

The Pedagogical 'Greenwash' To Ecopedagogy

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Along tortuous, sometimes parallel and sometimes distant paths, two environmental pedagogies have travelled through time: Education for Sustainable Development and Eco pedagogy. The former started with the ground-breaking Brundtland-report in 1987 but trails lead further back, to the Environmental Education founded in the 1970s. The latter stems from the critical pedagogy of Paulo Freire and the more radical calls for systemic changes raised by the environmental movements of the 1970s. Both would claim that they are about learning for the preservation of life on Earth as we know it. Eco pedagogy defined as a critical, transformative environmental pedagogy centred on increasing social and environmental justice. Its ultimate aim is to find a sustainable balance between the conflicting goals of diverse notions of human progress and environmental wellbeing.

One of the most significant contributors to the ecopedagogy movement, Kahn wrote "The next decade will ultimately decide whether education for sustainable development is little more than the latest educational fad, or worse yet, that it turns out to be nothing other than a seductive pedagogical "greenwash". On the other hand, if education for sustainable development is utilised strategically to advance a radical ecopedagogy, it could be the boost that education desperately needs in order to finally begin to adequately deal with the apocalyptic demands now being wrought upon society by planetary ecological crises". Eco pedagogy is essentially literacy education – to read and re-read humans' acts of environmental violence – coinciding with its popular education roots as reinventions of the pedagogies of the Brazilian pedagogue and philosopher Paulo Freire. Eco pedagogy stems from real problems, contradictions and perspectives of life. Eco pedagogies are grounded in critical thinking and transformability to construct learning with increased social and

environmental justice as the ultimate goal. ESD has perhaps not become the vital and decisive injection to environmental education that he was hoping for. The rhetoric of the ESD discourse is clearly different from that of critical pedagogy and critical theory, but anything else would have been surprising; the former is an established part of the UN system and has adopted its lingo, which is quite far from the terminology of Kahn and ecopedagogy.

This difference between how TEK (Traditional Ecological Knowledge) is used in ESD and ecopedagogy respectively also mirrors how critical perspectives are treated. In ESD praxis, critical thinking is emphasised, but it means something else than what Kahn intends with critical ecoliteracy. Critical thinking in ESD refers to an important part of the scientific method – to question truth claims and “think critically about what experts say”. In the list of key competencies of ESD, critical thinking competency is defined as “the ability to question norms, practices and opinions, reflect on own one’s values, perceptions and actions, and take a position in the sustainability discourse”. While, this kind of critical thinking highly commendable, ESD nonetheless lacks the critical perspectives that is at the centre of ecopedagogy. The latter belongs to a tradition of structuralist and materialist critical theory that focuses on power structures and also *name* these structures. In his description of what a critical ecoliteracy should contain, he points to the roles of “colonialism and imperialism,” “industrial capitalism,” “militarism.” The conclusion is that ecopedagogy’s focus on power structures is lacking in ESD, where criticality is a more limited phenomena reserved for singular aspects of modern society rather than modern society *as such*. That is a striking difference between ecopedagogy and ESD.

Critical ecoliteracy should, according to Kahn (2008), however not only focus on the negative in criticising the current, but also on the positive in visualising and mobilising for alternatives. ESD is also not alien to political protests. Yet, that there is a tension between ESD and the radical protests envisioned by Kahn becomes obvious in chapter 7 of the UNESCO report. Here, the “ESD movements developed by youth” are discussed in highly contradictory terms. Vallabh refers to youth-led movements based on “radical system criticism” as being in “discordant harmony” with “the mainstreaming of sustainable development”. She brings up several points of criticism toward such movements, including that they are idealistic,

shallow and biased, unable to upscale their influence and, most remarkable, that they are exclusive toward “others” such as immigrant groups. To find a cure, better to find a balance between “educating” youths and enable them to shape movements of their own. These suggestions remind of traditional methods for co-option such as creating “intergenerational dialogues”.

Thus, within pedagogical content there are large tensions between ESD and ecopedagogy around the meaning of criticality, including also the importance of cultural pluralism. Nonetheless, ESD contains at least some elements of all three ecoliteracies forwarded by Kahn. The development of the pedagogical *content* of ESD – divided into technical/functional, cultural and critical ecoliteracies – has not met Kahn’s hopes, however. Much of ESD seems to be limited to general environmental literacy while cultural and critical perspectives, necessary for comprehending the ecological crisis in its entirety, according to Kahn, are underdeveloped or absent. Kahn’s final judgment over ESD’s development be, not good enough to “actually deal with the planetary ecological crises.” Through ESD educators have a good reason to continue to use inspiration and material from mainstream ESD in their teaching, but in order to evoke an understanding of the systemic foundations and the cultural and social roots of problems such as climate change, it could be complemented with the critical perspectives of ecopedagogy.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ECO PEDAGOGY

The modern environmental movement took shape in the 1960s, alongside other new social movements, protesting and resisting different aspects of modern society. The growing environmental concern had wide effects in many areas and at all levels, and for instance led to the first global UN conference on the environment, held in Stockholm in 1972. There, the foundation was laid for Environmental Education (EE), which took firmer form through the Belgrade Charter in 1975 and the Tbilisi Declaration in 1977 (McKeown & Hopkins, 2003).

Later in the 1980s, the Brundtland report *Our common future* (WCED 1987), famously interlinked environmental, economic and social concerns in the concept sustainable development. Sustainable development stood at the center of The Earth Summit in Rio in 1992. The summit was a large conjuncture of movements, powerful

people and ideas (Warlenius et al., 2015), and also gave impetus to the further developments of both ESD and Eco pedagogy.

Paulo Freire, Moacir Gadotti and Francisco Gutierrez were having lunch in Sao Paulo one day in the late 1990s and came up with the word and basic concept of Eco pedagogy. Along with organising the International Meeting, "The Earth Charter in an Educational Perspective", all three of them then set out to write books on the subject. Gadotti wrote *Pedagogy of the Earth*, Gutierrez wrote *Eco pedagogy and Planetary Citizenship*, Freire however passed before he was able to write another book. Since then, Leonardo Boff of the Liberation Theology movement and multiple others have joined them in Latin America to form what has become an Eco pedagogy movement, based out of the Paulo Freire Institute in Brazil. There are currently 3 Eco pedagogy centres in Brazil. Richard Kahn published the first book in English on Eco pedagogy: *Critical Pedagogy, Eco literacy, and Planetary Crisis: The Eco pedagogy Movement* (Peter Lang, 2010) and says that Eco pedagogy is: "A blending of critical pedagogy and environmental education that will allow each to overcome their previous theoretical limitations towards the realisation of a more inclusive, critical and transformative Eco pedagogy".

STRATEGIES AND BARRIERS IN IMPLICATION

The "Pedagogical Keys" to the vitalisation of the inherent educational processes of Eco pedagogy are:

1. *You make the road by walking* – If pedagogy is a process, then it is made daily. Pedagogy does not exist as a premeditated theory to learn, but as a course to personally discover and create. The steps taken to create the pedagogy are lasting, once taken. Pedagogy is an opening of new paths that are dynamic, unrepeatable, meaningful, and spiritual.
2. *Walking with meaning* – Walking with meaning signifies giving meaning, sharing meaning, impregnating daily practices with meaning, and understanding the meaninglessness of other practices that people will try to impose upon us. Every step of the educative process has to hold personal meaning.
3. *Walking with the attitude of learning* – One is in the attitude of learning when one is open, receptive, and searching for

learning. In other words, when one is acting as a conscious subject of the process.

4. *Walking in dialogue with one's surroundings* – Education is a process of exchange and interactive communication between the educand, her/his surroundings and the educator. It is a process of communication, co-participation, co-production, and co-understanding with those involved in the education as well as with the environment the education is taking place in.
5. *In walking, intuition is the priority* – Intuition plays an essential role in the learning process. Feelings motivate us much more than reason or logic. They give our lives significance. To learn is much more than comprehending or conceptualising a subject. It is to care for, share, give feeling to, interpret, express, and live.
6. *Walking as a productive process* – The educative process must have immediate and permanent results, derived from practice itself. Education is productive when the subject constructs knowledge and expresses it, re-elaborates information, experiments with it and applies it.
7. *Recreating the world as you walk* – Expression is synonymous with education. In that sense, it is contrary to repression, depression and suppression. From the moment in which the student becomes owner of their expression we can speak about education.

BARRIERS

A growing number of texts utilize the terminology of ecopedagogy, without a clear relationship to the ecopedagogy movement described earlier. These include works by Ahlberg (1998); Jardine (2000); Payne (2005); Petrina (2000); Yang and Hung (2004). Indeed, at the same time it was coined by Freire's friend – cum – critic Ivan Illich (1988) to describe an educational process in which educators and educands become inscribed in abstract pedagogical systems, resulting in pedagogy as an end and not a means.

It is noteworthy that the Ecopedagogy movement is best perceived as a loosely knit, worldwide association of critical educators, theorists, non-governmental and governmental organisations, grassroots activities and concerned citizens engaged in ongoing dialogue and political action that is attempting to develop

ecopedagogical praxis in relation to the needs of particular place, groups and time periods.

Both supporters and critics of ecopedagogy agree that historically, critical educators in the West have been largely unsuccessful at addressing environmental issues in their classrooms. However, much disagreement still exists between critics and supporters of ecopedagogy on the ethics, theoretical approach, and methodology of this pedagogical style.

The strongest criticisms of ecopedagogy begins with the idea that Paulo Freire, critical pedagogy's founding figure, was unconscious of ecological challenges. The well-known collection, *Rethinking Freire*, includes strong criticisms of many aspects of critical pedagogy by Illich and eco-literacy teachers, criticisms that necessarily include the ecopedagogy movement. One critic, C.A. Bowers, argues that if ecopedagogy were universally adopted, it would contribute to the hegemonic spread of Western culture and systems, thereby choking out non-Western ways of thinking, viewing, and interacting with the human and built environments. Bowers further argues that adoption of Freirean ecopedagogy would hasten the existence of a world monoculture and would fail to address the systemic roots of the current ecological crisis and fail to protect the commons from further exploitation. In this view, ecopedagogy is akin to an educational Trojan horse that is little more than a vehicle for transmitting Western culture and domination.

Moderate critics of ecopedagogy argue that the critical lens of ecopedagogy can be useful, but that its adherents must be actively critical of ecopedagogy itself. They argue that without a constant focus on understanding and fostering diversity in thought, culture, and ecosystem, ecopedagogy is meaningless and could be counter-productive to its aims. Ecopedagogy has also been heavily criticised for not being critical of the categories that underlie its work. Here, critics argue that in valuing individualism, ecopedagogy fails to attend to traditional eco-centered cultures' already deep connection to the non-human world. Moreover, some scholars from the eco- and critical pedagogical traditions fail to recognize how the "primary categories in classical liberal thought may operate in the discourse of critical pedagogy".

HOW DOES IT DIFFER FROM OTHER PEDAGOGIES

Ecopedagogy scholar Richard Kahn describes the three main goals of the ecopedagogy movement to be:

1. Creating opportunities for the proliferation of ecoliteracy programs, both within schools and society.
2. Bridging the gap of praxis between scholars and the public (especially activists) on ecopedagogical interests.
3. Instigating dialogue and self-reflective solidarity across the many groups among educational left, particularly in light of the existing planetary crisis.

Angela Antunes and Moacir Gadotti (2005) write: "Ecopedagogy is not just another pedagogy among many other pedagogies. It not only has meaning as an alternative project concerned with nature preservation (Natural Ecology) and the impact made by human societies on the natural environment (Social Ecology), but also as a new model for sustainable civilisation from the ecological point of view (Integral Ecology), which implies making changes on economic, social, and cultural structures."

According to social movement theorists Ron Ayerman and Andrew Jamison, there are three broad dimensions of environmentally related movements: cosmological, technological, and organisational. In ecopedagogy, these dimensions are outlined by Richard Kahn (2010) as the following:

- The cosmological dimension focuses on how ecoliteracy, i.e. understanding the natural systems that sustain life, can transform people's worldviews. For example, assumptions about society's having the right to exploit nature can be transformed into understanding of the need for ecological balance to support society in the long term. The success of such 'cosmological' thinking transformations can be assessed by the degree to which such paradigm shifts are adopted by the public.
- The technological dimension is two-fold: critiquing the set of polluting technologies that have contributed to traditional development as well as some which are used or misused under the pretext of sustainable development; and promoting clean technologies that do not interfere with ecological and social balance.

- The organisational dimension emphasizes that knowledge should be of and for the people, thus academics should be in dialogue with public discourse and social movements.

Some of the questions that are asked by Eco pedagogy, while other pedagogies neglected, which it attempts to respond to are;

- How can we, as citizens of the planet, participate in the creation of a world that we want instead of simply observing those who are profiting off of extraction and exploitation create our world for us?
- What does an education look like that can encourage people to face what is happening, take responsibility for ourselves and work to create healthy, vibrant resilient communities that serve everyone, no one excluded?
- What kind of education is really relevant today, given our current globalised condition cum social and ecological crisis? (Action, 2011; Practicing Freedom, 2011).

Classic pedagogies were anthropocentric. Eco-pedagogy is based upon a planetary understanding of gender, species, kingdoms, formal, informal, and non-formal education. Our point of view is more comprehensive – from man to planet, beyond genders, species, kingdoms – evolving from an anthropocentric vision to a planetary understanding, to practicing planetary citizenship, and to a new ethical and social reference – planetary civilisation. Eco-pedagogy is a fitting pedagogy for the times of paradigmatic reconstruction, fitting to a culture of sustainability and peace, and, therefore, adequate for the Earth Charter process. It has been gradually growing, benefiting from much input originated in recent decades, principally inside the ecologic movement. It is based upon a philosophical paradigm.

From the perspective of pedagogy of liberation, educational activity starts from discussions of social and political issues and actions on the immediate social reality as it is. It seeks to discuss and analyze the emerging social problems in different communities in order to understand their determinants and promote the organisation of groups for actions capable of transforming the social and political reality. The teacher, in this context, is an active coordinator who organizes and operates jointly with students (BRAZIL, 1997, p. 30-31).

Education is configured as a process of “conscientisation”. The conscientisation is not only being aware of reality. The

conscientisation means not only to immerse in the reality but through critical analysis to unveil the reasons for your situation, and to become able to take a transformative action on this reality (GADOTTI, 2000, p. 103). Educational action thus consists primarily in this: to make explicit the human and social conflicts and challenge individuals and groups to interact and take action in order to overcome them. Pedagogy of liberation makes oppression and its reasons an object of reflection for the oppressed which will result in their engagement in the fight for their freedom. This is a participatory pedagogy to be made and remade (FREIRE, 1975).

ITS SIGNIFICANT ROLE

As a movement and an approach to education, Eco pedagogy is alive; it is open and fluid to be defined by its practitioners who critically engage with it. In this way it remains continuously relevant. Eco pedagogy increases the Eco literacy and it also help in development of the environment care characters. It can act as an element of citizenship education. Eco pedagogy has a major role in the educational goal attainment, especially in Education for all. It helps in sustaining life and it strengthens the ESD. Eco pedagogy leads a path to sustainability and it is considered as the most suitable pedagogy for the earth charter process. Eco-pedagogy is not just another pedagogy among many other pedagogies. It not only has meaning as an alternative global project concerned with nature preservation (Natural Ecology) and the impact made by human societies on the natural environment (Social Ecology), but also as a new model for sustainable civilisation from the ecological point of view (Integral Ecology), which implies making changes on economic, social, and cultural structures. Therefore, it is connected to a utopian project – one to change current human, social, and environmental relationships. Therein lies the deep meaning of eco-pedagogy, or the Earth pedagogy as we call it.

One of ecopedagogy's goals is the realisation of culturally relevant forms of knowledge grounded in normative concepts such as sustainability, planetarity (i.e. identifying as an earthling) and biophilia (i.e. love of all life). Ecopedagogy's primary goal is to create a “planetary consciousness” through revolutionary teaching and learning. The movement aims to create educational programs that interrogate the intersection of social, political, economic and environmental systems. As an outgrowth of critical pedagogy,

ecopedagogy critiques environmental education and education for sustainable development as vain attempts by mainstream forms of pedagogy seeking to appear relevant regarding current issues of environmental degradation. Ecopedagogy has tried to utilize the ongoing United Nations Decade of Educational for Sustainable Development (2005–2015) to make strategic interventions on behalf of the oppressed, using it as an opportunity to unpack and clarify the concept of sustainable development.

Eco pedagogy as an element of citizenship education

Citizenship education gives people the knowledge and skills to understand, challenge and engage with democratic society including politics, the media, civil society, the economy and the law. Emerging from popular education movements in Latin America, ecopedagogy is a critical environmental pedagogy which focuses on understanding the connections between social conflict and environmentally harmful acts carried out by humans. These connections are often politically hidden in education.

Ecopedagogy Frameworks within Eastern Citizenship Frameworks include the publicity, how to make the public aware of the importance of the environmental pollution, not just allow the students, but the general public, I think the whole society should have the same awareness, that we should protect our planet, and we should, everybody must do their job to protect the environment. Ecopedagogy is concerned with reflection on morals and the environment and how this reflection can lead to action. From this perspective, environmental morality is also social morality since it is impossible to separate social and environmental issues – they become socio-environmental. There are two ways to conceptualize this connection in which we highlighted in some of our previous research projects as cited.

Harmony Within Citizenship and Environmental Pedagogies is an important aspect. Environmentally good actions are also the responsibility of all citizens, because we all are connected and we have to live in the same planet, so no one can escape if the planet is polluted. I think that is the important part of citizenship education now, how to be a responsible citizen. That can protect our environment. Learning how to live in a condition less favourable is a means of maintaining harmony, which is a very significant goal or philosophy of life. (Liang, 1930, p. 9). The prioritising of social

harmony over biocentric needs as an educational point could be against environmental pedagogues' goal to help understand the importance of environmental wellbeing. The anthropocentric aspects of ecopedagogy can counter this possibility through its focus on socio-environmental connections – which promote environmental wellbeing in conjunction with individual-social harmony. In ecopedagogy, problem-posing the inseparability of social conflict and environmental devastation is key; thus, returning to this analogy, ecopedagogues would teach that the house is closely tied to both the wellbeing of those who live within the house and to the society, or spheres of societies, in which the house is built upon. In shallow models of environmental pedagogies such connections are not taught the focus on harmony minimizes environmental problems; however, within ecopedagogical models, harmony is directly linked to environmental wellbeing.

Eco pedagogy as an effort to increase student Eco literacy and the development of environmental care characters

Implementing the Environmental Education Program to improve students' intelligence on the environmental conditions or eco-literacy of students can be seen from several aspects. It will affect the improvement of aspects of student attitudes. Increasing eco-literacy or ecological literacy is needed by all people including students to understand, determine attitudes, be active and have high enthusiasm about what to do.

The importance of increasing the knowledge of students about the environment to make students who have broad insight into understanding environmental conditions, so that the creation of ecological literacy or eco-literacy of students will be created. Planting a conscious and caring attitude towards environmental conditions will shape the character of students who have the nature of responsibility. Increasing the eco-literacy of students in the aspects of activity can be seen from the daily activities of students such as the responsiveness of students in understanding the environmental conditions.

The importance of fostering the idea of eco-literacy or environmental literacy in various patterns and lifestyles is currently a global environmental issue and is the main reason for the need to foster the idea of eco-literacy. Through ecological or ecolithic literacy, the closest and simplest things in life-related to the environment

begin to be organised and preserved. Students must be accustomed to having a critical view of the importance of partnering with nature and preserving it for the sake of sustainable survival. Ecoliteration at the same time is a critique of specialisation that can dominate education, educational tendencies located indoors and eliminated from the natural environment, decreasing our capacity for aesthetic appreciation, and planting limited abilities to understand existing phenomena. Ecological competence is very closely related to the formation of knowledge and understanding of students about the environment followed by the development of values and applied in skills and ecological participation in everyday life.

Ecoliteracy in ecological competence means understanding the principles of natural ecological community organisations and then being able to compile human communities according to the same principles, especially in terms of studying communities both inside and outside of school. The concept of ecological competence emphasizes the sensitivity and concern of students to solve environmental problems in everyday life to the formation of ideal perspectives and ethics on the environment.

Eco pedagogy for the Attainment of Education for All

There are some basic principles outlined in the Eco pedagogy Charter, which have been elaborated on and interpreted by subsequent works. Through these principles, Eco pedagogy can attain the Goal-Education for All. Some of these principles include:

- *Social, Ecological and Climate Justice*: Not one or the other – but justice for all life, centering the voices of those who are most impacted by our current injustices. Eco pedagogy is a critique of environmental education which draws false lines between “nature” and society, ignores the economic and social oppression at the core of environmental destruction and invisibilizes environmental racism.
- *Popular Education*: As an heir of Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Eco pedagogy is grounded in popular education in which power is shared, participatory dialogue is the key methodology, learning leads to action and learning starts from and responds to the learners’ lived experiences.
- *Post-Issue activism*: Issues of social and economic justice, democracy and ecological integrity intersect and are

interdependent. Ultimately none of them are possible without all of them intact. Educators can choose whichever issue their learners are most personally connected to as an “entry point”.

- *Planetary Citizenship*: Our lived reality is becoming globalised, we should globalize our sense of community, responsibilities and our commitments as well.
- *Art Education*: Eco pedagogy encourages people to develop the capacity to feel, intuit, imagine, create, relate and express themselves. In this way we move from object to subject, able to participate in articulating and creating the world we want. This implies that the multiple languages/intelligences of theatre, music, visual art, photography, dance, etc. are fundamental to engage as tools of expression and creation in the educational project.
- *Care*: Dis-care of each other and of the planet has contributed to our current planetary crisis. Care can “conjure the strength to search for peace in the midsts of conflict”, “rescue the dignity of the condemned” and “permit a revolution of tenderness to prioritize the social over the individual.” – Leonardo Boff, Saber Cuidar.

Eco pedagogy for Sustaining Capitalism or Sustaining Life!

As numerous studies have revealed, ongoing economic reconstruction programs that seek to integrate regional economies into the global neoliberal framework appear not only to have generally failed to improve most people’s lives, but have disastrously grown the gaps between the rich and poor (Scott, 2001; Reuter, 2007; Pew Research Center for People and the Press, 2003). In educational circles, for instance, theories opposing the instrumental extension of global capital into the Third World date to at least the early texts of radical theorists such as Paulo Freire and Ivan Illich, who promoted “cultural action for freedom” (Freire, 2000) and a founding form of post-development theory (Rahnema and Bawtree, 1997), respectively.

There is also the political and economic global Third Way of so-called liberal centrists like Tony Blair and Bill Clinton, whom the New York Times has referred to as the “Impresario of Philanthropy” (Dugger, 2006) because of his Clinton Global Initiative and his work on behalf of disaster relief related to the recent Asian tsunami and Hurricane Katrina. The rhetoric of this approach champions

sustainable development as a win-win-win for people, business, and the environment, in which the following policy goals are upheld: 1) development "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Brundtland, 1987) and 2) development improves "the quality of human life while living within the carrying capacity of supporting ecosystems" (Munro and Holdgate, 1991). In its tendency to deploy quasi-leftist slogans.

Sustainable development has increasingly become a buzzword uttered across all political lines; Eco-pedagogy is a pedagogy centered on life: it includes people, cultures, *modus vivendi*, respect for identity, and diversity. It understands the human being in evolution, as an "incomplete, unfinished, and non-conclusive" being, as stated by Paulo Freire – a being in continuous development, interacting with others and the world. The prevailing pedagogy is centered on tradition, on what is already concluded, on what oppresses students by the way they are tested. With eco-pedagogy educators must welcome students. Their welcome and care are the basis for sustainability education. The theory of a new spirit of capitalism is not directly related neither to sustainable development nor pedagogy, but there are obvious parallels. Both the ecological movement, with its regard of the nature as authentic (Ibid., p. 447), and the critical pedagogy movement, aiming for liberation from oppressive institutions (Ibid., p. 125) are parts of the artistic critique of capitalism.

Eco pedagogy as the Appropriate Pedagogy to the Earth Charter Process

The sustainability values promoted by the Earth Charter have terrific educational potential: the preservation of the environment depends on an ecological conscience and shaping this conscience depends on education. It is here that eco-pedagogy, or Earth pedagogy, comes into play. It is a pedagogy to promote learning as the "meaning of the things from everyday life," as stated by Francisco Gutierrez and Cruz Prado. We develop this sense as we go, experiencing our context, and in this process, we open new trails – we do not merely observe the journey. It is then a democratic and understanding pedagogy, a pedagogy for everyday life.

Education is connected with space and time where relationships between the human being and the environment actually take place.

They happen primarily at the emotional level, much more than at the conscious level. We do not realize them, and many times we do not know how they happen. So, eco-education is necessary to bring them to the conscious level. And eco-education requires a pedagogy. As emphasised by Gaston Pineau, a series of references are associated with this: the Bachelardian experience; studies on the imaginary; the trans-versatility, trans-disciplinarian, and inter-cultural approach; as well as constructivism and alternative pedagogy. These days, we need an eco-pedagogy and eco-education. We need an Earth pedagogy precisely because without this pedagogy to re-educate men and women, we can no longer speak of Earth as a home, as a burrow for the "animal-man", as Paulo Freire said. Without a proliferation of sustainable education, Earth will be perceived as nothing more than the space for our sustenance and for technical-technological domination. But, it will not be a living space, a space giving us "solace" and requiring from us "care". It is in the context of the evolution of ecology itself that eco-pedagogy appeared – and is still in its infancy today – having been initially called "pedagogy for sustainable development," but which has now gone beyond its initial purpose. Eco-pedagogy is in development either as a pedagogical movement or as a curriculum approach. Eco-pedagogy implies redirecting curricula to incorporate values and principles defended by the Earth Charter.

With the support of the Paulo Freire Institute, Sao Paulo City (2001-2004) used the Earth Charter to train education managers for the Unified Educational Centers dedicated to developing educational, cultural, sport, and leisure activities. Education leaders were trained on the principles of the culture of peace and sustainability so that they can incorporate them in their educational projects and in their decision-making. The Earth Charter was submitted as an educational project during this process. Training education, in the fullest meaning of the words, is a very fertile field to promote the principles and values of the Earth Charter. The preparation of social studies teachers is another strategy to practice the principles and values of the Earth Charter. The Paulo Freire Institute was responsible for the direct education of 2,500 teachers and ten thousand children involved in the project. The Earth Charter was one of the documents used as a basis for reflecting on education and on the city, and it also guided the education of children. Based upon the Earth Charter, social and environmental issues related to the city were discussed as

well as priorities for the budget, which included the direct participation of the population.

The Earth Charter has contributed to the development of sustainability initiatives in schools and, principally, in communities. But, we still need to broaden the Earth Charter's recognition and acceptance around the world as a mobilising force toward a culture of peace and sustainability, as a way to celebrate diversity. As a call for unity, it can be used to develop the meaning of responsibility with respect for quality of life and to become a force to fight terrorism based on a global consensus. Faced with the possibility of planetary extermination, the Earth Charter presents alternatives based on a culture of peace and sustainability.

Eco pedagogy as a path to sustainability

When we have a clear intention to act to make this world a better place, we are surprised by our intimate feelings and a very powerful force is awakened that spreads to the environment. The Eco-Schools Program of Puerto Rico that would enhance the integration of the principles of ecopedagogy (pedagogy that instrumentalizes the Earth Charter) to its vision and strategic plan. The Eco-Schools Program adopts a systemic model of community outreach that pursues cultural transformation by integrating the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. Strengthening these efforts within the framework of the Earth Charter could offer us the opportunity to move towards holistic educational philosophical currents that tend to have broader and sustained impacts over time. The Earth pedagogy movement's theoretical foundations configure principles of sustainability, bio sensitivity, ethics of care and planetary citizenship, offering an alternative project to neoliberal society and economy.

A system of categories emerged that incorporates the onto-epistemological assumptions and pedagogical presuppositions of ecopedagogy and the pedagogical approaches and intervention practices of three organisations that promote a sustainable culture: Earth Charter International, the Centre for Ecoliteracy, and the Eco-schools Program. This integrated system of categories could very well serve as a reference when designing, implementing, and evaluating educational programs aimed at sustainability.

Ecopedagogy participates in the assumptions of the ecological paradigm in education. On the one hand, it favors a critical and systemic complex understanding of the world; on the other hand, it

is oriented towards the common good, solidarity and compassion with the community of life on the planet; and, on the other hand, it requires a praxis that favors the critical construction of a sustainable culture. Ecopedagogy promotes a holistic education for the school context. The holistic vision in education privileges life and context in its intention to construct meanings, and to propitiate the full development of the learner to evolve to levels of greater transcendence. This integral vision of the learner could enhance the development of his or her multiple intelligences, especially the emotional, social, and ecological ones; dimensions of human intelligence that expand from the personal sphere to relationships with fellow human beings and the community of life on the planet.

The Puerto Rico Eco-Schools Program promotes environmental education for sustainability through the research-action-reflection method, the integration of environmental lessons into the curriculum, projects, and the celebration of specific activities. The Eco-schools Program in Puerto Rico demonstrates commitment to the integration of the principles and values of the Earth Charter, which together with the SDGs is used for the conceptualisation of the curriculum.

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