



GLOBAL ECONOMY & SOCIETY

**“Environment and development in Latin-America.
Central discussions around the role of the State, the Society and the market”**

Course syllabus 2024

Lecturer: Dr. Pía Marchegiani

From: 14th August

To: 2nd October

Credit Hours (total): 15 hours

Time: 10 am – 12 (except class 7, from 10am -1pm)

Room:

Contact: pia.marchegiani@gmail.com pmarchegiani@flacso.org.ar

1. PRESENTATION

Global capital has managed for the last couple of decades to move unregulated through the world economy, ensuring that the global value chain selects goods and services from places with higher comparative advantages, regardless of its impacts on territories, natural goods, communities and societies. However, the Covid-19 pandemic and the conflict in Ukraine caused the disruption of value chains, the arrival of a new security discourse and a re-arrangement of priorities and agendas, particularly in the Global North. Thus, on-shoring strategies started complementing off-shoring ones.

For Latin America, which has integrated into this global system by providing its natural resources to the central powers since its early independence, the changes in priorities in the Global North can bring both challenges and opportunities. While the extraction and export based model has shaped the regions' economy and society for centuries, and has provided some benefits, Latin America remains the most unequal region in terms of wealth distribution, and is the region where more people lose their life defending the environment. Moreover, its economy remains little industrialized, highly in debt and dependent on the volatility of the international markets.

From the first two decades of the 21st, the extractive activities (due to the high commodity prices)

have expanded to unforeseen and unexpected areas causing the increase of socio-environmental conflicts and persistence of internal inequalities. This came together with first, a push towards large-scale infrastructure as a new investing trend of the global financing system to yield extreme capital returns. These types of investments are promoted as key to close the infrastructure gap and integrate the continent and its resources to the new emerging societies. Infrastructure projects are often implemented through public-private partnerships that offer State guarantees to private investors, but at the same time threaten to diminish public goods by causing new indebtedness waves. Second, in an urgent and compelling climate crises scenario, the race to acquire the so-called critical minerals (that are essential for the energy transition) has opened a new chapter in a geopolitical battle to control the supply chain of minerals such as lithium. Argentina, Bolivia and Chile hold around 60% of the known reserves of this mineral in their high-Andean wetlands, and are enthusiastic about new opportunities to re-think development, this time integrating industrializations policies.

Politically, over the last two decades, the region experienced a fluctuation between progressive governments, and liberal governments with opposing views on how to organize the economy and society. On the one hand, progressive governments tend to assign the State a major role in defining development paths, enabling different forms of integration to global debates and spaces and have had some achievements in terms of social welfare policies. On the other hand, liberal governments propose a less autonomous definition of development emphasizing a less conflictive integration with global markets and in cases, a setback in social rights and claims. In both, the debate on the role of natural resources as well as the environmental conflicts that arise remain central to the development debate. However, to add complexity, the extreme right has also appeared in the political scenario challenging the democratic consensus.

The seminar aims to discuss the challenges and opportunities that the current mode of globalization presents to Latin-America's natural riches and human capital. By drawing from different cases and experiences, the seminar seeks to debate the following questions: Which are the development debates, agendas and options for Latin America in relation to its natural resources? How relevant is the State, and its institutions, in the current global context? What is the role of social movements in challenging the scenario; how can their forms of resistance and participation within the global interconnectedness impact the political agenda?

2. CLASS REQUIREMENTS

The module "Global Economy and Society" is made up of the seminar "Environment and development in Latin-America. Central discussions around the role of the State, the Society and the market" and the seminar "Global and regional dynamics on transnational corporations. Understanding corporate capture".

The final grade of the entire module will be composed of:

- A common final paper according to the guidelines (60%)
- A group task per each seminar (30%).
- Participation in classes (10%).
- Attendance: 80% is encouraged and justified absences are considered in an integral manner.

3. SCHEDULE

(All texts are available in soft copy)

- 1. 14th August - From global to regional debates: Are natural resources a curse or a blessing for Latin America?**

The session discusses the challenges for Latin-America's integration to global economy in the XXIst century by revisiting and bringing to date a number of debates about development and the current trends of globalization.

Readings:

- a) Burchardt H.J and Dietz K. (2014). (Neo-) extractivism – a new challenge for development theory from Latin America, *Third World Quarterly*, pp. 468-486
- b) Hildyard, Nicholas (2017). Licensed Larceny: Infrastructure, financial extraction and the global South. (chapter 5)

2. 21st August – The ecological crises and the different views of Nature. Commodities, strategic goods and common goods.

The session discusses the different dimensions of the ecological crises and presents the different views, understandings and politization of nature.

Readings:

- a) Porto-Goncalves Carlos Walter and Leff, Enrique (2015). Political Ecology in Latin America: the Social Re-Appropriation of Nature, the Reinvention of Territories and the Construction of an Environmental Rationality, *Desevolvimento e Meio Ambiente*, Vol. 35, dezembro 2015, doi: 10.5380/dma.v35i0.43543
- b) Riofrancos, Thea (2022). The Security–Sustainability Nexus: Lithium Onshoring in the Global North. *Global Environmental Politics* 2022; doi: https://doi.org/10.1162/glep_a_00668

3. 28th August – Is the State still relevant? Development horizons; an approach to different rivalling models in the region.

The session presents and discusses the main development narratives in Latin-American countries reflecting on the current shifts from progressive to liberal governments and back to progressive. These include: conventional (liberal) development, neo-developmentalism, post-development.

Readings:

- a) Bresser-Pereira L.C. (2006). The new developmentalism and conventional orthodoxy, *XI Congreso Internacional del CLAD sobre la Reforma del Estado y de la Administración Pública*, Ciudad de Guatemala, 7 - 10 Nov. 2006
- b) Svampa, Maristella (2013). Resource Extractivism and Alternatives: Latin American Perspectives on Development in: Beyond Development; alternative visions from Latin America; *Fundación Rosa Luxemburg*, Quito-Ecuador.
- c) Gudynas, E. (2013). Transitions to post-extractivism: directions, options, areas of action. In: Beyond Development; alternative visions from Latin America; *Fundación Rosa Luxemburg*, Quito-Ecuador.

4. 4th September – Minerals for the energy transition – The case of lithium: a discussion on emerging tensions, opportunities and challenges for countries in the region.

The session presents the case of lithium as a critical mineral needed for energy transitions to face the climate crises. Through the case of mining, it discusses on the one hand, the emerging tensions between the Global North and Global South. On the other hand, the

opportunities and challenges for Argentina, Bolivia and Chile to participate in lithium's global value chain by producing batteries, while ensuring communities rights and avoiding environmental damage.

Readings:

- a) Kramarz, Teresa; Park, Susan and Johnson Craig (2021). Governing the dark side of renewable energy: A typology of global displacements, *Energy Research & Social Science*, Volume 74, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.erss.2020.101902>.
- b) Pelfini, Alejandro, Fulquete, Gastón, Marchegiani Pía, and Cristel Lucas (2020). Neo-extractivism, Developmental Models and Capital Formation: Substitutive Natural Resource Governance in South America. En Sujatha (ed.), *Global Capital and Social Difference*. New Delhi, Routledge.
- c) Jérez, Bárbara, Garcés, Ingrid and Torres Robinson (2021): Lithium extractivism and water injustices in the Salar de Atacama, Chile: The colonial shadow of green electromobility. *Political Geography*, Volume 87, 2021, 102382.

Complementary material:

- d) Revette, Anna C. (2015): This time it's different: lithium extraction, cultural politics and development in Bolivia. *Third World Quarterly*.
- e) In the name of lithium, documentary available at: www.enelnombredellitio.org.ar

5. 11th September - Socio-environmental conflicts I: bottom-up approaches and demands from social movements

The session gives an overview of socio-environmental conflicts by presenting the main characteristics, demands and challenges of social movements opposing extractive projects and policies.

Readings:

- a) Stahler-Sholk, R., Vanden H.E. and Kuecker G. D. (2007). Globalizing Resistance: The New Politics of Social Movements in Latin America, *Latin American Perspectives*, Vol. 34, No. 2, Globalizing Resistance: The New Politics of Social Movements in Latin America (Mar., 2007), pp. 5-16
- b) Verweijen Judith and Dunlap Alexander (2021): The evolving techniques of the social engineering of extraction: Introducing political (re)actions 'from above' in large-scale mining and energy projects. *Political Geography*, Volume 88, June 2021, 102343.

Complementary readings:

- c) Bebbington A., Bury J., Humphreys Bebbington D., Langan J, Muñoz J.P., Scurrah M. (2008). Mining and social movements: struggles over livelihood and rural territorial development in the Andes, April 2008, *BWPI Working Paper 33*

Complementary reading:

- d) Urkidi L, and Walter M. (2011). Dimensions of environmental justice in anti-gold mining movements in Latin America, *Geoforum*, November 2011.

6. 25th September – Socio-environmental conflicts II: Strategies, challenges and opportunities of collective actions in the Global North and South

The session discusses different collective action cases and analyses the strategies, achievements and learnings of the actors involved. These cases include: first, the mobilization of civil society seeking the clean-up of Matanza-Riachuelo water basin (Buenos Aires, Argentina) one of the most polluted in the region, and its institutional response. Second, the case of the Escazú Agreement, a regional treaty on access rights

(information, participation and justice) in environmental matters and human rights defenders. Third, the case of Kachi Yupi a community protocol to provide conditions for dialogue with indigenous communities in Salinas Grandes and Laguna de Guayatayoc in Argentina.

The session comprises a group presentation and discussions on social movements in the Global North and South (Group Task; part 1).

Readings:

- a) Spadoni, E. (2013), The role of the ombudsman in environmental conflicts: the case of the Matanza Riachuelo Basin, *Ambient. Soc.* vol.16, n.2, pp. 47-62.
- b) Barchiche, D., Hege, E., Napoli, A. (2019). The Escazú Agreement: an ambitious example of a multilateral treaty in support of environmental law? IDDRI, Issue Brief N°03/19
- c) Marchegiani, Pia and Parks, Louisa (2022): Community protocols as tools for collective action beyond legal pluralism – The case of tracks in the salt. In Fabien Girard, Ingrid Hall, Christine Frison (editors): Biocultural rights, indigenous peoples and local communities, Protecting culture and the environment, Routledge, Londres.

7. 2nd October - Socio-environmental conflicts: group task (3 hour class)

The session comprises group presentations and discussions on social movements in the Global North and South (Group Task; part 2).