

The Extractive Imperative

The Achievements and the Structural Limits of Latin American Neo Extractivism and the Emergence of the Post Extractivist Debate

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We review the structural limits of leftist “neo extractivism” and discuss the emergence of alternatives, including multilateral³, governmental⁴ and civil society approaches.⁵

Leftist governments in Venezuela, Bolivia and Ecuador have tried to maximize the fiscal benefits of the exploitation of natural resources, achieving high levels of growth, reducing poverty and inequality in the context of the super cycle.⁶ But the super cycle is over and the structural limits of neo extractivism have also become evident: deepening of a primary exporting condition, exposure to the volatility of commodities, evidence of Dutch Disease, gross productivity gaps, negative environmental and social impacts, social conflicts, etc.⁷

In response, a debate is emerging on how to move beyond “neoliberal extractivismo” and “neo extractivism” exploring avenues for productive diversification, sustainable use of renewable natural resources, using less fossil energies, protecting the environment, and guaranteeing indigenous territorial and consultation rights.

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³ CEPAL, Pactos para la Igualdad, Santiago de Chile, 2014.

⁴ Gobierno del Perú, Ministerio de la Producción, Plan Nacional de Diversificación Productiva, Lima, 2014.

⁵ Red GE, Caminos de Transición. Alternativas al extractivismo y propuestas para otros desarrollos en el Perú, Lima, 2014, en <http://www.redge.org.pe>

⁶ CEPAL, Panorama Social de América Latina, 2013 y Osvaldo y Mikio Kuwayama Rosales, China y América Latina y el Caribe. Hacia una relación económica y comercial estratégica, 2012.

⁷ Alicia Bárcenas, Gobernanza de Recursos Naturales en América Latina y el Caribe, CEPAL, 2012 and OCMAL, Cuando tiemblan los derechos. Extractivismo y criminalización en América Latina, Quito, 2011. En <http://www.conflictosmineros.net/biblioteca/publicaciones/publicaciones-ocmal/cuando-tiemblan-los-derechos-extractivismo-y-criminalizacion-en-america-latina/detail>