

Integral Ecology and Education for Sustainable Development – Alumni Seminar in Costa Rica 2023

Detailed Project Description:

Within the framework of the project, two consecutive training seminars for Alumni and Alumnae will take place. The first seminar was held in Santiago de Chile/Chile (from October 13th to 16th, 2022) in cooperation with the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile. The second seminar will take place in Heredia and Limón/Costa Rica (from November 17th to 20th 2023) in cooperation with the Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica under the title

»The Cry of the Earth« – decolonial, indigenous and ecofeminist perspectives of an »integral ecology«

The central challenge of international cooperation and intercultural scientific work is the ecological crisis. Although it varies from region to region, it is not a regional but a global crisis and calls in particular the countries of the northern hemisphere into duty to assume responsibility for the future of creation and to place their own actions and reflections in the service of sustainability and a »good life« for the whole creation in a process of transformation. As early as 1972, the Club of Rome referred to »The Limits to Growth« in its first report, today the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research speaks of the »planetary boundaries«, Pope Francis has spoken of the »Cry of the Earth« in his texts »Laudato Si'« and »Querida Amazonia«.

These are the guiding themes that were the starting point for fundamental theological and ethical, but also social science and pedagogical reflections on the relationship between God – Human – World in the two Alumni Seminars. Based on this, perspectives for sustainable education will be developed in an interdisciplinary discourse.

In various sciences, including theology, philosophy and pedagogy, there has been a new approach to creation-theological questions in recent years. Sustainability is not only a genuine topic of social ethics, but is also being developed through a fundamental approach to the God-World-Human relationship, to basic anthropological questions of human freedom and responsibility and the ethical perspectives associated with them, and is being treated in the field of pedagogy in new approaches to an education for sustainability. In the Latin American context, indigenous theologies have evolved that develop new ecological perspectives, as Pope Francis, among others, has taken up in his letter »Querida Amazonia,« and ecofeminist perspectives have been developed at grassroots educational centers.

The first seminar laid the foundations for an integral ecology and education for sustainability in an interdisciplinary discourse. The second seminar will focus on the new indigenous, afro-descendant and ecofeminist approaches, but both perspectives will be related to each other in the context of the two training seminars. The new actors are of particular importance, as they challenge the European scientific discourse and give important impulses for a »transformation« of science in the service of

sustainable education. In view of the limits to growth and the finite nature of the planet Earth, it is a matter of seeking and pursuing new paths that make it possible to live together and well on this one planet.

In this sense, the planned Alumni training seminar in Costa Rica is directly related to the BMZ's Reform Concept 2030, which aims to give special space to reflection on ecological challenges in international cooperation. In this sense, in a »world in upheaval« (cf. Reform Concept 2030), the seminar reflects on the concept of »integral ecology« from theological, philosophical, social science and pedagogical perspectives in liberating perspectives and in the service of sustainable education. Especially in view of these central questions for the future, the contribution of religion in an intercultural and interreligious perspective plays a special role. The new social and ecclesial actors – indigenous peoples and women – are in special focus at both training seminars.

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Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica (UNA): Escuela EcuMénica de Ciencias de la Religión;
Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile (PUC): Facultad de Teología and Facultad de Filosofía;
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