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“Exploring opportunities ...
for managing natural resources and a better life for all”

Beyond sustainable development in the era of planetary crises: Challenges and insights from Latin America towards deep green transformation

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Abstract

In the wake of accelerated global climate change and expanding civilisational crises, in my talk, I will address how ubiquitous Northern transitions to greener and more sustainable economies and lifestyles are taken up by diverse groups and societies in resource-rich regions of the global South.

To do so, I draw from my longstanding close engagement with Latin America, particularly its Pacific-Andean region. In this context, I will briefly outline the major climate change impact, translated into social, economic and political dimensions, this region is already facing and what can be learned from it elsewhere.

Looking then beyond predominant market-driven approaches and “liberal” perceptions of sustainability, I aim to describe the relevance of diverging understandings and conceptions of relevant climate action, adaptation and mitigation, such as Indigenous and Black-Andean “sustainability from below” through feminist readings of “socioecological care and reproduction”.

Such understandings underpin the worldwide growing number of implemented Earth jurisprudence (rights of nature), but also discussions about *Buen Vivir/Vivir Bien* (good living), based on a different ontological status and biocentric conception attributed to vital ecosystems. Furthermore, they call for a shifted and embodied engagement with our sustaining surroundings through the acquisition of a transformed skills set, focused on encompassing care cultures. Altogether, a more encompassing conception of green transitions becomes identifiable by connecting key insights from the global North and South, which I termed “deep green transformation” (Waldmüller 2024 - DOI: 10.1080/17449626.2024.2379324) and which represents the overall backdrop to my keynote intervention.