

**WORKSHOP 3:** 20 people (15 journalists and 2 relators: André Junqueira Ayres Villas-Bôas, Belkacem Mostefaoui).

**TITLE:** Identification and communication of different aspects of conflicts for natural resources

Identification of conflicts (wars) for natural resources: how to identify the real reasons for a war?  
How many different aspects can we discover by investigating the context in which a war is being fought?

And then, how to communicate this? It is also important to develop an easy to read and clear language to tell people the truth, not only about crises, wars and disasters (not only the facts, but what actually happened): people need and have to know the causes of crises and disasters all over the world, only can only be done by analyzing all the causes for a disaster (or a crisis) and all the reasons hidden between the official reasons of a conflict. This is the only possible way to imagine and work out a solution.

Nowadays it's much easier than in the past to identify how many wars are being fought all over the world because of the natural resources. Not only journalists are able to do it easily, people themselves are starting to understand what is happening around them. Few people today believe that there are religious reasons for the war in Palestine or the Darfur conflict.

What is the real (big) problem in communication: the lack of info about the real standard of living outside the big cities all over the world: Brazil is not Sao Paulo (the Amazon is something totally different!), China is not Peking, India is not Mumbai, etc. Often journalists don't know the environmental context or the natural resources of a specific area. And if they don't, they then can't identify which aspects are important for the development of that area, and why a country is fighting against another country to claim possession of something like a river or a land.

Only specialized journalists would be able to investigate these complexities.

Which aspects are easily identifiable in a conflict for natural resources?

Migration, forced displacement, land use changes.

Food as a commodity and not as a natural human right.

The non-sustainable use of natural resources.

Scarcity of natural resources.

Scarcity of water and rivers.

Violation of human rights.

Conflicts of interest.

In general, we can say that our relationship and hence connection with the land (mother land) is gradually being lost.

How to communicate these complexities? Could new media, be more useful than the old ones? (Only 7 of the 15 journalists attending this workshop use new media).

Two important aspects of new media, both of them positive and negative at the same time:

1) no control on the new media means no censure but also means the risk of non professional work: on the internet everybody can write anything. A journalist's job is something quite different. A journalist is trusted by his public because of his work: to go and to see (to touch with her/his hands) before writing.

2) on the internet, through social networks, writers could be anonymus: not always negative, especially when they live in a country where there is no press freedom. But there are also ways to put on the web everything but the truth: where is the source of the news? How can people check the source?

Surely, it's very important to simplify the language when the topic is too difficult: this is the only way to explain the complexity to a large public. A good journalist is able to find the right way to do it: for instance, through emotion you can get to people rationally.

A good journalist is in training all life long: a sort of work in progress with the world's changes. And a good journalist needs education and to be trained.

A good way to communicate is in showing the solutions instead of the problems: information spreads everywhere, but where you can find the analysis?

It's important to respect every point of view: communication isn't the same in every part of the world, because a different culture requires a different way to communicate the same news. To make the news understandable for everybody. It's the only way to help people to make progress (action and reaction).

Balance. We can't only focus on the question of the tools (new or old media? Which is better?). Focus is on the news: to know the situation, a population, a country and everything that is happening in it. Only when a journalist knows all the facts can he/she tell people what is really happening and what is hidden behind a war. The perfect tool for doing it is never the same: in Japan newspapers are very important; in China (because of the censure) twitter and instant messaging are very quick and democratic (much more control over the old media), blogging is a successful tool all over the world. A good journalist knows what is the best tool to use.

As a sort of conclusion, we can add that we need to highlight two points: continuous and ongoing training and specialized press (as already mentioned); a good network: a lot of bridges to link journalists between old and new media. Bloggers in communication with tv and radio journalists, a global communication to share information all over the world among colleagues from every part of the world. This is a powerful, a real network of journalists that work for good and correct info. And these two points are the reason why all of us are in the Greenaccord network.