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Hace 40 años, **Paolo Lugari** fundó en el Vichada una comunidad autosostenible. Una excentricidad que hoy es ejemplo.  
 / **Vivir p. 18**

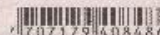


Con asesoría de un experto hindú, la Fundación Santa Fe prepara el primer trasplante de mano en Colombia.  
 / **Vivir p. 20**



# EL ESPECTADOR

BOGOTÁ - COLOMBIA FUNDADO EN 1887 N° 35.433 14 DE JULIO DE 2011 40 PÁGINAS www.elespectador.com \$1.500



## El olvido de Toribío

Los pobladores del municipio caucano tratan de recobrar su rutina tras el ataque terrorista del sábado que destruyó el pueblo. Creen que cuando termine el escándalo volverán a vivir en el fuego cruzado entre guerrilla y FFMM. / **Tema del día p. 2**



Una muestra de la desolación en que quedó Toribío, Cauca, después del sangriento ataque de los FARC. (Foto: Peter L. Caspe/Laica)

### Carrusel de la tributación

Después de ocho meses de investigaciones, el Gobierno reveló la existencia de un cartel en el interior de la DIAN, que habría destacado a los colombianos en por lo menos \$3 billones. Fiscalía pide captura de 14 implicados. / **Judicial p. 4**

### Adiós Zalamea

El artista Gustavo Zalamea murió el martes, a los 62 años, en Manaus, Brasil, lugar que exploraba para su próximo trabajo. La plástica colombiana perdió a uno de sus más sensibles y comprometidos exponentes. / **Cultura p. 24**

### Perú será el rival

Anoche quedaron definidos los cuartos de final de la Copa América. El sábado Colombia enfrentará a Perú y Argentina a Uruguay. El domingo, Brasil se medirá ante Paraguay y Chile contra Venezuela. Ecuador, con Reinaldo Rueda, quedó fuera. / **Deportes p. 34**

### ADENTRO

Política	6
Indicaciones	8
Espectra	12
Rosario	14
Internacional	16
Cinos	25
Editorial	28
Clasificados	36
Pasatiempos	39
Un chat con...	40

**CUPÓN**

REF. DONATELLA JULIO 14

# Utopia's Worker<sup>1</sup>

**Paolo Lugari, Founder of Gaviotas Experimental Center**

40 years ago Gaviotas, a sustainable community in Los Llanos, became a model of alternative energy for the world.

Paolo Lugari Castrillón did not stand up to talk. During his speech while the others speakers showed slides, figures, and strategies, Paolo who was late preferred to remain sitting down. Where is the material? It is in Internet you can consult it over there. He did not show any slide, nothing. He did not use a microphone. I speak loud; it sounded the strong voice of a sparse-haired tall man with white beard, who planted 8.000 hectares with Caribbean pine in Vichada, searched for alternative energy sources, and created a sustainable self sufficient community named Gaviotas. Lugari discussed as if he were reciting in a very natural way.

-Our first effort was to set aside our previous knowledge

## **"Someone similar to Robinson Crusoe"**

Ending the sixties he lived with his parents in Bogotá. His education was not a traditional one, he had tutors made exams but he never assisted to a school or college room in daily basis learning by heart.

His father, Mariano a French-Italian who spoke nine languages took him to explore new territories. Paolo who was born in Italy and grew up in Popayán, was his companion and learn from him.

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<sup>1</sup> Labriego de utopías, Juan David Torres Duarte. El Espectador, 14-07-2011, Bogotá, Colombia



Once, in the sixties he was walking down the 72<sup>th</sup> Street and bumped into a friend who came from Vichada, they talked about the marvelous Llanos. Though Lugari was planning to go to El Chocó, he changed his mind and went to Vichada with his brother and his father. They cross rivers in a homemade raft, made with empty oil cans and boards tied with big ropes. They wear life savers and were guided by an expert peasant. As they did not have enough gas for coming back, they have to stay. That night while they were resting in their hammocks they saw two gaviotas sitting beneath them, as these birds are called in the region. Paolo came back to Bogotá and a couple of months later he founded the organization that received money from some relatives and he inverted part of his savings from the job he had in the studies made for the inter-oceanic channel in Chocó. As his parents supported him all his wages went to the foundation.



Medellín, Valle de Aburrá, Solar water heaters      Resin extraction from the pines

In 1971 he arrived in Vichada wastelands and took these no-man's-lands and settled down the Gaviotas Experimental Center on a muddy terrain half the time and with more or less good roads in dry times. His father supported him enthusiastically. Others told him he was crazy because that was totally out of place. But eventually he started constructing housings, a healthcare center, and a school. First they made wells for having water, brought food from elsewhere and they have light connecting some bulbs with the battery of his jeep Nissan.

We started, after a lot of tries and errors to experiment with adequate technologies to the region. Adequate does not mean making wicker baskets but making research applied to the environment generating resources and not destroying them.

So they start building windmills and a 30-kilowatt hydraulic turbine and hand pump for extracting water. A bunch of people moved in and settled down over there. Gaviotas sold its projects and made a living with that.

While in Colombia, people did not talk about renewable energies, Lugari's project was focus on creating in the middle of an abandon region a sustainably community.

- By that time I was sort of Robinson Crusoe

"Create order from chaos"



Even though, in Colombia 697 Law from 2001 requires the implementation of policies for protecting the environment, still we are using these contaminants coal (17%) and oil 34%) and oil for transport and electricity. The alternative sources from wind, warm, and earth are only 4% of the energy supply. 30 years ago, Lugari was looking for energy sources harmless for the atmosphere.




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Before planting a forest with tropical Caribbean pine, Gaviotas first endeavor was with alternative energy. For example in the 80s it installed 5,000 solar water heaters in Ciudad Tunal, Bogotá.

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Vichada, Gaviotas's View

Other solar heaters are installed on the roofs of neighborhoods such as Niza III, Sausalito and Villa de Aburrá, Medellín

Students, engineers and people without academic background went to Gaviotas, living in the housing over there. From the talks where a tall man with strong voice listened to the others, they build a solar cooking and 150 kilowatts power plant feed with the left over from the woods when they prune the forest. Two 30 kilowatts turbine feed with small waterfalls produce power for some housing. They also planted some African palms that produce the oil for the cooking. All that was difficult, "Create a chaos from order" he said.

-But I love difficulties, he said in his office. Difficulties give me life.

Once somebody said to him that Gabriel García Márquez's world in One Hundred Years of solitude was magic, such a dream, but Lugari make it come true and that is much more difficult.

### **Reforest an infertile land**

The money they earn with the solar heaters and water mills, Lugari decided to invert planting pines. Those pines he found while flying above la Mosquitia tropical forest in Nicaragua, died soon. After that he combined them with

fungus to help them to keep growing and as a result there is now an 8,000 hectares forest planted with pines. The growing of the pines helps the growing of 250 different vegetal species under their shadow.

Due to the pine's resin they produce colophony used for making adherent material, and varnish; turpentine and painting solvent. These products are now the main income for Gaviotas. After extracting the resin of the pines after a process they extract a biofuel for the power plant and the tractors used inside the community.

With the pretext of producing fuel, he added, we are restoring the skin of the Earth that keeps alive the elements for life.

This infertile region or thought infertile for other people, in the middle of Los Llanos became the matrix of a community where there are 200 working, eating, studying and learning people.

### **One thousand spontaneous actions**

Lugar, 67 in his office in Bogotá, where he has a little representation of Gaviotas Vichada manages the distribution of the products. He also goes very often to the community to discuss the new plans.

Gaviotas meanwhile continue inventing, now they want the fuel from the pines to make able to be use as well in gas motors as well as diesel. "The important thing is the fuel to be sustainable" he says; furthermore it should be the product of a collective endeavor.

One thousand spontaneous actions, he adds with a smile are more valuable than a decree.

Gaviotas is not just an ecological dream for him it has become a philosophy. Thus he says traditional education is reductionist and his project is an

alternative teaching. He thinks, there is not an energy crisis but an imagination crisis. He believes Gaviotas joins disciplines and indiscipline. Many people see the part but they do not see the whole. The only constant thing is change. He says he is not humble but he does not want to be famous for the sake of leisure. He does not want to go back to Europe because he is a tropical man and over there he would be depressed. There is no more difficult project as Gaviotas and that is why for this difficulty he works so hard.

Thus Luguay says: I like to eat shit

And he laughs openly

*"When vegetal skin of Earth will worn it is very possible that the composition of the elements in the atmosphere change (oxygen, nitrogen and the others). Then human life would be impossible".*