

## **Socio-environmental conflict, citizen participation and territorial dispute: Contributions from Community Environmental Psychology**

### **Conflicto socioambiental, participación ciudadana y disputa territorial: La mirada de la Psicología Ambiental Comunitaria**

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#### **Background**

The planet is suffering a global warming and climate change phenomenon in which the neoliberal capitalist development model as a main actor is greatly responsible for socio-environmental problems that take us to a new geological era called Anthropocene. In Chile, under the current model, conflicts in which the territory is disputed, the valuations that are made from it and the common goods that exist are multiplied. Issues that have communities, businesses, central, regional and local governments as the main actors.

#### **Aims**

Seen through community environmental psychology's view, the main objectives of investigation are related to two areas: situate, characterize, describe and analyze the socio-environmental conflicts that develop in the Province of Petorca; and specify and understand the citizen participation practices that communities perform to defend their territory and the way they have lived and produced for decades.

#### **Method & procedures**

The Collective Mapping technique is used as a visual, dialogic and participative methodological tool that has been developed during three work sessions together with the socio-environmental movement "No a la Termoeléctrica Quebradilla de La Ligua. This has raised information and reflection from the community organization. This was later studied through a content qualitative analysis that allowed for a greater and better understanding of what the Mapping results delivered.

#### **Results & discussion**

Within the most relevant results emerges within the comunidad de La Ligua and from the socio-environmental conflict, an organized collective action that stimulates and defends the sustainable construction of the territory that the inhabitants have generated for decades. With this incentivizing environmental consciousness and citizen participation as basic elements to understand the issue and oppose the thermoelectric and the productive initiatives that prey on the ecosystems inhabited. Furthermore, the authorities and governmental institutions have been asked to stop a project that has been studied and catalogued as harmful to the environment and the local productive initiatives, in a global context of warming and climate crisis.

#### **Conclusion**

The contribution of Environmental Psychology as a discipline in the strengthening of the organized community and local governments, direct their efforts in transforming the complex reality that is lived, contributing to environmentally, socially and economically sustainable paths, on the basis of citizen participation and the control of the authorities in the administration of the territory. In addition to the above, it highlights the leading role of collective subjects as interpreters of their life situations and as managers of the changes necessary to problematize reality. With this, harmonious and integrated living conditions with nature are established, and searches for horizons linked to good living and the transversal dignity that this entails. Finally, the demand for transparency in public and political action establishes the need for profound transformations in the institutional mechanism to respond to multilateral requirements to strengthen citizen participation in socio-environmental issues that affect and influence the lives of people, communities, and inhabitants of various species that inhabit the area.

**Keywords:** citizen participation, community environmental psychology, socio-environmental conflict, territories

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