

For a Regenerative Future Agroecology

Panelists

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Enrique Silva

Agronomist and Chef

José Alfredo Bermúdez Beltrán

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Agroecological Transitions for an Arid Island

Micheline Cariño

Baja California Sur is characterized by its "arid island" status, with only 4% of its territory connected to the mainland and an average annual precipitation of 250 mm, making it the driest place in Mexico. This environment presents severe agroecological challenges, particularly in water management, wetland preservation, and the sustainability of agricultural practices.

According to panelist Michelin Cariño, despite the region's rich biodiversity and ancestral oasis-based agricultural tradition, a drastic change occurred in the 1950s with the Green Revolution, shifting local agriculture from self-sufficiency to export-oriented production. This resource-intensive model has exacerbated the water crisis and increased food imports, affecting local food security.

Today, the main challenges include reversing environmental degradation, curbing the loss of fertile land, and designing strategies for efficient water use, while promoting an agroecological model that prioritizes local consumption and fosters food self-sufficiency. The need to articulate public policies focused on agroecology and the creation of local markets is crucial to ensure the region's long-term sustainability.

In 1950, without consulting the people of Baja California Sur, the Green Revolution imposed an export-oriented agricultural model, steering us away from food self-sufficiency.

Michelin Cariño



Agroecology? What's that all about? Miguel Ángel Escalona Aguilar

Agroecology, according to Miguel Ángel Escalona Aguilar, is a key response to the agro-industrial model, focusing on sustainable practices that respect natural cycles and promote self-sufficiency. This approach seeks to re-establish the link between producers and consumers, prioritizing local consumption and rejecting intensive agrochemical use.

23.4% of the population in Baja California Sur has problems accessing food, affecting more than 200,000 people.

Miguel Ángel Escalona Aguilar

The concept of "domestic micropolitics," highlighted by Escalona, encourages change starting at home with sustainable practices like composting. Agroecology not only promotes environmental regeneration but also drives social and economic justice, proposing a more resilient and sustainable food system for Baja California Sur.

The success of this approach depends not only on farmers but on the active participation of all involved, from public policies to consumer awareness, allowing a "good living" that respects the territory and resources.



Importance of Agroecology in the Food Sector of Baja California Sur

José Alfredo Bermúdez Beltrán

José Alfredo Bermúdez Beltrán explained how agroecology in Baja California Sur has grown since 1985, becoming a viable alternative for small producers and a national benchmark. Currently, over 1,500 hectares in the state are dedicated to organic agriculture, generating 18% of agricultural value and over 10,000 annual workdays. Main crops, like tomatoes, asparagus, and aromatic herbs, are primarily destined for export.

Bermúdez emphasized the urgency of a legal framework to define exclusive zones for agroecology and promote local production, reducing reliance on a thousand monthly trucks entering through Pichilingue. He also stressed the need to specialize education in agroecology and irrigation to train skilled professionals.

Finally, José Alfredo Bermúdez highlighted that public policies must prioritize food sovereignty, encouraging local consumption over exports to ensure a sustainable agri-food system tailored to the region's needs.



It is essential to establish a legal framework so that agroecology is not only a local practice but also supported by public policies.


José Alfredo Bermúdez

High-Impact Agroecological Projects

Enrique Silva

Enrique Silva, founder of the Tamarindos project, emphasized how agroecology can drive change in Baja California Sur by integrating local production, education, and gastronomy. Tamarindos, which began as an agricultural project in 2002, has evolved into a model that promotes sustainability through organic food production, the promotion of local gardens, and education on healthy eating.

Silva also highlighted that the success of these projects depends on creating networks of learning and collaboration among producers, academic institutions, and society. Tamarindos is a living example of how agroecological projects can be profitable while contributing to community well-being, generating jobs, and promoting practices that regenerate the environment.



Organic agriculture, although costly, is viable when combined with education and community commitment. Our goal is to create a community based on healthy living and sustainability.

Enrique Silva



Conclusions

The panel concluded with an urgent reflection on the need to transform Baja California Sur's food system towards a sustainable model. However, one of the most critical points is the lack of a legal framework supporting agroecology in the region. José Alfredo Bermúdez Beltrán pointed out that there is currently no legislation that promotes agroecological practices, which limits their implementation.

Panelists stressed the urgency of creating public policies that prioritize production for local consumption, efficient water use, and food waste reduction. Without these laws, transforming the food system will be challenging. It is imperative to move forward in establishing a legal framework that allows sustainable development and guarantees food sovereignty in Baja California Sur.



We export water in the driest state of the republic in the form of vegetables, something completely irrational.

Michelin Cariño

Objective

We will discuss how agroecology can cultivate resilience and food security in both rural and urban areas of Baja California Sur. We aim to initiate a dialogue to understand and define whether BCS should implement a law to promote and incentivize agroecology.





“ *Agroecology is not just a discipline;
it is a comprehensive approach to
sustainability and good living.* ”

Miguel Ángel Escalona



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full panel.

