

UABDIVULGA

BARCELONA RECERCA I INNOVACIÓ

12/2010

ICTA publishes a special section in *Ecological Economics*



Researchers from the UAB Institute of Environmental Science and Technology (ICTA) and other universities have published a special section in the journal *Ecological Economics* analysing the link between ecological economics and political ecology. This issue stems from the institute's research on impacts and resistance at "commodity frontiers", where extraction of natural resources and disposal of toxic wastes produce a range of economic, environmental, cultural and social conflicts.

The special section, titled *Social Metabolism, Ecological Distribution Conflicts, and Valuation Languages*, comprises ten articles. The first (by M.C. Vallejo, from FLACSO Ecuador) presents the material flows of Ecuador and the resulting socio-environmental conflicts caused by these flows. Three other articles, by Leire Urkidi, Martí Orta, Duygu Avc?, Begüm Özkaynak and their co-authors, focus on the extractive industries of mining and oil (in Chile, Turkey and Peru). Four articles centre on biomass conflicts: from soy plantations in Paraguay and the North of Argentina (Nancy Arzipe), the viability of *Jatropha Curcas* in Tamil Nadu, India (Pere Ariza), indigenous struggles against deforestation in the Queen Charlotte Islands, Canada (Louise Takeda), to the

conflicts born from the export of timber in the South of Cameroon (S. Veuthey and J.F. Gerber). Finally, waste disposal conflicts are presented: Federico Demaria on the export of ships sent to be dismantled in Gujarat, India and salvaged for other metals; and an article by Giacomo d'Alisa and co-authors on the domestic waste crisis in Campania, Italy.

According to the editors, ICTA researchers Joan Martínez-Alier, Giorgos Kallis, Sandra Veuthey, Mariana Walter and Leah Temper, this special section offers a range of theoretical frameworks and methodologies culled from ecological economics, industrial ecology, environmental sociology, economic geography and political ecology that help explain the causes of the increasing number of resource extraction and waste disposal conflicts and to understand them in a historical perspective.

The authors are indeed aware that in such conflicts several valuation languages are deployed (economic valuation, sacredness, environmental values, human and indigenous rights), and they ask the question, who has the power to simplify complexity and impose one particular language of valuation?

Link to the special section [*Social Metabolism, Ecological Distribution Conflicts, and Valuation Languages*](#)

Joan Martínez-Alier

joan.martinez.alier@uab.cat

References

"Social Metabolism, Ecological Distribution Conflicts, and Valuation Languages". Joan Martínez-Alier, Giorgos Kallis, Sandra Veuthey, Mariana Walter, Leah Temper. *Ecological Economics*, Volume 70, Issue 2, Pages 153-158 (2010).

[View low-bandwidth version](#)