Water Culture requires fighting corruption and promoting many RRRRRRs.

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Abstract

Most ecologist and people concerned with transmitting messages to convince others to take more care for natural assets as water, air, forests, biodiversity, etc. talk about three "Rs" to solve our problems: Reuse, Recycle, Reduce, but such messages are short-sighted and weak in front of our severe present and coming problems, particularly in certain countries or regions. These promoters should be more daring and conscious in broadening their scope and teachings to other people. Those three "Rs" are simply insufficient, so more "Rs" must be included in the recipe. This article briefly explains why and which are those other "Rs".

Keywords: New water culture, Overshoot, Corruption, Reproductive responsibility, Restrictions, Redistribution, Reciprocal coercion, Rationality, Ethics.

Introduction

Several countries in the world face severe water scarcity, a situation that will worsen as demographic growth prevails. In order to combat water scarcity or its pollution some local and national governments, and even NGOs have created the figure of "water culture promoter" who transmits messages and materials to people about water conservation. However usually the level of their messages is insufficient (limited), considering the harshness of water related problems. Figuratively it would be equivalent as if promoters cared only for elementary school level when real problems pertain more to high-school; as if teaching addition and subtraction were enough, when calculus is needed.

One main obstacle for overcoming and stepping-out of problems is an inappropriate or incomplete perception of difficulties and reality. Educators and new-culture promoters may contribute to a better social understanding, but first they must also differentiate among a false pseudo-rationality at the style of free market economic theories (blind faith in growth and on the "invisible hand" converting into virtuous all selfish short term desires), and a more appropriate and ethical rationality, which seeks equity, wellbeing and stability for society and all living creatures.

The term "overshoot" (overload, excess) refers to a situation when a common good is used at greater rate than the natural regeneration capacity. An example is the overexploitation of underground aquifers, which apparently has little effect when it starts, because the damages are shared between multiple users; but later would become dangerous and could even completely deplete the resource. There are numerous statistics and international studies on "overshoot" alarming situations. Mexico is one example among the nations with a disquieting imbalance, and this is even worse in some of its regions. "The Commons" and their abuse and destruction have been studied for centuries. There are sad examples of their loss, without society or government acting to avoid that. This phenomenon is generally known as "The Tragedy of the Commons".

Unfortunately most present government policies and society perceptions, consider that it is good to seek short term gains and that a great way to do it is by building more dams and aquifers to "dominate nature" and exploit it according to "our needs". Although, fortunately, there is also a new vision in dealing with water topics, called "the new water culture" which opposes more huge infrastructure and expensive water transfers among regions, and promotes more rational use and respect for natural water streams. One of the new-water-culture arguments is this one: "With reference to water resources, the systematic destruction and degradation of water ecosystems and aquifers has already led to dramatic social repercussions. 1,100 million people with no guaranteed access to drinking water, and the breakdown of the hydraulic cycle and health of rivers, lakes and wetlands are two consequences of this crisis" (New Water Culture Foundation).

Recommendations:

Water culture promoters must expand their own competence in order to make others understand the complexity of the problems we face. They must explain the interactions and rivalries concerning water among environment, agriculture, industry, city and countryside; and motivate all to compare a future scenario reached through basic but insufficient actions; against a more elaborate one, achieved through more profound and delicate actions, which could lead to actual sustainability and harmony.

Messages like "turn off the faucet when you brush your teeth" is weak compared to another such as "consume less meat or milk, because their production causes serious environmental damage, requires much land, is cruel to animals, and consumes lots of water". The same would pertain to a message such as "please pay your water bill" compared to "Caution ... because there are corrupt officials or attendants who misapply the money, so we must watch..."
them and punish them!”. Without encouraging violence or
disorder we must promote mechanisms to ensure that staff
be competent, accountable and guided by a formal plan
towards a sustainable future and good public services.

An environmental campaigner is morally obliged to insist
that corruption is remaining silent and merely acquiescing
in the game played by politicians, economists and rich
businessmen when they say “GROWTH is the solution to
everything”; when clearly such prescription is impossible, if
not disastrous, for a finite planet or country.

“Anyone who believes exponential growth can go on
forever in a finite world is either a madman or an
economist”  Kenneth E. Boulding

An ample culture involves knowing that it is simply human
nature that “power corrupts even the honest” (Bendahan,
Antonakis, et al, 2014); and that “people which can make the
changes and lead are comfortable, so they don’t feel need or
obligation (compulsion) to act or push for big changes”
(AtKisson, 2010). Someone aware and educated should ask
himself: “how can a small number of men consider it their
right to destroy our common biosphere for political and
economic gains?” (Trevors & Saier, 2006). He or she should
also propose feasible solutions to these situations that are
contrary to wisdom and democracy.

Environmental campaigners often invite their audiences to
practice “the 3 Rs”: Reuse, Recycle, Reduce, hoping that those
measures may solve the growing problems caused by
increasing population and more consumption. Voluntary
actions by a few, only solve simple, "elementary school",
situations, but not "high school" problems. They are a good
start, but it is unfair and naive to appeal to the "three
voluntary 3 Rs" when the problem is severe and the majority
remain insensible. Then other "Rs" are needed, that are
directed toward mutual coercion, legislation, surveillance
and punishment for those not complying with the
agreements. These "Rs" are hardly ever invoked but remain
indispensable for true sustainability.

Recipe of 8 or + Rs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reuse (reutilise)</th>
<th>Repair (radicate programmed disobedience)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reduce (eliminate, real efficiency)</td>
<td>Recycle (share, cyclic repetition)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redistribute Relocate</td>
<td>Reflect (awareness)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restrict (rule, regulate)</td>
<td>Replace, Repair, AVOID, INHIBIT, PREVENT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure:** some indispensable RRRRRRs for achieving sustainability.

Among these other "Rs" are: Repair damage caused by
previous abuse. Reallocate resources and provide better
opportunities for those lacking them. Relocate residents of
areas with water shortages or disaster risks. Reason and
Reflect on how to achieve sustainability and justice. Restrict,
Ration or Reserve through regulations and social covenants
that promote mutual coercion among everyone. Reproductive Responsibility and Respect for biodiversity
and for congeners are essential complements to the above.
Besides, it is essential to Rebuke (punish) those who violate
the agreed rules (of course pReventive measures must be
first implemented in order to dissuade potential violations),
which in turn includes Repressing corruption among officials
and citizens.

Any "water acculturator" must understand "the tragedy of
the commons" and how it develops in many fields (its
relative slowness makes it unnoticeable to many, even
though they are impacted by it). The tragedy occurs when
the environmental damages on a public good are
"externalized", the costs are "socialized", profits are
"privatized" and the consequences are "futurized and
despised". Promoters should learn some group exercises
that demonstrate our abusive tendencies, thereby making

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us more aware of the need to inhibit them. We must move from merely repeating admonitions, into a social critique that searches for real improvement.

References
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