

SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT IN THE BASIN OF THE RECONQUISTA RIVER - INCLUDE EDUCATING

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I live in a neighborhood in the basin of the Reconquista river. This is an area of great environmental pollution. There is pollution in the water, in the air, in the landscape. People live in very poor conditions. They do not have essential services such as water, sewer, and in many cases there is no garbage collection.

Much of the population is unemployed and many children and youngsters are not attending school. They are not motivated to study. They do not see a good future in education.

About five million people live in this area in conditions of extreme poverty and social vulnerability to environmental

It is necessary to address the issue of caring for the environment with the seriousness required to be able to reverse the habits that caused damage, so far, to our planet. In particular in the basin of the Reconquista, considered the second most polluted basin of the República Argentina., putting at risk human health and the sustainability of the ecosystem. Incorporate the idea that with the passage of time and by keeping harmful behaviours towards the environment we will lose the opportunity to have a better quality of life, we are going to deteriorate our planet and the beings that inhabit it.

Educate about the importance of caring for the environment is essential to train the population and teachers so that they have the necessary tools to educate young people about who we are... one more element of nature, and that we as a society depends on the future of our planet

This work arises from the commitment assumed by the National University of Tres de Febrero with citizens who inhabit the area of the basin of the Reconquista river.

Bring these issues to the community, but with a purpose, which is not only the information, but the formation of a conscious citizen participation to be able to reverse the habits that caused damage to our planet.

The National University of Tres de Febrero is approaching citizenship workshops environmental education to the inhabitants of the Reconquista river basin. Students, teachers and non-teaching. Everyone must participate

The basin of the Reconquista consist of an area of one hundred and sixty seven thousand hectares through eightenn counties of Buenos Aires province.

On the high plain of the basin seventy two thousand hectares are used for agricultural activities. In the medium and low plain ninety five thousand hectares are strongly urbanized. The population of the basin is not homogeneous, on the contrary it shows strong discontinuities that can be understood in the light of the relationship established with economic activity prevailing in each sub-area: those areas in which there is strong presence of agricultural activities with very low population densities and more urbanized areas show very high population densities

Most densely populated counties are Tres de Febrero, General San Martín, Vicente López and Hurlingham. It is necessary to emphasize that all of these counties are affected by frequent floods.

The basin has a strong percentage of population in conditions of extreme structural poverty, measured by the indicator of unsatisfied basic needs (NBI)

The poor state of the infrastructure of urban health services, such as the supply of drinking water, collection and treatment of sewage fluid and disposal of solid waste strongly affects the environmental quality and is closely linked to the health and well-being of the population. Historically, the treatment of such waste and fluids has not been covered by the process of provision of health services.

This situation affects the population, deteriorating current resources and the future of young people.

The National University of Tres de Febrero is linked to educational institutions and social organizations establishing records of commitment to improve education.

Generates a network among teachers at all educational levels to improve the learning of students in the engineering sciences that guarantee, starting from the basic knowledge of citizen for the care of the environment.

The demographic growth of the basin is related to the rise of subdivisions in the 50's and 60 which were sharing the process of urban and industrial development. The lack of control and urban planning, gave rise to the lots in areas lacking basic sanitation infrastructure or in areas of low elevation corresponding to the Valley of the river flood, by which these populations were seriously affected by the floods having suffer in many cases evacuations. In this area are located three hundred settlements where there live approximately Ninety thousand families in conditions of extreme poverty, of which 20,000 are located on the banks of the River

Both industrial activities as residential grew in disorderly way sharing the same spaces

Approximately, there are about Thirteen thousand industrial establishments (of synthetics, ferrous metals, food - preparation and preservation of meat-, slaughterhouses, tanneries, electric storage batteries, rubber, iron and steel, among other items). Of which about three hundred thirty are considered of 3rd category, involving greater environmental risk.

Another problem that generates a strong environmental impact in the basin is the management of urban solid waste

The problem of waste is not only an environmental issue but also a social problem, around which are the developing survival strategies system excluding the poorer sectors.

Land affected by sanitary landfills cannot be used for human settlements over a 50 year period, however vast sectors of the population are living on garbage and waste. Another problem is lack of collection services in areas where settlements and villages, where trucks cannot enter.

Neighbors accumulate garbage, or throw it in ditches, streams or on the same bank of the river.

As a result of the above-mentioned problems prevailing pollution levels are now a serious danger that puts at risk the viability of the ecosystem.

From the entry of the waters of the Moron Brook is produced a significant change in the quality of the water, being detected an alarming deterioration. Studies indicate that from this point pollution should be categorized as very high.

A high load of organic matter which belong to household waste, out stand according to the data from the 2010 census, 52% of the population in the Reconquista area lacks sewer service, some counties ¹the population without sewer reaches values higher than 95%.

90% of the sewage are flushed raw and more than 3000 atmospheric trucks daily flow directly into the river. While recently inaugurated in Hurlingham a plant of treatment of the four originally planned, this operation provides only a partial response widely surpassed by demand.

The problem of the availability of drinking water is of high gravity as the water supplies are contaminated. The coverage of water in the basin is 60%, however arise strong asymmetries, while Vicente López mains water coverage, is total in Malvinas Argentinas 90% of the population lacks this service.

The problems of the Delta is a special case, given the complex dynamics of the River, aggravated by the construction of the relief channel to prevent flooding.

It is important to highlight the lack of epidemiological studies and the lack of systematic recording of such diseases, which makes difficult the assessment of the damage to the health of the affected people.

Teachers of the basin report the large number of absences for health reasons, mostly respiratory problems caused by high air pollution

It should be noted that efforts to integrate the various problems affecting the basin from a more global approach, were reflected in the report of the Ombudsman of the people of the nation and the papers presented at the seminar "Poverty and environment in the basin of the Reconquista". Various governmental actors, national universities, of Civil society organizations and the dioceses of San Isidro and Merlo-Moreno participated in this seminar.

¹ Ituzaingó, José C. Paz, Malvinas, Hurlingham

Different works coincided in pointing out the complexity of the problem and the need for further studies on the characteristics of the people seated around the basin and its relations with the environment as a necessary condition to guide the design of policies for tackling the problem. All these agencies agree that there are necessary tools to educate the population on the problem of the environment for the inclusion of children, women and teenagers to a society healthier through agreements between universities and civil agencies.

Conclusion

Those who inhabit the basin live with poverty, social inequality and environmental pollution that cause health problems and a great despair.

Since 1970 I live in Loma Hermosa, tres de February county , one of the county of the middle basin of the Reconquista. It is my duty to work on their problems and that is what leads me to deliver this report.

The National University of Tres de Febrero, as institution situated in the area of the basin, is involved with social projects for the inclusion of children and gives me the opportunity to work on this very important matter, not only for the inhabitants of the basin, we are... everyone affected by environmental pollution.

It is said that what is not spoken about, it is not seen, and if it is not seen, it does not exist.

The basin of the Reconquista affects many people, women, men and children who deserve better and sustainable healthier life to ensure them a harmonious and dignified future.

Our duty is to give them the tool that we have, is to educate children and adults, teachers and non-teachers. Our duty is to include educating everyone

Thanks, so much

