of different ecosystems that each demand different kinds of adaptation in the wake of climate change. Some ecosystems may demand protections against climate change, while others will require maintenance due to their contributions to carbon emissions.

A major type of area that requires stronger mitigation rather than protection efforts is mainly agricultural systems. Agricultural ecosystems are abundant in LAC countries, although, in general, these systems also contribute around 20% of global greenhouse gas emissions.¹⁹² Thus, it is urgent to promote activities that will help reduce emissions from these areas. These activities can include: improving the efficiency of fertilizers, restoring any degraded agricultural land, and ensuring that soils are managed well enough to improve their carbon sequestering potential (to reduce the amount of carbon that is released).¹⁹³

Some of the ecosystems that require stronger protections rather than mitigation efforts include dry and sub-humid ecosystems, forests, and island ecosystems. Dry ecosystems are vulnerable particularly to changes in rainfall patterns, which may lead to water scarcity, the introduction of invasive species, and even the threat of destruction via wildfires.¹⁹⁴ Several populations located in the Southern hemisphere like those in LAC countries are highly dependent on these lands, so these systems should focus on integrating sustainable management practices of their water resources. Forest ecosystems are similarly vulnerable to fires and invasive pests. The **conservation** of forests is

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Unit, Biosafety. "Climate Change and Biodiversity," August 24, 2020. <https://www.cbd.int/climate/>.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

essential because of the carbon-holding capacity of the vegetation present within them. Deforestation and land-clearing activities have already devastated forest ecosystems. To protect, and perhaps even reverse these activities, adaptation options that should be considered in these areas include **reforestation** (replanting and seeding land that has been deforested) efforts, preventing the creation of plantations, and practicing less intense forestry.¹⁹⁵ Finally, species and populations living in island ecosystems face the greatest threat of extinction due to their vulnerability to climate disasters and a rise in sea level.¹⁹⁶ More cost-effective protections for these lands include conservation efforts of the vegetation (e.g. coral reefs) around islands and coastal regions, as these species offer natural protection against the extreme weather conditions that are instigated by climate change.¹⁹⁷

Moving Towards Green Economies

The Latin American region consists of a wide range of economies, as some countries are finding better success than others in the global market. Nevertheless, LAC countries collectively experience a great vulnerability to climate change, as we have discussed in previous sections. Several LAC countries have become more intertwined in and dependent on the global market, but these international economic activities have left the region degraded of its natural resources. This leaves countries needing alternative approaches to their economies, and one of the proposed ideas is to introduce the concept of a **circular economy** within the region.¹⁹⁸

A circular economy is a model that aims to reduce waste by regenerating and reusing resources.¹⁹⁹ This is in contrast to a traditional economic model that ends its cycle by discarding rather than reintroducing materials.²⁰⁰ A circular economic approach would greatly benefit the economic progress of LAC countries as much as it would benefit the workforce.²⁰¹ Research conducted in other

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ "New Publication: Climate Strategies 2020 | Climate Technology Centre & Network." Accessed August 24, 2020. <https://www.ctc-n.org/news/new-publication-climate-strategies-2020>.

¹⁹⁹ "The Circular Economy In Detail." Accessed August 24, 2020. <https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/explore/the-circular-economy-in-detail>.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ Ibid.

countries has indicated that this model will provide substantial savings for the nations involved.²⁰² Shifting towards a green and circular economy will require intergovernmental assistance and support in order to help LAC countries and their businesses in their plans for converting to a more sustainable economic model. The Climate Technology Centre & Network is one of the leading programs under the UNFCCC that has begun to provide this assistance for countries in the region.²⁰³ This shift towards green economies will be gradual, but it will provide long-term benefits for the environment.

Supporting Local Sustainability

The institutional and legislative actions of LAC national governments can only be so effective. The success of these broad-ranged solutions is directly dependent on the concerted efforts of both formal institutions and local-level participants, particularly indigenous groups.²⁰⁴ The very identities and social structures of indigenous peoples in LAC are based on an intimate connection to the environment. The knowledge of these groups is invaluable to understanding natural systems.²⁰⁵ Thus, their participation in the development, negotiation, and implementation of sustainable solutions is essential, and is the key to ensuring true progress.

Adaptation measures that consider indigenous knowledge must adopt certain strategies to strengthen the protection of these local communities. These strategies should aim to build local resilience, and may take multiple forms. Indigenous representatives must be included from the initial stages of designing new sustainable policies.²⁰⁶ Then, political institutions must provide technological and technical support for indigenous communities as they aim to implement sustainable practices.²⁰⁷ This includes ensuring that local communities have access to resources that will aid them as they shift towards more sustainable modes of production. Of course, the trade-off for indigenous communities offering their knowledge must be that they will be ensured by their governments their rights to social capital and land.²⁰⁸

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Kronik, Jakob Verner, Dorte. *Indigenous Peoples and Climate Change in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Directions in Development - Environment and Sustainable Development. The World Bank, 2010. <https://doi.org/10.1596/978-0-8213-8237-0>.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

Bloc Positions

Overview on Economic Stances and Theories

As you develop an understanding of the positions that your country takes in this committee, it is important to keep in mind that LAC countries are at a crossroads in this crisis in which several economic theories are gaining prominence, all of which have different approaches to environmental governance. Thus, it's inevitable that out of all the topics that the leaders of the OAS member nations may discuss, the topic of changing and regulating the economy will be one of the most divisive in the region.

Countries Heavily Reliant on Resource Extraction (Unsustainable Economic Models)

To some degree, the economies of several developed countries in the LAC region have become dependent on excessive resource extraction, but there are certain countries that have exploited this opportunity more than others. In South America, several countries such as Brazil, Colombia, Peru, Venezuela, and Ecuador, export large volumes of physical exports from their environments, yet these exports are barely able to pay for the imports they require.²⁰⁹ The United States and Canada similarly benefit from these practices, which leads to their overwhelming contributions to global greenhouse gas emissions. Fossil fuel and oil exploitation from these countries are largely to blame for these consequences.

Two of the largest oil producing countries in the LAC region are Brazil and Venezuela. Venezuela annually exports approximately 120 million tons of oil.²¹⁰ In the Spring of 2014, there was a three month period in which Brazil had an alarming **trade deficit** of around US\$6,072 million, which was

²⁰⁹ Martinez-Alier, Joan, and Mariana Walter. "Social Metabolism and Conflicts over Extractivism." In *Environmental Governance in Latin America*, edited by Fábio de Castro, Barbara Hogenboom, and Michiel Baud, 58–85. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2016. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-50572-9_3.

²¹⁰ Martinez-Alier, Joan, Michiel Baud, and Héctor Sejenovich. "Origins and Perspectives of Latin American Environmentalism." In *Environmental Governance in Latin America*, edited by Fábio de Castro, Barbara Hogenboom, and Michiel Baud, 29–57. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2016. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-50572-9_2.

taken as an indicator that their natural resources were severely depleted.²¹¹ Popular resistance to these practices of extraction should not be completely seen as attacks on those politicians or corporations in power, but instead, they should be seen as opportunities for shifts in environmental governance policies that will promote sustainability..

Countries Demanding an "Ecological Debt"

In a letter to the UN General Assembly from 2008, Bolivia clearly stated its intent to demand "direct compensation from developed to developing countries" for the amount of LAC resource exploitation happening in global markets.²¹² Bolivia refused to support any involvement in the global carbon market on the basis that this market allows for developed countries to exploit the most vulnerable developing countries in the LAC region. Instead, Bolivia spearheaded the formation of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas (consisting of Bolivia, Cuba, Ecuador, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Nicaragua, and Venezuela) which completely rejects any participation in the carbon market, while advocating for alternative strategies for reducing emissions.²¹³ Thus, these countries are also strong advocates for involving civil society in the process of creating strategies for environmental governance, which is supported by their commitment to environmental justice movements.²¹⁴

Approaches to Reducing Deforestation and Degradation

Governments in Latin America have also taken a few approaches to implement forest-climate policies that aim at reducing deforestation and forest degradation. There are two main strategies (apart from the resistant countries just discussed above) that are being pursued in the LAC region. The "assertive strategy," which is characteristic of Brazil, Mexico, and Guyana, is an approach to forest-climate policies that aims to take their own national legal frameworks and plans and shape

²¹¹ Martinez-Alier, Joan, and Mariana Walter. "Social Metabolism and Conflicts over Extractivism." In *Environmental Governance in Latin America*, edited by Fábio de Castro, Barbara Hogenboom, and Michiel Baud, 58–85. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2016. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-50572-9_3.

²¹² Aguilar-Støen, et al. "Forest Governance in Latin America: Strategies for Implementing REDD." In *Environmental Governance in Latin America*, edited by Fábio de Castro, Barbara Hogenboom, and Michiel Baud, 205–33. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2016. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-50572-9_9.

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ Ibid.

them so that they are meeting globally negotiated standards.²¹⁵ The second most common strategy, which is referred to as the “accommodating strategy,” takes a slightly different approach. Countries such as Costa Rica, Guatemala, Argentina, Chile, Honduras, Panama, Paraguay, Uruguay, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador and Suriname, are all proponents of this strategy which instead of using existing frameworks, these countries simply adhere to the global guidelines for forest governance and aren’t as interested as implementing these guidelines into their national frameworks yet.²¹⁶

Sustainable Consumption in the Water-Energy-Mining Complex

Capitalistic aspirations towards high levels of economic growth have led to significant demands for water and energy, but these aspirations can become dangerous in the context of sustainable growth in LAC. Water and energy are essential to human production, and together, they fuel the process of industrial mining, thus making the overuse of these nonrenewable resources a controversial topic in environmental discussions in the region.²¹⁷ In studying the multisectoral approaches to the water-energy-mining complex, environmental researcher Cristián Parker and his colleagues found that there are two main discourse models that appear from LAC government representatives who participate heavily in this type of resource extraction.²¹⁸

First, less progressive nations believe in the significance of mining to the development of a nation, but they also emphasize that this practice should be performed responsibly by advocating for greater regulations.²¹⁹ This model surrounds itself around the idea of efficiency. Past Argentinian and Chilean environmental consultants have advocated for this idea, and call for either the state or private companies to take into account the environmental costs of these activities by providing clear rules for the extent of these practices.²²⁰ A more progressive model, which is supported by countries such as Chile, Costa Rica, and Mexico, takes a stronger stance on the negative consequences of mining for health and for the environment.²²¹ Nevertheless, this model still sees mining as a

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Ibid.

²¹⁷ Parker, Cristián, et al. “Water-Energy-Mining and Sustainable Consumption: Views of South American Strategic Actors.” In *Environmental Governance in Latin America*, edited by Fábio de Castro, Barbara Hogenboom, and Michiel Baud, 164–85. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2016. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-50572-9_7.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ Ibid.

necessary activity. The difference between this more progressive model and the previous more moderate model is that these countries call for a more direct involvement from the state in setting sustainable policies for these practices.²²² More notably, these countries also advocate for shifts towards renewable energy and for public participation in developing more sustainable policies.²²³ Countries pushing for these various models must maintain their commitments in perspective to those of their neighbors, and should seek to recognize their differences while searching for common ground.

Countries with the Most Vulnerable Populations

Central American (such as El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, and Panama) and Caribbean countries (such as Grenada, Dominican Republic, Barbados, Haiti, and Saint Lucia) are much less developed than the countries discussed earlier, yet often, these are the countries that experience the greatest vulnerability to climate disasters.²²⁴ The priorities of these countries are twofold. These countries, who are affected the most by hurricanes, floods, and other climate disasters, must advocate for both short and long-term solutions with the support of developed countries. First, they should prioritize developing mitigation strategies (such as evacuation plans and weather prediction mechanisms) that will allow their most vulnerable populations support in the case of environmental emergencies.²²⁵ Secondly, these countries should also advocate for systemic changes that address the underlying social and economic forces that lead to the inequality which perpetuates poverty and leaves these populations vulnerable in the first place.²²⁶ It is up to each delegates' discretion to which of these policies are specifically advocated for during the conference, keeping in mind your individual country's position.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ Castro, Fabio de. "Introduction: Environment and Society in Contemporary Latin America." ResearchGate. Accessed August 30, 2020. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-50572-9_1.

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ Ibid.

Glossary

Adaptive capacity: The ability for an entity or group to respond to damage

Biodiversity: The diversity of organisms and life within an ecosystem

Buen vivir: Translates from Spanish to “good living” ; represents a progressive ideology that stems from indigenous knowledge and promotes a balance and harmony between the environment and humanity

Circular economy: An economic model which is based on the idea of completely reusing and regenerating all resources used

Conquistadores: The “conquerors” or colonizers from Spain and Peru which occupied several South and Central American countries

Conservation: The act of preserving natural life and resources

Commodification: The transformation of natural resources into commodities or objects of trade

Democratization: The introduction of democratic principles

Ecodevelopment: A theory of development that is centered around respecting both social and environmental diversity

Ecosocialism: A movement which promotes the idea of *buen vivir* and opposes the system of extractivism

El Niño events: A weather phenomenon that leads to warmer sea surface temperatures and even extreme weather events

Exponential consumption: The capitalistic idea in which societies extract and utilize resources without regulation or concern for the consequences

Extractivism: The act of removing natural resources and making a profit off of them in a global market

Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC): An agreement adopted in 1992 which became known as a 'constitution' for the international regime on climate change policy

Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC): A committee put together in 1990 to develop the FCCC

Kyoto Protocol: An international convention adopted in 2005 which set the precedent for the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions

Left-wing: The more liberal or socialist governments

Paris Agreement: A convention under the FCCC, which came into effect in 2020, that legally binds countries to fulfill their climate obligations

Popular environmentalism: Environmentalism for the working class/poor and indigenous

Reforestation: The process of replanting or seeding land that has been severely degraded

Sacrifice zones: Lands that are exploited for their richness in natural resources

Trade deficit: A country is importing (buying) more than it's selling

Zoning: A method of forcefully removing specific populations from their land

Bibliography

- Aguilar-Støen, et al. "Forest Governance in Latin America: Strategies for Implementing REDD." In *Environmental Governance in Latin America*, edited by Fábio de Castro, Barbara Hogenboom, and Michiel Baud, 205–33. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2016. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-50572-9_9.
- Alimonada, Hector. "La Naturaleza Colonizada. Ecología Política y Minería En América Latina." Accessed August 16, 2020. http://www.clacso.org.ar/libreria-latinoamericana/libro_detalle.php?id_libro=638.
- Andrade, Pablo A. "The Government of Nature: Post-Neoliberal Environmental Governance in Bolivia and Ecuador." In *Environmental Governance in Latin America*, edited by Fábio de Castro, Barbara Hogenboom, and Michiel Baud, 113–36. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2016. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-50572-9_5.
- Barkin, David, et al. "Local Solutions for Environmental Justice," 257–86, 2016. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-50572-9_11.
- Bodansky, Daniel, et al. "The Evolution and Governance Architecture of the United Nations Climate Change Regime." SSRN Scholarly Paper. Rochester, NY: Social Science Research Network, November 14, 2016. <https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=2168859>.
- Cai, Wenju, et al. "Increasing Frequency of Extreme El Niño Events Due to Greenhouse Warming." *Nature Climate Change* 4, no. 2 (February 2014): 111–16. <https://doi.org/10.1038/nclimate2100>.
- "Caribbean GBV Law Portal: Country Resources | UN Women – Multi-Country Office – Caribbean." Accessed July 12, 2020. <https://caribbean.unwomen.org/en/caribbean-gender-portal/caribbean-gbv-law-portal/gbv-country-resources>.
- Castro, Fabio de. "Introduction: Environment and Society in Contemporary Latin America." ResearchGate. Accessed August 30, 2020. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-50572-9_1.
- Castro, Rodrigo, et al. "Human-Nature Interaction in World Modeling with Modelica," 2014. <https://doi.org/10.3384/ECP14096477>.
- "Central and South America — IPCC." Accessed August 7, 2020. <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar5/wg2/central-and-south-america/>.
- "Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States - Main Page." Accessed August 16, 2020. <https://legal.un.org/avl/ha/cerds/cerds.html>.
- Climate and Development Knowledge Network. "GUIDE: The IPCC's Special Report on Climate Change and Land: What's in It for Latin America?" Accessed August 7, 2020.

<https://cdkn.org/resource/guide-the-ipccs-special-report-on-climate-change-and-land-whats-in-it-for-latin-america/>.

Climate and Development Knowledge Network. "What's in It for Latin America." Accessed August 7, 2020. <https://cdkn.org/resource/whats-in-it-for-latin-america/>.

"Climate Change and Health." Accessed August 9, 2020. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/climate-change-and-health>.

Environment, U. N. "Our Work in Latin America and the Caribbean." UNEP - UN Environment Programme, October 24, 2017. <http://www.unenvironment.org/regions/latin-america-and-caribbean/our-work-latin-america-and-caribbean>.

"Environmental Governance in Latin America | Fabio De Castro | Palgrave Macmillan." Accessed August 7, 2020. <https://www.palgrave.com/gp/book/9781137505712>.

Esteves de Freitas, Leonardo, et al. "Conflicts After the Tragedy in the Mountains of the State of Rio de Janeiro in 2011: The Relationship Between Residents of Córrego d'Antas and the Zoning of Evacuation Areas for an Adaptation to Climate Change." In *Climate Change Adaptation in Latin America: Managing Vulnerability, Fostering Resilience*, edited by Walter Leal Filho and Leonardo Esteves de Freitas, 387–98. Climate Change Management. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-56946-8_23.

Europe and the People Without History. Accessed August 16, 2020. <https://www.ucpress.edu/book/9780520268180/europe-and-the-people-without-history>.

Filho, Walter, and Leonardo Freitas. *Climate Change Adaptation in Latin America: Managing Vulnerability, Fostering Resilience*, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-56946-8>.

Foran, John. "Notes on Transition Towns, Degrowth, Buen Vivir, Ecosocialism and How to Get There," 2020.

Gabreldar, Bushra. "FUELING HUMAN PROGRESS: Climate Change and the Future of Renewable Energy." *Harvard International Review* 39, no. 2 (Spring 2018): 18. <http://proxy.uchicago.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=f5h&AN=129196180&site=eds-live&scope=site>.

García, San Juanita. "An Intersectional Approach to Assimilation and Mental Health among Mexican-Origin Women in the United States." undefined, 2014. /paper/An-Intersectional-Approach-to-Assimilation-and-in-Garc%C3%ADa/2b5fed628f4abbf312a1c4f3e55179f5fcfa5410.

Gray, Mark Allan. "THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME: AN ASSESSMENT." *Environmental Law* 20, no. 2 (1990): 291–319. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43265919>.

- Guni Network. "Higher Education, Environment and Sustainability in Latin America and The Caribbean," May 12, 2015. <http://www.guninetwork.org/articles/higher-education-environment-and-sustainability-latin-america-and-caribbean>.
- Hogenboom, Barbara. "Depoliticized and Repoliticized Minerals in Latin America:" *Journal of Developing Societies*, June 29, 2012. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0169796X12448755>.
- Kaimowitz, David. "The Political Economy of Environmental Policy Reform in Latin America." *Development and Change* 27, no. 3 (1996): 433–52. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7660.1996.tb00598.x>.
- Klein, Naomi. *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate*. Simon & Schuster, 2014.
- Kronik, Jakob Verner, Dorte. *Indigenous Peoples and Climate Change in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Directions in Development - Environment and Sustainable Development. The World Bank, 2010. <https://doi.org/10.1596/978-0-8213-8237-0>.
- MacLennan, Michael, and Leisa Perch. "Environmental Justice in Latin America and the Caribbean: Legal Empowerment of the Poor in the Context of Climate Change." *Climate Law* 3 (2012): 283–309.
- Martinez-Alier, Joan, et al. "Origins and Perspectives of Latin American Environmentalism." In *Environmental Governance in Latin America*, edited by Fábio de Castro, Barbara Hogenboom, and Michiel Baud, 29–57. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2016. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-50572-9_2.
- Martinez-Alier, Joan, and Mariana Walter. "Social Metabolism and Conflicts over Extractivism." In *Environmental Governance in Latin America*, edited by Fábio de Castro, Barbara Hogenboom, and Michiel Baud, 58–85. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2016. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-50572-9_3.
- Mata, Luis, et al. "Latin In America.: IPCC, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change." *Climate Change 2001: Impacts, Adaptation, and Contribution of Vulnerability*, January 1, 2001, 693–734.
- Nagy, Gustavo J., et al. "An Assessment of the Relationships between Extreme Weather Events, Vulnerability, and the Impacts on Human Wellbeing in Latin America." *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 15, no. 9 (September 2018). <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph15091802>.
- "New Publication: Climate Strategies 2020 | Climate Technology Centre & Network." Accessed August 24, 2020. <https://www.ctc-n.org/news/new-publication-climate-strategies-2020>.
- "OECD Glossary of Statistical Terms - Eco-Development Definition." Accessed August 16, 2020. <https://stats.oecd.org/glossary/detail.asp?ID=710>.

- Parker, Cristián, et al. "Water-Energy-Mining and Sustainable Consumption: Views of South American Strategic Actors." In *Environmental Governance in Latin America*, edited by Fábio de Castro, Barbara Hogenboom, and Michiel Baud, 164–85. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2016. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-50572-9_7.
- "(PDF) Local Solutions for Environmental Justice." Accessed August 23, 2020. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/305552548_Local_Solutions_for_Environmental_Justice.
- Potochnick, Stephanie, et al. "Local-Level Immigration Enforcement and Food Insecurity Risk among Hispanic Immigrant Families with Children: National-Level Evidence." *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health* 19, no. 5 (October 2017): 1042–49. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10903-016-0464-5>.
- Rojas Hernandez, Jorge. "Society, Environment, Vulnerability, and Climate Change in Latin America: Challenges of the Twenty-First Century." *Latin American Perspectives* 43, no. 4 (July 2016): 29–42. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0094582X16641264>.
- "SDG Indicators." Accessed August 7, 2020. <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2019/>.
- Sebastián, Essayag. "From Commitment to Action: Policies to End Violence Against Women in Latin America and the Caribbean. Regional Analysis Document." UNDP, 2017.
- Siegel, Karen M. "Environment, Politics and Governance in Latin America." *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies/ Revista Europea de Estudios Latinoamericanos y Del Caribe*, no. 102 (October 1, 2016): 109. <http://proxy.uchicago.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsclr&AN=edsclr.487928484&site=eds-live&scope=site>.
- "Southern Perspectives on the Post-2015 International Development Agenda." Accessed August 7, 2020. <http://eds.b.ebscohost.com.proxy.uchicago.edu/eds/ebookviewer/ebook/bmxIYmtfXzEoMDk4OTBfXoFOo?sid=8568d222-13f1-45d3-8fd9-bcbd68a2b72f@pdc-v-sessmgro5&vid=6&format=EB>.
- "The Circular Economy In Detail." Accessed August 24, 2020. <https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/explore/the-circular-economy-in-detail>.
- "The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2019." Text. Accessed August 7, 2020. https://www.un-ilibrary.org/economic-and-social-development/the-sustainable-development-goals-report-2019_55eb9109-en.
- "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development ... Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform." Accessed August 24, 2020. <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld/publication>.

- UNDP. "UNDP Report: Latin America and Caribbean Are 'Biodiversity Superpower.'" Accessed August 8, 2020. <https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2010/12/02/amrica-latina-y-el-caribe-superpotencias-de-biodiversidad.html>.
- Unit, Biosafety. "Climate Change and Biodiversity," August 24, 2020. <https://www.cbd.int/climate/>.
- Vasquez, Patricia I. *Oil Sparks in the Amazon : Local Conflicts, Indigenous Populations, and Natural Resources*. University of Georgia Press, 2014. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt46n84z>.
- "What Is the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change? | UNFCCC." Accessed August 22, 2020. <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-convention/what-is-the-united-nations-framework-convention-on-climate-change>.