

# THE URGENCY OF A LOCALLY ROOTED SCIENCE COMMITTED TO TERRITORIES

As the multiple crises affecting our region—environmental, social, economic, and cultural—become increasingly severe, the need for a science that not only pursues academic excellence but is also deeply rooted in territories becomes ever more evident. That is, a situated science: one that responds to local contexts, engages in dialogue with traditional knowledge, and actively contributes to addressing the challenges faced by our communities.

Latin America and the Caribbean possess extraordinary natural and cultural wealth, but also significant socio-environmental vulnerability. Desertification, biodiversity loss, the decline of key ecosystems, food insecurity, and displacements caused by natural disasters or socioeconomic conflicts are problems that demand responses from science—but not from just any science. What is needed is one that takes into account the historical dynamics, regulatory frameworks, institutional trajectories, and values that shape the ways of life of affected populations.

In this sense, the notion of situated science acquires a strategic value. It does not imply renouncing the universality of knowledge, but rather committing to the territorial anchoring of the scientific process. This means recognizing that research questions, methodologies, interpretations, and impacts are conditioned by the social, ecological, and political contexts in which knowledge is produced. Such a perspective not only enriches knowledge but also expands its legitimacy and potential for impact.

The articles in this issue of *Interciencia* clearly reflect this vocation: from studies examining the tensions and lessons derived from quality assurance policies in initial teacher education in Chile, to research validating instruments for evaluating inclusive teaching and competencies linked to creative and sustainable thinking in university students. Also included are analyses on historical consciousness and its implications for citizenship education, as well as recent studies on the key factors shaping the relationship between artificial intelligence and academic ethics in university students. In all these cases, we see a science that does not turn its back on reality but actively engages with it, responding to local contexts and urgent social needs.

It is equally important to emphasize the growing relevance of transdisciplinarity and the co-production of

knowledge. Many of the region's most pressing problems cannot be effectively addressed from a single discipline or through an exclusively academic lens. Collaboration among scientists, technicians, policymakers, community leaders, and holders of ancestral knowledge is not merely desirable but essential. In this horizontal dialogue, more robust, just, and sustainable solutions emerge.

At *Interciencia* we reaffirm our commitment to disseminating rigorous, plural, and relevant science. Editorial work does not end with selecting and publishing articles; it also involves building a meeting space for the diverse voices that make up the knowledge ecosystem of Latin America and the Caribbean. In our view, a scientific journal must also be an active agent of social transformation and a defender of the commons.

In this context, we invite the regional scientific community to continue advancing research that combines methodological excellence with territorial commitment. We also urge institutions to strengthen mechanisms of funding, dissemination, and evaluation that recognize and value the contributions of those who conduct research from and for their communities. Transformative science is not the one that merely accumulates indexed publications, but the one that contributes to improving people's living conditions, conserving natural and cultural heritage, and building possible futures grounded in equity and sustainability.

Finally, we stress that the challenge of consolidating a situated science does not fall exclusively on researchers. It is a shared responsibility among universities, research centers, public agencies, scientific editors, and communities themselves. Only in this way will it be possible to build a scientific culture truly committed to territories and aligned with the principles of epistemic justice, citizen participation, and sustainable development.

From our modest yet persistent editorial trench, *Interciencia* will continue to open its pages to research that, with a critical outlook and transformative vocation, contributes to the construction of useful, inclusive, and deeply Latin American knowledge.

ANA RAQUEL PICÓN ÁVILA  
Editor (E)  
INTERCIENCIA