

Ibero-American Network for Ecological Economics (REDIBEC)

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III Ibero-American Conference on Development and the Environment

The III Ibero-American Conference on Development and the Environment was held at the Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica (UNA) from 5th to 9th November 2007, focusing on the main topic of “public policies facing the challenge of conservation and development”. The conference was organised by UNA along with the Ibero-American Network of Ecological Economics (REDIBEC), and with support from The World Conservation Union (IUCN).

The Conference gave the opportunity to have a plural scientific and social discussion on concepts, methodologies, and experiences, between the private and public sector, academia, NGOs, and civil society. It was possible to analyse the links between community development, private enterprises, local governments and other state institutions, regarding environment and development options, within the framework of the Millennium Development Goals.

The conference was organised in 4 themes, within which a total of 23 symposia were developed, coordinated both by public organisations (academic and not) and private ones, allowing thus for an open dialogue on sustainability at large. The 4 themes were: 1) public policies and local management; 2) methodological issues regarding the environment and development; 3) Art and culture; and 4) poverty and income distribution. These themes included presentations touching a great variety of topics, such as climate change; local environmental management; environmental business administration; water integrated management; energy; bio commerce; innovation and education for the environment; food security; ethics, poverty and income distribution; environmental economic valuation; and multi-criteria evaluation techniques. In total, more than 200 papers were presented to an audience of 370 people from countries such as Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, and Spain.

In this third edition of the conference it was made clear that links between the different actors in the region are getting more stable over time, opening the door to further collaboration in terms of research, education and publications in the future. Additionally, one of the outcomes of the conference will be a book containing the best papers presented, that is being compiled at the moment. A last outcome from the conference was setting up a steering committee to promote a constituent assembly in Mesoamerica (Mexico + Central America) that will launch the Mesoamerican Chapter of the International Society for Ecological Economics.

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