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River Knowledge and Epistemic Justice: Seasonal Production and Riverine Culture in Darién (Panama)

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Abstract

This paper presents the main findings of the ethnographic study "Seasonal Production and Riverine Culture in Darién", focused on communities living along the banks of the Tuira and Chucunaque rivers in the province of Darién, Panama. Through a combination of census analysis, participatory methodologies, and local narratives, the study reveals how seasonal productive practices, and riverine rationalities constitute alternative ways of life to the dominant extractivist model. It argues that these practices embody situated knowledge that has been systematically rendered invisible by a structure of epistemic injustice. Using the BIG methodological model (Search, Immersion, Generation), the research proposes to decolonize the social sciences by articulating critical theory, intercultural dialogue, and community action to revalue river epistemologies as legitimate forms of knowledge.

Keywords: Culture, sustainable development, stable production, riparian, amphibious life