

Plenary Session 3

Development and sustainability: a new productive paradigm?

We are assigned, as society, by the responsibility of the environmental crisis emergence. Some features of the environmental crisis are the non rational exploration of the natural resource, the accelerated loss of biodiversity, the exacerbated consumerism, the high level of air and water pollution, the greenhouse effect and the enormous quantity of waste pollutants. However it is necessary to highlight that the environmental crisis did not upsurge as the result of environmental problems themselves but it developed as a consequence of the global dynamics of capital expansion. The “environmental global crisis” is related to a set of multidimensional and concomitant crises, like the financial crisis, which make clear the limits of the current accumulation regime, based on the intensive use of non renewal resources.

Many authors stress the idea that there is a “civilization crisis”. It is not a new concept; it has been used to emphasize the inter-relationship between the several current crises: the financial crisis, the food crisis and the environmental one.

After the financial market meltdown speculative activities migrated to the commodities markets, mainly the food markets. It is possible to foresee inflationary pressures in basic products like rice and corn, with dramatic consequences for the poorest people of the underdeveloped countries. The economic success of the bio-fuels aggravated the food crisis because million hectares of farmland are taken out of food production.

The process of climate change is a consequence of the capital accumulation regime, which it leads to exhaustion of natural capital quicker than their renewal capacity, resulting in water shortages and floods and many other natural disasters

The plenary session “Development and sustainability: a new productive paradigm?” wants to put into question the sustainability of the current development model and promote the debate about the required conditions for a transition towards a new development mode based on a rational exploration of non renewal resources, which must be socially inclusive and sustainable. It is proposed to discuss what are the main obstacles (technological, political and economics) for a transition towards a techno-economic sustainable paradigm.

Also we want to analyze how the social and environmental sustainable paradigm can open new opportunities. In this regard, it is intended to identified the new technological paths that are consolidating while the expansion of sustainable paradigm.

Guiding Questions:

1. What are the main obstacles to the consolidation of a sustainable techno-productive paradigm?
2. Are the social and environmental sustainability opening new windows of opportunity?
3. What are the technological trends that have been consolidating? What opportunities for the productive sector there are?
4. What types of innovation policies are required to strengthen the low-carbon technological trajectory?
What types of innovation policies are required to promote a socially inclusive technological trajectory?