



THINGS THAT HAPPEN

Lucy Nieto de Samper

Finally a great project?

As the notable environmentalist Manuel Rodríguez says, President Duque's proposal in Davos, planting 2022 to 180 million trees, represents half of the goal set by the National Development Plan (PND). However, the president returns to an issue that interested him when he visited Gaviotas. A dream factory come true, founded in 1971 by Paolo Lugari, in the sheets of Vichada, "far from everything and close to nothing". As journalist Alan Weisman writes in his book 'Gaviotas', a community to reinvent the world, "that community has become a surprising setting for one of the most hopeful environmental stories that exist."

In 2008, Iván Duque, advisor to the IDB, in an article entitled 'Flying with the Gaviotas', praises the successful work of Paolo Lugari. Who, in 1971, "begins to develop a project that, with idealism and the desire to challenge conventional thinking, materialized in building an eco-sustainable community in the complex conditions of Vichada ... And overcoming the difficulties of the soil for that kind of crops, it manages to sow 6 million pines, from which a resin is

extracted that can be converted into rosin, material demanded by the paint and stationery industry ”.

These data serve to speculate on tree planting. Well, as Lugari says: "All environmental actions are important, but nothing is more important than planting a tree." Therefore, in Gaviotas, from the beginning they planted trees. And, little by little, 8 million tropical pines covered 8,000 hectares of sterile sheets. Over time, those trees formed a thick forest that amazes me. Since different trunks are extracted from their trunks, which are used by Gaviotas and other industries, to manufacture essential elements for daily living.

The last 4 million pines were planted in two years, says Lugari. "We use very advanced technologies, some created in Gaviotas, others adapted. The forest, designed to be permanent,

As has happened, it was harvested without cutting down the trees. And, under the roots of the pines, millions of native plants were reborn. In one hectare of forest there can be 250 different species ”. Still below, a spring was born. The water that flows from that forest, Gaviotas sells it in plastic bottles that can be assembled for many uses.

At this rate, with the experiences acquired and using their own technologies, the "seagulls" could plant, in four years and at a low cost, 20 million trees. "The replica of this diverse tropical forest could be equivalent to 10 percent of the goal set in good time by President Duque in the face of the climate crisis," says Lugari.

To plant 180 million trees, as President Duque proposed in Davos, time, money and serious programs that involve the participation of the majority of citizens are needed. Starting with the farmers. Well, there is no right that in Colombia there are 35 million hectares dedicated to livestock and only 7 million dedicated to agriculture.

And not to mention the fields cultivated with coca, marijuana and poppy, to get heroin. To that millions of deforested hectares are added to steal the wood.

In order to forget the jungles invaded by narcos, guerrillas, arboricides and others, President Betancur wanted to build a city there, called Marandúa, based on the experience of Gaviotas. It would be an administrative center, like Brasilia, with 1.5 million hectares for agriculture, commerce and industry, as Juan Pablo Calvas recalls in his book. But, due to the disasters that were then, everything remained in see. The jungle is still in the hands of predators, and that makes it difficult to plant 180 million trees. However, we must gain momentum and begin. The most important environmental action is to plant a tree.

lucynietods@gmail.com