



THEME WORK

SUB-THEME:

AGRICULTURE, POVERTY AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY

TITLE OF WORKSHOP

WS 38. Thought of degrowth and agricultural models: what connections for a social and cultural transition?



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Keywords

Thought of degrowth and agricultural models: what connections for a social and cultural transition?

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Description

The number of hungry people worldwide has grown to almost 1 billion. Most of these are made up of the rural poor. According to Olivier De Schutter, UN Special Reporter on the right to food, we must work on —the strengthening of the agricultural sector, especially the small-scale farmers.” Furthermore, almost 1 billion people are at risk of obesity. The (physical and mental) distance between consumers and producers is increasing and food is perceived as a commodity and not as a product of the farmers’ work. This data is consistent with the imagery of unlimited growth that characterises our current thinking and the current system. Introducing the concept of degrowth and connecting it to the agricultural models means to focus on the following issues:

Change from industrialised farming to family farming agriculture. Social recognition of the farmers work and role.

Recognition of positive externalities in the work produced in the community by a quality farming, starting from the labour inclusion of disadvantaged people.

Transition from a state of dependence on agro-business multinational to courses of autonomous plant reproduction, protection and use of seeds and mapping of the species present in the different territories.

Change from chemical agriculture to natural methods and production time.

Transition from a model with a strong concentration of land in the hands of the few to practices that ensure access to land by those who live it and work it (farmers, cooperatives and associative networks of farmers).

Transition from a model that sees producers and consumers as counterparties to a model in which they are configured as co-responsible in the production model.

A special focus on social farming will also be proposed; a system that manages a network of different actors of a territory, contributing to building a sustainable and inclusive model, supportive and respectful of the environment.



“Permaculture proposals and tools for degrowth process in the fields of rural work and agriculture in Brazil”

GUSTACK DELAMBRE E JACQUES DIAS, Mildred Nova Oikos Project — Brazil

ABSTRACT

Keywords : Work, hunger, poverty, Industrial farming, Permaculture, autonomy

The defence rhetoric for unlimited economic growth uses as argument the need to create new jobs in order to increase life quality. We are in Brazil, the sixth world economy in 2011. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) celebrates the reduction of poverty in the country and thanks its Impressive economic growth” for that. A sixth of world’s population is undernourished, although the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) affirms that actual food production could easily feed all. We verify the same scenario in Brazil - one of the largest producers and exporters of food (grains, fruits and meat), one of greatest biodiversity and freshwater reserve of the planet has 6% of its population undernourished and 8,5% in extreme poverty. In terms of employment in rural areas, agribusiness employs in the country only 15% of the Economically Active Population (PEA), against the remaining 85% that works in family farming. Considered as the great strategy for saving the world from hunger, we will present some reasons why the industrial agricultural model (agribusiness) instead of generating better life conditions, is actually causing more damage than benefits for both environment and society. The mechanization of agriculture, the introduction of new technologies (such as genetically molested organisms) and the monoculture cannot be a part of the solution while it follows an economic logic that works against Nature and Man. The problem remains in the conception of development, centered in economic perspectives and strategies to reach a common welfare and wellbeing - and which is logically not suitable to man kind needs. Using Brazil as example, we will investigate the industrial agriculture and its relation to unemployment, environment degradation, disorganized urbanization, hunger and violence and therefore, stressing the reasons and ways to revert such situation. We present Permaculture as toolbox for degrowth process in the fields of rural work and the shared characteristics with the Brazilian Solidarity-based Economy working methods as well as the divergences in terms of market and production relations. Further, we will explore a few contributions of Perma culture for yielding abundance



in agricultural production while increasing life quality and the positive externalities offered by small and medium-scale of organic farming.

“Claiming recognition for geographical proximity within the agricultural supply chain: two case studies from the Veneto region (Italy)”, by Paolo Angelini, Alessio Surian

ABSTRACT MISSING



TACKLED ISSUES

Kuminda presentation: Food as right for everyone → 2003 network formed by 30 associations.
Kuminda festival. Meeting south producers. In the world: 50% food is wasted. Principles of food Sovereignty and responsible consumers.

GROWTH

+Jobs = \$
needs

Dependence on technology

Material consumption

Results: lower resilience to

Economic and ecological shocks

DEGROWTH

Productivity of activity = cover

Development of knowledge by experimentation (commons)

Resilience

- Food security: the right to have sufficient food, without compromising access to others
- Brazilian left = Brazilian right
- What's perma culture ? Interdisciplinary, synergic methodology, the search for covering the needs rooted on ethics. From dependency to autonomy. " Projects beyond our backyards" Brazilian politics on "family farming" are very supported, but they have their dark side too, as it's just a marketing move.
- EQUISTIAMO Local production: GAS Experience: 20 people from different professional background, "foot tour" without high technology, rescue of territory Monti Berici , suffering great demographic dismissing, walking as feeding act, building nets with workers as social tissue, forest management, social agriculture, micro tourism.

GIVEN ANSWER

To start with perma- culture, eco villages are a good way. " Food for everyone", but with meat food? The network doesn't have an official position. They try to educate and form people to a responsible consumption of food.

Abandoned territory: from hills to city, it's not a clear dynamic: starting from ' 70es with young people coming back the natural world

South is searching growth, a minority in the north is looking for de growth.



UNANSWERED QUESTIONS, MESSAGES AND COMMENTS

- Practical sustainable solutions
- Growing South versus Degrowing North
- Conflict between perma culture way of life and agriculture education in schools;
- What technology is useful for transition to degrowth?
- New ways to organise productivity and consumption.
- Renounce to animals technology exploitation.
- Perma culture near or far from the city?
- What value can we bring back to things?



REPORT OF THE ACTIVITY WORKSHOP N°65 ON INTERNATIONAL DEGROWTH NETWORK AND CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

On Thursday, 20th of September there was an activity workshop on setting up an international degrowth network. Issues debated included questions about accountability, legitimacy and transparency and considered the risk of centralization. We decided therefore not to initiate a formal international network. We identified several important projects in order to improve the visibility, internal communication and networking of this growing movement.

In collaboration with Research&Degrowth, we decided to contribute to the evolvement of existing projects:

1) Demagazine website: <http://en.demagazine.eu/>

The main goal for contributing to that website would be to collect texts from regional Degrowth movements, translate them into several languages (in English first), edit them and publish in order to spread Degrowth ideas in respecting the diversity approaches.

2) Degrowth Map: in order to help the Degrowth activists and researchers to connect to each other we would like to create an interactive map.

Contact: Panos(manbat3@gmail.com)

3) Creation of a collective to share experiences from different countries:

In every region, Degrowth activists face the same problems, contradictions and conflicts. Interesting solutions and proposals underway and being developed around the globe. This collective's goal would be to create thematic mailing lists and/or facebook pages in order to initiate discussion and to exchange experiences. This is an open and organic and autonomous roces currently. Mailing lists, FB.

Conact: Anja (anja.humburg@gmx.net)

4) R&D monthly Newsletter. We invite people to send their contributions of degrowth news, activities and publications to expand the scope of this Newsletter

Contact Sheryle (sherylee@gmail.com) and Filka (Filseklova@gmail.com).

5) Degrowthpedia



A wiki about Degrowth was launched a couple of years ago. The founders are looking for volunteers to help them to continue the development of this collaborative information and discussion tool.

Contact Mildred (nova.oikos@gmail.com)

We invite all the people interested in joining one of these open collectives to send an email to the respective contact

The participants of the workshop