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A New Public Policy and Economic Approach to Cultural Sustainable Tourism in the Andes

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Abstract

This research examines the current reality of the sustainable cultural development, in the Cotacachi –Cayapas Ecological Reserve and its surroundings, part of the UNESCO Global Geoparks (2019), as a world heritage site located in South America, in the inter-Andean region of the Republic of Ecuador. The diverse cultural and ethnic focusing on the situation of indigenous and peasant people, looking at the processes of their self-awareness, validation, and empowerment. The problems faced by this community are diverse in terms of their empowerment, low levels of education, low levels of economic development, and social, cultural and political discrimination. Their relationships are not stable and their incomes are variable, because they depend on farming and producing livestock on their small plots and the precarious nature of available work in their rural environment. The research enables us to conclude that participation in organizational groups and processes has strengthened the capacity of leadership to collaborate more actively and effectively in the progress and development of their indigenous and peasant communities. This, in turn,

enhances success of their projects and makes possible the administration of public and private partnerships that permit social and institutional recognition, contributing to improvement in their standard of living and quality of life and to finds and alternative sustainable economy model based on a cultural tourism.

Keywords: indigenous and peasant people, alternative economy, sustainable cultural tourism, political participatory and human rights

Introduction

Sustainable cultural tourism has received much attention in recent years due to the western belief that indigenous people are the protectors in order to consider a space where the human being is reunited with the past, with a history. Moreover, with an infinity of natural, cultural and gastronomic resources, which at first could control as a source of income in which offer important economic benefits, but becomes the exact point where the being human must rethink. However, it has been found that the economic value is seen from the extraction of resources with a capitalist sense, without considering other types of wealth, in which the human being is located.

As a consequence, is necessary to consider valuing a frame beyond the material and the simplicity of the economic and to find a mechanism that allows generating a type of culture that transcends economic expectations and seeks human interest and wellbeing, applying a sustainable transformation through the empowerment and awareness of a new vision of a different economic development.

Undoubtedly, it is evident the neglect of the governments regarding the regulation that drives and supports this historically undervalued sector, as a result , of the null participation in projects, laws that strengthen their communities. Education as an empowering tool might help indigenous and peasant people.

The present paper presents a set of criteria for making a social change and improve their conditions of living by taking action while having knowledge and skills of generate a new value of their Andes culture.

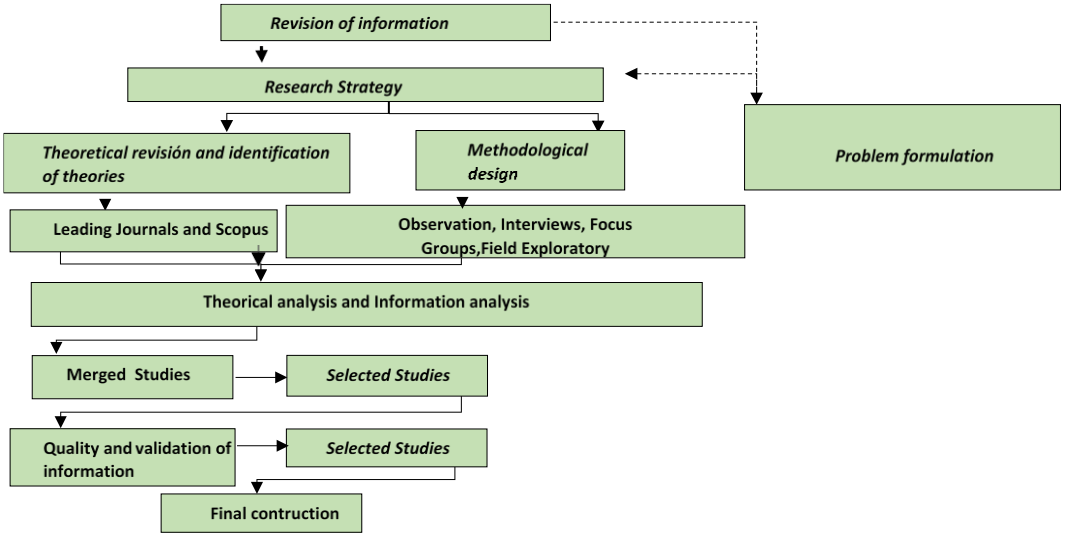
Cuicocha –Lake (Own Resource, 2019)

Methodological Procedures

Qualitative research is interested in the perspective of the subjects themselves (Millan 1974: 38). The focus of the research approach allows for a perspective from the subject's point of view and their culture and environment. It is framed in a research model with greater focus on social- cultural change and alternative tourism because it is based on a recognition and acknowledgment of the intrinsic value of the knowledge of the reality in which the subjects live. It is a systematic process of learning, since it implies that people carry out critical analysis of the situations in which they are immersed.

An approach was made through participant observation, sharing the circumstances, from the daily life of the social subjects, their activities, interests' preferences and environment. Participant observation can be considered the quintessential example of capturing the nature of reality, rather than alternative techniques of qualitative research methods (Callejo, 2002).

Field visits were conducted where the life situation of indigenous and peasant people, their economic, cultural and social conditions, the way of life, working conditions, productive activities and daily life were observed. An in-depth interview was conducted, like an ordinary conversation, with some particular characteristics of participant observation applied (Callejo, 2002). It is about capturing the meanings in an open dialogue that encourages conversation. The interview allows access to the universe of meanings from the perspective of the actors, not only the texts but the situations of the context from the vision and cultural approach of the same. In order to carry out the interviews, it was necessary to establish preliminary contacts, coordinate the times and agree on places, in an attempt to accurately capture the reality of the subjects,



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This paper is based on the systematic review approach, which has been used to answer the research questions presented above. The aim of this working paper is, therefore, to identify all relevant studies of the sustainable cultural development and according to the current state of the research. Therefore, an evaluation of relevant literature and an examination of the current state of affairs will be undertaken.

Toward a Comprehension of Andean World

In the Andes and in the Amazon, the ethno-peasant populations have their own way of conceiving and ordering their lives. This corresponds to a type of perception, political and legal organization of the world, which has its own roots and it is nourished by pre-Hispanic society. Despite the efforts of the hegemonic classes in Latin America to "integrate" in one the characteristics of western societies, a pre-Hispanic spirit remains current and vigorous through knowledge, technologies and values that characterized the pre-Hispanic collective organizations called *ayllus*[1]. Even tough elements from the West are adopted and adapted, they are always in force because they are applied to processes of constant change. As Arguedas, a Peruvian thinker stated once: “the pre-Hispanic society remains in force despite having undergone many changes” (García, 2007, pág. 74).

[1] *Ayllu*: family, kinship system, community. Depending on the characteristics of the natural and sociocultural context, it expands or restricts its meaning. For this reason, it can include from the biological family to the local neighborhood or spiritual affinity. It also encompasses the territory or country that includes soil, subsoil, rivers, lagoons, mountains and domestic upbringing as members of the *ayllu*.

Going beyond this, Andean philosophy is the consciousness of the other, female or male, who has been marginated, alienated, beaten and forgotten. (Estermann, 2006, pág. 13). Andean rationality expresses a serial of principles that constitutes and Andean logic which is its rationality *sui generis*. These principles provoke material manifestations in cosmology or *pachasophia*, anthropology or *runasophia*, ethics or *ruwanasophia* and theology or *apusophia* belonging to the Andean world.

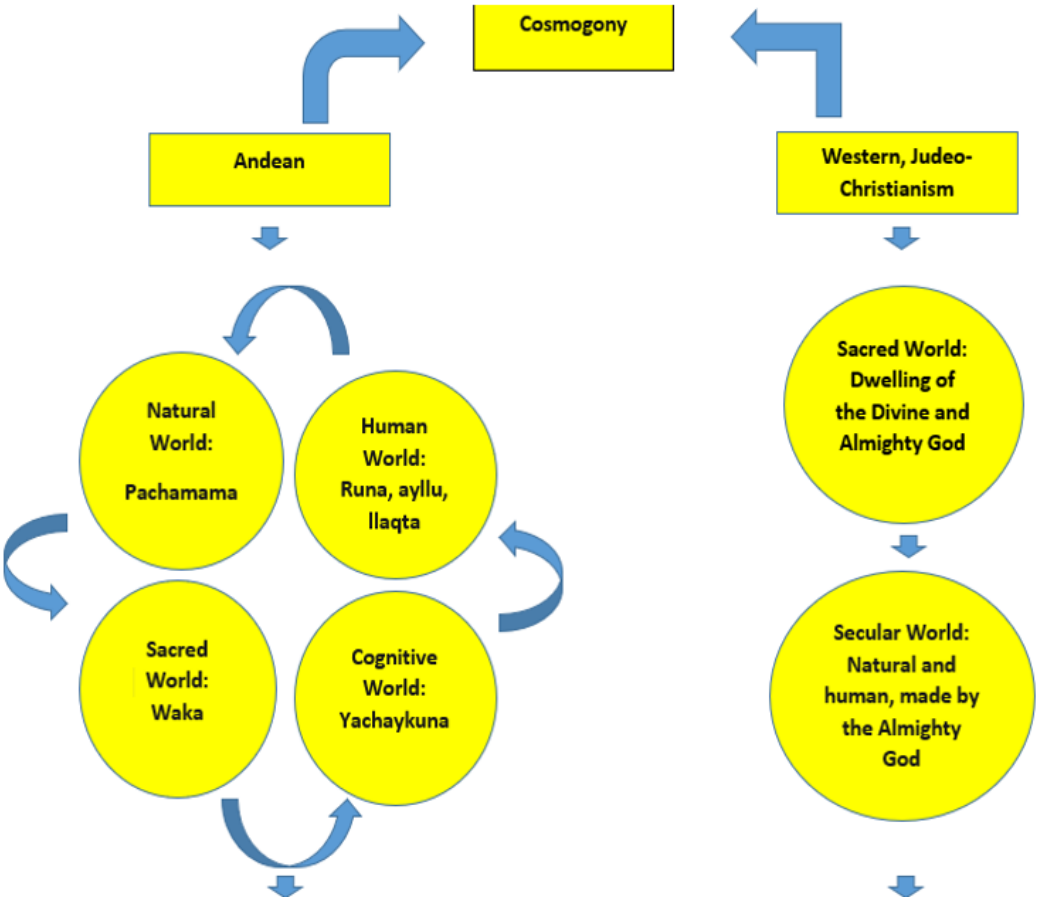
According to Estermann it is possible to talk about an Andean logic meaning a basic structure in the Andean thinking. Following this, Andean rationality reveals, before all, a principle of relation of all with all. Besides, this rationality also implies symbolism, affectivity and integration. (Sobrevilla, 2008, págs. 233-234).If we can feel this way of thinking and relation, it would be easier to comprehend this popular saying from the indigenous world: "*Ruraqman chayaspa, rurapakuna; mikuqman chayaspa, mikupakuna; tusuqman chayaspa, tusupakuna; yachaqman chayaspa, yachapakuna*" (When we get to someone who is working, let us work with him; when we get to someone who is eating, let us eat with him; when we get to someone who is dancing, let us dance with him; when we get to someone who knows, we can learn with him) (García, 2007, pág. 77).

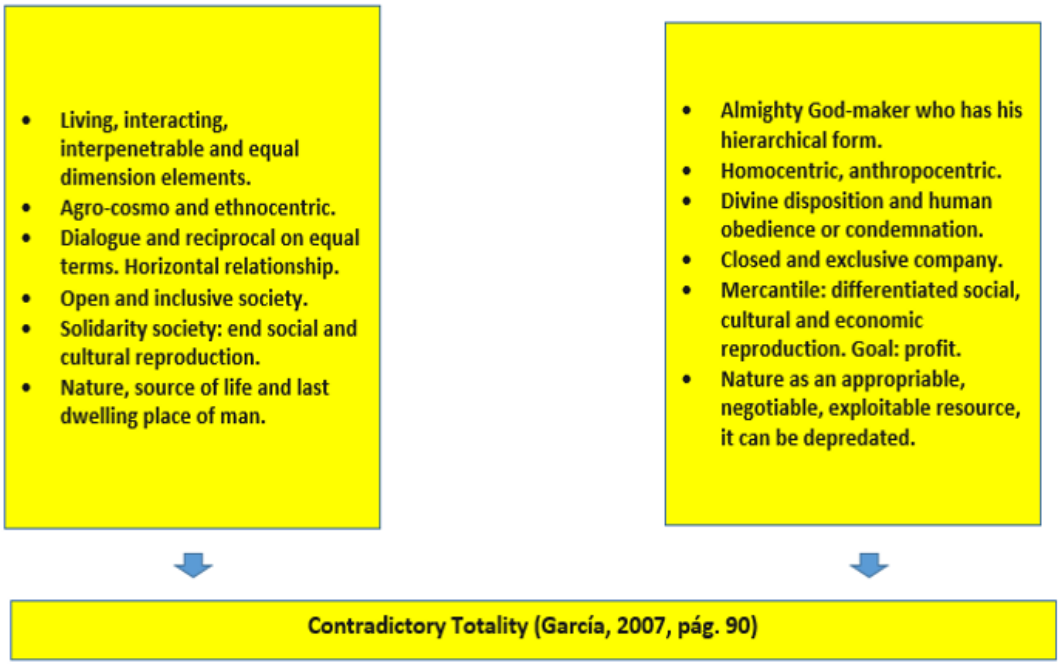
The aim of this essay is the comprehension of sustainable tourism in a world where the indigenous cosmologic thinking predominates. So it is necessary to focus on the Andean thinking first in order to see the way it could be apply to tourism in a sustainable way.

Often in the Andean communities the vision and logic of the ayllu are maintained when they refer that the community is a single thought, a single feeling, a single force. That is why the maxim summarizes the tradition of the Andean ayllu, which is the product of a millennial experience that gives strength to what Arguedas once suggested: "the forging of a magical socialism that would be built from the Andean culture and without "tracing nor copy". The Andean community now represents that tradition of the Quechua and Aymara ayllus. Its historical and at the same time projective meaning seeks the construction of a society with harmony in a changing context, of constant modernization. The following table could establish a line between cosmology and sustainable tourism to make it easier to get:

Since every element in the Andean logic drives you to the awareness of the other and nature, it is important to keep it in mind when a project in sustainable tourism appears. As it can be seen, eastern principles come from Judaism and Christianity

which let us know others as a part and not as a hole of a reality where everybody builds it up. In a Judeo-Christianity and Greco-Roman vision, the center of cosmogony is man, hence his anthropocentrism, unlike indigenous and native communities, where the worldview is structured from the man-nature identity as a collective entity and, therefore, it is agro-cosmo-ethnocentric. According to this so, the Andean *ayllu* is the center of collective life through community forms of organization and action (García, 2007, pág. 80). A structure of the two worlds and logics before us today could be useful to understand this point:





However, this permanence of the Andean culture does not imply that it has been removed from the global scene, in fact, it is inserted in it due to its ability to contextualize elements and manifestations of others, giving a dynamic character to what we have called contradictory totality. Thus, the elements that have been incorporated go through an adaptation process in which they are recreated, reinterpreted and reinvented (Sobrevilla, 2008, pág. 240). Some call this phenomenon "syncretism" and others "miscegenation", but regardless of the appropriate term to call this cultural process, the truth is that it is about incorporations that do not destroy but preserve, which explains the validity of the Andean culture.

How is it possible to talk about a world order where a sustainable tourism could be appeared? Under which conditions a sustainable tourism takes place in an Andean order? Is it possible to dream an anti-capitalism order where mankind and nature could live together? Let us see a sustainability order in a new logic.

Sustainability Logic for a Tourism of Life

Everyone talks about sustainability all over the world. Most of the countries and their institutions proclaim a real change on this. A sample of this is The World Tourism Organization or UNWTO with 156 countries confederated. UNWTO is the United Nations agency in charge of promoting responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism.(OMT, 2020). As a reference to the topic we discuss about, sustainable tourism has objectives (Europraxis, 2007, pág. 19) as it follows:

- Economic viability
- Local prosperity
- Job quality
- Social equity
- Visitor satisfaction
- Local control
- Cultural wealth
- Physical integrity
- Biological diversity
- Efficiency in the use of resources
- Environmental purity

Besides sustainable tourism, the Millennium Development Goals (Europraxis, 2007, pág. 19) are seen as an opportunity to achieve several macro objectives local and abroad. They are:

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Achieve universal primary education
- Promote gender equality and women's autonomy
- Reduce child mortality
- Improve maternal health
- Combat HIV / AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Ensure environmental sustainability
- Promote a global partnership for development

There is a remarkable aspect where objectives and Millennium Goals meet together. In fact, the objectives for a sustainable tourism fit well when you have to eradicate poverty, help women's autonomy as well as gender equality, protect environment and a global partnership promoting. Focus on this, sustainable tourism for Ecuador presents real opportunities to improve the living conditions of the entire population. First of all, it could be through the articulation of private and community businesses in value chains that directly and indirectly generate employment. On the other hand, the demand for tourist services where you can get authentic experiences becomes a great chance to be satisfied.

Challenges presented by the United Nations World Tourism Organization or (UNWTO) to fight against poverty through tourism are:

1. Tourism promotion as an instrument for poverty reduction through a sensitization of actors in the touristic area.
2. Creative and better ways to reshape the visitor spending outcome to poor and local economies ever visited before.
3. Effectiveness of tourism pilot projects and their escalation against poverty.
4. Pilot projects promotion and their several settings widely spread.

In spite of capitalism and its perverse neoliberalism and the way they cause a great damage in the tourism area as they get accustomed to the highest benefit. Also, and according to sustainable tourism and it principles, different and attractive ways to a new approach to the phenomenon must be established now. This paper shows a way where it could be possible. This information will be obtained through qualitative analysis of data applied to the representatives of both micro and small businesses, as well as the enterprises of the popular and solidarity economy.

This will allow to identify territorial tourism systems, in order to seek synergies and empower residents through knowledge transfer or specialized training in tourism-related techniques, such as: lodging, food and beverage, customer service, entrepreneurship, financing, etc. taking advantage of the potential of existing natural, landscape and public resources (CEDIA, 2020, pág. 5).

A sustainable tourism, in this proposal should look like Yasuní-ITT Project proposed to let in soil 846 million barrels of oil from the ITT Block in the Yasuní National Park. In exchange, from the International Community, Ecuador would receive half of what Ecuador would have generated by exploiting the reserves of oil from this place in the heart of Amazonas. Thus, Ecuador establishes goals in the creation of alternative energy sources that respect the environment and in social policies. The total to be raised was estimated at 3.6 billion dollars, half the value of the oil not extracted, in a period of 13 years. The other half would be assumed by the Ecuadorian government (Becerra, 2016, pág. 29).

The main objective of this project is to contribute to the fight against climate change and set up a change of production in the country. This unique and unprecedented initiative on the planet would prevent the emission of more than 407 million tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere as well. For the first time in history, a mechanism was presented that proposed avoiding CO2 emissions into the atmosphere instead of reducing them, and was accompanied by one of a specific proposal to combat climate change: Yasuní-ITT Project. Finally, the Yasuní-ITT main proposal is not only to preserve a piece of the lung of our planet, but leaving the oil under the ground to set an example and make the world aware that a change in the energy matrix is necessary. (Becerra, 2016, pág. 29).

According to this model explored by Ecuador, three kinds of people could appear in a new way of sustainable tourism to economies in Latin America. Assets are those who feel and suffer with the community, that is, those who share daily events, assemblies, tasks, burials, festivities and everything that happens in the community. On the other hand, Cooperators are those who feel but do not suffer with the community, that is, those who have emigrated and from their new places of residence long for and support their people or community. Finally, Defaulters are those who do not feel or suffer with the community, that is, the uprooted who do not participate in the vicissitudes of the community, neither inside nor outside. They are the acculturated, those who have chosen to place themselves in anthropocentric positions.

In this way, assets are the people who really want a change in the economic world order and along endogamy people like tribal communities and some interested persons who are really involved in a new and contra hegemonic way of rule and taking advantage of natural resources. Cooperators are so close to assets, in this case would be millions of tourists all over the world who really want to change the world into a friendly and suitable space for living and share. Defaulters are not interested in such a big and important enterprise and they are allies of nature destruction as well as capitalism rule for every human transaction with other humans as well as nature. Extractivism is an incarnation of a model imposed in Latin America, which essentially maintains a pattern which consists in providing natural resources to satisfy the demands of both the industrialized economies of the North as well as those which are in full growth like China (Chicaiza, 2012, pág. 130).

Following a holistic point of view where Andean logic get into an economic and political sustainable tourism would change upwards the present order. Pachasophia give us a guide to consider both sustainable tourism and economy. Be part of a world where everything is part of everything, a relation of all with all make compatible tourism with nature as well as economy in service of both. Since economic principles take advantage of nature, a new economy can open advantages of sustainable tourism where every gain let them free.

Ways to do it are innovative and rare but a real "new normality" after Covid-19 make it possible if we really want it. This project longs to reach this goal and show a way to do it. All the time reports are declaring the same because political will is engage with a devastating economy that is looking for selfish accomplishments and the highest benefits. This is part of it in a world where sustainability is destined to utopist:

…. Some of these breaches were: that the environmental authority did not verify or require the holder of the concessions, the expansionary environmental impact studies in accordance with current legislation; that the annual programs and budgets were not required, thus limiting the control and monitoring action; nor was it verified that the compliance audit is comprehensive, and that the programs of the Environmental Management Plan are detailed; and finally, that the competent ministries did not develop actions to implement prior, free, and informed consultation processes for the indigenous communities, peoples, and nationalities of the area of influence, in order to obtain their consent for the development of extractive activities. (Chicaiza, 2012, págs. 129-130).

Extractivism, on the root of a neoliberalism that accomplishes goals wherever it can manipulate income out of capitalism strategies works under the following principles:

The territorial reordering based on the commodification of the territories and their integration to the dynamics of financial accumulation of global capitalism

The transfer of macroeconomic decisions to foreign direct investment and investors (especially economic growth, investment and employment).

The geopolitics that integrates extractivism into the new processes of struggle for world hegemony, where the processes of concentration and centralization of capital on a world scale have intensified.

Regulatory convergence towards the definitions of the World Trade Organization (WTO), free trade agreements and the conformation of the investor and foreign direct investment as new subjects of contractuality structured under the rule of law.

Social control and discipline, especially due to conditional cash transfers and the use of social fiscal spending as a political legitimizer.

The integration of territorial infrastructures based on the accumulation of capital and the formation of new power blocks.

The new institutional architecture for regional political integration that alters the blocks of world power (BRICS, UNASUR, BNDES).

Violence, social criminalization and the "heuristic use of fear" as a mechanism for political domination, and the resolution of conflicts across the territories and the control of society by paramilitaries, drug trafficking mafias and terrorism.

Hegemonic and authoritarian political systems supported by election mechanisms.

The epistemological colonization in which universities converge towards market mechanisms (Bologna reforms) and articulate forms of knowledge-power inherent in the accumulation of capital (Verónica Albuja y Pablo Davalos, 2013 , págs. 84-85).

Coming to a Commitment Where a Sustainable Tourism Plan Could Be Joined to An Economic Principle of Responsibility

Tourism could not be longer be part of an industry linked to capitalism. Those called “environmental services” are not only privatization of water, carbon markets, the tourism industry, paying for environmental services, biotechnology; geotechnology, biofuels, among others (Verónica Albuja y Pablo Davalos, 2013 , pág. 83). If ecotourism can become a new economic alternative and a complement to extractive activities with all benefits, conflicts and tensions for indigenous groups, it is not desirable in a context where capitalism has exploited everything (Azevedo, 2007, pág. 198).

Here comes a main principle in the sustainable tourism: “There is no way to conceive ecotourism as a market made up for a group of consumers willing to pay the high prices to satisfy their desire to appreciate wildlife and perhaps experience other cultures, customs and traditions and meet indigenous peoples following the example of indigenous societies” (Azevedo, 2007, pág. 197). Following this perspective, ecotourism initiatives must be prepared with financial, human, marketing, and especially transportation and logistics appropriate resources, in order to achieve the expectations of ecotourists.

Some of the experiences where capitalism takes place over ecotourism ideas and platforms are not good enough to the people they trust in. Those people, especially indigenous ones were able to establish higher levels of control of their territories, in spite of the pressures of the logging, mining, oil and specifically tourism developed by private ecotourism operators. As a matter of fact, they only use indigenous lands and natural resources to take advantage of them as cheap labor in the worst jobs, without bringing them social, cultural and ethnic benefits (Azevedo, 2007, pág. 195). There is no way to talk about sustainable tourism where it is offered as a market –based solutions for sustainable tourism that preserve invaluable social and environmental capital for the well-being of local people around the world as EplerWood International (EWI) declared (Epler, 2020).

EWI provides innovative systems for companies, NGOs and governments to build competitive resource-efficient economies that benefit all members of society. They also provide market research, business plans, financial and investment plans, and other economic and social entrepreneurship tools to help countries or destinations develop the capacity they need to professionally deliver sustainable ecotourism. Finally, initiatives like this oversees the development of sustainable tourism as a tool to economically benefit underserved rural populations and as a means to support the conservation of protected areas and biodiversity (Epler, 2020).

From the perspective that collective initiatives are not viable from the market point of view and in order for them to obtain satisfactory results by generating income through the constant tourist flow, experiences, under any model of operation and support, need to have the following requirements: the sale of quality and differentiated products, facilitating access to all essential information to visitors such as the nature of the offer, location, type of transport, degree of logistics, prices, guide services regional and bilingual. Furthermore, the absence of technical support and training through agreements with local governments are challenges for the effectiveness of such a competitive market, mainly in the Ecuadorian Amazon.

Market and community failures have occurred in general terms due to the absence of investments for the training of indigenous groups so that they can have the necessary skills to enter a market that is very different from their subsistence economy, their way of life, symbols and worldview of the world. Here, the productive chains could be promoted so that the projects do not use their profits in the importation of food, in this way, the costs will decrease and the economic benefits would be greater for the whole community where the project is located (Azevedo, 2007, págs. 196-197). Those ideals could be representative to a devastated economic world that keep on urging on these topics:

- *Industry:* advice on adventure and ecotourism operations, hotels, tour operators, cruises and transportation.

- *Environment:* managing mainstream sustainable development and ecotourism.
- *Poverty alleviation:* creating income-generating opportunities for the bottom one billion.
- *Business:* development of micro and medium-sized companies in local economies.
- *Government:* advice on regional and national planning of tourism development, growth and policies.

Conclusions

As Ecuador and the Andean countries contemplates and navigates through the growing pains associated with any transition from social invisibility nation to a peaceful claim to their ancient cultural rights and find a place with prosperous rights in economics, education and culture, that lets build a new ways of development and could be Andean tourism with its own cultural, economic, and philosophical identity of Latin American indigenous peoples.

Educational training programs, and education more broadly, can help produce a populace with enhanced skills and abilities to support local, regional and national development strategies as well as to promote democratic values, attitudes and behaviors. It is compelling to argue that both phenomena, increasing education and promotion of democratic ideals, are desirable outcomes for an indigenous society struggling to transform itself and to emerge successfully from its forgotten era transition.

In a forgotten society, the reestablishment and consolidation of democratic values, attitudes and behavior—indeed democratic institutions themselves—are paramount. However, democratic institutions alone are not sufficient to guarantee majority rule with respect for minority rights and democratic stability. It is the values and norms to which the citizens adhere that provide the ultimate guarantee. This means a willingness to tolerate the rights of those who disagree with the majority and hold opposing views. In the absence of such tolerance, democratic stability will be weak at best.

Therefore, in addition to support for democratic institutions, there must be ample public support for political tolerance, and elite and powerful groups must demonstrate tolerance towards the opposition and other minorities for a stable democracy to flourish.

Another key component to any notion of democracy and a fundamental building block of democratic theory is the centrality of participation to the democratic process. Education and training programs can foster, encourage and support indigenous community and political social organizations to build a real multicultural state.

Participation in these training programs and organizations often stimulates innovation and promotion in defense of democratic processes and institutions built upon the notions of trust and reciprocity. It is important to support an alternatives approaches of economic development as both an end in itself and because it is a critical element in promoting sustainable development. This objective is facilitated through the establishment of democratic institutions, free and open markets and an informed and educated populace.

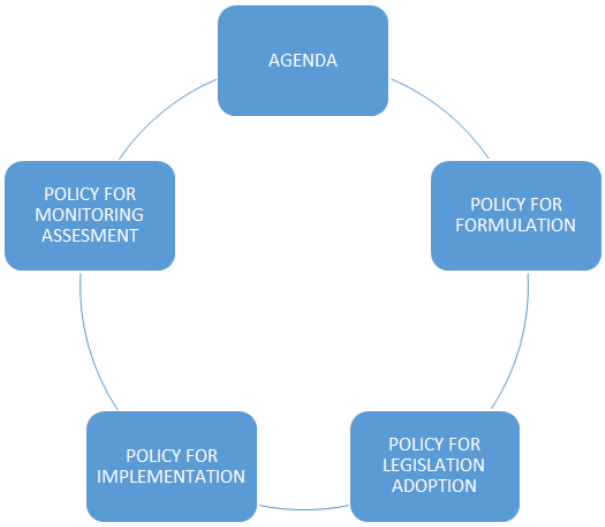
In Ecuador and most of the countries in the Andes, still a restricted political participation by a multitude of factors. Not all citizens have equal access to the political process. Factors affecting access include distance from voting stations, fear of government retaliation, fraud, limit participation and in many cases limitations placed on indigenous and peasant women who are faced with competing obligations in the rural and urban sector, restrictions placed on peasants and indigenous who cannot afford to leave the source of their livelihood, etc. Education has proven to be a powerful predictor of political participation. Specifically, those who have a higher level of education tend to participate more.

Recommendations

Greater and high quality of education for communities of indigenous and peasants definitely equips citizens with the intellectual tools to be able to link their economic, political, social and cultural interests with their behavior in defense of the millenarian natural resources, but, perhaps more importantly, it gives them community respect so that when they participate they will be taken seriously by their peers. Education is directly related to income and those with higher incomes have more free time to participate and find it easier to obtain the resources to participate.

Therefore, future studies that examine the role of the indigenous communities and Pleasants in local, regional and national economic development strategies in society may do well to include a more extensive analysis of the critical roles that increased educational and training programs can have on the institutionalization and consolidation of democratic stability and processes of a new way of economic development based on a cultural tourism for the Andes.

Political process to make a project into reality.



Source: Self-made

The visibility for a political project immersed in social interests and sustainable tourism must be directed through a strong platform for decisions. For this reason, it is considered a relevant organization in the region as the Andean Nations Community (ANC). As it could be inferred from the graphic, an agenda is required to bring about a necessity in order to formulate a first policy in charge of contemplate and analyze reality. This is driven to a formal legislation to create a law and public policies for the Andes countries, integrated as a one community to be implemented in real life and make improvements for its members, and can be determined a new way of social structure with a given order. Furthermore, the whole process is monitoring through a permanent evaluation to check the integrated community of countries and to check the progress and correct procedures.

An example could be given to illustrate the process. An agenda could determine the lack of promoting tourism in the Andes through the governments and its diplomacy services it can be the link between tourism of the Andes and internationals relation of Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia. The configuration of the respective proposal must be written and supported by theoretical and technical criteria. Once a project is discussed and considered by specialists, it goes to be presented and approved by authorities in charge of legislation on this matter. They could declare it as a law to be considered and widely diffused among citizens in order to apply its contents in the problematic area. Moreover, it is strictly revise periodically to improve eventualities.

According to this insight of the political procedure to get a relevant social product, the neglect of the governments regarding the regulation that drives and supports this historically undervalued tourism sector could be come to its end. The participation

in social projects and laws that strengthen a sustainable tourism community could be leaded by the ANC in the region and every nation belonging to it. No more delays, no more particular initiatives, no intermediaries but several proposals from diverse points of view of the ecotourism and its real participants in the field.

Besides, educational new perspectives would be spring out to empowering indigenous communities and peasant people. They will be able to create formational spaces by regular institutions as universities or colleges or be qualified in different areas in order to fulfill old and empty spaces to grow in leadership and local protagonism. Ways to do it are innovative and they compelled to call a "new normality" in order to make it possible if we really want it.

That´s why this project longs to reach this goal and show a way to a new order with an Andean cosmovision as it has been declared before. Nowadays, socio-political aims are engaged with a devastating economy that only look for selfish accomplishments and the highest benefits of some power groups and their interests.

Finally, the role of the indigenous communities and peasants in local and regional has been deplored for years and it is necessary new economic and development strategies to support western civilization. Critical analysis of social and economic phenomena should be increased through these new educational and training programs by new educative institutions raised by the Andean world. Consolidation of real democratic stability and processes of a new way for economic development are required to break old premises as well as prejudices on indigenous and peasant peoples and their protagonic role in a sustainable tourism.

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