

# **THE ECOMUN**

## **A mesoeconomic currency conserving the ecosystems in Mexico**



The Ecomún  
Multitrueke Mixiuhca

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# The worldwide financial system is destroying the planet and the people livelihood.

- Huge amounts of money are needed to finance large megaprojects of transnational corporations.
- One of the great problems in Mexico is the dispossession of territories belonging to their original inhabitants.



# The volatile masses of speculative money find materiality when they are invested in territories.

- The outcome is the contamination of ecosystems, the creation of poorly paid jobs and decomposition of social tissues.



# Current Mexico's challenges: Politics and Macroeconomics

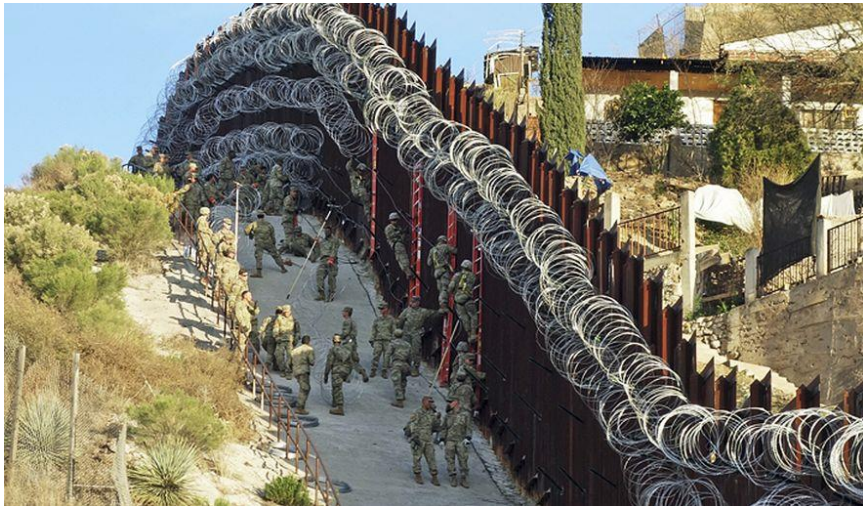
- After more than 90 years of the same political regime, the political regime changed in 2018 when López Obrador won the presidential elections.
- The current neoliberal system started in Mexico in 1982. This system increased in 1994 with the North American Free Trade.
- Today many public sectors are privatized or in the process of being privatized.



# Current Mexico's challenges: geography and migrants

“Poor Mexico, so far from God, so close to the United States”

*Dictator Porfirio Díaz*



- The migrants: A humanitarian crises

# Current Mexico's challenges: Water



- In México there are 42 main rivers
- 7 of 10 rivers are polluted

- Two thirds of the 700 watersheds are polluted



Más de 200 cuerpos de agua dulce están clasificados por la Conagua como fuertemente contaminados

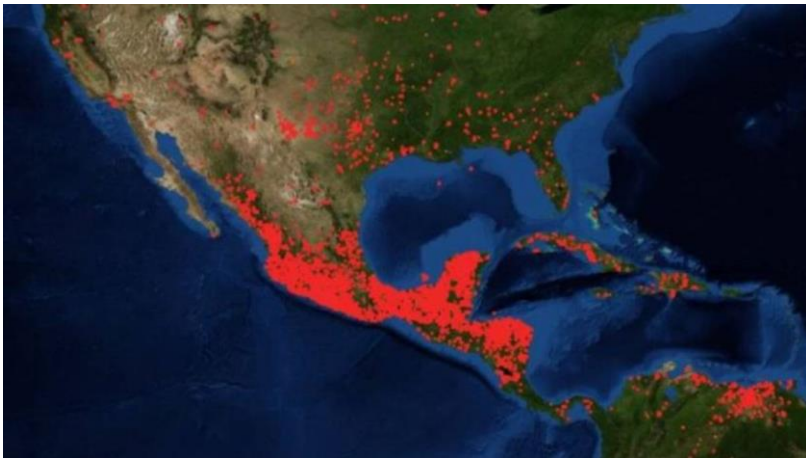


# Current Mexico's challenges: Land



- 30% of its territory is in possession of mining corporations

- The 90% of the country is deforested



- Mexico is one of the three more deforested countries in the world.

# Current Mexico's challenge: Security

- Feminicide: 9 women are killed every day.
- Over 40,000 people have disappeared
- Many reporters say that Mexico is more dangerous than Siria
- Five years ago 43 students were disappeared in Ayotzinapa.
- 125 environmentalists were killed in the last 10 years



**We live in a silent war**



# Social movements and organizations.

- In the 70's different movements of indigenous and peasants were influenced by the "liberation theory"
- In 1985 we suffer a great earthquake in Mexico City, many people organized themselves in order to find solutions.
- In 1994 the Zapatista's Army of National Liberation (EZLN in spanish) shocked the country with the rise of an indigenous people who claimed self-government on its own territory.
- In Mexico City it was organized the World Social Forum WSF-Mexico in 2008, 2009 and 2010.
- In 2014 and so on there have been in Mexico big demonstrations because the insecurity: thousands of disappeared people were reported. One case is still today very outrageous: 43 students were supposedly killed by the mexican state and narcotrafickers.

# Ours alternatives

Alternative  
economics:  
solidarity and  
ecological  
caring.

Defense of the  
commons:  
water, land, air,  
seeds, jungle,  
forest, energy

## **Axes of ecosystems alternatives**

Integral health,  
self-managed  
and responsible  
caring

Communication,  
education, free  
art and  
emancipation  
culture.

Food  
sovereignty:  
urban gardens,  
agroecology

# Food sovereignty

## Urban gardens



## Agroecology: The “Milpa” and the “Chinampas”





# Defense of the commons

The isthmus is ours



Our mantra: “Without corn there is no country”



**SIN MAÍZ NO HAY PAÍS**  
ALIMENTOS CAMPESINOS PARA MÉXICO  
**¡EL HAMBRE NO ESPERA!**



# Solidary economy in México

- Since the 60's there have been much more grass roots groups dedicated to the popular organization.
- The concept of solidary economy was promoted since the 90's, with the first group "ECOSOL".
- The concept spread among NGOs, cooperatives, private companies and recently the government.
- The solidary economy is a widely used concept... so used that it lost depth.

**Community  
currency  
networks**

**Barter markets**

**Community radios**

**Food production  
cooperatives**

**De-  
schooling**

**Hack-labs**

**Organic markets**

**Community libraries**

**Solidarity  
consumption  
groups**

**Solidary Economy**

**Independent  
publishers**

**Seeds banks**

**Ecotechnics**

**Urban  
gardens**

**Femenine circles  
on health**

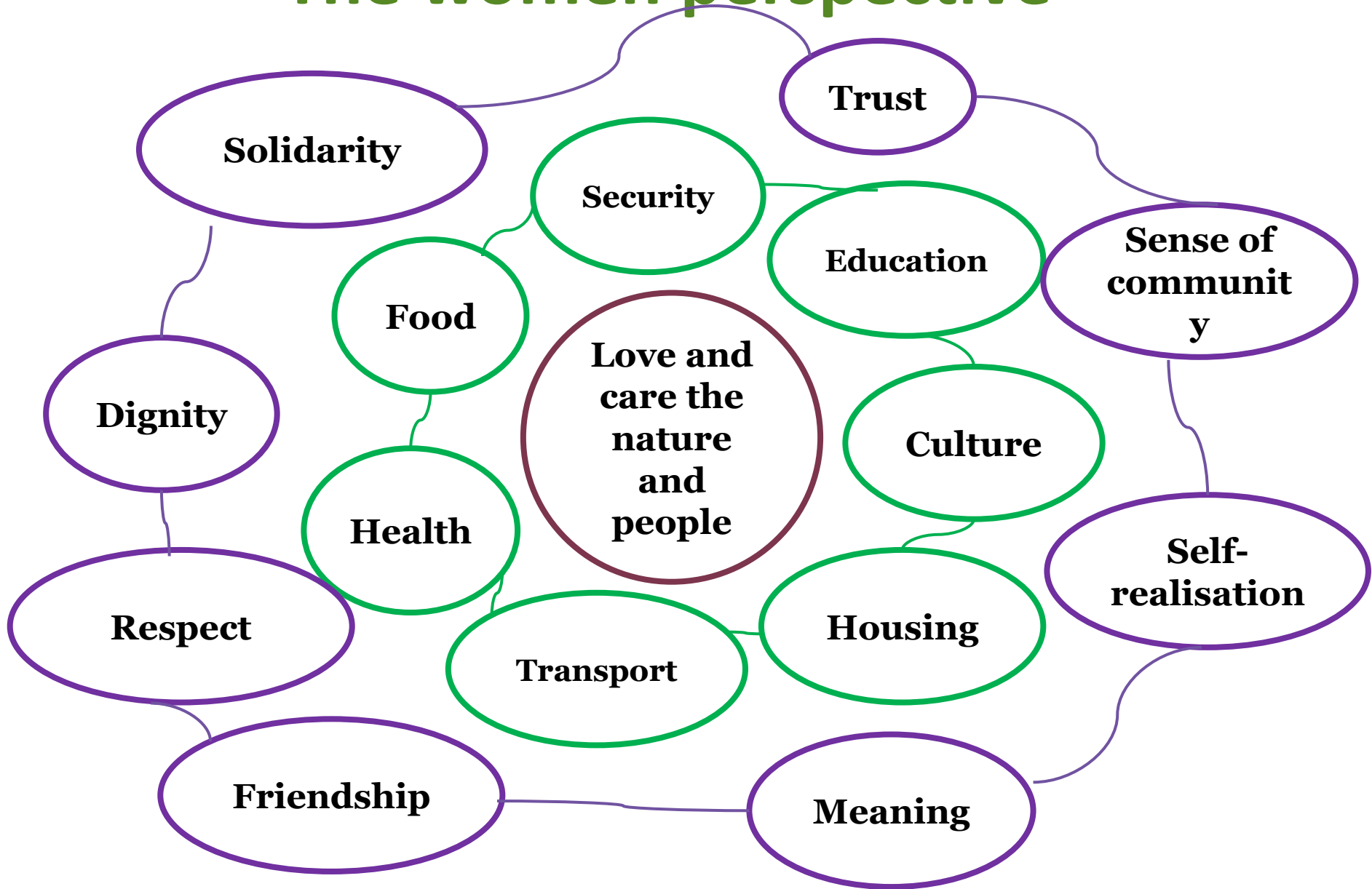
**Occupied  
abandoned houses**

**Bicycle  
riders  
networks**

**Community  
kitchens**

**Green buildings**

# The women perspective



The feminists view in Mexico is underscored by indigenous movements and multiplied by young women in the cities.



- There are many cooperatives of health, dress, foods, farming, etc mainly promoted by womens



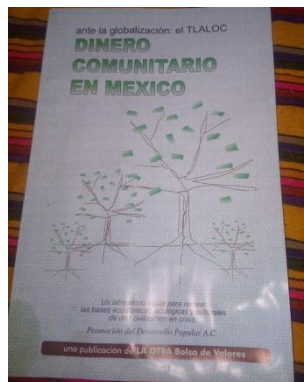


# Community currency in Mexico

- The first urban community currency was “Tlálloc” (1994-2014)



- “The Other Stock Exchange” was a magazine that illustrated a great network of people doing alternatives.
- In this network the “Tlálloc” was the comun currency practiced.



# Community currency in Mexico

- There has been a lot of different currencies in the last 25 years



- Actually there are 12 local currencies in 5 different states

# Verdillite: a community currency among childrens



- Childrens from 4 to 9 years old issue and use their own money: the Verdillite (green bill)
- They make ecological products and barter between them.

- With the Verdillite, they are learning how to use an alternative currency, they learn a solidarity economic and to care the nature





# Annual National Fair for Livelihood



- 400 producers from 18 different states participate every year.

- The “Mezquite” is the community currency that the producers use to buy and sell among themselves.





# Mixiuhca Network



- The main community currency was founded in 2009.
- It is located in Mexico City.



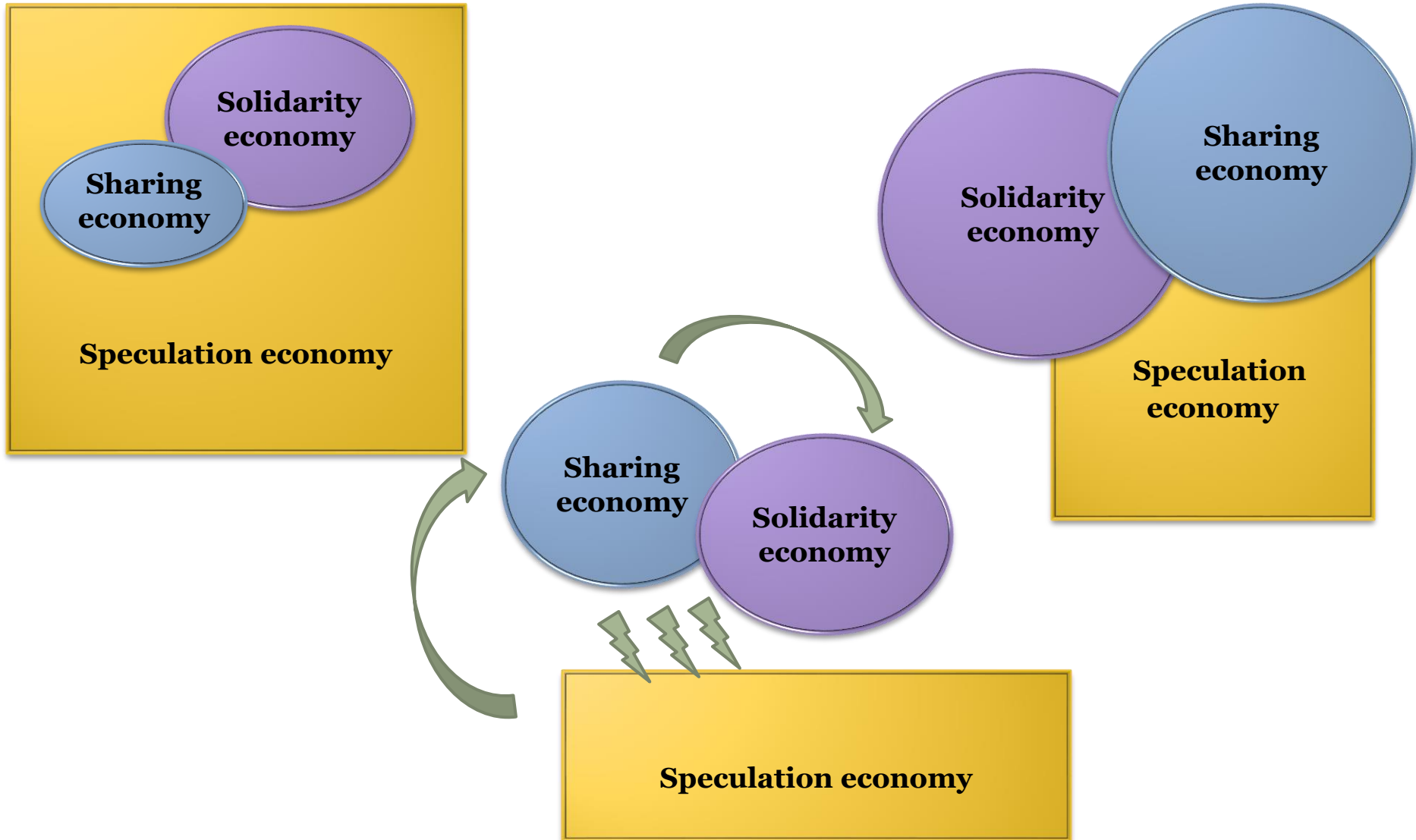
- The “prosumers” are committed for the multiplication of their own model...
- There are others similar experience like: Sabilas, Fausto, Kuni



# Some lessons from our history

- Three economies
- Sharing economy
- The currency linked to a proper ecosystems
- Creating rhizome
- Mesoeconomy
- The ECOMUN

# Three economies





# Sharing economy

- In the Mexican case there are many examples of giving practices, such as “Guelaguetza “ or “tequio”, that teach us that sharing is the experience of being together and feeling in common.





# Sharing economy

- In the virtuous circle of giving we find the key to generate a network of mutual support that sustains experiences of community and ecosystem currency.



# Ecosystem

- It is an essential task to look at the same regions with new eyes, rediscover the regions with life and the life in the regions; to conceive the boundaries established by nature and not for the convenience of the human.
- The “Cañadas” cooperative is in the ecosystem “Foggy Forest” (state of Veracruz, México).
- All the houses have eco-technics like composting toilet, rainwater harvesting and wood stove.
- They take care the forest, plant their owns foods and have their own school





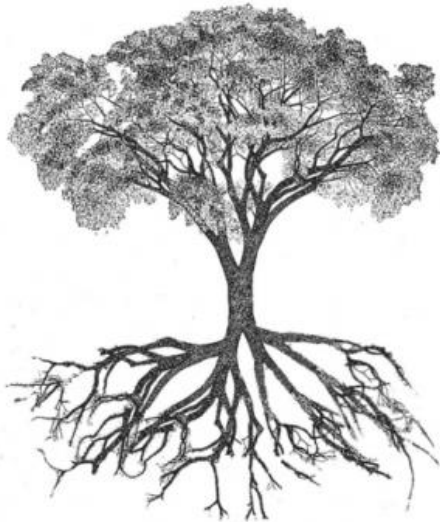
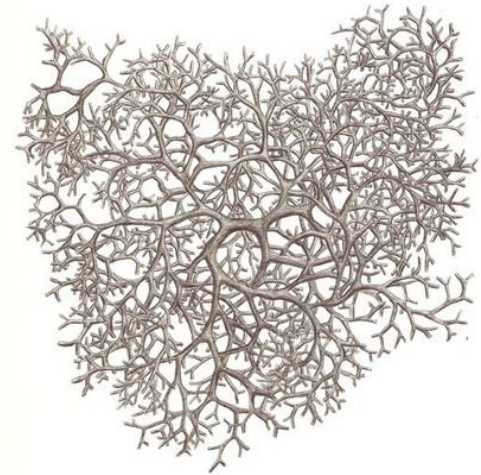
# The currency linked to the ecosystem

- Inhabiting an ecosystem is to develop life's alternatives such as: housing, transportation, health, food, culture, economic sustainability.



# Rhizome

- The rhizome grows horizontally and underground through sprouts called bulbs. Bulbs are a species of knots where nutrients accumulate, waiting for the right moment for a new sprout to spring forth and create a new path.



Tree



Rhizome

- The Tree is not a Rhizome. The Rhizome is grassroots



# Spread and multiplication

- The multiplication and propagation of small experiences of community currencies has not been enough for the current challenge



# Solidarity Meseconomy

- The mesoeconomy is the needed interface between small alternatives and the big system.
- The mesoeconomy is the use of resources from the financial system to the alternatives process.
- The mesoeconomy avoids the dependence and cooptation



# Mesoeconomy and Alchemy



Painting from Diego Rivera made in 1953 where he denounced there were 9 thousand millionaires and 20 million of poor people. Today there are 145 thousand millionaires and 53 million of poor people. The total population of Mexico is 125 million



# Ecomun

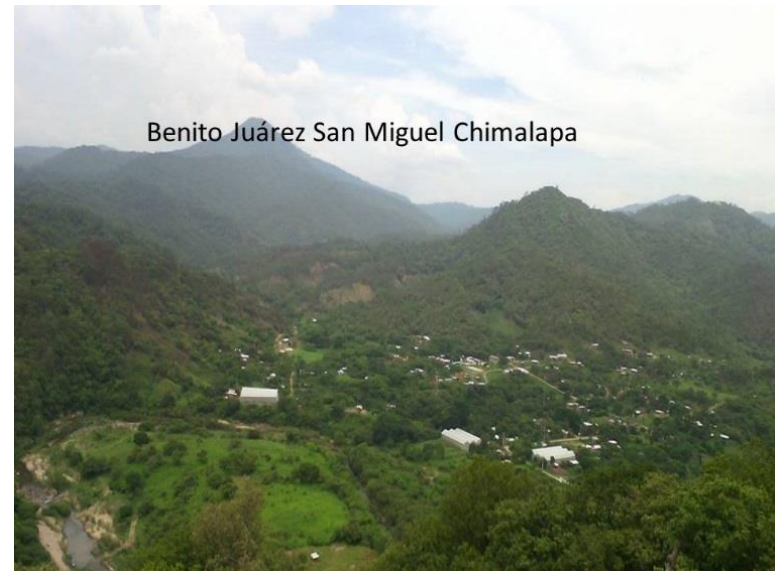
- We need an economic, ecological and cultural transformation where the money is a tool to transform the present economic rationality that prey the nature and all living beings in the planet.





# The Ecomun is a currency that does not exploit nature, but conserves it

- The Ecomun is a currency that is issued with the objective of supporting the people who have dedicated their existence to the caring of the land and the ecosystems.



# Defending the reserved lands in Mexico City

- Defense of the forests and the official reserved lands in order to avoid predatory human settlements in the South of the Metropolitan Zone of the Valley of Mexico City.



# Health brigades in rural communities

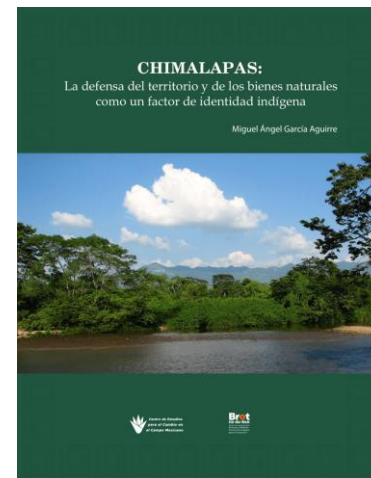
- Training and caring for personal and communal health applying natural resources as roots, herbs, vegetarian food, acupuncture, massage, mediation, yoga, bioenergetics and new or old ritual performative practices.





# Defending the last virgin jungle in Mexico

- Defense of the last virgin jungle in Mexico and its rich biodiversity, the “Chimalapas” in the state of Oaxaca, Isthmus of Tehuantepec... Protection of their ancient ethnic groups and constant struggle with mining and timber companies, invasion of foreign cattle and agrobusinesses, hunters and desperate migrants, drug traffickers...





# Agroecological and indigenous practices

- Defense of the land and fostering of natural agroecological practices in the western territories nearby Mexico City. Defense of the ethnic groups called Mazahuas and their healthy practices as the traditional steam bath called “Temazcal”.



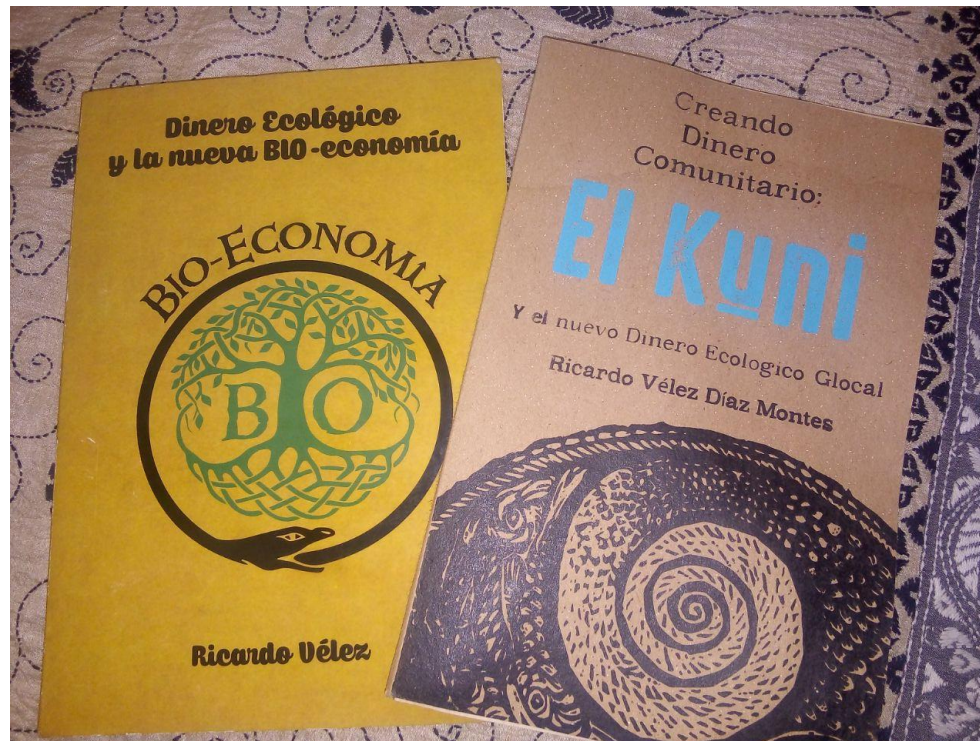
# Community currency among children

- In a school for children there is an initiative among the children, girls and boys, to produce or transform organic agroproducts in order to have healthy food and ecotechnical gadgets and services. Periodically they organize fairs in order to exchange among themselves (producers and consumers: 'prosumers') using alternative money called "verdillete" (green bill)



# Transition towns in Querétaro

- Ecological activists practicing permaculture and dry toilets through a network called 'Transition Towns' have created their proper community money called "kuni". Based on this experience they produce books explaining the concept of bioeconomy.





# Floating gardens in Xochimilco

- In Mexico City, there is a famous lake and productive gardens called Xochimilco (where the Aztecs invented the floating gardens called 'chinampas'). A network of farmers are taken care of the preservation of this historical zone with its fresh water and they produce organic food and medical herbs introduced into alternative markets using community money.





# Univerity city´s neighborgs oppose gentrification

- In Mexico City, near the University City, there is a movement called 'United Neighbors Copilco University' who is opposing the creation of big buildings for expensive housing and commercial offices and businesses, even including an heliport. This challenge implies to oppose the process of 'gentrification' (expulsion of original poor inhabitants).



# The Ecomun is a currency not issued as debt but as a gift

- Those who have dedicated their lives to the defense of nature or to a conviction for the good of humanity, deserve to be appreciated, taken care and paid back. Offering them a basic income in a community currency such as the Ecomun is a minimum reciprocity to their contribution.



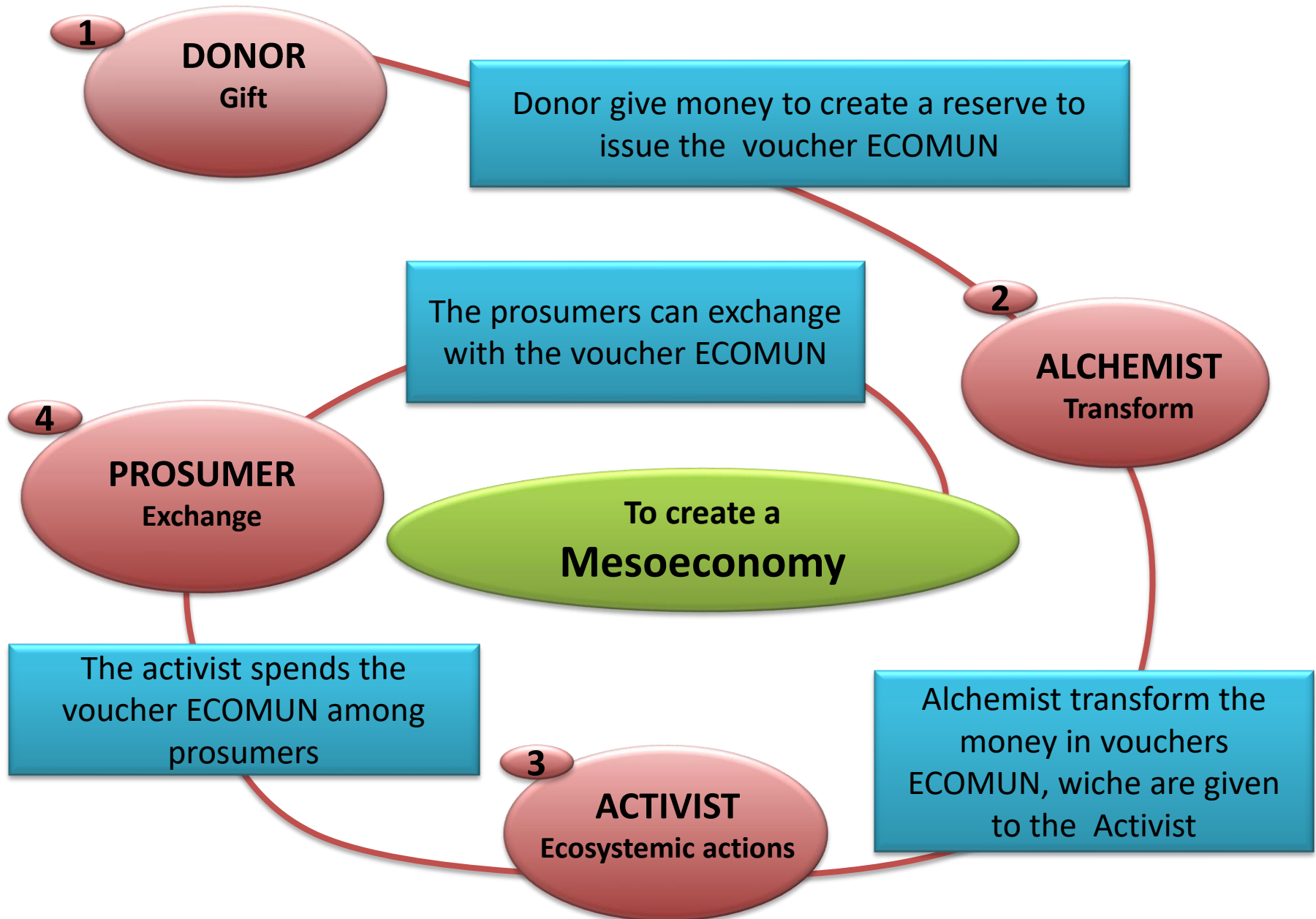
# The Ecomun is a currency that does not extract wealth, but keeps it in an ecosystem.


- It maintains the wealth among the network of producers, who, as they consume within that same network, they become prosumers.
- It is a membrane that protects, stimulating local consumption and encouraging production to satisfy needs among the inhabitants of an ecosystem.





# How does the ECOMUN works?





Today, humanity faces two essential challenges: devastating voracity and the inability to relate to other human beings.

With local currencies, like the Ecomun we are relearning to live and love ourselves in everyday life, locally being part of creative and unprecedented spaces and from them, contributing in the global consciousness.

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