



**KULTURSTUDIER**

**Sustainability and Conservation in Costa Rica:  
Exemplary policies and practices  
LE-803**

**Self-study document**

**Spring 2022**

## Learning outcome

The self-study reading period will provide students a basic background knowledge necessary to understand how Costa Rica developed its main economic activity during the 20th century and how Costa Rica controlled the negative impacts of this activity on the environment. You will write a reflection which has two parts, one of them based on chapter 1 and chapter 2; while the second part will be based on the reading of chapter 8 of the course book.

## Formal requirements

The reflection is to be comprised of approximately **1200 words**. All submissions must be sent by email to [mauricio@kulturstudier.org](mailto:mauricio@kulturstudier.org) no later than **14 January 2020**.

You must write your document in the following format: **Times New Roman, 12 points, space 1.5 between lines, and margins 3.0 (both left and right)**. This gives approximately 400 words on one page. It is absolutely essential that you adhere carefully to the formal requirements of both this written assignment and all others during the course. This is a *working requirement* and must be passed (Approved) in order to complete the course. The intention is to give you an early orientation of how you will be assessed, and what to expect from the other submissions you will be required to compose during the course. If a student does not approve with his/her first attempt, this student will get a new chance to submit a new version during week 4.

### Part 1

Chapters one and two of the course book explore how the role of the Costa Rican state as a regulator of the agriculture market has historically changed over the last 70 years, in particular with respect to the support of smallholders. Based on chapter 1 and 2, students will write a short reflection (600 words) about how this change has impacted the socioeconomic livelihoods of these peasants as well as the ecological conditions of agriculture.

### Part 2

Chapter eight of the course book studies how Costa Rica's relationship with forests has long been a turbulent one. Quite similar to other countries and regions of the so-called tropical world, throughout most of the twentieth century forests in the country represented a frontier to be conquered, to be destroyed in order to provide land for development. Forests were cleared to make place for agricultural crops and cattle ranching with direct economic incentives from government and international organizations. In the 1970s, however, this relationship with forests started to change in Costa Rica with the recognition that they were disappearing. Students will write a short reflection (600 words) about how Costa Rica managed to stop and revert deforestation.

## Course book

Fletcher, R., Dowd-Uribe, B., & Aistara, G. A. (Eds.). (2020). *The Ecolaboratory: Environmental Governance and Economic Development in Costa Rica*. University of Arizona Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvxw3pvp> . Available as an e-book at [this link](#)

### Chapter 1:

Galt, R. E. (2020). The Costa Rican Agrifood System, 1961–2014: Assessing Neoliberalism’s Impacts on Agriculture and Diets. In R. Fletcher, B. Dowd-Uribe, & G. A. Aistara (Eds.), *The Ecolaboratory: Environmental Governance and Economic Development in Costa Rica* (pp. 25–57). University of Arizona Press.

### Chapter 2:

Babin, N. (2020). Agrarian Questions, Neoliberalism, and the Persistence of the Costa Rican Coffee Peasantry. In R. Fletcher, B. Dowd-Uribe, & G. A. Aistara (Eds.), *The Ecolaboratory: Environmental Governance and Economic Development in Costa Rica* (pp. 58–74). University of Arizona Press.

### Chapter 8:

Breitling, J. (2020). Costa Rica’s Forest Transition Revisited. In R. Fletcher, B. Dowd-Uribe, & G. A. Aistara (Eds.), *The Ecolaboratory: Environmental Governance and Economic Development in Costa Rica* (pp. 147–160). University of Arizona Press.

## Guidance to write an academic paper

There are two writing stages throughout this course. First, you’ll write one 1200-word reflection during your self-study period. Reading the assigned material will certainly help you dive into this issue at more depth. Second, you will present a written exam at the end of the course.

Together with the oral in-class work, these written assignments shall serve to stimulate and document your:

- a. reading and understanding of the course literature and other relevant information,
- b. critical reflection upon the topics in question, and
- c. familiarity with the standards of academic writing.

We encourage you to be pro-active both during the lectures, seminars, and also outside class. We will gladly discuss any concerns/ ideas/ thoughts/ confusions you might have either via mail or in person. Show initiative! Our teachers are available and more than happy to engage with you.

### **Some guidelines concerning your short essays:**

Although you are not expected to deliver original contributions to research, there are some basic guidelines that you ought to follow when writing your pieces. These guidelines are in accordance with normal standards for University/College assignments and will, in combination with the overall purpose defined above, serve as our criteria for assessment. They are as follows:

#### **1. Define your topic, intention and structure in the introduction – and stick to them**

Whether writing a short paper, a group paper or a home exam essay, you must have an introduction. Here you first present your topic/s. Then you formulate what question/s related to the topic/s that you intend to look into. These question/s and your intention must be clearly formulated and realistic. Finally, you outline the structure of your paper/essay, that is, how you will proceed in the following pages to critically reflect and explore your question/s. This structure must be simple and logical, normally resting on three building blocks:

- d. An introductory part as already described,
- e. A main part (normally consisting of various sub-chapters/sections) where you present your material, and discuss your results in relation to the overall topic/s and question/s raised in the introduction, and
- f. A concluding part where you summarise your study and draw some conclusions.

Once you have defined your topic/s, intention and structure in the introduction, it is important that you stick to them throughout the paper.

You have the right to guidance during the writing periods. We advise you to make use of this opportunity, for as we have mentioned before, writing consists in large part of re-writing, and it is often through the constructive and critical feedback of another person that we develop our ideas further.

#### **2. Systematize your material**

It is essential for the quality - and readability - of the text that you present and discuss your material in a systematic manner. By “your material” we mean the different views/theoretical approaches and empirical examples you use to study the topic/s in question. There is no standard way of doing this. What is important is that you give reasons in the text for why you choose to put the various elements of the material together the way you do. Each time you introduce a new idea or example, remember

to ask yourself: Is it clear to the reader (and yourself) why this idea/example is being introduced here? If your answer is not a clear “yes”, the text needs revising.

### **3. Discuss and conclude your results**

What is equally vital for the quality of the paper, but often forgotten, is that you *discuss* the material (the views/theoretical approaches and empirical examples) in relation to the topic and questions raised in the introduction. Actually, it is this element of discussion that makes the paper an academic study. We encourage you to use these papers as opportunities to further develop your own, critical voice.

Finally, in the end, you must summarize your study and draw some tentative conclusions on the basis of the above discussion.

### **4. Write clearly and smoothly**

While academic writing demands a formal style, this does not mean using intricate formulations. On the contrary, you should search for phrasings that communicate your ideas as clearly and precisely as possible. In addition, and this is equally important, you should put effort in establishing good flow between the elements of the text. This implies that there must be a meaningful connection between the various phrases of a section, between the various sections of a chapter, and between the various chapters of the paper/essay. To obtain this, it is often helpful to begin papers by briefly stating what you are about to do, and how it relates to where you come from.

### **5. Get the technicalities right**

#### References in the text

There must be references in the text immediately after quotations, and after paragraphs that refer to existing literature, views of others, and/or specific information that need to be documented. These references are to be written in parentheses in the appropriate place of the text (always after, not within, a paragraph), and should simply consist of the author’s surname/other source’s name followed by the publishing year and the pager number.

*Examples: (Steger 2003:76)*

*(UNDP 2004:218)*

#### List/s of sources

All sources referred to in the text should be presented in full length in separate list/s at the back of the document. The first list, which can be called “Literature”, should contain the full

literature-references organized in alphabetical order. Each reference should have the following format:

Surname of author, first name or initial/s (publishing year) *Title*, Place of publishing which is normally a town: Name of publisher.

*Example:*

*Pieterse, J.N. (2001) Development theory. Deconstructions/reconstructions, London: Sage Publications.*

If the source is an article in an anthology (book with contributions from several authors), the reference in the literature list should have the following format:

Surname of author of the article, first name or initial/s (publishing year) "Title of article", in + full name/s of the editor/s, *Title of book*, Place of publishing which is normally a town: Name of publisher.

*Example:*

*McGrew, A. (2000) "Sustainable globalisation. The global politics of development and exclusion in the new world order" in Tim Allen and Alan Thomas (eds.), Poverty and development into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Oxford: Oxford University Press.*

If the article stands in a periodical, the reference in the literature list should have the following format:

Surname of author, name or initial/s (publishing year) 'Title of article', In + *Name of periodical*, volume/issue number x, pp. z-y.

*Example:*

*Castles, S. (2000) 'International migration at the beginning of the twenty-first century: global trends and issues', In: International Social Science Journal, n.165, pp. 269-280.*

If you have downloaded a text from the Internet, the reference should have the normal format used for references to books, anthologies or periodicals as described above, only adding the Internet-address in parenthesis. If you use information from the internet which is frequently updated (newspapers, magazines, etc.), you should also include the date when you downloaded the information.

Other types of sources, like conversations or information from web-sites that have not been published in printed form, should stand in a separate list (after the literature-list), which can be called "Other sources". These sources should also be organized in alphabetical order according to surnames/names. As for unpublished Internet-information, references should consist of the Internet-address (not in parenthesis) followed by the date of your downloading:

*Name of Site*. Date of Posting/Revision. Name of institution/organization affiliated with the site (sometimes found in copyright statements). Date you accessed the site <electronic address>.

Examples:

*The Purdue OWL Family of Sites*. 26 Aug. 2005. The Writing Lab and OWL at Purdue and Purdue University. 23 April 2006 <<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>>.

Felluga, Dino. *Guide to Literary and Critical Theory*. 28 Nov. 2003. Purdue University. 10 May 2006 <<http://www.cla.purdue.edu/english/theory/>>.

For an individual page on a Web site, list the author or alias if known, followed by the information covered above for entire Web sites. Make sure the URL points to the exact page you are referring to, or the entry or home page for a collection of pages you're referring to:

"Caret." *Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia*. 28 April 2006. 10 May 2006 <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caret>>.

Remember to be very careful in your choice of Internet sources. Although being very informative, Wikipedia is for instance an un-authoritative source that should not be used as a regular encyclopedia or dictionary.

Only sources that have actually been used in the study and referred to in the text should be put on the list/s of sources.