           Reflection on Tammy Lewis’ “Ecuador’s Environmental Revolutions”

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Abstract

Ecuador is a great place to study environmental issues for a number of reasons. Not only is it one of the number one biodiversity “hot spots” in the entire world, but it is an extremely excellent representation of good things to come for other countries around the globe. A scientist at the University of Texas states, “A team of scientists has documented that Yasuní National Park, in the core of the Ecuadorian Amazon, shatters world records for a wide array of plant and animal groups, from amphibians to trees to insects.” Ecuador has a unique history and it seems to have a very unique economic history. Ecuador is also a hot spot for Petroleum. Their number one export is crude oil. It is also the number one country for exporting bananas, however, petroleum seems to beat bananas in sales. Ecuador is not just rich in bananas and petroleum, but is rich in shrimp, cut-flowers, cacao, coffee, wood and fish. The major environmental issues this country has comes from the extractions of their petroleum, the over-shrimping, the killing of their flowers and just the deforestation that takes place overall. Going from a fourth of the population in poverty to putting a large amount of those people over that poverty line, President Correa has changed the country for the better. He has done this by bringing attention from foreign countries to recognize Ecuador for what it is, a beautiful biodiverse land full of unique people, lots of biodiversity and uniqueness for so many different reasons. He changed the constitution of Ecuador to fit the country’s environmental needs. He has started initiatives and plans like the Yasuní-ITT initiative and not all have been successful but they certainly have made a difference. He has found ways to increase economic success without having to destroy the land of Ecuador through extraction and deforestation. He has brought allies into these matters and they have made a difference as well.

*Keywords: Petroleum, Bananas, Shrimp*

Ecuador is a country that is made up of four different regions. These regions are the coastal line, the Andes mountains, the Amazon (jungle) and the Galapagos Islands. Due to their being so much diversity in landscapes, there is even more diversity in plants, insects, animals, fungi, etc. The country of Ecuador is considered one of the number one “biodiversity hot spots” in the entire world. This is because it is extremely small in size but has double, if not more, the amount of various species than countries and U.S. states bigger than it by many acres. Norman Myers, an environmentalist, was put in charge of identifying the world’s “biodiversity hot spots”. He did this by contrasting regional numbers of plant and animal species. Ecuador’s numbers came to at least 20,000 plant species, 4,000 of which are endemic. Having this much biodiversity in a very under developed country that mostly relies on its natural resources for economic gain leads to a loss of a great portion of it. Due to the over shrimp farming, there is a huge destruction of the mangroves along the coast. The Galapagos Islands are ecologically sensitive enough and the tourist development is effecting that. Environmental health problems are stemming from pesticides used for the production of flowers to eventually be cut and killed. Illnesses are also sprouting because of fumigation along the Colombian border, which is part of the US “Plan Colombia” designed to eradicate coca. Deforestation, soil erosion and industrial pollution are just a few more environmental threats Ecuador faces, some of very many. In addition, a scientist from the Technical University of Munich states, “Tropical forests worldwide are at risk. Two of the main threats are the deforestation for arable land and climate change. Scientists compared the losses due to deforestation with those that would result in extreme climate change scenarios in Ecuador.”

*Keywords: Regions, Biodiversity “Hot Spots”, Environmental Problems*

A scholar at the University of Sheffield in England says, “Only 38 per cent of tropical forest is 'wildlife friendly' as a result of deforestation, increasing the likelihood that vulnerable species will go extinct, say scientists.” According to Tammy Lewis, the author of this book, “Ecuador’s Environmental Revolutions”, she believes that with her writing this book about Ecuador (who, as mentioned before, is a great representation of many other under-developed countries), it will be a great influence on other countries to read about the success of the country and to follow and learn from the information she is given. Looking at other reviews on her book, not everyone agrees with her vies and opinions, however, I personally agree with everything she says and her information seems to be credible as well as correct and logical.

*Keywords: Tammy Lewis, Representation, Opinions*

Citations

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