

1. Climate Change

Mexico currently has two big infrastructure projects ongoing as part of the political campaign promises made by the current president. One is an oil refinery and the other is a multi-state train track, both in the southeast of the country.

As for the location, this part of the country concentrates the 75% of biodiversity as well as people living under extreme poverty. For one, the refinery project is advertised as a renewed motor for the oil industry in Mexico, which has a sentimental national pride behind it that the federal administration has managed well. As for the “Maya train”, the president has said that it will “develop” this part of the country with little explanation of what that means.

One strong argument for the refinery is that while Mexico is a medium-size oil extractivist country, it sells it in crude state which is refined and transformed into gasoline abroad and is later imported to Mexico, increasing its cost. On the Maya train, it is also true that due to the geography and current infrastructure, the transportation of good people and goods is rather difficult and costly, for one, Cancún as the main touristic center in the country imports more goods from Florida than from neighbor states (Feliciani, 2019).

The COVID-19 pandemic is disrupting virtually all aspects of life, including transportation and tourism. If we understand this moment in history as the gateway between the old and the new world, we must ask ourselves if we want to continue with extractivism and nature devastation as a path to thrive as society and humanity.

References

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2. COVID-19

While the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have been routinely measured and multiple attempts to diagnose its lasting effects, most of these have been surpassed by the next one with a more obscure outlook. I have been performing a monitoring of the crisis from a socio-economic perspective in the Latin America region for the past few months for an NGO and I have witnessed the worsening of the forecasts from multiple angels.

In their last report, the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, to mention just one, has estimated that the progress made in the region to fight extreme poverty in the last 30 years has already been lost. This means that 231 million people are falling into poverty and 96 millions will go from poverty into extreme poverty (ECLAC, 2020). But stepping aside from an institutional assessment, in a personal setting, talking to my family and friends in different places of Mexico and the world, there are bad news over the place. Most of us by now have a close person who has fell sick and some may even have died. Most states in Mexico have been constantly bouncing between tight restrictions one month with fewer cases, which leads to ease of measures next month to see cases rising in an apparent endless cycle. News keep informing that a vaccine (to my best knowledge, the only lasting solution), is on the way but with no real timelines, but which also opens up many questions as of how it will be distributed among the population and where I consider there's a chance for it to be commodified.

Indeed, there's no normal where to go back, nor we should desire to go back there. We're building a new reality and this represents an important chance to ask ourselves how is it that we want to live in society. I hope we all move to a more compassionate and less individualistic social contract.

Reference

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