

Land grabbing and its environmental justice implications

Nienke Annemarie Busscher

Land grabbing and its environmental justice implications

PhD thesis

to obtain the degree of PhD of the
University of Groningen
on the authority of the
Rector Magnificus Prof. E. Sterken
and in accordance with
the decision by the College of Deans.

and

to obtain the degree of Doctor of Science: Geography (PhD) of the
Faculty of Science, KU Leuven
on the authority of the
Rector Prof. L. Sels
and in accordance with
the decision by the Examination Committee and the Arenberg Doctoral School.

Double PhD degree

This thesis will be defended in public on

Thursday 29 November 2018 at 11.00 hours

by

Nienke Annemarie Busscher

born on May 21 1986
in Groningen

Printing of this thesis made possible by SASA BV, Thesinge, the Netherlands.

Paranymphs: Lidewij van der Ploeg
Jing Wu

Cover design: Anouk Marein Dijkstra

Layout: Ilse Modder, www.ilsemodder.nl

Printed by: Gildeprint Drukkerij Enschede, www.gildeprint.nl

ISBN: 978-94-034-1160-6



© Nienke Busscher, 2018

All rights are reserved. No parts of this thesis may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, photocopying, recording or any information storage and retrieval system, without the permission of the author.

Contact: nienkebusscher@gmail.com

Supervisors

Prof. F.M.D. Vanclay (University of Groningen)

Prof. Dr. C.A. Parra Novoa (KU Leuven)

Assessment Committee

Prof. B.B. Hogenboom

Prof. L.G. Horlings

Prof. C. Kesteloot

Prof. L.E. Sánchez

Table of Contents

Chapter 1. Introduction	13
1.1 Introduction to land grabbing	14
1.2 Overall aim and main research questions of this thesis	16
1.3 Theoretical framework and key concepts	18
1.4 The contribution of this research	22
1.5 Research approach and methodology	23
1.6 Positionality	30
1.7 Outline of the thesis	32
References	35
Chapter 2. Analysing the governance of land grabbing from a combined political ecology and environmental justice perspective	39
2.1 Introduction	41
2.2 The drivers and implications of land grabbing governance	42
2.3 The contribution of Political Ecology and Environmental Justice in the context of Land Grabbing	46
2.4 Connecting Land Grabbing, Political Ecology and Environmental Justice	49
2.5 Conclusion	53
References	54
Chapter 3. Land grabbing within a protected area: The experience of local communities with conservation and forestry activities in Los Esteros del Iberá, Argentina	59
3.1 Introduction	61
3.2 Land grabbing and its characteristics	63
3.3 The governance dynamics of land grabbing in protected areas	64
3.4 Methodology for the case studies	66
3.5 Background information about land governance and extractivism in Iberá	68
3.6 Land grabs in Iberá: Harvard Management Company's tree plantations	71
3.7 Land grabs in Iberá: the conservation projects of Douglas Tompkins	74
3.8 Governance dynamics in Los Esteros del Iberá	75
3.9 Conclusion: land grabbing and governance changes within protected areas	80
References	83

Chapter 4. Environmental justice implications of land grabbing for industrial agriculture and forestry in Argentina	91		
4.1 Introduction	93		
4.2 Environmental injustice, resistance, protest and social transformative action	95		
4.3 Quick overview of the field of environmental justice studies	97		
4.4 Land grabbing as environmental injustice	99		
4.5 The violence inherent within land grabbing	99		
4.6 Land grabbing in Argentina	100		
4.7 Methodology	102		
4.8 Description of the two case studies	105		
4.9 Environmental and social injustice from land grabbing: findings from the field	106		
4.10 Strategies and social transformative actions used by rural communities to cope with land grabbing	110		
4.11 Conclusion	111		
References	114		
Chapter 5. State-civil society collaborations in the context of land grabbing in Argentina	121		
5.1 Introduction	123		
5.2 A critical analysis of state-civil society collaborations	125		
5.3 State-civil society collaborations in Latin America and Argentina	128		
5.4 Methodology	129		
5.5 Background to land grabbing in Argentina	131		
5.6 Land grabbing and land use change in Santiago del Estero	133		
5.7 State-civil society collaborations in the face of land grabbing	135		
5.8 Potential limitations to collaboration	139		
5.9 Conclusion	142		
References	144		
Chapter 6. Conclusion	149		
6.1 Introduction	150		
6.2 The social, political and environmental dynamics underlying the contemporary governance of land grabbing	151		
6.3 The implications of land grabbing in terms of environmental justice	152		
6.4 Reflection on the theoretical approaches used in this thesis	153		
6.5 Comments regarding industrial tree plantations, nature conservation and agricultural expansion	156		
6.6 The outlook for land grabbing and environmental justice in Argentina	158		
		and beyond	
		6.7 Recommendations	160
		6.8 Final remarks and future research directions	162
		References	164
		Addendum	169
		English summary - <i>Land grabbing and its environmental justice implications</i>	170
		Nederlandse samenvatting - <i>Landroof en de consequenties voor de lokale gemeenschap</i>	178
		About the author	186
		Acknowledgements	188
		Appendix I - Interview guide (Example)	192
		Appendix II - Consent form	196

Overview of the papers produced as part of this PhD research

Chapter 2 was published as:

Busscher, N., Krueger, R., Parra, C., 2019. Analysing the governance of land grabbing from a combined political ecology and environmental justice perspective. In: Broeck, van den P., Sadiq, A., Verschure, H., Moulaert, F., Quintana, M. (eds.). *Communities, land and social innovation. Land taking and Land making in rapidly urbanising areas*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishers, in press.

Chapter 3 was published as:

Busscher, N., Parra, C., Vanclay, F., 2018. Land grabbing within a protected area: The experience of local communities with conservation and forestry activities in Los Esteros del Iberá, Argentina. *Land Use Policy* 78, 572-582.

Chapter 4 is under review with an international peer-reviewed journal:

Busscher, N., Parra, C., Vanclay, F. Environmental justice implications of land grabbing for industrial agriculture and forestry in Argentina.

Chapter 5 is under review with an international peer-reviewed journal:

Busscher, N., Vanclay, F., Parra, C. State-civil society collaborations in the context of land grabbing in Argentina.

Introduction

1.1 Introduction to land grabbing

Around 2008, non-governmental organizations, like Grain, and the global media started reporting on the increasing commodification of land to meet the demand for food and materials, a process that is also known as land grabbing (Edelman, 2013; Grain, 2008, 2016; Zoomers, 2010; Zoomers & Otsuki, 2017). Land grabbing was considered a new means to generate revenues and respond to the food and financial crisis that started around 2007-2008 (Borras, 2016; Zoomers, 2010). Even though some institutions merely see land grabbing as foreign driven, domestic players and local elites also play a central role (Margulis et al., 2014). Major concerns were expressed on the impact of land grabbing on local people and the environment (Grain, 2008; Cotula et al., 2009). The social impacts include displacement, further decline of opportunities for inclusion of local people and human rights violations (Alden Wily, 2011; van der Ploeg & Vanclay, 2017). A few of the environmental impacts are the loss of biodiversity, irreversible modification of ecosystems and water scarcity (Cotula et al., 2009; Johansson et al., 2016). Ten years later, in 2018, the global land grab is far from over (Grain, 2016; Li, 2017). We are dealing with a type of socio-political and economic reorganization of space that has not been witnessed before (Borras, 2016; Grain, 2016).

In 2016, Grain reported that their database on foreign land grabs contained 491 projects covering 30 million hectares across 78 countries (Grain, 2016). These are projects initiated after 2006 to produce food, and consist of land investments larger than 500 hectares.² To compare, from 2008 till 2012 the projects in the database quadrupled from 100 to 400 projects. From 2012 till 2016, Grain reported 91 new projects. This shows that land grabbing peaked in the period from 2008-2012. The projects in the Grain database do not include land grabbing for conservation purposes, (i.e. 'green grabs' (Fairhead et al., 2012)) or, for example, land grabbing for biofuels and large infrastructure (Zoomers, 2010).³ Thus, land in the hands of foreign owners caused by the land rush is probably higher than the numbers presented by Grain. As problematized by Edelman (2013), the

1. Grain is a non-profit organization that supports small farmers and social movements in their struggles for land access and food sovereignty (www.grain.org).
2. International organizations use different definitions for land grabbing. For the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) a land grab constitutes a deal of at least 1,000 hectares for a single deal while for Grain a land grab is a deal of 500 hectares and more. In contrast, scholars such as Borras et al. (2012a, p.404) stress the need to step away from using scale as a unit of analysis, since it misses or underemphasizes the underlying broader logic and operation of capital.
3. The distinction between land and green grabbing is becoming increasingly vague due to the rise of 'flex crops' (Borras et al., 2016). Flex crops have multiple potential uses, including food, animal feed, biofuel, fibre, building materials, and derivative products (Borras et al., 2016; Kröger, 2016). Because flex crops operate simultaneously in different markets, green grabs can easily transform into land grabs, and the other way around. The rapid expansion of flex crops has led to increasing and competing demands for land.

numbers on land grabbing are 'messy'; over the years very different estimations have been made on the amount of hectares being grabbed (both sold and leased land), depending on the definition used. These estimations differed from 15 million to 227 million hectares being grabbed (Edelman, 2013). Edelman (2013), stressed the need for reliable data and approaches that go beyond the 'hectare-centred' focus. Rather than focusing on the numbers, it is important to understand the kinds of hectares being grabbed (e.g. areas of high biodiversity, fertility rates, water access, arid grassland) and the levels of capitalization (Borras et al., 2012a; Edelman, 2013).

What becomes clear from the data on land grabbing is that the increase in large land-based projects has slowed down over the years (see Grain, 2016 and the Land Matrix database). Also, whereas land grabbing used to be mainly concentrated in countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia, now, other countries such as Australia and Ukraine are included in the list (Grain, 2016; Wolford et al., 2013; Zoomers, 2010). Even though the pace at which land grabbing takes place is slowing down, resistance and conflict is rising worldwide over land access and the execution of these projects (Brent, 2015; Grain, 2016). Conflicts range from local people denouncing misconduct of (state-owned) companies, governments or elites, to intercommunity conflict and conflict between family members, as land grabbing involves clashing perspectives on land usage and ownership (Borras, 2016; Hall et al., 2015; Kansanga et al., 2018).

The presence of multiple actors taking control over land is triggered by the privatization of land and the global land market (Isakson, 2014; McMichael, 2012). The land market facilitates the process of land acquisition for global companies and other actors, leaving less opportunities for local people to maintain land access and formalize land tenure (McMichael, 2012). Rural communities often depend on land access for their livelihood but often do not possess formal land titles nor do they possess the financial means to formalize tenure (Zoomers, 2010). This is troublesome as the likelihood of land grabbing to occur increases when local people do not possess formal land title (Zoomers, 2010). As a consequence, local people are being displaced from the land they have been working and living on for years, are fenced-in or have their land access restricted (McMichael, 2012).

There are different drivers for land grabbing, including population growth, sustainability paradoxes, the efficiency argument, and the Western financial system (Borras, 2016; Zoomers, 2010). In general, land investors go to where the highest potential revenues can be obtained. Target countries therefore also shift (see the Land Matrix and Grain 2008, 2016). As highlighted by several scholars (Fairhead et al., 2012; Wolford et al., 2013), another driver for land grabbing is the idea that future scarcity can produce super-profits. This idea is considered a perverse capitalist drive justifying land grabbing, as money is made at the expense of local people. Another important driver that made way for land grabbing to occur was the estimation of the World Bank

that around 445 million hectares of land worldwide were uncultivated under-utilized, marginal and empty, that could be used for increasing food production (Borras, 2016; Kapstein, 2018). An outcome of this was that different actors started buying such lands to close the gap between demand and supply for food (Kapstein, 2018). Kapstein (2018) explained that this severely impacts local communities, since fertile land is seldom uncultivated but is instead used by local communities.

1.2 Overall aim and main research questions of this thesis

At the time of starting this PhD, in 2013, pressing topics were to analyse the impacts of land grabbing more rigorously, to understand the legal and political context in which land grabbing takes place, to explore the historical and political antecedents exacerbating the impact of land grabbing, and how agency and resistance shapes land grabbing dynamics (Edelman et al., 2013). These topics have shaped this PhD research.

Land grabbing can take many forms, can happen under different conditions, occurs in a variety of contexts, and has different implications (Edelman et al., 2013; Hall et al., 2015; Zoomers, 2010). To fully grasp crucial issues in land grabbing and its multi-scalar character, a focus on governance was chosen for this research (explained in greater detail in section 1.3). A focus on governance allows to explore the multi-scalar political context and dynamics in which land grabbing takes place. Also, it helps to understand which policies and practices lead to injustice and how affected communities resist (Cook & Swyngedouw, 2010).

Social, political and environmental dynamics (or a combination of these) influence the modes of land regulation and governance in the context of land grabbing. An important social dynamic is that people without formal land tenure suffer more from land grabbing than those that have full ownership of the land (Schlosberg & Carruthers, 2010). In this respect, the contribution by Ribot & Peluso (2003) on access and ownership becomes relevant: land grabbing has a larger negative impact on people without formal land title yet it also restricts access to certain resources associated with land (water, for example) even for those that do have full ownership of the land. This means that in certain cases, people might be protected by their ownership of land, but still they may suffer from negative impacts of land grabbing as the access to certain resources can be modified. Therefore, people often experience combined social and environmental impacts. This also underlines that “the value of nature cannot be assessed only in economic terms” (Escobar, 2006, p.8), making it crucial to consider the socio-environmental impacts of land grabbing. An important political dynamic in the context of the governance of land grabbing is how policies and practices at multiple geographical levels influence land grabbing (Escobar, 2008; Peet et

al., 2011; Schlosberg, 2013). An important environmental dynamic is that many local communities that derive their livelihood from land are adversely impacted, as problematized in environmental justice literature (for more detail see section 1.3). Environmental justice problematized the unequal distribution of harms, and provides different topics to better understand the local impact of land grabbing, including the historical dynamics of marginalization. The dynamics discussed above shape the context in which land grabbing takes place.

Consequently, the main research questions that guide this research are:

‘What are the social, political and environmental dynamics underlying the contemporary governance of land grabbing?’ and ‘What are the implications of land grabbing in terms of environmental justice?’

These questions led to the following research aims: (1) to investigate the *socio-political* dynamics underlying the contemporary governance of land grabbing; (2) to investigate the *environmental* transformations underlying the contemporary governance of land grabbing, including the environmental impact of land grabbing at the local level; (3) to understand the environmental justice implications of land grabbing.

In order to answer these research questions and meet these aims, Argentina was chosen to understand the phenomenon of land grabbing. The past decade, Argentina has dealt with a large variety of land grabbing (see Borras et al., 2012a; Costantino, 2015; Murmis & Murmis, 2012). Specifically, two rural regions, the Provinces of Santiago del Estero and Corrientes, were chosen for this PhD research on land grabbing (see Figure 1). Santiago del Estero has experienced a massive expansion of industrial agriculture, especially soy, after the promulgation in 1996 of a national law allowing GMOs (Goldfarb & Zoomers, 2013). The shift in agricultural production trends has also led to a major increase in feedlotting and extensive livestock farming in this province (Jara & Paz, 2013). The Province of Corrientes faces important socio-environmental transformations resulting from the huge expansion of industrial tree plantations (Busscher et al., 2018). At the same time, Corrientes hosts the protected area ‘Los Esteros del Iberá’ where different land grabs are reported, including land grabbing for nature conservation (Busscher et al., 2018; Murmis & Murmis, 2012; Slutzky, 2014).

Land grabbing throughout Argentina has been particularly problematic for local communities and has led to much conflict over land use and concern about security of land tenure (Bidaseca et al., 2013). In the two provinces studied, many smallholders reside in situations of informal title or precarious land tenure (Goldfarb & van der Haar, 2016; Jara & Paz, 2013; Slutzky, 2014). Land grabbing severely disrupts the lives and livelihoods of local people and leads to the displace-

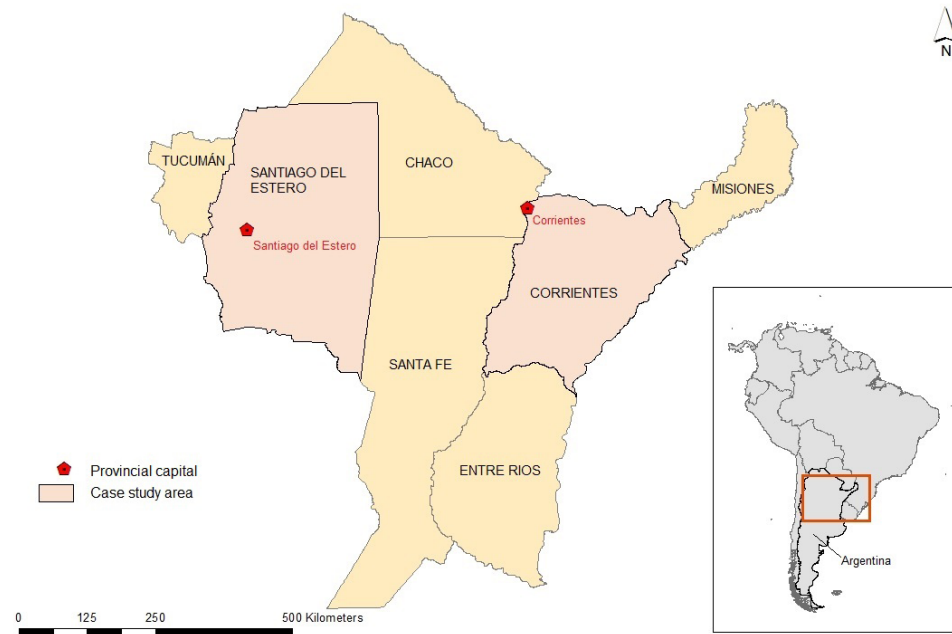


FIGURE 1. Map of Argentina, with Santiago del Estero and Corrientes highlighted. Source: Author

1.3 Theoretical framework and key concepts

To answer the research questions guiding this PhD, literature was selected that engages with issues of exclusion, socio-environmental transformations, and articulation among actors and institutions at different spatial scales. Power inequality is also a crucial dimension to understand land grabbing, as only some people suffer from the negative consequences of land grabbing and whereas other actors pro-actively stimulate and benefit from it (Hall et al., 2015; Zoomers, 2010). The disproportionate negative effect of land grabbing on certain people largely depends on class, status, age, gender, ethnicity and capabilities (Alden Wily, 2011; Escobar, 2006; Hall et al., 2015; Wolford et al., 2013). Moreover, these power inequalities are usually created in the past and are further reproduced in contemporary cases of land grabbing (Edelman et al., 2013). The impact of land grabbing sometimes triggers people to start protest actions ranging from passive resistance (i.e. weapons of the weak) (Scott, 1985) to overt action (Hanna et al., 2016), with the aim to simultaneously change reality and land governance. Bearing this in mind, political ecology, environmental justice and governance were chosen as central bodies of literature in this thesis, as discussed below (see Table 1).

Political ecology refers to the field of study that critically assesses the roles, interests and re-

sponsibilities of different actors while considering their power dynamics, at global, continental, national, regional and local levels. These actors “contribute to, are affected by, or seek to resolve environmental problems at different scales” (Bryant & Bailey, 1997, p.33). Thus, political ecology considers the broader socio-political dynamics to the analysis of local realities. One of the key objectives of political ecology research is to understand the politics over the environment and the implications of power inequality (Low & Gleeson, 1998). Literature on political ecology also stresses the importance of studying environmental change, as a way to advocate for better land governance and environmental use (Escobar, 2006; Peet et al., 2011). In the context of land grabbing, political ecology draws attention to the different roles, interests and responsibilities of different actors in land grabbing, and to the environmental degradation caused by land grabbing.

Environmental justice primarily focuses on the disproportionate environmental burden of land use activities on certain racial, vulnerable and marginalized groups (Bullard, 1996). As Low & Gleeson (1998, p.102) note, “environmental quality is a central aspect of wellbeing for individuals and communities, and it is therefore a critical question for justice.” Environmental justice claims tend to arise when: (i) the environment in which people live is irreversibly modified in its quality and use value; (ii) the access to common property resources is restricted; (iii) certain groups are not considered or do not benefit fairly; (iv) the capabilities of people are constrained because of land control and use changes (Bullard, 1996; Schlosberg & Carruthers, 2010). Core themes covered by the field of environmental justice include the unequal distribution of harms, the extent of participation in decision-making, procedural justice issues, and recognition of and respect for local people and local cultures (Agyeman et al., 2016; Bullard, 1996; Carruthers, 2008; Schlosberg, 2004, 2013; Schlosberg & Carruthers, 2010). In the context of land grabbing, the environmental justice scholarship helps to explore why and how certain vulnerable groups are negatively impacted by land grabbing, and the forms of resistance used by local communities and social movements.

Governance literature draws attention to the interaction of a diverse set of actors and institutions in the political and social arena. Governance is defined as a system of regulation involving the interactions between and within a variety of actors, such as local people, social movements/ NGOs, government officials and companies, across a variety of geographical scales and the socio-institutional arrangements they take part in (Agnew, 2013; Parra, 2010). The interactions between government, civil society and market actors at various levels, means a constant renegotiation, restructuring and readjustment of their roles, interests and responsibilities (Agnew, 2013; Corson & MacDonald, 2012; Parra & Moulaert, 2016; Swyngedouw, 2005). Thus, in this thesis, *the governance of land grabbing* is defined as the policies and practices exercised, at various spatial scales, by different actors and institutions to achieve their interest regarding land access and control, and land use practices. Throughout this research there is a specific interest in how land

governance materializes at the local level, influencing land governance at the local and other spatial scales. Specifically, governance literature facilitates to understand the power dynamics underlying land grabbing practices, as well as the strategies used by actors to promote their goals and agendas. This is important, as a wide range of actors in diverse institutional settings at different spatial levels are now influencing, mediating and negotiating land grabbing (Margulis et al., 2014; Parra & Moulaert, 2016).

Combining political ecology, environmental justice and governance adds value to the study of land grabbing in various ways. First, it brings on board an understanding of the power dimensions of different actors, including the role of the state in land grabbing (Zoomers, 2010). Second, it links broader multi-scalar socio-political dynamics of actors negotiating control over land. Third, synergy between land grabbing, political ecology, environmental justice and governance helps to identify in more detail the vulnerable groups that suffer the consequences of land grabbing. Finally, analysing land grabbing from an environmental justice perspective also strengthens the discussion on why land grabbing brings severe injustice. As discussed in Chapter 2, a combined political ecology and environmental justice lens provides a basis for a thicker socio-political framework to study the contemporary governance of land and land grabbing, including the drivers, mechanisms, consequences and processes from which (in)equality is reproduced.

TABLE 1. Overview of theoretical framework.

Scholarship	Focus	Strength	Weakness	Value added to studying the governance of land grabbing
Land Grabbing	Land in the hands of few	Addressing inequalities in access to land	Temporal dynamics of land grabbing are not sufficiently understood	-
	Displacement of local people			
	Land tenure insecurity for smallholders	Connecting local issues to global processes		
	Violence			
	Large-scale industrial production and large conservation projects			
Political Ecology	Local struggles linked to global issues	Multi-scalar analysis	Ecological elements of environmental change are not sufficiently integrated	Power inequality
	Injustice in contemporary commodity chains	Identifying the interests of different stakeholders		Analysing multiple actors from the local to the global
	Why, how and by whom environmental control occurs			
	The roles and power dynamics used by different actors			
	Environmental concern			
Environmental Justice	Unequal distribution of resource use and control	Focus on local inequalities and vulnerabilities	Little focus on place-based specificities and pre-existing injustice	Identifying vulnerable groups
	Identification of vulnerable groups experiencing excessive social and environmental harm	Protest, resistance, social transformations	Positive outcomes of protest and resistance are not sufficiently addressed	Identifying the factors that create and reproduce instances of injustice
	Resistance and the local agency introducing governance changes			
Governance	Understanding how actors (re)negotiate, restructure and readjust their roles, interests and responsibilities in response to other actors	Focus on power hierarchies and participation in spaces of decision-making	Limited focus on how past policies and practices shape current governance dynamics	Understanding the power dynamics between actors, including those operating at different spatial scales and collaborative governance

1.4 The contribution of this research

This PhD research offers several academic contributions. The theoretical chapter of this thesis (Chapter 2) starts by acknowledging the lack of methodological clarity on how to study land grabbing. By drawing synergies between political ecology and environmental justice, this chapter elaborates on five analytical elements for the study of land grabbing and its governance: (i) past and present policies and practices enabling unequal land ownership and access, (ii) the relationship between social and environmental expressions and visa-versa, (iii) geographical scales and multi-scalar analysis, (iv) temporal dimensions, and (v) context and diversity.

Further contributions, resulting from the empirical research material produced in this research, are the analyses of land grabbing in a protected area. As discussed in Chapter 3, land grabbing in protected areas can have severe understudied social impacts. So far, spaces for biodiversity conservation have not received sufficient attention in land grabbing research, in spite of the specificities of land grabbing in protected areas.

The analyses of land grabbing from an environmental justice perspective is another contribution of this PhD research (Chapter 4). This research gives an account of how land grabbing not only leads to actual violence, but constitutes a form of 'slow violence' for local people (Nixon, 2011), resulting from the lack of consideration by the government of the long term issues and cumulative impacts of land grabbing (see Chapter 4).

Additional research contributions are given to the literature of environmental justice with an analysis on the conditions that hinder local communities to resist to injustice (Chapter 4). It considers how pre-existing inequalities hamper local people to pro-actively address injustice brought by land grabbing. Chapter 4 also discusses why local people in some cases tacitly accept injustice instead of getting organised in a pro-active way.

This research also contributes to the literature on state-civil society collaborations in the context of land grabbing. Chapter 5 zooms in on a collaboration between the provincial government of Santiago del Estero and social movements. Years of political pressure have led to the establishment of two agencies to assist local communities in land tenure formalization as well as in (violent) conflicts over land. Even though there are limitations identified in the strengths of such agencies, it is argued that local communities would have been worse off without this type of collaboration.

Finally, the methodological approach of this research provides an in-depth understanding of the local governance implications of land grabbing, by including the perspectives of different actors

such as local people, social movements representatives, NGOs employees, government officials and company staff.

1.5 Research approach and methodology

This research is the result of four fieldwork visits to Argentina, totalling 10 months of fieldwork carried out between 2011 and 2016. For this research, I focused on two provinces more in-depth, namely Corrientes and Santiago del Estero (see Figure 1). Central to the fieldwork was understanding (i) the impacts of land grabbing on the lives of local people; (ii) the roles, interests and responsibilities of different actors; (iii) the difficulties in addressing the negative impacts from land grabbing; and (iv) how resistance strategies were mobilized at different geographical scales in an attempt to influence land grabbing. An extensive literature review was done to understand what drives land grabbing and why land grabbing and its governance creates injustice (Chapter 2). For the empirical research part of this thesis, land grabbing was studied in different localities and from complementary perspectives, as depicted in Table 2.

TABLE 2. Overview of the case studies and their location in this thesis.

Focus	Case study	Discussed in chapter
Land grabbing in a protected area	Conservation program of Douglas Tompkins in 'Los Esteros del Iberá' in Corrientes	3
	Investment of the Harvard Management Company in 'Los Esteros del Iberá' in Corrientes	
Environmental justice implications of land grabbing	Industrial tree plantation expansion in the province of Corrientes	4
	Agricultural expansion in the province of Santiago del Estero	
State-civil society collaborations in the context of land grabbing	<i>El Registro de Poseedores</i> and <i>El Comité de Emergencia</i> in Santiago del Estero	5

During the research, a multi-methods approach was adopted, with a wide range of social research methods used, including: document analysis, analysis of media reports, in-depth interviews and participant observation with field visits and attendance at village meetings where land use issues and land tenure were discussed. A total of 70 in-depth interviews were carried out, including 12 interviews with local residents, 16 with representatives of social movements/NGOs, 13 with representatives of companies, 13 with other researchers and journalists studying

land grabbing, and 16 interviews with government officials (including interviews with government officials from *El Registro de Poseedores* and *El Comité de Emergencia*). I conducted all these interviews in Spanish, and in a few of them this was done in collaboration with Constanza Parra. An example of an interview guide is given in Appendix I (in Spanish). Depending on the expertise of the interviewee, the interview guide was adjusted.

Informed consent was given for the interviews, although usually in an oral way (Vanclay et al., 2013). The informed consent form was prepared in Spanish (see Appendix II). Ethical approval for conducting this research was provided by the Ethical Committee of the Faculty of Spatial Sciences, University of Groningen, the Netherlands. Only about half of the interviews could be recorded because of people's concerns about this. Nevertheless, interview notes were taken during interviews. The interviews that were recorded were transcribed. After each interview, especially for those that were not recorded, additional notes were made regarding any significant observation or comments made. In some interviews, participants presented photos, documents or other materials. Where appropriate, I took copies of these (see pictures 1 and 2). Also, where appropriate, I took photographs during field visits.



PICTURE 1. This picture (picture of a picture) was taken while interviewing a family that has been living in Corrientes for decades. Their house has been slowly enclosed by industrial tree plantations. The picture depicts the situation of the pond around 30 years ago when children were playing in the water body (picture taken by the author in 2015).



PICTURE 2. The same water body pictured in 2015. According to the interviewee, the water body had severely diminished size in the face of industrial tree plantations expansion in the area (picture taken by the author in 2015).

Several specific activities helped me to understand the complexity of land grabbing in Argentina. As part of my Master thesis in 2011, fieldwork was conducted with the assistance of a local NGO in Santiago del Estero. This collaboration has been very valuable in understanding the institutional context of Santiago del Estero, for network building and understanding the legal issues pertaining to land grabbing. Being in Santiago del Estero in this period also gave a good understanding of the violence that is mobilised by investors to gain land control. At this time, Cristian Ferreyra was killed when he was defending his land and protecting his community from being expelled. A demonstration was held right after this had happened (see pictures 3-5) and also a meeting of the 'Mesa Provincial de Tierra' (Provincial Roundtable for Land Issues - a formal mechanism that gathers together different actors involved in land use conflicts) (see Chapter 5) was attended where community members of Cristian Ferreyra were present to discuss the killing of Cristian, as well as the violence their community had experienced. This demonstration and meeting were of great tension.



PICTURE 3. Protest action in 2011. On the banner people ask for one minute of silence in respect of the people that died as a cause of the agricultural expansion in Santiago del Estero (picture taken by the author in 2011).



PICTURE 4. Protest action Greenpeace 'Stop deforestation stop evictions' (picture taken by the author in 2011).



PICTURE 5. Demonstrators in front of Dirección de Bosques (i.e. Directorate of Forests). This institute approved deforestation on the plot of land where Cristian Ferreyra was living. This instance instigated violence and the intend to evict the community (picture taken by the author in 2011).

Other activities included field visits to soy and tree plantations accompanied by owners or other key actors. Also, the conservation project of Douglas Tompkins and the tree plantations of Harvard Management Company (HMC) were visited accompanied by staff members (see pictures 6 and 7). Also, the manager of HMCs plantations was interviewed. Another way of gathering information was attending community meetings organized by NGOs. Often a lawyer would inform people about their land rights and mapping activities were organized (see pictures 8 and 9). All research activities contributed to gaining an integrated view of the implications of land grabbing and the local realities surrounding this. To grasp the temporal dynamics of land grabbing, one community was visited several times, in different points in time (2011 and 2016). Additional to the activities described, supportive information was gained from fieldtrips to other provinces like Misiones, Buenos Aires, Rosario, Jujuy, Santa Fe, Córdoba and Tucumán.



PICTURE 6. One of HMCs tree plantations in Los Esteros del Iberá, Corrientes (picture taken by the author in 2015).



PICTURE 7. The protected area Los Esteros del Iberá, Corrientes (pictures taken by the author in 2015).



PICTURE 8. Community meeting in Santiago del Estero with the aim to inform people about their land rights (picture taken by the author in 2011).



PICTURE 9. Capacity building activities in a community (mapping the land) (picture taken by the author in 2011).

The data for analysis comprised the interview transcripts, relevant documents, and field notes. Analysis of the data was done by reviewing all materials many times over and distilling the key issues relating to land grabbing. A limitation of this research is that it was only possible to visit communities that had external connections, as typically a gatekeeper, such as various NGO employees, introduced me to these communities. This may have influenced the findings, because the research mainly concerns communities that are reasonably well-connected and well-functioning. Other limitations related to language nuance, given the strong regional dialects in some of the rural villages. Statements about specific facts, events or happenings were cross-checked or triangulated as much as possible.

1.6 Positionality

This section considers my positionality as a researcher and how this influenced the research. As generally accepted, the researcher's beliefs, political stance, cultural background and other features such as gender, race, class, socio-economic status, and educational background may affect the research process, especially in cross-cultural research and when studying the experience of people in vulnerable situations (Baud, 2002; Bourke, 2014; Clifford et al., 2010). Researchers that study a foreign context, carry with them their own culture, and empathize and identify with certain situations in the research process (Baud, 2002; Clifford et al., 2010). Aside from being a researcher, researchers are persons with moral compasses that are not easily 'switched off'. In line with this, Jara et al. (2016) expressed how difficult (or perhaps impossible) it is to produce objective science when working with vulnerable people that are affected by land grabbing, as you easily feel involved in their situation. Bourke (2014) coincides with Jara et al. (2016) and mentioned that the belief of producing something such as objective science is naïve or impossible, as values and worldviews are inherent and cannot be separated from who is researching.

Drawing on Bourke (2014), this section continues by discussing the following questions: (i) What role did my positionality - as a European, high-educated woman studying land grabbing and issues of vulnerability - play? (ii) How did my positionality help me in different spaces? (iii) How did my positionality influence my interactions with various actors in Argentina? The answers to these questions are not near to being final or conclusive. As many scholars on research positionality conclude, self-reflexivity is a non-conclusive and ongoing process (Bourke, 2014).

My own experience while doing research and approaching local people, company staff and government officials has been quite positive and constructive. I did not experience many boundaries in approaching people and having them participate in this research. The fact that I am not from Argentina opened important doors for me. In general, people were very curious about

what a foreigner was doing in their provinces, especially in Corrientes and Santiago del Estero that do not receive many tourists and foreign researchers. Also, NGO staff was happy to take me to local communities. Moreover, I had the impression that even tree plantation managers, conservation managers and soy farmers were pleased to show me their activities, and share their story. As an outsider, it is more acceptable to ask certain question that 'insiders' can't because they are either supposed to know the answer or they do not dare to ask (see Bourke (2014) for a discussion on the insider/outsider perspective). However, as an outsider, it was not always possible for me to fully understand the local language and expressions, which might have led to certain misunderstandings, incomplete information and insufficient nuance in the interpretation of collected information.

One of the challenges of this research was to interview and talk to a wide variety of people. In certain conversations with company staff, it was difficult to keep neutral and not to speak up for the communities that had shared their struggles with me. Another issue was the blurred boundary between my role as researcher and 'myself'. Once, I went to an event in the weekend for leisure and I met somebody with whom I discussed my research and the issues local people encountered with the arrival of large-scale land owners cultivating soy. This person then introduced me to somebody that happened to own 10,000 hectares, where he cultivated soy. He informed this person about my concerns. As a result, the large-scale land owner was aware of some of my findings, possibly influencing my research, as I visited his farm and interviewed him a few weeks later. Even though this visit has been highly interesting, this encounter reflects the difficulty of how to present yourself and live for a few months in a foreign country, including the limitations that one might have to disclose research findings.

Another issue in research positionality is the critical line as of which the researcher, investigating vulnerable people, should start engaging instead of studying, interviewing and merely taking notes. During my fieldwork research, I visited a family that was highly exposed to the negative impacts from agrochemical use in their vicinities. The purpose of my visit was to carry out an in-depth research to better understand their situation and struggles studied for this PhD. However, the difficult conditions experienced by this family couldn't prevent me from wanting to discuss the possible alternatives on how to deal with the issues they faced. At the end, I decided not to intervene. Instead, I asked the NGO personnel I was with to address these issues in their next visit. The question of the boundary between carrying out research for a PhD and intervening was a challenging one.

A final ethical consideration regards the role of researchers. As discussed by panellist An-Ansoms during the LandAc conference 'Land governance and (in) mobility' (Utrecht, July 2018), there are many ethical challenges inherent to research on land grabbing and the consequent

knowledge production. Specifically, she reflected on the legitimacy of making a career out of studying very vulnerable people. She raised the issue whether researchers have an obligation to go beyond knowledge production. We assume that we give people a voice by studying their struggles, but we do not acknowledge enough that the information we gather may be used by powerful actors too, possibly entailing negative consequences. I believe this ethical consideration deserves higher attention among the academic community.

1.7 Outline of the thesis

This thesis consists of six chapters, including this general introduction. The four papers written as part of this PhD research guide the structure of this thesis.

Chapter two explores how and why land grabbing occurs, and offers a framework to analyse the governance of land grabbing from a combined political ecology and environmental justice perspective. This chapter stresses that the examination of land grabbing that is inflected by political ecology and environmental justice frames can allow for a better comprehension of the multi- and interscalar mechanisms, and the processes and practices that lead to inequality. This chapter also discusses the socio-political and socio-economic drivers triggering land grabbing and pays special attention to how and why land grabbing creates social and environmental injustice. Building on political ecology and environmental justice literature, the following key elements for the study of the governance of land grabbing were identified in this chapter: (i) past and present policies and practices enabling unequal land ownership and access, (ii) the relationship between social and environmental expressions and visa-versa, (iii) geographical scales and multi-scalar analysis, (iv) temporal dimensions, and (v) context and diversity.

Chapter three discusses land grabbing in a protected area in Argentina: Los Esteros del Iberá in Corrientes. Protected areas are increasingly prone to land grabbing under the reign of neoliberal ideas on conserving nature (Busscher et al., 2018). There is a specific focus on two projects in and around Los Esteros del Iberá, namely the investment of Harvard Management Company for developing industrial tree plantations and the conservation initiative of Douglas Tompkins/Conservation Land Trust. The local implications of these two projects are discussed, as well as the governance implications of land grabbing in protected areas. In this chapter it is suggested that the multi-level governance character of land grabbing in protected areas leads to negative outcomes but potentially also positive developments can be distinguished. However, even though some positive features were distinguished in the case studies, this chapter highlights that the needs, interests and demands of communities are never fully considered in land grabbing practices, not even when social movements from multiple scales assist local people

affected by land grabbing.

Chapter four discusses the environmental justice implications of land grabbing. Environmental justice literature is used to analyse the issues arising from industrial tree plantations in Corrientes and the agricultural expansion in Santiago del Estero. In this chapter different shortcomings are identified with respect to environmental justice literature, including the lack of understanding of the preconditions necessary to initiate social transformative action. Furthermore, this chapter explores the factors that enable or constrain people to seek resolution of their environmental justice issues. Environmental justice too easily assumes that people will resist when experiencing injustice. That is not the case in the provinces studied. In the context of land grabbing, local people would address other injustices experienced rather than for example proactively formalizing land tenure. These injustices are a result of historical marginalization of rural areas in Argentina. This chapter underlines the need to recognize informal and customary land use and the need to support social movements in their actions for creating a more equal society.

Chapter five analyses the governance implications of land grabbing in Santiago del Estero. It specifically focuses on the institutional setting of the province and the role of social movements. It shows how *Movimiento Campesino de Santiago del Estero* (Peasant Movement of Santiago del Estero) (MOCASE) and other social movements influence the debate of land tenure insecurity. With MOCASE as the leading actor, the provincial government was pressured to better address the violent situation in the province. After decades of struggles, social movements reached an agreement with the provincial government to set up two agencies that address land grabbing issues, namely, *el Registro de Poseedores* and *el Comité de Emergencia*. In this chapter an overview of the incentives for, limitations of, and contradictions to these type of collaborations is presented. These types of local collaborations are not so often studied, nor are their programs well analysed. Additionally, an extensive explanation is given on the legal context in which land grabbing takes place in Argentina.

In the final chapter of this thesis, the main research findings are summarized and a reflection is given on the theoretical framework used in this thesis. In this reflection, several points are identified that are important to consider for an improved understanding of land grabbing. Subsequently, a more nuanced description of land grabbing is given. Moreover, some concluding comments are given on the different industries studied; industrial tree plantations, nature conservation and agriculture. This chapter also provides an analysis of recent political developments in Argentina and Latin America. These political changes possibly influence land grabbing and environmental justice dynamics in the future. Finally, recommendations are given for different actors based on the findings of this thesis. Specifically, recommendations are given for local communities, social movements/NGOs, governments, international organisations, and for companies engaged in ac-

tivities that might be perceived as land grabbing. Lastly, this chapter offers some final remarks on the research and directions for further research. Special attention is given to the importance of redressing inequality and actively addressing the issues communities face in academic research.

References

- Agnew, J.A. (2013). Territory, Politics, Governance. *Territory, Politics, Governance*, 1(1), 1-4.
- Agyeman, J., Schlosberg, D., Craven, L., and Matthews, C., 2016. Trends and directions in environmental justice: From inequity to everyday life, community, and just sustainabilities. *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 41, 321-340.
- Alden Wily, L., 2011. 'The Law is to Blame': The vulnerable Status of Common Property Rights in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Development and Change* 42(3), 733-757.
- Ansoms, A. Panellist LandAc Conference 'Land governance and (in) mobility' Utrecht, The Netherlands, July 2018.
- Baud, M., 2002. *Wetenschap, moraal en politiek. Latijns Amerikaanse intellectuelen en in een mondiale wereld*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Bidaseca, K., Gigena, A., Gómez, F., Weinstock, A.M., Oyharzábal, E., and Ota, D., 2013. Relevamiento y sistematización de problemas de tierras de los agricultores familiares en Argentina. Buenos Aires: Ministerio de la Agricultura, Ganadería y Pesca de la Nación.
- Borras, S.M., 2016. Land politics, agrarian movements and scholar-activism. Inaugural lecture April 14 2016, International Institute of Social Sciences, the Hague, the Netherlands. [Accessed August 10 2018 on: <https://repub.eur.nl/pub/93021>]
- Borras, S.M., Kay, C., Gómez, S., Wilkinson, J., 2012a. Land grabbing and global capitalist accumulation: Key features in Latin America. *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 33(4), 402-416.
- Borras, S.M., Franco, J., Gómez, S., Kay, C., Spoor, M., 2012b. Land grabbing in Latin America and the Caribbean. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 39(3-4), 845-872.
- Borras, S.M., Franco, J.C., Isakson, S.R., Levidow, L., Ververst, P., 2016. The rise of flex crops and commodities: implications for research. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 43(1), 93-115.
- Bourke, B., 2014. Positionality: Reflecting on the Research Process. *The Qualitative Report* 19(33), 1-9.
- Brent, Z., 2015. Territorial restructuring and resistance in Argentina. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 42(3-4), 671-694.
- Bryant, R.L., Bailey, S., 1997. *Third World Political Ecology*. London: Routledge.
- Bullard, R., 1996. Environmental Justice: It's More Than Waste Facility Siting. *Social Science Quarterly* 77(3), 493-499.
- Busscher, N., Parra, C., Vanclay, F., 2018. Land grabbing within a protected area: The experience of local communities with conservation and forestry activities in Los Esteros del Iberá, Argentina. *Land Use Policy*, 78, 572-582.
- Carruthers, D.V., 2008. Popular Environmentalism and Social Justice in Latin America. In: Carruthers, D.V., ed. *Environmental Justice in Latin America. Problems, Promise, and Practice*, 1-22. Cambridge MA: MIT Press.
- Clifford, N., French, S., Valentine, G., (eds.) 2010. *Key Methods in Geography*. London: Sage.
- Cook, I.R., Swyngedouw, E., 2012. Cities, Social Cohesion and the Environment: Towards a Future Research Agenda. *Urban Studies* 49: 1959-1978.
- Corson, C., MacDonald, K.I. (2012). Enclosing the global commons: the convention on biological diversity and green grabbing. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 39(2), 263-283.
- Costantino, A., 2015. El capital extranjero y el acaparamiento de tierras: conflictos sociales y acumulación por desposesión en Argentina. *Revista de Estudios Sociales* 55, 137-149.
- Cotula, L., Vermeulen, S., Leonard, R. and Keeley, J., 2009. Land grab or development opportunity? Agricultural investment and international land deals in Africa. IIED/FAO/IFAD, London/Rome.

- Edelman, M., 2013. Messy hectares: questions about the epistemology of land grabbing data. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 40(3), 485-501.
- Edelman, M., Oya, C., Borras, S.M., 2013. Global Land Grabs: historical processes, theoretical and methodological implications and current trajectories. *Third World Quarterly* 34(9), 1517-1531.
- Escobar, A., 2006. Difference and Conflict in the Struggle over Natural Resources: A political ecology framework. *Development* 49(3), 6-13.
- Escobar, A., 2008. *Territories of Difference: Place, Movements, Life, Redes*. Durham: Duke University.
- Fairhead, J., Leach, M., Scoones, I., 2012. Green grabbing: A new appropriation of nature? *Journal of Peasant Studies* 39(2), 237-261.
- Goldfarb, L., Zoomers, A., 2013. The drivers behind the rapid expansion of genetically modified soya production into the Chaco Region of Argentina. In: Fang, Z., ed. *Biofuels: Economy, Environment and Sustainability*. Rijeka: InTech, 73-95.
- Goldfarb, L., van der Haar, G., 2016. The moving frontiers of genetically modified soy production: shifts in land control in the Argentinian Chaco. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 43(2), 562-582.
- Grain, 2008. Seized! The 2008 land grab for food and financial security. Grain Briefing. [Accessed: July 17 2018 on: <https://www.grain.org/article/entries/93-seized-the-2008-landgrab-for-food-and-financial-security>]
- Grain 2016. The Global farmland grab in 2016. How big, how bad? [Accessed: July 17 2018 on: <https://www.grain.org/article/entries/5492-the-global-farmland-grab-in-2016-how-big-how-bad>]
- Hall, R., Edelman, M., Borras, S.M., Scoones, I., White, B., Wolford, W., 2015. Resistance, acquiescence or incorporation? An introduction to land grabbing and political reactions 'from below'. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 42(3-4), 467-488.
- Hanna, P., Vanclay, F., Langdon J., Arts, J., 2016. Conceptualizing social protest and the significance of protest action to large projects. *Extractive Industries and Society* 3(1), 217-239.
- Isakson, S.R., 2014. Food and finance: the financial transformation of agro-food supply chains. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 41(5), 749-775.
- Jara, C., and Paz, R., 2013. Ordenar el territorio para detener el acaparamiento mundial de tierras. La conflictividad de la estructura agraria de Santiago del Estero y el papel del estado. *Proyección* 15, 171-195.
- Jara, C., Gil Villanueva, L., Moyano, L., 2016. Resistiendo en la frontera. La Agricultura Familiar y las luchas territoriales en el Salado Norte (Santiago del Estero) en el período 1999-2014. In: Gutiérrez, M.E., Gonzalez, V.G., eds. *Desarrollo Rural, Política Pública y Agricultura Familiar. Reflexiones en torno a experiencias de la Agricultura Familiar en Santiago del Estero*, 33-49. San Miguel de Tucumán: Magna Publicaciones.
- Johansson, E.L., Fader, L., Seaquist, J.W., Nicholas, K.A., 2016. Green and blue water demand from large-scale land acquisitions in Africa. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 113 (41) 11471-11476.
- Kansanga, M., Andersen, P., Atuoye, K., Mason-Renton, S., 2018. Contested commons: Agricultural modernization, tenure ambiguities and intra-familial land grabbing in Ghana. *Land Use Policy* 75, 215-224.
- Kapstein, E.B., 2018. Governing the Global Land Grab. *Global Policy* 9(2), 173-183.
- Kröger, M., 2016. The political economy of 'flex trees': A preliminary analysis. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 43(4), 886-909.
- Land Matrix. The Online Public Database on Land Deals. <https://landmatrix.org/en/>.
- Lapegna, P., 2016. Genetically modified soybeans, agrochemical exposure, and everyday forms of peasant collaboration in Argentina. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 43(2), 517-536.
- Li, T.M., 2017 (in press). After the land grab: Infrastructural violence and the "Mafia System" in Indonesia's oil palm plantation zones. *Geoforum* <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2017.10.012>.
- Low, N., Gleeson, B., 1998. *Justice, Society and Nature: an exploration of political ecology*. London: Routledge.
- Margulis, M., McKeon, Borras, S.M., (eds.) 2014. *Land Grabbing and Global Governance*. New York, Routledge.
- McMichael, P., 2012. The land grab and corporate food regime restructuring. *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 39 (3-4): 681-701.
- Murmis, M., Murmis, M.R., 2012. Land concentration and foreign land ownership in Argentina in the context of global land grabbing. *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 33(4), 490-508.
- Nixon, R., 2011. *Slow Violence and Environmentalism of the Poor*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Parra, C., 2010. Sustainability and multi-level governance of territories classified as protected areas in France: The Morvan Regional Park case. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management* 53(4), 491-509.
- Parra, C. Moulart, F., 2016. The governance of the nature-culture nexus: Lessons learned from the San Pedro de Atacama case-study. *Nature + Culture* 11(3), 239-258.
- Peet, R., Robbins, P., Watts, M., 2011. Global Nature. In: Peet, R., Robbins, P., Watts, M., eds. *Global Political Ecology*, 1-47. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Ploeg, van der, L., Vanclay, F., 2017. A human rights based approach to project-induced displacement and resettlement. *Impact Assessment & Project Appraisal* 35(1), 34-52
- Ribot, J.C., Peluso, N.L., 2003. A theory of access. *Rural Sociology* 68(2), 153-181.
- Schlosberg, D., 2004. Reconceiving environmental justice: Global movements and political theories. *Environmental Politics* 13(3), 517-540.
- Schlosberg, D., and Carruthers, D., 2010. Indigenous struggles, environmental justice, and community capabilities. *Global Environmental Politics* 10(4), 12-34.
- Schlosberg, D., 2013. Theorising environmental justice: the expanding sphere of a discourse. *Environmental Politics* 22(1), 37-55.
- Scott, J.C., 1985. *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Slutzky, D., 2014. *Estructura social agraria y agroindustria del Nordeste de la Argentina: desde la incorporación a la economía nacional al actual subdesarrollo concentrador y excluyente*. Misiones: Editorial Universitaria, Universidad Nacional de Misiones.
- Swyngedouw, E., 2005. Governance Innovation and the Citizens: The Janus Face of Governance-beyond-the-State. *Urban Studies*, 42(11), 1991-2006.
- Vanclay, F., Baines, J., Taylor, C.N., 2013. Principles for ethical research involving humans: Ethical professional practice in impact assessment Part I. *Impact Assessment & Project Appraisal* 31(4), 243-253.
- Wolford, W., Borras, S.M., Hall, R., Scoones, I., White, B., 2013. Governing Global Land Deals: The Role of the State in the Rush for Land. *Development and Change* 44(2), 189-210.
- Zoomers, E.B., 2010. Globalization and the foreignization of space: The seven processes driving the current global land grab. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 37(2), 429-447.
- Zoomers, E.B., Otsuki, K., 2017. Addressing the impacts of large-scale land investments: Re-engaging with livelihood research. *Geoforum* 83, 164-171.

Analysing the governance of land grabbing from a combined political ecology and environmental justice perspective*

*** This paper has been published as:**

Busscher, N., Krueger, R., Parra, C., 2019. Analysing the governance of land grabbing from a combined political ecology and environmental justice perspective. In: van den Broeck, P., Sadiq, A., Verschure, H., Moulaert, F., Quintana, M. (eds.). *Communities, land and social innovation. Land taking and Land making in rapidly urbanising areas*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishers, in press.

Abstract

In this chapter we link ‘political ecology’ and ‘environmental justice’ frameworks to analyse land grabbing and its implications for governance. Building on these scholarships, we identified five key elements for understanding the governance of land grabbing: (i) past and present policies and practices enabling unequal land ownership and access, (ii) the relationship between social and environmental expressions and visa-versa, (iii) geographical scales and multi-scalar analysis, (iv) temporal dimensions, and (v) context and diversity. This chapter stresses that examinations of land grabbing that are inflected by political ecology and environmental justice frames will allow for a better comprehension of the multi- and inter scalar mechanisms, processes, and practices that lead to inequality. This approach will also allow for a better understanding of how ongoing urbanization fuels the phenomenon of land grabbing, as rural areas serve to produce commodities consumed in urban localities.

Keywords

Environmental justice movements, governance, social impacts, rural development, urbanization, land acquisition.

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explores how and why land grabbing occurs and offers a framework to analyse land grabbing from a combined political ecology and environmental justice perspective. Such an approach looks at land grabbing from the perspective of the understudied multi-scalar mechanisms, processes and practices that lead to inequality (Bryant & Bailey, 1997; Schlosberg, 2004; 2013). By drawing synergies between political ecology and environmental justice, this chapter also enhances the understanding of the governance of land grabbing and the multi-scalar socio-political processes underlying the increasing trade in and use of natural resources in Asia, Latin America, Africa and elsewhere. On the one hand, political ecology draws attention to power inequalities among actors operating at different spatial scales who aim to gain access to the environment (Little, 2007). On the other hand, environmental justice studies inequity in the local distribution of environmental harms and goods (Schlosberg, 2013). The exposure to negative environmental effects such as overexploitation and pollution is uneven. As reported by several studies, certain social groups suffer the negative impacts of the growing demand for land and resources disproportionately. This is usually the case for women, indigenous communities, and the rural poor. It is argued that the disproportionate negative effects of land-based projects on certain people largely depend on class, status, age, gender, ethnicity and capabilities (Alden Wily, 2011; Escobar, 2006; Hall et al., 2015; Wolford et al., 2013). Thus, this chapter contributes to a growing body of literature on the governance of land grabbing by calling attention to issues of exclusion, socio-environmental transformations, power inequalities, and connections among different spatial scales. The main questions discussed are: ‘What are the socio-political and socio-economic drivers triggering land grabbing?’ and ‘How and why does land grabbing and its governance create and reproduce socio-environmental injustice?’ We will explore these questions in the sections below.

This chapter unfolds as follows. Section two presents the drivers and implications of land grabbing governance and the interlinked socio-environmental transformations, including the manifestation of social resistance and protest as a response to land grabbing (Hanna et al., 2016; Vira, 2015). Section three discusses the contribution of political ecology and environmental justice to the analysis of land grabbing. From the cross-fertilization of these two bodies of scholarship, section four zooms into five key elements for the understanding of land grabbing and its governance roots and implications: (i) past and present policies and practices enabling unequal land ownership and access, (ii) the relationship between social and environmental expressions and visa-versa, (iii) geographical scales and multi-scalar analysis, (iv) temporal dimensions, and (v) context and diversity. The chapter concludes with a plea for a combined political ecology and environmental justice lens, as a basis for a thicker socio-political framework to study the contemporary governance of land and land grabbing, and notably the drivers, mechanisms, consequences and processes from which (in)equality is reproduced.

2.2 The drivers and implications of land grabbing governance

Land grabbing promotes a socio-environmental transformation that is produced at broader spatial scales. Land grabbing provokes alterations on day-to-day life for rural people by, for example, land use changes but also land tenure insecurity and conflict (Borras & Franco, 2012; Zoomers, 2010). Moreover, land grabbing constitutes a socio-environmental transformation as it highlights the ongoing changes from nature being a local resource for livelihood reproduction to nature being a commodity that can be accessed and transformed by powerful entities. We develop these characteristics in the rest of this section.

Land grabbing exacerbates unequal access to resources and diminishes the opportunities for local people to derive benefits from nature. Unequal power contributes to processes of unequal distribution of resource access (Escobar, 2008). For companies on the other side of the world, gaining land access and control is often easier than for local communities to maintain access and control over land, even though they have been living and working on the land for decades (McMichael, 2012).

Actors in land grabbing operate across different spatial scales. These include land investors ranging from state authorities, private firms and social elites (Alden Wily, 2011). Investors also include hedge funds speculating with pension funds over the turnover of land investment projects (Grain, 2012). States play a crucial role in allowing land grabbing by companies. For example, states pave the way for land grabs through the introduction of policies such as those lowering barriers to (foreign) investment (Alden Wily, 2011; Dwyer, 2013).

Land grabbing thus contains clashing ideas and discourses of what development means and how development should unfold (Banerjee, 2015; Wolford et al., 2013). Local authorities and global development institutions, for example the World Bank, mobilize 'modernization' and 'pro-development' discourses to approve and stimulate conditions favouring land grabs. The idea of the existence of "marginal, under-utilized, empty, and available lands" further stimulates the introduction of the 'pro' land grabbing discourses (Borras, 2016, 6). As a result, land grabbing opens a route to economic growth by (violently) dispossessing people of their land (Alden Wily, 2011; van der Ploeg & Vanclay, 2017).

The social, economic and political factors underlying land grabbing and unequal land transactions are complex. A first driver is the growing demand for commodities across the globe and the concomitant production of commodities at competitive prices relying on cheap labour force, and weak or inexistent environmental regulations (Fairhead et al., 2012; Zoomers, 2010). A second driver is related to the role of (neoliberal) states in enacting policy mechanisms to

facilitate the international trade of commodities and accompanying land transactions (Blaikie, 1999; Brenner et al., 2010). The privatization of goods and deregulation of states are a core component of a neoliberal economic system that allows land grabbing (Fairhead et al., 2012; Zoomers, 2010). Third, land grabbing is also promoted by postcolonial development strategies and discourses that aim to improve social and economic conditions of 'developing countries' through land investments (Escobar, 2008). In practice, these different drivers reinforce each other; land grabbing often makes it impossible for local communities to maintain a proper livelihood on the land, and consequently local people might be forced to lease or sell land to investors, facilitating land grabbing.

As introduced earlier, land grabbing takes place at the cost of local people, their communities, health and the physical environment (Escobar, 2004; 2006; Svampa & Viale, 2014). From a social perspective, land grabbing may result in human right violations, a clash between formal and customary land rights, loss of job opportunities, severe livelihood changes, and displacement and dispossession (Alden Wily, 2011; Banerjee, 2015; van der Ploeg & Vanclay, 2017). It also results in increased land prices and reduced possibilities for local people to regain land ownership (Davis et al., 2014). From an environmental perspective, land grabbing leads to the exploitation of land, including biodiversity loss, ecosystem deteriorations, water scarcity and pollution (Svampa & Viale, 2014).

The impact of land grabbing on local communities is uneven depending on the local context, history and social compositions (Busscher et al., 2018). In some cases, certain social groups may be able to benefit from land investments (Edelman & León, 2013; Hall et al., 2015). Typically, the most negatively affected people are those lacking adequate financial means to respond and adapt to new situations. These are usually those who have not secured land tenure before the start of the land rush. In the words of Vira (2015, 773), "there is growing evidence that the poor feel the impact of natural resource loss disproportionately". From this perspective, it can be argued that land grabbing leads to the aggravation of pre-existing inequalities and injustice. Bearing this in mind, below, we look at three relevant issues to understand the reproduction of inequalities, namely historical mechanisms of exclusion, indigeneity and gender.

Complex historical land use arrangements and tenure affect the relationship between the causes and effects of land grabbing (Mamonova, 2015), notably the overlooked link between land grabbing and dispossession (Alden Wily, 2011; Boamah & Overå, 2015). In many countries, the enduring land tenure informality facilitates land grabbing. Furthermore, pre-existing instances of injustice and informal rules regarding who is and who is not allowed to use land can aggravate the negative impacts of land grabbing (Boamah & Overå, 2015). Research in Ghana by Boamah & Overå (2015) showed how local leaders negotiating land distribution with a biofuel

company deliberately excluded other community members. According to their research, local chiefs leading land transactions with the company, excluded community members without clear antecedents to claim land. These include those community members lacking family ties, social networks, or working antecedents in the community. Other research showed that traditional leaders approved land transactions that led to displacement of local people. The approval by local leaders granted permission for land grabs even when other community members were against land leases (Alden Wily, 2011). These results suggest that there are local winners and losers in land negotiations, depending on particular historical antecedents (Edelman & León, 2013; Mamonova, 2015) and power structures within communities. Therefore, local communities are to be considered as spaces where a plurality of ideas, opinions and power dynamics exist.

Indigeneity is another socio-political layer prominent in the land grabbing literature (Borras & Franco, 2012; de Schutter, 2011). Indigenous peoples are the ones suffering the most from instances of injustice; they have been harmed disproportionately in the past and today they face the lack of recognition of ethnic rights and customary laws (Carruthers, 2008; de Schutter, 2011; Global Witness, 2016; Schlosberg & Carruthers, 2010). A tension exists between the historical marginalization of Indigenous groups and recent attempts to recompense these harms roughly since the 1990s. The creation of rights, based on ethnic values, provide a way to claim and restore resource access. In many countries, numerous native peoples are claiming land rights based on their ancestral origins (Hanna & Vanclay, 2013; Leguizamón, 2014; Parra & Moulart, 2016). International conventions, such as the International Labour Organization Convention 169 and the Principle of Free Prior and Informed Consent, support these claims. Both conventions give Indigenous peoples better protection against evictions, destruction of their environment, and also encourage participation in decision-making over development projects (Hanna & Vanclay, 2013). However, when Indigenous peoples lack certain stereotypical ethnic characteristics and behaviour, it becomes difficult for them to be recognized as Indigenous and therefore to benefit from institutionalized policies and programs that target them (see Ojeda, 2012). Being 'non-Indigenous' or Indigenous contributes to the complex socio-political struggle underlying land grabbing practices.

Gender inequality is also an important element to consider at the local level within the discussion on land grabbing (Alden Wily, 2011; de Schutter, 2011; Hall et al., 2015). Deere and León (2003) discussed how gender inequality in land ownership in Latin America plays a role in current landscapes of production, giving particular attention to male dominance in decision-making over land. In another research, Deere and León (2001) showed how land titling programs in Latin America during the 1990s led to redistribution of land to farmers that disadvantaged women. In many other parts of the world, male inheritance of the land continues to be the cultural norm. In Uganda, for example, women are disadvantaged in landownership when divorced or widowed

(Adoko & Levine, 2009). Gender is a crucial element considering that the marginalization of women in land tenure plays a crucial role in limiting the possibilities for economic empowerment and emancipation (Deere & León, 2003).

The risk of being excluded or unjustly treated in land deals triggers resistance among local communities (Escobar, 2008; Grajales, 2013; Hall et al., 2015; Leguizamón, 2014; Ojeda, 2012). Hall et al. (2015) explain that resistance comes in many forms. Local people may organize against corporations and landed elites, against the state, and within their own localities. Resistance and protest have different purposes, including the disruption or cancellation of projects, and the exercise of political pressure for being included in land deals (Hall et al., 2015; Hanna et al., 2016). Resistance can also lead to alliances among actors which traditionally would not work together, such as collaborations between the government and social movements (Vergara-Camus & Kay, 2017). As a result, resistance and protest actions are constantly renegotiating how and by whom space is owned, accessed and controlled (Hanna et al., 2016; Horlings, 2018; Massey, 2005).

Resistance is a sign of socio-political dynamism of communities which could lead to empowerment, new knowledge and skills, and enhance awareness about their rights. As explored by Hanna et al. (2016), protest can create social capital and lead to improved well-being, especially when protest claims are met. Of course, local communities and social movements face many constraints to voice their concerns and needs. As a result, land grabbing can simultaneously erode communities and stimulate community participation and knowledge creation. This is not to say that protest and resistance is without a risk, there are many cases worldwide in which activists are criminalized or even murdered because of their mobilization (Global Witness, 2016). Grasping both the drivers and consequences of land grabbing means to consider several interacting variables, such as distributional and procedural issues, spatial and temporal scales, local contexts, and entangled social and environmental transformations. Several of these matters have been studied by land grabbing scholars yet important gaps remain. Among these gaps, we can mention the limited attention given to the environmental side of land grabbing and the lack of long-term analyses of the multiple impacts of land grabbing (see Li, 2017). From a socio-political perspective, limited attention has been given to resistance and its influence in the governance of land, as well as to the inter-scalar connections between local and global processes and the actors revolving around these processes. By synergizing political ecology and environmental justice scholarship, the following section aims at contributing to further knowledge on these gaps.

2.3 The contribution of Political Ecology and Environmental Justice in the context of Land Grabbing

The study of land grabbing from a perspective that puts political ecology and environmental justice together allows quite a complete grasp of the multiple factors and mechanisms reproducing unequal land transactions. As further discussed below, political ecology assists in connecting interacting multi-scalar processes and analysing the role of the multiple actors involved in the governance of land grabbing, without forgetting the material or biophysical side of land grabbing. Environmental justice, for its part, contributes to the understanding to the main local conditions under which different types of injustices are reproduced within an environment exposed to land grabbing practices and processes.

2.3.1 Political Ecology

Political ecology is a field of investigation and a form of criticism to contemporary environmental politics, which emerged as a critique to mainstream apolitical analysis of environmental issues (Peet et al., 2011; Robbins, 2004). Mainstream explanations of environmental control and change included issues such as population growth and the lack of technology to cope with environmental decay (Peet et al., 2011). Alternatively, political ecologists provided explanations highlighting the importance of power, international trade, careless human behaviour, and the rapid development of capitalism (Blaikie, 1999; Bryant & Bailey, 1997). It was argued that the supremacy of the market in environmental regulation reproduces social inequalities (Peet et al., 2011). Land grabbing, land use change, and contestation over land use and access are a good illustration of the responsibility of market actors in generating environmental degradation and socio-political conflict (Bryant & Bailey, 1997; Leguizamón, 2014; Nixon, 2011; Svampa & Viale, 2014).

A major concern in political ecology is the socio-political contestation over the access to resources (Blaikie, 1999; Bryant & Bailey, 1997; Robbins, 2004). From an analytical perspective, political ecology examines the roles of various actors and their power relationships, including states, multilateral institutions, transnational corporations and local businesses, (environmental) nongovernmental organizations and social movements (Bryant & Bailey, 1997). One distinctive feature of political ecology is the study of the interlinked and multi-scalar socio-political processes that operate at the local, regional and global scales (Bryant & Bailey, 1997; Robbins, 2004).

Political ecology investigates unequal resource access and unequal distribution of benefits disadvantaging vulnerable groups in society (Peet et al., 2011). Powerful actors, such as companies, often contribute to and aggravate instances of injustice and inequality. Therefore, political ecologists look at the political mechanisms generating these inequalities, including how access to re-

sources and land determine the possibilities to develop a proper livelihood (Blanc & Soini, 2015). Starting from the premise of the indivisibility of nature and society (Cook & Swyngedouw, 2014), political ecology highlights the connections between the economic interests lying beneath the contemporary trade of commodities and the consequent environmental and social degradations experienced by local communities. Land grabbing is a good example in this respect, showing how contemporary political-economic logics play a major role in decision-making over land. In the prevailing economic logic, the multiple local values of land for local users is not accounted for, generating major consequences. These include conflict but also a forced adaptation by local people to unhealthy land use practices, such as the spraying of agrochemicals (Leguizamón, 2014).

In the section below, we further explore the issues that are of particular interest in studying land grabbing. By bringing on board literature on environmental justice, we zoom in on the instances of injustice arising from projects and programs at the local scale.

2.3.2 Environmental Justice

Environmental justice scholarship examines the unequal and asymmetrical distribution of harmful environmental side effects on certain social groups (Schlosberg, 2004). These groups are predominantly situated in countries in the southern hemisphere or are vulnerable groups in the North (Escobar, 2004; Haluza-DeLay et al., 2009). Environmental justice issues are related to localized environmental conflicts that are place-based and that may get national or even global attention (Coenen & Halfacre, 2003).

Environmental justice movements in the USA triggered the development of the environmental justice field in the early 1980s. In Warren County in South Carolina, a large African-American population resisted the siting of a hazardous waste landfill in their neighbourhood. Deprived social groups and racial minorities considered this landfill as environmental racism (Coenen & Halfacre, 2003). Since the conflict in Warren County, environmental justice issues have been further developed. Justice is now recognized as a plural notion with changing meanings according to the context specificities (Sikor, 2013). At the same time, there is also a recognition that justice should be considered as a universally shared notion, in addition to its focus on how people experience (in)justice in particular contexts (Sikor, 2013). Four main topics have become central to the environmental justice debate: (i) distribution of environmental harms and goods; (ii) participation in decision-making processes; (iii) procedural justice and; (iv) recognition and respect for alternative cultures. As Schlosberg (2004) explained, these topics are interlinked 'circles of concern' within environmental justice scholarship. More recent topics include the relationship between human beings and nature (Schlosberg, 2007) and the one between capabilities and justice (see Sen, 1985, 2009; Nussbaum & Sen, 1993 on the capability approach). Below, we discuss the first four main topics of concern.

Distribution

There is an uneven distribution of environmental goods, bads and risks between people and places (Escobar, 2008). People and localities with higher vulnerability and lower resilience are usually the ones enduring the negative externalities reproducing situations of inequality (Carruthers, 2008; Walker & Bulkeley, 2006). Local communities, poor people, ethnic minorities and marginalized groups suffer environmental risks and discrimination disproportionately (Cook & Swyngedouw, 2012). The planned landfill in Warren County in an area with a 65% African-American population illustrates the uneven distribution of environmental harms (Coenen & Halfacre, 2003). Social and environmental injustice also adversely affects Indigenous peoples and women (Carruthers, 2008; Cook & Swyngedouw, 2012; Schlosberg & Carruthers, 2010). Conversely, elites and rich people benefit disproportionately from a healthy environment, 'clean' technologies, sustainability progress among others.

Participation

In the planning of investment projects and programs there is often a lack of participation of local people (Schlosberg, 2004; Schlosberg & Carruthers, 2010). The involvement of local communities in decision-making processes can take different forms, from exclusion in participatory processes to co-construction of projects through which benefits are shared in more equal way. There are several critical elements to participation from an environmental justice perspective. First, the state and companies usually do not include local communities and Indigenous peoples in the decision-making over land investment and extractive projects (Schlosberg & Carruthers, 2010). Second, there is no transparent and fair information given to local communities regarding the possible risks of projects and investments. Third, when there is only one or multiple community representative(s) participating in decision-making, it is unclear if the interests and needs of the entire community are represented (Cooke & Kothari, 2001). Consequently, investment projects can also lead to conflict and struggles within communities if people do not share the same opinion (Alden Wily, 2011). Criticism to participation is ample; participation can be exercised in such a way that it merely paves the way for unjust and illegitimate power manifestations; and local community's participation in decision-making spaces can too fast be interpreted by company managers as an implicit approval of a certain investment (Cooke & Kothari, 2001; Velicu & Kaika, 2015).

Procedural justice

Procedural justice focuses on more transparent, open and democratic decision-making processes (Schlosberg, 2004) and implies that "governing rules and regulations, evaluation criteria, and enforcement are applied in a non-discriminatory manner" (Coenen & Halfacre, 2003, 189). In places with high social vulnerability, companies tend to have less respect for environmental laws (Coenen & Halfacre, 2003). Moreover, Coenen & Halfacre (2003), suggested that the amount of

penalties given to minorities and white people in law violations differed significantly. In practice, procedural justice points to the sharing of clear, complete and honest information regarding, for example, the social and environmental risks of investment projects. Even in the case of confidential investments and information, local people have the right to accessible information, including written documentation in appropriate local language(s). Better access to just information by local people leads to an improved control over and management of the environment (Blaikie & Muldavin, 2014). Consequently, it is less likely that local communities will tolerate distributional injustice when honest information is available. From this perspective, impartiality and treating all concerned parties in an unbiased manner can prevent the emergence of conflicts (Schlosberg & Carruthers, 2010).

Recognition and respect

A misrecognition and lack of respect of other cultures and ways of living exacerbates the uneven distribution of environmental harms and goods (Fraser, 2000). A lack of respect and recognition of other people's life indicates that certain societal standards are seen as superior or more important. Moreover, the multifaceted connection people have with the environments where they 'live, work and play' (Novotny, 2000) is neglected in many development projects and programs. Development projects in the South that involve land use changes, have influenced severely, and in many cases broke the more traditional connection between nature and people (Parra & Mouleart, 2016).

The importance of respecting the inseparability of human and nature in land grabbing practices is expressed in the concept of *biocultural* diversity defined by Blanc and Soini (2015, 80) as "the diversity of life in all its manifestations (biological, cultural, and forms), which are all interrelated". This concept simultaneously refers to a healthy environment, meaning an environment with high biodiversity, and to cultural diversity involving respect and recognition of different types of knowledge, languages and ways of living (Blanc & Soini, 2015). The concept of *biocultural* diversity is a criticism to large-scale industrial commodity production (monocultures) and to the equalizing cultural attempts land grabbing provokes. This concept, connects the literature on land grabbing, political ecology and environmental justice as it promotes a healthy environment and sustainable ways of production while respecting local people.

2.4 Connecting Land Grabbing, Political Ecology and Environmental Justice

The connections between political ecology, environmental justice and land grabbing literature help to uncover the socio-political interrelations between people, nature, the economy, pow-

er asymmetries, scales and arenas of injustice. Further elaborating on Cook and Swyngedouw (2012), bringing political ecology and environmental justice together allows to further the understanding of changing human-nature relations, by means of reinstating the embeddedness of local socio-political realities in broader multi-scalar dynamics and processes.

2.4.1 Global issues in land grabbing

From a global level perspective, political ecology helps to explain how land grabbing is a typical example of market-led economic development, conditioned and designed at different geographical scales, which goes at the expense of local environmental and social justice (Borras et al., 2013). Political ecology brings knowledge on board on the dominance of powerful and rich actors controlling the bargaining over the access to natural resources, and privatizing and patenting all life forms (Borras et al., 2013). Considering that nature, as a 'scarce ecological space', has production and use limits the concentration of ownership becomes a global distributional matter enhancing the divide between rich and less well-off countries, and between present-day and future generations (Vira, 2015, 764).

Environmental justice calls attention to several important global issues in land grabbing. The citizens of many southern countries are increasingly confronted to the negative effects of resource exploitation and land grabbing (Schlosberg, 2013; Schlosberg & Carruthers, 2010). Environmental justice should be understood in its relation to social justice, notably from the perspective of the worldwide unequal distribution of wealth (Walker & Bulkeley, 2006). Moreover, the multi-scalar spatial component of land grabbing implies and relies on the transfer of negative effects and burdens to other scales, localities around the world and also to the food people eat, the clothes people wear, and the garbage people dispose (Agyeman et al., 2016).

2.4.2 Local issues in land grabbing

At the local level, political ecology addresses several implications of land grabbing. Taking the concerns over the environment as a starting point, land grabbing and the consequent land use changes, are responsible for ecological degradation (Borras et al., 2013). In this respect, the study of environmental bads and goods in land grabbing calls for a critical engagement with the biophysical elements of socio-environmental change. This includes, for example, analysing how flora and fauna changes over time, water flows and situations of water stress, various forms of pollution, among many others, in the interrelation with the key production activities in the area (Cook & Swyngedouw, 2012; Little, 2007; Robbins, 2004). In addition, as land grabbing takes places in an arena of unequal power relations, political ecology can help to understand the dynamics of oppression and dispossession undergone by local groups.

Environmental justice literature brings tools to analyse the disproportionately local suffering of

vulnerable people like those with limited financial means, women and Indigenous people exposed to land grabbing (Alden Wily, 2011; Deere & León, 2003; de Schutter, 2011; Vira, 2015). Power imbalance is also greatly problematized in environmental justice research, explaining the process of land grabbing in certain localities. Another local environmental justice consequence of land grabbing is the increasing exclusion of local people from democratic participatory practices. Moreover, the loss of access to land and resources entails the growing proletarianization of family farmers at the expense of a more diverse human-nature relationship.

2.4.3 Zooming in on five key elements for analysing land grabbing and its governance

Analysing land grabbing and its governance implications is multifaceted and complex. Land grabbing provokes local transformations that cannot be analysed in isolation, notably in terms of multi-scalar governance processes that reproduce inequality and injustice. Understanding land grabbing and its implications means to be attentive to many variables, including distributional and procedural issues, local contexts, and combined social and environmental transformations. Governance is a constant process of negotiation, restructuring and readjustment, among a plurality of actors and institutions operating at various spatial scales (Swyngedouw, 2005). Therefore, governance is context dependent and time sensitive, and comprises changing power and scalar dynamics, which are connected from the local to the global.

Further elaborating on political ecology and environmental justice literature, we consider the following five key elements for the analysis of land grabbing and its governance. First, the policies and practices introduced by the ones in power, in the present and the past, enabling unequal land ownership and access is an important component to understand contemporary land ownership and access (Mamonova, 2015). In Argentina, for example, Spanish colonizers were one of the first to create formal land division favouring large-scale land ownership (Slutzky, 2014). This historical land division has two main effects. On the one hand, contemporary land investments are based on relatively large plots of land. On the other hand, the division of large cadastral plots into smaller ones is expensive, and thus, obstructing the possibilities for local people to buy small pieces of land and gain formal land title.

Second, it is highly relevant to combine social and ecological aspects in studies of land use, land governance and land grabbing as both elements go hand in hand. Increasing land privatization and control by grabbers lead to many communities being enclosed or 'enclaved', through fences, plantations and other barriers (Li, 2017; Zoomers, 2010). These enclosures without a doubt influence how local people interact with their environment. In addition to access and tenure possibilities, land grabbing has an ecological impact, including changes in soil composition, pollution, and biodiversity loss. Many land grabs involve a change from small-scale farming to industrial production, and therefore attention is needed in terms of the destruction of biocultural diversity

and capabilities due to changes in production modes.

Third, scales and multi-scalar analysis are crucial to understand the interconnection among different spatial scales and competing interests over the environment, connecting global agreements and their local outcomes. From this perspective, power inequalities and unequal distribution of goods and services at multiple levels are two core dimensions of the multi-scalar decision-making processes over land. The 'land making' is in the hand of different actors such as the state, companies, social movements, civil society, NGOs and diverse local groups. We highlight the role of social movements in articulating discontent to land grabbing at different scales, as well as their potential to trigger procedural, policy and participatory changes.

Fourth, temporal dimensions, including path dependencies and path breakings, are relevant when studying instances of injustice within the lifecycles of communities (Li, 2017). Human-nature relations are dynamic, diverse and they change over time. Moreover, some of the consequences of land grabbing are unpredictable and might only manifest in the future (Nixon, 2011). We should not forget that the process of commodification of nature, related to deforestation, large-scale industrial farming, and the use of pesticides to just mention a few, is causing irreversible socio-ecological change which in many cases is overlooked and purposely ignored (also conceptualized 'slow violence' by Nixon, 2011). Conversely, time could also influence situations in which land investments could bring positive effects (Boamah & Overå, 2015), including awareness of local communities and their rights.

The fifth element refers to an analysis of land grabbing that is context and diversity sensitive (Escobar, 2004), as defined by the environmental justice in terms of recognition and respect. By context and diversity sensitive we mean giving attention to diversity of cultures, livelihoods, and modes of interaction with nature which are not static but changing over time. Diversity of culture refers to diversity in practices, systems of knowledge, beliefs, values, norms, identities and socio-political organizations of human societies. At the same time, human groups relate, value and use nature in different ways, leading to development paths that are more or less sustainable (Parra, 2018; Pilgrim & Pretty, 2010). In this respect, labelling certain people in fixed boxes of 'Indigenous' 'underdeveloped' or 'peasant' is problematic as it gives a "single, drastically simplified group-identity" and reinforces stigmas (Fraser, 2000, 112).

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the socio-political and socio-economic drivers triggering land grabbing and gave special attention to how and why land grabbing creates social and environmental injustice. Among key drivers are the demand for commodities, the commodification of land, and flexible social and environmental regulations that attract investors to certain countries. Among the consequences discussed in this chapter, we can mention enhanced social exclusion of rural communities and power inequalities, as well as various environmental unsustainabilities. A focus on governance allows connecting both the drivers and the consequences of land grabbing. On the one hand, the contemporary multi-scalar governance of commodity production enables land grabbing; on the other hand, the governance of land grabbing reinforces the localized reproduction of injustice by further stimulating land control by elites.

A delicate issue in the governance of land grabbing is the process through which local communities resist, negotiate and fight for their rights. Their resistance and protest can in some cases lead to empowerment, more equality, justice and to social innovation when land tenure and access is secured (i.e. land making). However, we should not forget that in many cases resistance leads to criminalization, violence, disempowerment, extreme violations of human rights, and in the worst-case, death (Global Witness, 2016). The role of the state to prevent and address these issues is at least twofold. First, warranting meaningful and democratic decision-making for communities. Second, addressing seriously its historical socio-political debts, as well as environmental ones, with rural communities and their land. The vulnerability and injustice experienced by rural communities will exacerbate without a state that addresses both issues.

At a first glance, the phenomenon of land grabbing and its governance seem to be mainly rural. However, land grabbing cannot be disassociated from ongoing urbanization and real-estate development (Dirlik, 2017), notably of those from the global North. Rural areas serve to produce commodities, which are used by industries that steer various urban expansion processes worldwide. In this respect, we consider that synergies between political ecology and environmental justice have the potential to further explain the connections between the rural and the urban.

References

- Adoko, J., Levine, S., 2009. Rural women still have few rights to land in Uganda. [Accessed: July 17 2018 on: <https://www.theguardian.com/katine/2009/mar/26/women-land-rights>]
- Alden Wily, L., 2011. 'The Law is to Blame': The vulnerable Status of Common Property Rights in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Development and Change* 42(3), 733-757.
- Banerjee, A., 2015. Neoliberalism and its Contradictions for Rural Development: Some Insights from India. *Development and Change* 46(4), 1010-1022.
- Blaikie, P., 1999. A Review of Political Ecology. Issues, Epistemology and Analytical Narratives. *Zeitschrift für Wirtschaftsgeographie* 43(3-4), 131-147.
- Blaikie, P., Muldavin, J., 2014. Environmental justice? The story of two projects. *Geoforum* 54, 226-229.
- Blanc, N., Soini, K., 2015. Cultural and Biological Diversity: Interconnections in ordinary Places. In: Beukelaer, de, C. Pyykkönen, M. Singh, J.P., eds. *Globalization, Culture, and Development. The UNESCO Convention of Cultural Diversity*, 75-90. Hampshire, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Boamah, F., Overå, R., 2015. Rethinking Livelihood Impacts of Biofuel Land Deals in Ghana. *Development and Change* 47(1), 98-129.
- Borras, S.M., Franco, J.C., 2012. Global Land Grabbing and Trajectories of Agrarian Change: A preliminary Analysis. *Journal of Agrarian Change* 12(1), 34-59.
- Borras, S.M., Franco, J.C., Wang, C., 2013. The Challenge of Global Governance of Land Grabbing: Changing International Agricultural Context and Competing Political Views and Strategies. *Globalizations* 10(1), 161-179.
- Borras, S.M., 2016. Land politics, agrarian movements and scholar-activism. Inaugural lecture April 14 2016, International Institute of Social Sciences, the Hague, the Netherlands. [Accessed August 10 2018 on: <https://repub.eur.nl/pub/93021>]
- Borras, S.M., Franco, J.C., Isakson, S.R., Levidow, L., Ververst, P., 2016. The rise of flex crops and commodities: implications for research. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 43(1): 93-115.
- Brenner, N., Peck, J., Theodore, N., 2010. Variegated neoliberalization: geographies, modalities, pathways. *Global Networks* 10(2), 182-222.
- Bryant, R.L., Bailey, S., 1997. *Third World Political Ecology*. London: Routledge.
- Busscher, N., Parra, C., Vanclay, F., 2018. Land grabbing within a protected area: The experience of local communities with conservation and forestry activities in Los Esteros del Iberá, Argentina. *Land Use Policy*, 78, 572-582.
- Carruthers, D.V., 2008. Popular Environmentalism and Social Justice in Latin America. In: Carruthers, D.V., ed. *Environmental Justice in Latin America. Problems, Promise, and Practice*, 1-22. Cambridge, USA: MIT.
- Coenen, F.H.J.M., Halfacre, A.C., 2003. Local Autonomy and Environmental Justice: Implementing Distributional Equity across National Scales. In: Bressers, H.Th.A., Rosenbaum, W.A., eds. *Achieving Sustainable Development. The challenges of Governance across Social Scales*, 185-210. Westport: Praeger.
- Cook, I.R., Swyngedouw, E., 2012. Cities, Social Cohesion and the Environment: Towards a Future Research Agenda. *Urban Studies* 49, 1959-1978.
- Cook, I.R., Swyngedouw, E., 2014. Cities, Nature and Sustainability. In: Paddison, R., McCann, E., eds. *Cities and Social Change*, 168-185. London: Sage.
- Cooke, B., Kothari, U., ed., 2001. *Participation: The New Tyranny?* London: Zed Books.
- Davis, K.F., D'Odorico, P., Rulli, M.R., 2014. Land grabbing: A preliminary quantification of economic impacts on rural livelihoods. *Population & Environment* 36, 180-192.
- Deere, C.D., León, M., 2001. Who Owns the Land? Gender and Land Titling Programmes in Latin America. *Journal of Agrarian Change* 1(3), 440-467.
- Deere, C.D., León, M., 2003. The Gender Asset Gap: Land in Latin America. *World Development* 31(6), 925-947.
- Dirlik, A., 2017. Neoliberal Socialism/Global Capitalism: Boom and Gloom in China Watching. *Development and Change* 48(2), 387-396.
- Dwyer, M.B., 2013. Building the Politics Machine: Tools for 'Resolving' the Global Land Grab. *Development and Change* 44(2), 309-333.
- Edelman, M., León, A., 2013. Cycles of Land Grabbing in Central America: an argument for history and a case study in the Bajo Aguán, Honduras. *Third World Quarterly* 34(9), 697-1722.
- Escobar, A., 2004. Constructing Nature. Elements for a post-structural political ecology. In: Jones, S., Carswell, G., eds. *The earthscan reader in environment, development and rural livelihoods*. London: Earthscan.
- Escobar, A., 2006. Difference and Conflict in the Struggle over Natural Resources: A political ecology framework. *Development* 49(3), 6-13.
- Escobar, A., 2008. *Territories of Difference: Place, Movements, Life, Redes*. Durham: Duke University.
- Fairhead, J., Leach, M., Scoones, I., 2012. Green grabbing: a new appropriation of nature? *Journal of Peasant Studies* 39(2), 237-261.
- Fraser, N., 2000. Rethinking recognition. *New Left Review* 3, 107-120.
- Global Witness, 2016. On Dangerous Ground. [Accessed August 8 2018 on: <https://www.globalwitness.org/en/campaigns/environmental-activists/dangerous-ground/>]
- Grain, 2012. Civil society statement on the finance of land grabs. Land grabbing by pension funds and other financial institutions must be stopped. [Accessed: July 17 2018 on: http://www.grain.org/bulletin_board/entries/4534-land-grabbing-by-pension-funds-and-other-financial-institutions-must-be-stopped]
- Grajales, J., 2013. State Involvement, Land Grabbing and Counter-Insurgency in Colombia. *Development and Change* 44(2), 211-232.
- Hall, R., Edelman, M., Borras, S.M., Scoones, I., White, B., Wolford, W., 2015. Resistance, acquiescence or incorporation? An introduction to land grabbing and political reactions 'from below'. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 42(3-4), 467-488.
- Haluzá-DeLay, R., O'Riley, P., Cole, P., Agyeman, J., 2009. Speaking for Ourselves, Speaking Together: Environmental Justice in Canada. In: Agyeman, J., Cole, P., Haluzá-DeLay, R., O'Riley, P., eds. *Speaking for Ourselves: Environmental Justice in Canada*, 1-26. Vancouver: UBC.
- Hanna, P., Vanclay, F., 2013. Human rights, Indigenous peoples and the concept of Free Prior and Informed Consent. *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal* 31(2), 146-157.
- Hanna, P., Vanclay, F., Langdon J., Arts, J., 2016. Conceptualizing social protest and the significance of protest action to large projects. *Extractive Industries and Society* 3(1), 217-239.
- Horlings, L.G., 2018. Politics of connectivity; the relevance of place based approaches to support sustainable development

- and the governance of nature and landscape. In: Franklin, A., ed. *Handbook Nature*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Leguizamón, A., 2014. Modifying Argentina: GM soy and socio-environmental change. *Geoforum* 53, 149-160.
- Li, T.M., 2017 (in press). After the land grab: Infrastructural violence and the "Mafia System" in Indonesia's oil palm plantation zones. *Geoforum* <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2017.10.012>.
- Little, P.E., 2007. Political ecology as ethnography: a theoretical and methodological guide. *Horiz. antropol.* Vol.3 no.se Porto Alegre. Low, N., Gleeson, B., 1998. *Justice, Society and Nature: an exploration of political ecology*. London: Routledge.
- Mamonova, N., 2015. Resistance or adaptation? Ukrainian peasants' responses to large-scale land acquisitions. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 42(3-4), 607-634.
- Massey, D., 2005. *For space*. London: SAGE Publications.
- McMichael, P., 2012. The land grab and corporate food regime restructuring. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 39(3-4): 681-701.
- Nixon, R, ed., 2011. *Slow Violence and Environmentalism of the Poor*. Cambridge: Harvard University.
- Novotny, P., 2000. *Where We Live, Work, and Play: The Environmental Justice Movement and the Struggle for a New Environmentalism*. Westport: Praeger.
- Nussbaum, M., Sen, A., 1993. *The Quality of Life*. Gloucestershire: Clarendon.
- Ojeda, D., 2012. Green pretexts: Ecotourism, neoliberal conservation and land grabbing in Tayrona National Natural Park, Colombia. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 39(2), 357-375.
- Parra, C., 2018. What can culture in and for sustainable development learn from protected areas? In: Birkeland, I., Burton, R., Parra, C., Siivonen, K., eds. *Cultural sustainability and the nature-culture interface: Livelihoods, policies and methodologies*, 49-65. New York and London: Routledge.
- Parra, C., 2013. Social sustainability: a competing concept to social innovation? In: Moulaert, F., MacCallum, D., Mehmood, A., Hamdouch, A., eds. *The International Handbook On Social Innovation Collective Action, Social Learning and Transdisciplinary Research*, 142-154. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.
- Parra, C., Moulaert, F., 2016. The governance of the nature-culture nexus: lessons learned from the San Pedro de Atacama case-study. *Nature+Culture* 11(3), 239-258.
- Peet, R., Robbins, P., Watts, M., 2011. Global Nature. In: Peet, R., Robbins, P., Watts, M., eds. *Global Political Ecology*, 1-47. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Pilgrim, S., Pretty, J. (eds), 2010. *Nature and culture: rebuilding lost connections*. London, UK and Washington, US: Earthscan.
- Ploeg, van der, L., Vanclay, F., 2017. A human rights based approach to project-induced displacement and resettlement. *Impact Assessment & Project Appraisal* 35(1), 34-52.
- Robbins, P., 2004. *Political Ecology: A Critical Introduction*. Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Sen, A., 1985. *Commodities and capabilities*. New York: Elsevier.
- Sen, A., 2009. *The Idea of Justice*. Cambridge, USA: Harvard University.
- Schlosberg, D., 2004. Reconceiving Environmental Justice: Global Movements and Political Theories. *Environmental Politics* Vol. 13(3), 517-540.
- Schlosberg, D., 2007. *Defining Environmental Justice: Theories, Movements, and Nature*. New York: Oxford University.
- Schlosberg, D., Carruthers, D., 2010. Indigenous Struggles, Environmental Justice, and Community Capabilities. *Global Environmental Politics* 10(4), 12-34.
- Schlosberg, D., 2013. Theorising environmental justice: the expanding sphere of a discourse. *Environmental Politics* 22(1), 37-55.
- Schutter, de, O., 2011. How not to think of land-grabbing: three critiques of large-scale investments in farmland. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 38(2), 247-279.
- Sikor, T., 2013. Introduction: Linking ecosystem services with environmental justice. In: Sikor, T., ed. *The Justices and Injustices of Ecosystem Services*, 1-19. New York: Routledge.
- Slutzky, D., 2014. *Estructura social agraria y agroindustria del Nordeste de la Argentina: desde la incorporación a la economía nacional al actual subdesarrollo concentrador y excluyente*. Misiones: Editorial Universitaria, Universidad Nacional de Misiones.
- Svampa, M., Viale, E., 2014. *Maldesarrollo: La Argentina del extractivismo y el despojo*. Buenos Aires: Katz Editores.
- Swyngedouw, E., 2000. Authoritarian governance, power and the politics of rescaling. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 18, 63-76.
- Swyngedouw, E., 2005. Governance Innovation and the Citizens: The Janus Face of Governance-beyond-the-State. *Urban Studies* 42(11), 1991-2006.
- Swyngedouw, E., 2010. Apocalypse Forever? Post-political Populism and the Spectre of Climate Change. *Theory, Culture & Society* 27(2-3), 213-232.
- Velicu, I., Kaika, M., 2015. Undoing environmental justice: Re-imagining equality in the Rosia Montana anti-mining movement. *Geoforum*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2015.10.012>.
- Vergara-Camus, L., Kay, C., 2017. Agribusiness, peasants, left-wing governments, and the state in Latin America: An overview and theoretical reflections. *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 17, 239-257.
- Vira, B., 2015. Taking Natural Limits Seriously: Implications for Development Studies and the Environment. *Development and Change* 46(4), 762-776.
- Walker, G.P., Bulkeley, H., 2006. Geographies of Environmental Justice. *Geoforum* 37(5), 655-659.
- Walker, G., 2009. Globalizing Environmental Justice. The Geography and Politics of Frame Contextualization and Evolution. *Global Social Policy* 9(3), 355-382.
- Wolford, W., Borras, S.M., Hall, R., Scoones, I., White, B., 2013. Governing Global Land Deals: The Role of the State in the Rush for Land. *Development and Change* 44(2), 189-210.
- Zoomers, E.B., 2010. Globalization and the foreignization of space: The seven processes driving the current global land grab. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 37(2), 429-447.

Land grabbing within
a protected area:
The experience of local
communities with
conservation and
forestry activities in
Los Esteros del Iberá,
Argentina*

*** This paper has been published as:**

Busscher, N., Parra, C., Vanclay, F., 2018. Land grabbing within a protected area: The experience of local communities with conservation and forestry activities in Los Esteros del Iberá, Argentina. *Land Use Policy* 78, 572-582.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landusepol.2018.07.024>

Abstract

Protected areas are increasingly being created, managed and owned by private actors, resulting in land grabs that are often at the expense of local control, livelihoods and biodiversity. Changes in land ownership and land use lead to new governance arrangements, which are full of paradoxes, alter ownership responsibilities, and create clashes of perspectives over how nature should be valued and utilised. Conversely, the presence of new actors potentially also brings about socio-environmental awareness and can open-up arenas for dialogue and multi-level collaboration. Using qualitative research methods, we considered two case studies in the protected area, *Los Esteros del Iberá*, in the north-east of Argentina: the Harvard Management Company's investments in industrial tree plantations; and the conservation project of Douglas Tompkins (i.e. the Conservation Land Trust). Their activities have increased the complexity of socio-political dynamics in the region, leading to contradictions and conflicts, as well as to a strengthened commitment to manage the *Iberá* region better. Nevertheless, local communities perceived little difference between green grabbing and land grabbing, with all land transfers increasing inequality.

Keywords

Green grabbing; extractivism; neoliberal conservation; environmental justice; private protected areas; political ecology.

3.1 Introduction

Land grabbing changes patterns of land ownership and land use, and fosters new modes of land regulation and governance (Brent, 2015). The exploitation of land and land-based resources by companies also generates socio-environmental conflict, inequality and environmental degradation (de Schutter, 2011). The implications of land grabbing are diverse; in many cases, conflict over land brings about the further political marginalization of the groups of people living nearby (Gerber et al., 2009; Vanclay, 2017a). However, in some cases, land grabbing may create opportunities for people to benefit from the arrival of new actors and capital (Hall et al., 2015). In contrast to the typical conception of land grabs – i.e. the large-scale commercial production of agricultural commodities (Borras et al., 2012a) – land is also being consumed by an increasing array of private conservation initiatives (Igoe & Brockington, 2007). Protected areas and other areas of high ecological value have become vulnerable to land grabbing in several ways, including: by a policy discourse that promotes neoliberal conservation; the increasing demand for ecotourism; the increasing power of big international (environmental) NGOs (BINGOs); and the opening-up of local land markets (Büscher et al., 2012; Corson et al., 2013; Igoe & Brockington, 2007; Holmes, 2014a; Zoomers, 2010). These neoliberal conservation initiatives are full of controversy (Fairhead et al., 2012; Vanclay, 2017a).

The entry of new actors in local land markets and the accompanying changes in control over land alter power relationships and can be seen as an expression of the shift from government to governance (Corson & MacDonald, 2012). Drawing on Parra (2010), governance can be defined as the system of regulation involving the interactions between and within a wide range of actors (individuals, institutions, NGOs, companies) at different territorial levels and the socio-institutional arrangements in which they participate. Governance is a multidimensional concept that implies the constant renegotiation, restructuring and readjustment of the various roles and responsibilities of governments, civil society and the market (Castree, 2010; Corson & MacDonald, 2012; Swyngedouw, 2005).

Changes in governance can be manifested in various ways, and the impacts of these changes have been interpreted, perceived and analysed from different perspectives. On the one hand, scholars such as Eden (2009:383) state that the passage from government to governance can entail a “more proactive, preventative and socially relevant decision-making” and can imply a change “from closed debates and state-led, reactive and technocratic decision-making to more open, stakeholder-led debates in a civil society mode”. From this perspective, the diversification of actors brings opportunities to open-up decision-making thus empowering citizens (Swyngedouw, 2005). On the other hand, this transformation can be interpreted as the withdrawal or erosion of the state from its environmental regulation and social responsibilities (Fairhead et al.,

2012; Klooster, 2010; Swyngedouw, 2005). The growing role of markets and the private sector in biodiversity conservation now constitutes one of the key issues in the governance of the natural environment (Corson & MacDonald, 2012; Klooster, 2010; Zammit, 2013).

The empirical focus of this paper is land grabbing in and around the protected area, *Los Esteros del Iberá* (henceforth Iberá), which is located in the Province of Corrientes in the north-east of Argentina. The factors that affect governance dynamics in this region include the growing presence of private actors, increasing commodity production under green pretexts, and private conservation initiatives. We examine two cases of land grabbing in this protected area. One case focuses on commodity production, specifically the industrial tree plantations of the Harvard Management Company (HMC), the endowment management fund of Harvard University. The other case is the land acquisition activities in Argentina of the late multi-millionaire, Douglas Tompkins, who through the Conservation Land Trust (CLT) bought large tracts of land in Iberá, primarily for conservation purposes. Both cases reveal the social and environmental issues in the ongoing discussion associated with land of high ecological value being flogged-off to foreigners (Corson & MacDonald, 2012; Fairhead et al., 2012; Lunstrum et al., 2016).

Our two cases of land grabbing can also be considered as 'green grabbing' (Fairhead et al., 2012; Messerli et al., 2013). Our preferred definition of land grabbing is: "the capturing of control of relatively vast tracts of land and other natural resources through a variety of mechanisms and forms involving large-scale capital that often shifts resource use to that of extraction, whether for international or domestic purposes" (Borras et al., 2012a:405). The focus on control in this definition means that local people do not necessarily have to be expelled from the land, but rather that their resource access is lost or diminished (Hall et al., 2015). Green grabbing, a term first used by Vidal (2008), primarily concerns land acquisition for environmental purposes, such as biodiversity conservation, national parks, carbon sequestration, biofuel production, ecosystem services, ecotourism, or offsets (Fairhead et al., 2012; Vanclay, 2017a). Green grabbing adds a new dimension to the debate over land grabbing in that environmental reasons are used to justify the acquisition of land and associated resources (Corson et al., 2013; Fairhead et al., 2012). A sense of environmental crisis in various forms, e.g. resource scarcity, biodiversity loss, climate change, is also promoted to legitimate green grabbing (Castree, 2010; Corson, 2011; Fairhead et al., 2012; Igoe & Brockington, 2007). Green grabbing causes the displacement of people creating inequality, social impacts and human rights impacts (Brockington & Igoe, 2006; Fairhead et al., 2012; Lunstrum et al., 2016; Vanclay, 2017a, 2017b).

Drawing on the two case studies in Iberá, our aim is to discuss the characteristics of the governance of land grabbing in and around protected areas. Protected areas are defined as designated spaces that are managed to achieve the objectives of preserving natural qualities,

biodiversity, and/or cultural heritage (Parra & Moulaert, 2016). In their creation and ongoing operation, protected areas can have detrimental impacts on local people (Brockington et al., 2008; Büscher & Fletcher, 2015; Holmes, 2014b; Vanclay, 2017). By zooming in on the most important governance dynamics, we explore how land grabs and subsequent governance changes provoke socio-political development as well as conflict. Our focus on land governance also helps to understand the mechanisms, practices and processes that lead to inequality.

With a growing diversity of forms of conservation, the governance of protected areas has become increasingly complex. Therefore, examining the roles, responsibilities, activities and interests of the different key actors is even more important (Cavanagh & Benjaminsen, 2014; Hanna et al., 2008; Oliveira & Hecht, 2016). An analysis of governance is useful to gain a better understanding of land grabbing from the positions and perspectives of the full range of actors. We suggest that the multi-level governance character of land grabbing potentially can lead to positive as well as negative outcomes. Nevertheless, the negative issues arising from land grabbing are frequently difficult to address because of local contextual factors. Moreover, we show that the negative implications of land grabbing are experienced far beyond the boundaries of the land investment itself.

3.2 Land grabbing and its characteristics

Contemporary research suggests that understanding of the drivers and impacts of land grabbing is still developing (Hall et al., 2015; Temper, 2018). Initially, the literature on land grabbing focussed on local resistance, displacement and the privatisation of land (the new enclosures) (Borras et al., 2012a, 2012b, 2013; Holmén, 2015), whereas now land grabbing research goes further, for example, new insights have revealed that local people are not always against land grabbing (Hall et al., 2015; Holmén, 2015). In certain cases, local people, and women in particular, may actively seek to benefit from the jobs that might flow from land grabbing (Hall et al., 2015). In other situations, local people engage in negotiation or struggle to improve the terms and conditions under which land grabbing occurs and the outcomes that follow (Hanna et al., 2014; Hall et al., 2015). Their actions are directed to various actors, including the state, investors, the wider public and to others in the local community. In this struggle, tensions can occur between different groups of local people (Borras et al., 2013, 2016). Sometimes, people decide not to resist but to adapt to the negative situation brought about by land grabbing. Recent insights show that land grabbing creates unintended as well as intended, unexpected and expected social impacts and political dynamics (Hall et al., 2015; Holmes, 2014a), which was also evident in our research as we discuss below.

Based on research in Sub-Saharan Africa, Holmén (2015) identified four reasons explaining why land grabbing occurs: (1) there is a prejudice favouring large-scale development over local farming; (2) governments have been keen to attract land investments and foreign money, for example to develop much-needed infrastructure; (3) corruption and a lack of capacity with government exists in many forms, including in weak land policies; and (4) there has been misguided foreign advice. We consider that these reasons play a significant role universally, including in Latin America. With many different contexts in the world, the specificities of how land grabbing plays out varies from place to place (Borras et al., 2012b), but there are also generalities (Edelman et al., 2013). For example, in the Latin American context, Grajales (2011) emphasised the use of violence in Colombia. Costantino (2015) suggested that there were relatively high returns on land investments in Argentina and the myth of the relative abundance of land.

While land grabbing might be a necessary evil for countries to produce commodities, keep economies running, gain foreign currency to pay off debts, or to develop economically (Baird, 2011; Cotula et al., 2009; Fairhead et al., 2012), the negative effects of land grabbing on local people are extensive (Fairhead et al., 2012; Messerli et al., 2013). From a social perspective, the established impacts of land grabbing include violation of human rights, ignoring customary land rights, livelihood changes, forced evictions, and the criminalization of local people as they take action to protect their interests (Brent, 2015; Hanna et al., 2016a; Holmes, 2014a; Messerli et al., 2013; Vanclay, 2017b). The main negative consequences from an environmental perspective are biodiversity loss, ecosystem changes, water shortages, and pollution (Svampa & Viale, 2014). Land grabbing can lead to loss of income and job opportunities, reduced possibilities to own land in the future, increased land prices, and increased inequality with land ownership shifting into the hands of elites (Costantino, 2016; Davis et al., 2014).

3.3 The governance dynamics of land grabbing in protected areas

Land grabs have introduced many changes to institutional arrangements and power dynamics (Borras et al., 2013; Corson, 2011; Margulis et al., 2013). A wide range of actors in diverse institutional settings at different spatial levels are now influencing, mediating and negotiating territory (Brent, 2015; Margulis et al., 2013). Manifestations of new forms of land governance include the policies, standards and guidelines of global institutions (e.g. FAO, 2012), the various certification schemes of industry bodies (e.g. FSC, 2015), and what is becoming known as good international industry practice (GIIP). Although certification schemes arguably have the potential to improve environmental and social governance (Dare et al., 2011; Eden, 2009; Fortin & Richardson, 2013), they have been criticized for prioritizing economic over social and environmental issues, and

for not protecting informal land users (Cook & Swyngedouw, 2012; Fortin & Richardson, 2013).

New governance modes create opportunities for new forms of political pressure, which local resistance groups use to advance their causes (Hanna et al., 2016a, 2016b). With the roles and responsibilities of the state and other actors being continuously negotiated and disputed, new modes of action for local people are created, as are new ways by which powerful actors can impose their agendas (Hall et al., 2015). Often, the interests of the local community are not heeded and thus they will likely consider different strategies, often at different levels, in an attempt to have their concerns addressed (Moulaert et al., 2014), a phenomenon Swyngedouw (2005) called 'scale-jumping'.

Various systems of conservation can be observed, arising from the increasingly-varied strategies for protecting nature (Büscher et al., 2012; Büscher & Fletcher, 2015; Hanna et al., 2008; Igoe & Brockington, 2007; Parra, 2010; UN, 1992). The concept of neoliberal conservation is used to explain this diversification. Neoliberal conservation refers to the introduction of market mechanisms to the field of nature conservation. This leads to stakeholders other than the state, i.e. private actors, having an active role in protecting nature, as well as to the opening-up of opportunities to derive profit from conservation efforts (Igoe & Brockington, 2007). Neoliberal conservation is undertaken in different forms, by different actors, at different levels (Corson, 2011). It is sometimes suggested that local communities can benefit from these new conservation modes, e.g. in terms of ability to establish or join conservation-related businesses (Igoe & Brockington, 2007; Zammit, 2013). However, land grabbing for conservation by private actors can have many negative impacts, which are extensively discussed in the literature on neoliberal conservation and green grabbing (Holmes & Cavanagh, 2016; Jones et al., 2017; Vanclay, 2017a).

Allegedly neoliberal conservation is more "democratic, efficient, equitable, and profitable" (Igoe & Brockington, 2007:433). In practice, however, many contradictions can be observed (Büscher & Fletcher, 2015; Castree & Henderson, 2014; Cundill et al., 2013). On the positive side, diverse civil society engagement in nature conservation programs can create new spaces and institutions to protect nature (Stolton & Dudley, 2010). Protected areas are increasingly being established and run by various forms of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and not-for-profit organisations (NFPs), often funded by donations (Corson, 2011; Vidal, 2008). Moreover, the growing pressure on governments from these actors may lead to a renewed state interest in conservation activities and the expansion of protected areas (Büscher et al., 2012; Holmes, 2014a).

More critically, however, contemporary conservation programs may facilitate a further withdrawal of the state from the protection of nature given that other actors are taking over this task (Corson, 2011). Private actors operating in conservation areas have frequently been criticized for

utilizing nature for commodity production, or 'fictitious conservation' (Büscher & Fletcher, 2015). Their productive uses may harm biodiversity or local people, especially where limited regulation may require, allow, or at least not prevent environmental degradation (Büscher & Fletcher, 2015; Castree & Henderson, 2014; Holmes, 2014a; Igoe & Brockington 2007).

The rhetoric behind conservation schemes tends to be characterised by entwined, overlapping and complex reasonings that make their aims and determination of success difficult to assess. This can be illustrated by an example from Oliveira and Hecht (2016), who explained that some environmental NGOs in Brazil advocate for the intensification of harmful production practices (that they formerly resisted) in the interests of 'land sparing'. These NGOs argued that intensification of some land has the potential to reduce the extent of conversion of other land (potentially of high ecological value) to soy production (thus saving or sparing it). The use of catch-phrases - e.g. save the wildlife, restore the global environment, feed the world, stop climate change - not only reveals confusion about the roles and responsibilities of the various actors, but is frequently intended to obfuscate (Cavanagh & Benjaminsen, 2014; Fleming et al., 2014; Oliveira & Hecht, 2016; Rocheleau, 2015). The extent of the diversity of forms of nature conservation raises questions about the meaning, purpose and governance of protected areas and about the exact roles and responsibilities of the state, the market and civil society (Holmes, 2014b; Minter & Pyne, 2015).

Despite the potential benefits new modes of governance bring, the way governance actually plays out in practice has several unfulfilled promises, which Swyngedouw (2005) suggests are: (1) a more democratic society - whereas in reality not every group participates or benefits equally; (2) greater opportunities for involvement - but the hegemonic influence of state and market power persist; and (3) greater transparency - but there is blurred accountability regarding who is responsible for the various tasks and roles. Governance dynamics in protected areas are complex and are constantly being negotiated, as we discuss below in the context of Iberá, Argentina.

3.4 Methodology for the case studies

Our research was conducted in the region of *Los Esteros del Iberá* in the Province of Corrientes in Argentina (see Figure 1). Iberá has unique ecological and hydrological qualities that facilitate commodity production and attract land investors and conservationists alike. Over the last ten years or so, two large-scale land owners in Iberá have been the Harvard Management Company (HMC), which invested in industrial tree plantations in the protected area and surrounding buffer zone, and the Conservation Land Trust (CLT), which was founded by the conservationist, Douglas Tompkins.

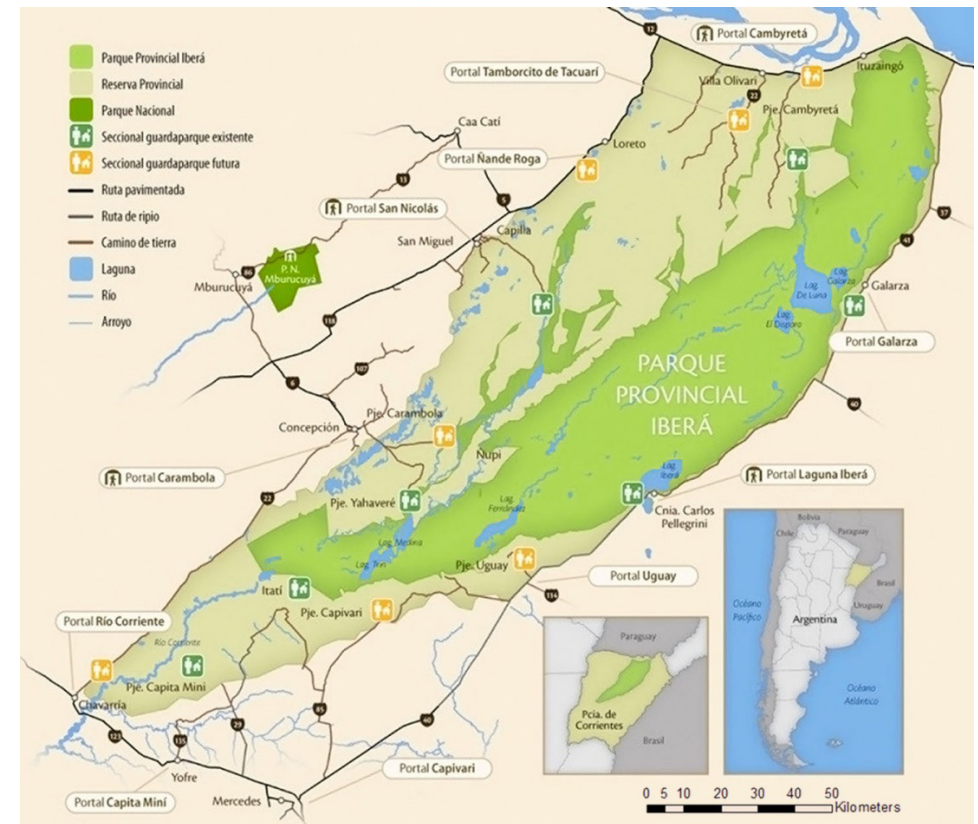


FIGURE 1: Location of Los Esteros del Iberá

Source: Proyecto Iberá (2016) (used with permission)

(Note that in late 2016 the provincial park became part of a new national park. The map depicts an area of approximately 200 kms by 200 kms).

The lead author carried out fieldwork in Corrientes in 2014 and 2015. The research methods included document analysis, in-depth interviews and participant observation. Key interviewees within government institutions, companies, NGOs, as well as prominent individuals in local communities were identified and approached. A process of snowball sampling was used to ensure all key people were interviewed. Key staff of HMC and CLT were also interviewed as well as several people from local impacted communities. A total of 42 individuals plus 4 rural families were interviewed. The interviews covered a wide range of topics related to land politics in Argentina, the investments of HMC and/or CLT, and community concerns about these investments. Informed consent was obtained for all interviews, and other ethical research considerations were observed (Vanclay et al., 2013). Interviews were recorded when permission was given, however most participants preferred that the interview not be recorded. Although a list of key topics to

be covered was determined prior to each interview, the interviews tended to be of an open conversation format. The setting of most interviews was informal. For example, some interviews were conducted while the interviewer participated in family or work activities of the interviewee. Where possible and appropriate, triangulation was done to validate information, especially of critical or controversial issues.

3.5 Background information about land governance and extractivism in Iberá

Argentina has a federal government system, combining provincial and national regulations, with each province having its own idiosyncrasies. For the past decade or so, the provincial government of Corrientes has not been politically aligned with the national government. The provincial government argues that, because of this, it has received far less discretionary funding than other provinces in north-east Argentina (Gobierno Provincial, 2015). Along with other historical and structural factors, this has contributed to Corrientes being one of the poorest provinces in Argentina (World Bank, 2010).

Corrientes is characterized by a small number of elites owning large tracts of land, and having one of the highest percentages of foreign land ownership in Argentina (Ministerio de Justicia y Derechos Humanos, 2017; Slutzky, 2014). Surface and ground water resources are abundant, with extensive wetlands and two major rivers flowing through the province. Corrientes also hosts part of the Guaraní Aquifer, one of the world's largest reserves of fresh water (Tujcheider et al., 2007). There is structural social deprivation, exacerbated by limited employment opportunities. The factors that contribute to the persistence of social deprivation include the poor quality of infrastructure (e.g. electricity, water distribution, roads, drainage), high unemployment rates, low education levels and inadequate healthcare (Neiff, 2004; Slutzky, 2014; World Bank, 2010).

Argentina is known for its agriculture (especially soy) and extractive industries, and for the export of unprocessed raw materials (Gudynas, 2009; Oliveira & Hecht, 2016; Svampa & Viale, 2014). Investment in agricultural industries has increased in recent decades as well as land acquisition for conservation purposes (see Murmis & Murmis, 2012; Veltmeyer & Petras, 2014). This increase in land investment has had many consequences, notably the displacement of people, insecure tenure, inflation of land prices, and conflict (Brent, 2015; Murmis & Murmis, 2012).

One of the dimensions of the land grabbing process is that many smallholders do not possess formal land titles. Smallholders without formal title typically live either on land owned by a formal land owner who is not actively using the land, or on land owned by the state (Costan-

tino, 2015; Jara & Paz, 2013). Even though the Argentine Civil Code provided a mechanism for informal owners to gain formal land titles when they have lived on the same piece of land for over 20 years, people have struggled to exercise this right (Goldfarb & van der Haar, 2015; Leguizamón, 2016). Obtaining land titles based on historical land use or customary rights is complicated and prohibitively expensive for informal land users (Brent, 2015). In the past, formal title holders were not particularly worried about communities starting procedures to gain formal land title, because the land was not seen as having much value. Now, with a ready market for land and increased land values, formal land owners are actively selling off or leasing their land to land investors, and are becoming concerned about informal land users claiming rights over land (Jara & Paz, 2013). In some situations, new investors might (unknowingly) encounter people living on the land and who have built up rights to this land, which often results in conflict. The government is also actively selling off land (Costantino, 2015). The lack of formal land title disadvantages local people, especially when there are competing claims over land (Costantino, 2015; Messerli et al., 2013). It also makes the land grabbing process complex, and arguably increases the social impacts that are experienced.

The factors facilitating land grabbing in Argentina are similar to those identified by Holmén (2015) regarding Sub-Saharan Africa discussed earlier. In Argentina, there is a strong prejudice by companies and government agencies against rural people because of differing cosmologies, values, and levels of land attachment (Bidaseca et al., 2013). Moreover, smallholders are not perceived as contributing to economic progress, leading to the view that rural areas are in need of modernization, which is believed to come with foreign land investment. Argentina needs foreign direct investment to pay off its very large external debt (Bidaseca et al., 2013; Gudynas, 2009). Indebted countries are likely to put nature up for sale (Fairhead et al., 2012). Corruption is also a factor in Argentina, and many non-transparent land transfers have been facilitated with the inappropriate collaboration of notaries or land registry staff (Goldfarb & van der Haar, 2015). Regarding misdirected foreign advice, the structural adjustment programmes promoted by the World Bank have led to much protest and social harm (Brent, 2015; Harvey, 2005). All up, these four factors have led to an enabling setting for land grabs in rural, urban and protected areas of Argentina.

Some specific characteristics of land grabbing in Argentina include the active role of the state in supporting foreign investors to gain land (Costantino, 2015; Jara & Paz, 2013). This includes lowering entry barriers, selling-off public land, and authorizing deforestation. Some economic characteristics that provided an incentive for foreign investors to invest in Argentina were the profitability of agricultural exports due to the devaluation of the peso. In addition, low interest rates in Argentina and other countries like the United States also stimulated land investments (see Costantino 2015 for an in-depth analysis of economic factors influencing the land market).

The protected area, *Los Esteros del Iberá*, was created in 1983 by the Province of Corrientes and is now the biggest nature reserve in Argentina with approximately 1.3 million hectares (Provincia de Corrientes, 2014). Iberá has a mix of wetland and grassland ecosystems. The abundance of water and nutrients have led to it being rich in biodiversity (Silva et al., 2005). Up until 2016 (when the Parque Provincial Iberá was converted into the Iberá National Park), Iberá had two parts, the Reserva Natural Iberá and the Parque Provincial Iberá (see Figure 1). In the Reserva Natural Iberá (818,000 hectares), private land owners could undertake productive activities providing they adhered to guidelines like avoiding biodiversity loss and protecting significant habitats (Gobierno Provincial Corrientes, 2015). The water, favourable climate and high rainfall attracted investors who used the area for a range of purposes including tree plantations, rice production, grazing, and conservation projects. The Parque Provincial Iberá (482,000 hectares) was a protected conservation zone dedicated to preserving native species and to providing a high quality tourist experience (Gobierno Provincial Corrientes, 2015).

Despite its protected status, various socio-environmental conflicts have occurred and threats to biodiversity protection exist, including: the construction of illegal drainage channels and embankments; harmful practices such as the application of chemicals and fertilizers; the spread of invasive exotic plant and animal species; and illegal fishing and hunting (Boletín de los Esteros, 2010). Controversial land acquisitions are associated with various multi-millionaires, including George Soros, Gilberte Yvonne Andrée Lovisi de Beaux (a French banking magnate), and the late Douglas Tompkins (Aranda, 2015; Cultural Survival, 2014; Pittaro, 2011; Ruta de Arroz, 2011) (see Table 1). It is claimed by some that their resource use is not consistent with the special characteristics of the region's sensitive ecosystems (Boletín de los Esteros, 2010; Loiselle et al., 2004; Saverin, 2014).

TABLE 1: Foreign investments in Iberá and its buffer zone

Name of investor	Area owned (approx) (hectares)	Main purpose
Gilberte Yvonne Andrée Lovisi de Beaux	51,000	rice production
George Soros	76,500	rice production
Harvard Management Company	88,000	industrial tree plantations
Tompkins/The Conservation Land Trust	150,000	conservation

Source: author compilation based on Aranda (2015), Hábitat y Desarrollo (2014), CLT (2016) and Ruta de Arroz (2011)

The communities living in and around Iberá are diverse. Most communities descend from the Guaraní Indigenous peoples. Families tend to be large with up to 12 children (Interview government official, 2015). They engage in a wide variety of livelihood activities including hunting, fishing and subsistence farming. Local employment options once included working on cattle ranches, although this has now largely been replaced by the forestry industry. Government social welfare

assistance is an important source of income. The vast majority of people do not possess land titles. Local communities use and drink water from the lagoons as there is no town water supply system. They have experienced many changes with the arrival of investors (see Neiff, 2004).

The policies implemented by the provincial government increasingly promote neoliberal conservation practices. Different trends indicate this shift from conventional to neoliberal conservation in Iberá. The province implemented a twofold strategy of increasing biodiversity while making money out tourism; and increasing access to the park (Gobierno Provincial Corrientes, 2015). There is an increasing focus on ecotourism. There is also an increasing number of conservancies, i.e. private properties dedicated to biodiversity protection or ecotourism (Gobierno Provincial Corrientes, 2015). Finally, environmental NGOs are having greater influence on the management of Iberá.

3.6 Land grabs in Iberá: Harvard Management Company's tree plantations

HMC is a \$37 billion investment management fund associated with Harvard University (Harvard Management Company, 2018). HMC's investment portfolio is broadly based, but includes real estate and tree plantations. Since 2005, HMC has invested in plantation forestry in Argentina and elsewhere, and its natural resources portfolio was a key feature of its philosophy of sustainable investment. In 2015, HMC owned approximately 88,000 hectares in the buffer zone of the Iberá park (Interview manager Las Misiones/EVASA, 2015). However, HMC experienced ongoing controversy about its forestry operations and recent poor investment returns, which in late 2016 led to changes in leadership and to its corporate and investment strategy reducing commitment to its natural resources portfolio (Harvard Management Company, 2018).

Revenue generated from HMC's investments is used to support Harvard's academic programs, provide financial aid for students, and fund research. HMC's philosophy is to ensure the financial sustainability of the fund so that subsequent generations can be supported into the future, as well as demonstrating a commitment to sustainable investment, specifically to the six Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI, 2016). Although minor in terms of HMC's total financial position, as at 2015, HMC had planted over 100 million trees and owned approximately 242,800 hectares of land worldwide, about half of which was reserved for conservation (Hoyle, 2014). Before the change in corporate strategy in late 2016, the HMC story was ostensibly 'green' in that it presented itself as being in the business of sustainable investment, committed to the sound management of environmental, social and governance factors, and in bringing benefits to local people.

HMC's plantations in Corrientes were managed by two subsidiaries it acquired, *Empresas*

Verdes Argentina Sociedad Anónima (EVASA), and Las Misiones. HMC had a minority holding in these companies from 2007, gaining full ownership in 2010. The operations of EVASA and Las Misiones created some 200 permanent jobs (Interview manager EVASA/Las Misiones, 2015). All HMC tree plantations in Iberá have been FSC certified since 2014 (Business Wire, 2014). Nevertheless, several problems have been noted by local people (discussed further below).

The area surrounding HMC's plantations in Iberá is diverse, with small settlements, villages and towns. They have all been affected by HMC's plantations, albeit in different ways, especially as a result of land acquisition by EVASA and Las Misiones. They are also affected by the increasing demand for land by other actors. Our research participants expressed concern about how the expansion of tree plantations has led to an uncertain land tenure situation. This concern was taken up by the local NGO, *Unión Campesina*, whose mission is to improve the life of poor people in rural areas of Corrientes. In response to the fear of further plantation expansion that is held by most villagers, for several years *Unión Campesina* pressured the provincial government to formalize informal land holdings, which was achieved in 2014 (Interview government official, 2015; Partido Comunista Revolucionario de la Argentina, 2014). As a precaution against land grabbing, one condition associated with being granted formal land title is a prohibition on selling the land for ten years after formal title is given (Interview government official, 2015; Partido Comunista Revolucionario de la Argentina, 2014). Another condition is that the land can never be used for industrial forestry (Interview government official, 2015). However, people who have not sought or been able to secure formal title have continued to be vulnerable to land speculators. Some interviewees described being visited by people working on behalf of forestry companies in the region (not EVASA and Las Misiones) who sought to induce them to leave their land. An implication of this would be, should they leave their land, this would potentially invalidate their ability to later claim formal title. Encounters with forestry company representatives were generally distressing to local people.

There were also controversies around the way EVASA and Las Misiones acquired land. We were told HMC had gained possession of public land. Although the conversion of public land to private ownership is common in Argentina (Sili & Soumoulou, 2011), it is controversial because normally there are people and communities living on public land (Bidaseca et al., 2013). Therefore, the question arises as to what happened to the people previously living on the land acquired by HMC's subsidiaries. Our sources suggest that there were people previously living on this land and that a large number of families were displaced. Even though there are no publicly-available records of compensation or resettlement arrangements, we understand that people were induced to leave voluntarily and that adequate compensation was provided. In our interviews with local people, this was generally confirmed, but it was noted that there was dissatisfaction with the level of compensation and the process used to gain land. One in-

terviewee mentioned that the people who left no longer live in rural areas and therefore are in poverty because they lack the ability to engage in subsistence activities and have been unable to establish other livelihoods. The lack of land title and uncertainty about who has land rights has exacerbated the conflict around the competing claims over land. Although the provincial government was keen to sell land to raise revenue, local people considered they did not benefit from land sales and they were concerned about corruption. They thought the government had a vested interest in not acknowledging the land rights of people living on public land.

The expansion of plantations in Corrientes has led to wider social transformation, as it required a change in the amount and nature in the available work from that associated with cattle ranching to forestry. In general, this change in work activities was not favoured by local people. With the large number of heavy trucks transporting logs and equipment, there has been a deterioration and diminished accessibility of roads, which were already badly maintained. Because of increased traffic, there has been an increase in dust, risk of accidents, and other health and safety issues. Although these issues are not solved, EVASA made improvements to the road following complaints from villagers (Oakland Institute, 2013). Finally, people now living close to plantations have lost their sense of place and aesthetic enjoyment of the landscape. Instead of open spaces, people are now surrounded by a wall of trees. On the environmental side, there has been a reduction in water availability because of the high water consumption of plantation trees. The lowering of the watertable has affected people's access to water, and influences their ability to cultivate food. One interviewee said: "the plantations have been appalling for us ... we used to have a bucket well that was only 2.5 meters deep ... nowadays we need a shaft more than 10 meters deep to get water".

A controversial point about HMC was its FSC certification, especially because one of its plantations was in an area of high conservation value. Industrial forestry operations in the Iberá reserve potentially reduce biodiversity and facilitate the dispersion outside of plantations of species like pine and eucalyptus (Boletín de los Esteros, 2010; Gerber, 2011; Overbeek et al., 2012). Slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*) is particularly prone to spreading (Zalba, 2010), thus is a major threat to the protected conservation zone. Acknowledging this, staff of EVASA and Las Misiones said in an interview that HMC will not plant slash pine in the future. Another controversial point about the FSC certification was the extent of local opposition to the plantations, suggesting that HMC was not meeting all FSC principles, especially with regard to treatment of local communities.

Despite these controversies, in our interviews local people said that EVASA and Las Misiones were companies with relatively good labour conditions and were considered to be managing the plantations more responsibly than the local forestry companies. Perhaps this relatively good reputation was largely due to the malpractice of other companies operating in Corrientes. Most

local companies failed to provide protective clothing for their employees, had inadequate or no fire prevention in place, and a general neglect of the plantations could be observed. However, from what was said in interviews, it seemed that HMC and/or its subsidiaries were potentially failing to ensure their subcontractors maintained full respect for the rights of their workers.

3.7 Land grabs in Iberá: the conservation projects of Douglas Tompkins

Douglas Tompkins (1943-2015) accumulated significant capital and publicity from the success of the outdoor brand, *The North Face*, and clothing company, *Esprit*. He and Kristine Tompkins (nee McDivitt), whom he married in 1993, have dedicated much of their time and resources to conservation projects.⁴ Under the umbrella of Tompkins Conservation, they became noted conservationists and philanthropists establishing many reserves via a series of subsidiaries in Chile and Argentina. The Conservation Land Trust (CLT) was originally founded in 1992, with its Argentinean arm formally created in 1998. Starting with the purchase of the cattle ranch, Estancia San Alonso, in 1997, CLT gradually acquired several other properties in Iberá totalling over 150,000 hectares at the time of our research in 2015. The land was being used for a variety of purposes including conservation, tourism, organic agriculture and biodiversity protection (CLT, 2016; Tompkins Conservation, 2017).

The Tompkins were arguably responsible for starting discussions about nature conservation and sustainability in some parts of Latin America. Their not-for-profit organisations – e.g. Foundation for Deep Ecology, Conservacion Patagonica and CLT – have established several private protected areas (Tompkins Conservation, 2017), including the Pumalín and Patagonia Parks in Chile. They were actively involved in the creation of the Impenetrable National Park in Argentina in 2014 by supporting a campaign to pool land donations from individuals, NGOs/NFPs and companies (Gardinelli, 2015). Arguably with the change in government in Argentina in December 2015, Kris Tompkins announced plans for the phased transfer of CLT-held land in Corrientes to the Argentinean state. A similar arrangement has also been implemented in Chile. The Iberá National Park, which was gazetted in 2016, is the largest national park in Argentina (La Nación, 2015). It includes part of the *Los Esteros del Iberá* protected area and now covers 700,000 hectares (550,000 held by the state, and the 150,000 formerly owned by CLT gradually being transferred to the state). In the conditions

4. For more information on the projects of Douglas and Kris Tompkins see: *Our Story, Tompkins Conservation* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5sfyGCzqGMc>; *Douglas Tompkins: Wild Legacy* on Vimeo <https://vimeo.com/172053488> or YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2QDnhjkULdM>; and *Corrientes Becomes Corrientes Again* on: <http://cltargentina.org/en/cvsc.htm>

associated with the transfer, CLT staff continue to be involved in the administration of the park and retain some influence over acceptable uses of the park (see also Corson, 2011).

Several controversies revolve around Tompkins and their conservation projects in Iberá and elsewhere (Holmes, 2014a). Their presence has produced suspicion and mistrust regarding their intentions. Although the Tompkins always expressed their wish to transfer the land to the Argentinean and Chilean states to create national parks, for countries more used to the exploitation of nature rather than its protection and low levels of trust in the state, the goals of the Tompkins were difficult for local people to comprehend (see El Litoral, 2006a). Irrespective of the intention, a major concern expressed by our interviewees was the fact that a foreigner could obtain such large tracts of land, which they considered affected their sovereignty. People were suspicious of the Tompkins and imagined many fanciful reasons for their presence such as: grabbing water from the *Guaraní Acuífero*; starting a military base; and various other illegal activities. Interviewees and media sources denounced his alleged extraordinary profit making through land sales (see for example La Política Online, 2011). A range of concerns relating to local communities were also mentioned. For example, as a result of a land investment surrounding the Yahaveré community in Iberá, Tompkins was accused of illegally closing a school and, by fencing the land in question, effectively locking-in or enclosing the community (El Diario Digital, 2007; Mi Mercedes, 2007). Tompkins later donated some land back to the Yahaveré community and reopened access roads that were restricted by his land acquisitions (El Litoral, 2006b).

Another controversy concerned the relationship between Tompkins and HMC. Actually, Tompkins originally founded EVASA in 2003 (now owned by HMC). In 2007, Tompkins sold some land to the Global Environment Fund, which later sold it to HMC (Oakland Institute, 2013; Pittaro, 2011). As a result of these transactions, Tompkins is still associated by our interviewees with HMC and erroneously with current ownership of tree plantations in Iberá.

A further concern for local people was the planned reintroduction of the jaguar, which was locally extinct because of excessive hunting. Feelings about the reintroduction were mixed. A small group of people feared the impact of jaguars on livestock, while the majority of people felt a sense of pride in having this emblematic animal restored to Iberá.

3.8 Governance dynamics in Los Esteros del Iberá

There are many factors that need to be taken into consideration when examining the relationship between land grabbing and the governance of protected areas. Iberá is very big and relatively remote. Responsibility for park management is spread across ministries, political terri-

tories and institutions. The park has limited resources, and monitoring and ensuring compliance is difficult. Its limited accessibility, inadequate policy framework, and a general lack of capacity and resources contribute to making the interactions between key actors challenging and create ongoing socio-political tension. The limited capacity of states is frequently given as a justification for neoliberal conservation (see Igoe & Brockington, 2007). To understand the characteristics of land grabbing in and around protected areas, and the roles different actors play, the key governance processes in our two cases are discussed below.

3.8.1 Socio-environmental conflict over HMC's tree plantations

The struggle against land grabbing by HMC (in the form of EVASA and Las Misiones) and its forestry operations has connected two groups operating at different spatial scales: the coalition, *Responsible Investment at Harvard* (Responsible Harvard for short), and the local NGO, *Guardianes del Iberá*. Responsible Harvard gathers students, alumni, and other Harvard community members who demand more transparent and socially responsible investments from HMC (Oakland Institute, 2013). *Guardianes del Iberá* (i.e. Guardians of Iberá) is a local action group which advocates for local interests and local sustainability concerns in and around Iberá. Inter alia, it demands stronger regulation of plantations, greater community participation (for example in environmental impact assessments), and better employment conditions for workers.

In 2013, Responsible Harvard started investigating HMC's plantations in Iberá in collaboration with *Guardianes del Iberá*. In the words of the two students leading the investigation, "we went [to Argentina] because we knew that research on Harvard's land grabs in Mozambique led to badly needed scrutiny of those investments ... and a public spotlight could lead to changes for the better in Argentina" (Bayard & Wohns, 2014, para 5). An independent thinktank, the Oakland Institute (2013), published their report, which stimulated Responsible Harvard to initiate a variety of protest actions, including mounting a worldwide petition hosted by the online campaigning community, Avaaz, and holding an event at Harvard University featuring two people from *Guardianes del Iberá* who discussed the problems caused by HMC. Arguably influenced by these actions, in 2014 HMC appointed a vice president for sustainable investment and signed the Principles for Responsible Investment (Harvard Gazette, 2014). The Principles for Responsible Investment contribute to the creation of long-term value by integrating environmental, social and governance issues in investment projects (PRI, 2016). HMC's efforts did not stop new protests, which drew attention to issues around the foreignization of land ownership in Corrientes, with HMC as a main target (Cultural Survival, 2014).

Another concern surrounding HMC's investment in Iberá relate to the granting of FSC certification. A platform of environmental NGOs, including Greenpeace and Aves Argentinas, has queried how FSC certification could be granted to a plantation in an area of high ecological

value, especially because impacts on local fauna, water balance and soil fertility were evident (Greenpeace et al., 2011; Pittaro, 2011). They demanded the voidance of FSC certification to any plantation inside the Iberá protected area or buffer zone. They also demanded that specific FSC guidelines be developed for wetland habitats, given that the current FSC standards do not specifically address wetland areas.

A further criticism concerns the process of certification. Interviewees denounced how HMC potentially could hide its bad practices during the pre-announced audits and thus manipulate the certification process (see also Oakland Institute, 2013). For example, workers without formal work contracts could be asked to stay at home during the audit. Responsible Harvard and *Guardianes del Iberá* reported there was a fear of retaliation amongst employees if they would speak up about the poor practices (see also Pittaro, 2011).

An additional issue surrounding the certification process concerned the limited attention given to social issues in the FSC framework in general (Klooster, 2010; Dare et al., 2011), and especially in the context of Iberá (Hashmi, 2014). A more sensitive approach to socio-cultural diversity in the certification of tree plantations is needed (see Overbeek et al., 2012).

3.8.2 Socio-political development in HMC's activities

The HMC case also revealed some positive outcomes. Certification has the capacity to stimulate companies and public institutions to improve their socio-environmental standards, with HMC and its subsidiaries setting a good example for plantation management in the region. This was especially important in Corrientes where working conditions in the forestry sector were poor. These conditions were exacerbated by the fact that appropriate regulations were not in place to protect workers or prevent misconduct such as unpaid hours, exploitation, informal labour arrangements, etc. Stimulated by its FSC certification, HMC and subsidiaries became involved in a range of social development activities, including: providing transportation for school children; worker safety programs; and dental health initiatives. Furthermore, effort was expended on an employee environmental awareness program regarding garbage management and composting. Land has been set aside for conservation purposes, and there is strict environmental monitoring of the plantations, and reduced use of agrochemicals.

3.8.3 Socio-environmental conflict surrounding Tompkins & CLT

The Tompkins investments and their presence in the region provide an interesting example of governance within neoliberal conservation. Their activities have influenced the management of various protected areas and have led to contestation and conflict (Saverin, 2014). First, there have been campaigns against the land investments of the Tompkins with the *Guardianes del Iberá* organized a campaign in 2013 denouncing Tompkins' land transactions as land grabbing

(Radio Mundo Real, 2013). Second, the large scale of the Tompkins investments has concentrated land ownership in foreign hands, and has raised questions regarding land sovereignty, especially whether it was desirable to hand over Argentina's say in how land should be used, by who, and for what purpose. Selling this large amount of land to foreigners (150,000 hectares) was interpreted by local people and the media as a form of neo-colonialism (Garay, 2004). Critical academic debates associate the foreignization of land with power concentration and constraints on equitable and sustainable development (Zoomers, 2010). Foreign investments might be prioritized, especially where governments seek to attract foreign capital by lowering entry barriers and incentivizing foreign access to land (Corson, 2011; Zoomers, 2010). Summarizing, Tompkins' land investments for conservation have been perceived by Argentinean society with ambiguity. On the one hand, there was scepticism about their intentions; on the other hand, there was admiration for their projects by those locals willing to collaborate with them.

3.8.4 Socio-political development in Tompkins & CLT's activities

Despite the criticism of Tompkins' conservation projects, it is possible to observe the triggering of positive developments in Iberá. From a social perspective, CLT initiated several projects to reappraise local culture and stimulate sustainable tourism in Iberá. For example, the '*Corrientes vuelve a ser Corrientes*' (in English 'Corrientes will be Corrientes again') project played an important role in reinvigorating the cultural, environmental and social elements that characterize Corrientes. '*La Ruta Escénica*' (in English 'Scenic Route') project led to the development of new infrastructure and roads opening new access points to the Iberá reserve. Both projects promoted and facilitated local small-scale tourism development. In collaboration with CLT, the provincial government started a project in which conservation and tourism are presented as strategic steps to simultaneously stimulate rural development and conserve nature (Proyecto Iberá, 2016). Even though difficulties were encountered in implementing these projects, awareness of the importance of conserving Iberá was raised and possibilities for local initiatives were identified. However, not all local people have the capacity to start local initiatives, and therefore a significant part of the community might remain excluded (see Corson, 2011). Moreover, for many critical academics (Büscher & Fletcher, 2015; Corson, 2011; Igoe & Brockington, 2007), CLT's activities can be framed as a capital accumulation strategy that commodifies nature.

A program that raised ecological awareness was the reintroduction of locally extinct species, such as the jaguar and giant anteater. Heinonen (2015, author translation), the director of the CLT, perhaps somewhat over-enthusiastically stated that CLT is "working on a project to restore ecosystems and regenerate processes ... that have been disturbed by environmental impacts ... we are writing history in Latin America, no other project like this exists where people are working on the complete restoration of an ecosystem". However, CLT's programs also have contradictions because people value nature in different ways. People living on the fringes of Iberá histor-

ically have hunted for survival and leisure. As observed during our fieldwork, hunting continues today (even targeting the very animals being reintroduced), showing how certain local uses of Iberá clash with the ecological values held by CLT. From a governance perspective, situations like this raise questions about ideals, representations, and the sharing of the benefits of nature.

All in all, environmental organizations and philanthropists face various challenges in the implementation of their programs. A long-term commitment is needed to successfully achieve program outcomes that are socially accepted and bring benefits to all actors (Jijelava & Vanclay, 2014). CLT has been very influential in drawing attention to the importance of protecting Iberá. The role of CLT in steering protected areas highlights the positive outcomes foreign land acquisitions can have (see also Zoomers, 2010). This is exemplified in the recent transfer of the land titles from CLT to the Argentinean state for the creation of the National Park Iberá (La Nación, 2015).

3.8.5 The complexities of governance in land grabs

The empirical material has provided a nuanced overview of the many governance dynamics present in protected areas. The two cases show that the effects of land grabbing go further than simply capturing control over land. Land grabs (including green grabs) introduce changes to the entire governance system. However, the arrival of foreign investors is not necessarily the main or only cause of the many social problems or conflicts observed in the deprived rural areas of Iberá. As pointed out by many scholars (Corson, 2011; Dressler & Roth, 2010; Fairhead et al., 2012; Hall et al., 2015), it is important to consider the place-based particularities and histories of each location. The root cause of many problems of local people is arguably not the arrival of the land grabbers, rather it is the reduction of the barriers to investment by governments. With foreign investment bringing in the capital needed by low income provinces (e.g. Corrientes), governments create a regulatory environment that is attractive to investors, but which overlooks the needs and interests of impacted communities. Both cases showed that the entrance of foreign actors facilitated a concentration of land ownership and exacerbated inequalities. However, these inequalities and deprivations have older historical and political roots that stem from the political and social history of Argentina (Slutzky, 2014). In Corrientes, people have historically felt excluded from development and this is expressed in contemporary conflicts (Slutzky, 2014).

Another challenge companies and philanthropists have to deal with is the local setting. Local characteristics create operational challenges for the implementation and operation of investment projects, especially in a complex context like Iberá. These operational challenges include: aligning visions; getting people to think about the future; establishing participatory and deliberative processes; resolving pre-existing conflict; and implementing an ongoing and sustainable process of development without entrenching dependency (Esteves & Vanclay, 2009). All in all,

this results in a conflictive arena where economic development, the protection of nature, and social development are difficult to align.

The major problems and sources of conflict in Iberá were related to the weak regulatory role of the state at the national and provincial level, which has led to enduring social marginalization. There is a long list of improvements that need to be implemented, including the provision of essential public services – education, health and infrastructure – for remote communities, the implementation of better working conditions, and the eradication of unlawful work practices. The provision of public services by the government is increasingly abandoned under neoliberalism. There is no clear responsibility regarding how local people can be elevated out of their current situation of entrenched poverty.

Civil society groups are another critical component of the system of governance in land grabs. Various groups are active in raising awareness and the appreciation of the values associated with protected areas. They deploy different strategies in the struggle against land grabbing like fostering awareness, denouncing bad practices, and demanding more responsible company behaviour (Hall et al., 2015; Hanna et al., 2016b; Klooster, 2010). One strategy used by these groups to fight for their objectives is forming alliances at multiple levels. In our case studies, it was evident that the demands raised by local groups were rarely fully met. However, the NGOs had some impact, like increasing community awareness of issues and enabling local communities to be better organised and informed. Nevertheless, the spaces of participation are controlled by neoliberal logic, and governments tend to represent economic market interests rather than community interests (Kaika, 2017; Swyngedouw, 2011).

3.9 Conclusion: land grabbing and governance changes within protected areas

The growing presence of business actors and social elites in protected areas creates changing, contradictory and multifaceted meanings for the governance of conservation (Holmes, 2014b). Whereas in the past, conservation tended to mean only the protection of scenic places, species and habitats by public authorities with public finance, now conservation policies allow a wider range of activities, including privately-owned parks, ecotourism, and biodiversity offsets and reserves by forestry companies and other production enterprises. These conservation activities are resisted or supported by local communities and other stakeholders depending on whether the interests, needs and demands of different actors are met, the impacts experienced, and the effectiveness of the engagement processes used (Vanclay, 2017a). Actions to conserve nature are increasingly being undertaken by influential foreign entities. As seen in Iberá, the presence

of these actors may not always harm the environment and/or the local people. However, even though there may be attempts by companies to do good, there can always be controversy about their activities.

Land use and ownership changes reinvigorate historical controversies. Even philanthropists and companies with the best intentions cannot avoid dealing with the local history of the places in which they operate. Corrientes and the area surrounding Iberá are characterized by persistent inequality, disunity and socio-political struggle. In such a context, the Harvard Management Company and Douglas Tompkins/CLT were easy scapegoats for quick judgements about anything that was perceived to be inadequate in Corrientes. The socio-political-historical context is typically not sufficiently analysed or taken into account in project development, including by HMC and CLT. However, sometimes the problems may be so complex that they are inherently unsolvable. As emblematic American actors, HMC and Tompkins have been the subject of a disproportionate level of criticism. Many other operators with much worse practices can be found in Corrientes (and elsewhere), yet they receive less scrutiny.

Even though land grabbing and green grabbing have been criticized in this paper and elsewhere for placing land in the hands of the few and for the many misconducts and mistakes made, they may also open-up spaces for reflecting on the environmental values and social responsibilities of individuals, communities, NGOs, governments and companies. This perspective is not always highlighted. Thus, in the governance of protected areas, there is a need to find a way to bring together the many different perspectives and interests, so that all parties can contribute and benefit.

As demonstrated in our two case studies, land grabbing led to various governance changes having positive and negative outcomes. These changes highlight the failed promises of governance identified by Swyngedouw (2005). First, governance proclaims to create more democratic spaces, whereas in Iberá, poor local people continued to be excluded and expelled. Second, land grabs are presented by governments and investors as bringing opportunities for local people, while in reality the land grabs pose a threat to local people's livelihoods and may lead to environmental degradation. Third, neoliberal conservation promises greater transparency, whereas the involvement of more and varying actors across scales increases the blurriness about accountability, roles and responsibilities.

These three points highlight that governance of protected areas is dynamic, multifaceted, complex, and does not serve the interests of all actors. The belief that neoliberal conservation can bring sustainability (Corbera, 2015; Costello et al., 2012) while continuing to allow exploitative practices (Cook & Swyngedouw, 2012) is manifestly invalid, especially in the Latin American

countries where neoliberalism is much promoted (Parra & Moulaert, 2016; Veltmeyer & Petras, 2014). As argued by Overbeek et al. (2012), local people are disadvantaged because of the absence of the state from key social responsibilities such as education and health. Moreover, governments support the very industries that are destroying the environment and livelihoods of local communities. If no emphasis is given to enabling local people to maintain control over land, rural-to-urban migration will inevitably occur, leading to people entering the ranks of the urban poor (Fairhead et al., 2012; Gerber, 2011). These issues promote civil resistance and reduce the stability of government (Veltmeyer & Petras, 2014).

Protected areas are subject to both green grabbing and land grabbing. Regardless of the term, the impacts experienced are similar in that local people are displaced or have their use of land and resources restricted, their environments are harmed such that maintaining their livelihoods becomes impossible, and/or they experience considerable other social impacts and upheaval. In this sense, green grabbing can be seen as a type of extractivism. From the positioning of local people, green grabbing is land grabbing. Facilitating the ability of local people to gain formal land title, increasing awareness of land grabbing issues, increasing the scrutiny of land investors by all stakeholders, and increasing the opportunities for local people would go a long way to enhance the benefits and mitigate the harms from land grabbing.

References

- Aranda, D., 2015. *Tierra Arrasada: Petróleo, soja, pasteras y megaminería radiografía de la Argentina del siglo XXI*. Buenos Aires: Sudamericana.
- Baird, I.G., 2011. Turning land into capital, turning people into labour: Primitive accumulation and the arrival of large-scale economic land concessions in the Lao People's Democratic Republic. *New Proposals: Journal of Marxism and Interdisciplinary Inquiry* 5(1), 10-26.
- Bayard, G.H., Wohns, S.F., 2014. The Harvard Crimson: A steep price for Harvard's investments. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2014/4/9/steep-price-investment/>]
- Bidaseca, K., Gigena, A., Gómez, F., Weinstock, A.M., Oyharzábal, E., Otal, D., 2013. Relevamiento y sistematización de problemas de tierras de los agricultores familiares en Argentina. Buenos Aires: Ministerio de la Agricultura, Ganadería y Pesca de la Nación.
- Boletín de los Esteros, 2010. "Iberá en Peligro". Edición Especial, Número 8. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: http://cltargentina.org/download/boletines/boletin_08.pdf]
- Borras, S.M., Kay, C., Gómez, S., Wilkinson, J., 2012a. Land grabbing and global capitalist accumulation: Key features in Latin America. *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 33(4), 402-416.
- Borras, S.M., Franco, J., Gómez, S., Kay, C., Spoor, M., 2012b. Land grabbing in Latin America and the Caribbean. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 39(3-4), 845-872.
- Borras, S.M., Franco, J., Wang, C., 2013. The challenge of global governance of land grabbing: Changing international agricultural context and competing political views and strategies. *Globalizations* 10(1), 161-179.
- Borras, S.M., Franco, J., Isakson, S., Levidow, L., Ververst, P., 2016. The rise of flex crops and commodities: implications for research. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 43(1), 93-115.
- Brent, Z., 2015. Territorial restructuring and resistance in Argentina. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 42(3-4), 671-694.
- Brockington, D., Duffy, R., Igoe, J., 2008. *Nature Unbound: Conservation, Capitalism, and the Future of Protected Areas*. London: Earthscan.
- Brockington, D., Igoe, J., 2006. Eviction for conservation: A global overview. *Conservation & Society* 4(3):424-470.
- Büscher, B., Fletcher, R., 2015. Accumulation by conservation. *New Political Economy* 20(2), 279-298.
- Büscher, B., Sullivan, S., Neves, K., Igoe, J., Brockington, D., 2012. Towards a synthesized critique of neoliberal biodiversity conservation. *Capitalism Nature Socialism* 23, 24-30.
- Business Wire, 2014. Harvard Management Company's Argentine Timberland Plantations Receive FSC® Certification. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <http://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20140407006112/en/Harvard-Management-Company%E2%80%99s-Argentine-Timberland-Plantations-Receive>]
- Castree, N., 2010. Neoliberalism and the biophysical environment 1: What 'Neoliberalism' is, and what difference nature makes to it. *Geography Compass* 4(12), 1725-1733.
- Castree, N., Henderson, G., 2014. The capitalist mode of conservation, neoliberalism and the ecology of value. *New Proposals: Journal of Marxism and Interdisciplinary Inquiry* 7(1), 16-37.
- Cavanagh, C., Benjaminsen, T.A., 2014. Virtual nature, violent accumulation: The 'spectacular failure' of carbon offsetting at a Ugandan National Park. *Geoforum* 56, 55-65.

- CLT, 2016. The Conservation Land Trust. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <http://www.theconservationlandtrust.org/eng/ibera.htm>]
- Costantino, A., 2015. El capital extranjero y el acaparamiento de tierras: conflictos sociales y acumulación por desposesión en Argentina. *Revista de Estudios Sociales* 55, 137-149.
- Costantino, A., 2016. The dark side of the boom: Land grabbing in dependent countries in the Twenty-First Century. *International Critical Thought* 6(1), 79-100.
- Cook, I.R., Swyngedouw, E., 2012. Cities, social cohesion and the environment: Towards a future research agenda. *Urban Studies* 49, 1959-1978.
- Corbera, E., 2015. Valuing nature, paying for ecosystem services and realizing social justice: a response to Matulis (2014). *Ecological Economics* 110, 154-157.
- Corson, C., 2011. Territorialization, enclosure and neoliberalism: non-state influence in struggles over Madagascar's forests. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 38(4), 703-726.
- Corson, C., MacDonald, K.I., 2012. Enclosing the global commons: the convention on biological diversity and green grabbing. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 39(2), 263-283.
- Corson, C., MacDonald, K.I., Neimark, B., 2013. Grabbing "Green": Markets, environmental governance, and the materialization of natural capital. *Human Geography* 6(1), 1-15.
- Costello, C., Gaines, S., Gerber, L.R., 2012. Conservation science: A market approach to saving the whales. *Nature* 481(7380), 139-140.
- Cotula, L., Vermeulen, S., Leonard, R. and Keeley, J., 2009. Land Grab or Development Opportunity? Agricultural Investment and International Land Deals in Africa, London/Rome: IIED/FAO/IFAD.
- Cultural Survival, 2014. Argentina: Communities Protest Foreign Land Grabs in Iberá. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <https://www.culturalsurvival.org/news/argentina-communities-protest-foreign-land-grabs-ibera>]
- Cundill, G., Thondhlana, G., Sisitka, L., Shackleton, S., Blore, M., 2013. Land claims and the pursuit of co-management on four protected areas in South Africa. *Land Use Policy* 35, 171-178.
- Dare, M., Schirmer, J., Vanclay, F., 2011. Does forest certification enhance community engagement in Australian plantation management? *Forest Policy & Economics* 13(5), 328-337.
- Davis, K., D'Odorico, P., Rulli, M., 2014. Land grabbing: A preliminary quantification of economic impacts on rural livelihoods. *Population & Environment* 36, 180-192.
- de Schutter, O., 2011. How not to think of land-grabbing: Three critiques of large-scale investments in farmland, *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 38(2), 249-279.
- Dressler, W., Roth, R., 2010. The Good, the Bad, and the Contradictory: Neoliberal Conservation Governance in Rural Southeast Asia. *World Development* 39(5), 851-862.
- Edelman, M., Oya, C., Borrás, S.M., 2013. Global Land Grabs: historical processes, theoretical and methodological implications and current trajectories. *Third World Quarterly* 34(9), 1517-1531.
- Eden, S., 2009. The work of environmental governance networks: Traceability, credibility and certification by the Forest Stewardship Council. *Geoforum* 40, 383-394.
- El Diario Digital, 2007. Tompkins habría demolido una escuela en el Iberá. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <http://www.voxpopuli.com.ar/archivo/2007/mayo/misiones2007051405.shtml>]
- El Litoral, 2006a. Goya: el obispo no aceptó trabajar con Tompkins. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <http://www.ellitoral.com.ar/34448/Goya-el-Obispo-no-aceptotrabajar-con-Tompkins>]
- El Litoral, 2006b. Tompkins donará parte de sus terrenos para construir un acceso a Yahaveré. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <http://www.ellitoral.com.ar/46233/Tompkins-donara-parte-de-sus-terrenos-para-construir-un-acceso-a-Yahavere>]
- Esteves, A.M., Vanclay, F., 2009. Social Development Needs Analysis as a tool for SIA to guide corporate-community investment: Applications in the minerals industry. *Environmental Impact Assessment Review* 29(2), 137-145.
- Fairhead, J., Leach, M., Scoones, I., 2012. Green grabbing: A new appropriation of nature? *Journal of Peasant Studies* 39(2), 237-261.
- Fleming, A., Vanclay, F., Hiller, C., Wilson, S., 2014. Challenging conflicting discourses of climate change. *Climatic Change* 127(3-4), 407-418.
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2012. Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of lands, fisheries and forests in the context of national food security. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/016/i2801e/i2801e.pdf>]
- Forest Stewardship Council. FSC International Standard, 2015. FSC Principles and criteria for Forest Stewardship. FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2 EN. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <https://ic.fsc.org/preview.fsc-principles-and-criteria-for-forest-stewardship-fsc-std-01-001-v5-2-en-print-version.a-4843.pdf>]
- Fortin, E., Richardson, B., 2013. Certification schemes and the governance of land: Enforcing standards or enabling scrutiny? *Globalizations* 10(1), 141-159.
- Garay, F., 2004. Esteros del Iberá: Douglas Tompkins (sic), el dueño de la polémica. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <http://www.rodolfowalsh.org/spip.php?breve1353>]
- Gerber, J.F., Veuthey, S., Martínez-Alier, J., 2009. Linking political ecology with ecological economics in tree plantations conflicts in Cameroon and Ecuador. *Ecological Economics* 68, 2885-2889.
- Gerber, J.F., 2011. Conflicts over industrial tree plantations in the South: Who, how and why? *Global Environmental Change* 21, 165-176.
- Giardinelli, M., 2015. Douglas Tompkins in memoriam. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <http://www.pagina12.com.ar/diario/sociedad/3-288218-2015-12-14.html>]
- Gobierno Provincial, 2015. Fondos nacionales para el NEA: Corrientes recibió hasta 300% menos que el resto. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <http://www.corrientes.gov.ar/noticia/fondos-nacionales-para-el-nea-corrientes-recibio-hasta-300-menos-que-el-resto>]
- Gobierno Provincial Corrientes, 2015. Parque Provincial Iberá. Producción de naturaleza y desarrollo local. Corrientes: Gobierno Provincial Corrientes.
- Goldfarb, L., van der Haar, G., 2015. The moving frontiers of genetically modified soy production: Shifts in land control in the Argentinian Chaco. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 43(2), 562-582.
- Gudynas, E., 2009. Diez tesis urgentes sobre el nuevo extractivismo - Contextos y demandas bajo el progresismo sudamericano actual. In: Schuldt, J., Acosta, A., Barandiarán, A., Bebbington, A., Folch, M., CEDLA, Alayza, A., Gudynas, E. *Extractivismo, Política y Sociedad*, 187-225. Quito: CLAES CAAP.
- Grajales, A., 2011. The rifle and the title: Paramilitary violence, land grab and land control in Colombia. *Journal of Peasant*

Studies 38(4), 771-791.

Greenpeace, Aves Argentinas, Fundación Biodiversidad, Fundación Flora y Fauna Argentina, Delegación Técnica Regional Noreste Argentino Administración de Parques Nacionales, IABIN Red Interamericana de Información sobre Biodiversidad, 2011. La inclusión de pastizales de Alto Valor de Conservación dentro de la Agenda del FSC. Un cambio importante y urgente dentro del contexto ambiental mundial. El caso de la región del Iberá en Corrientes, Argentina. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <http://www.greenpeace.org/argentina/Global/argentina/report/2011/bosques/inclusion-pastizales-fsc.pdf>]

Hábitat y Desarrollo Fundación, 2014. Iberá, Los Caminos del Agua: Guía de Naturaleza. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: https://issuu.com/fundacionhabitatydesarrollo/docs/cuadernillo_ibera]

Hall, R., Edelman, M., Borrás, S.M., Scoones, I., White, B., Wolford, W., 2015. Resistance, acquiescence or incorporation? An introduction to land grabbing and political reactions 'from below'. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 42(3-4), 467-488.

Hanna, K., Clark, D., Slocombe, D., (eds), 2008. *Transforming Parks and Protected Areas: Policy and Governance in a Changing World*. London: Routledge.

Hanna, P., Langdon, J., Vanclay, F., 2016a. Indigenous rights, performativity and protest. *Land Use Policy* 50, 490-506.

Hanna, P., Vanclay, F., Langdon E.J., Arts, J., 2016b. Conceptualizing social protest and the significance of protest action to large projects. *Extractive Industries and Society* 3(1), 217-239.

Hanna, P., Vanclay, F., Langdon, E.J., Arts, J., 2014. Improving the effectiveness of impact assessment pertaining to Indigenous peoples in the Brazilian environmental licensing procedure. *Environmental Impact Assessment Review* 46, 58-67.

Harvard Gazette, 2014. Harvard to sign on to United Nations-supported Principles for Responsible Investment. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <http://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2014/04/harvard-to-sign-on-to-united-nations-supported-principles-for-responsible-investment/>]

Harvard Management Company, 2018. [Last accessed 19 March 2018 on: <http://www.hmc.harvard.edu/>]

Harvey, D., 2005. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford UK: Oxford University Press.

Hashmi, A.H., 2014. With Argentine timberlands recertified, local organizers lodge complaints. *The Harvard Crimson*. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2014/4/7/harvard-argentine-timberlands-recertified/>]

Heinonen, S., 2015. Public press event: Anuncian el desarrollo de una gran área protegida en Los Esteros del Iberá. *Host news Diario de Turismo*. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NJJRjKhQkVo>]

Holmén, H., 2015. Is land grabbing always what it is supposed to be? Large-scale land investments in sub-Saharan Africa. *Development Policy Review* 33(4), 457-478.

Holmes, G., 2014a. What is a land grab? Exploring green grabs, conservation and private protected areas in Southern Chile. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 41(4), 547-567.

Holmes, G., 2014b. Defining the forest, defending the forest: Political ecology, territoriality, and resistance to a protected area in the Dominican Republic. *Geoforum* 53, 1-10.

Holmes, G., Cavanagh, C., 2016. A review of the social impacts of neoliberal conservation: Formations, inequalities, contestations. *Geoforum* 75, 199-209.

Hoyle, S., 2014. Good for Harvard good for the world: Why HMC embraced ESG with a passion. [Last accessed

21 September 2017 on: <https://www.top1000funds.com/profile/2014/10/28/good-for-the-world-why-harvard-has-embraced-esg-with-a-passion/>]

Igoe, J., Brockington, D., 2007. Neoliberal conservation: A brief introduction. *Conservation and Society* 5(4), 432-449.

Jara, C., Paz, R., 2013. Ordenar el territorio para detener el acaparamiento mundial de tierras. La conflictividad de la estructura agraria de Santiago del Estero y el papel del estado. *Proyección* 15, 171-195.

Jijelava, D., Vanclay, F., 2014. Assessing the social licence to operate of the work of humanitarian and development cooperation organizations: A case study of Mercy Corps in Samtskhe-Javakheti, Georgia. *Social Epistemology* 28(3-4), 297-317.

Jones, N., McGinlay, J., Dimitrakopoulos, P., 2017. Improving social impact assessment of protected areas: A review of the literature and directions for future research. *Environmental Impact Assessment Review* 64, 1-7.

Kaika, M., 2017. "Don't call me resilient again!" The New Urban Agenda as immunology ... or what happens when communities refuse to be vaccinated with 'smart cities' and indicators. *Environment and Urbanization* 29(1), 89-102.

Klooster, D., 2010. Standardizing sustainable development? The Forest Stewardship Council's plantation policy review process as neoliberal environmental governance. *Geoforum* 41, 117-129.

La Nación, 2015. Mauricio Macri recibió a la viuda de Douglas Tompkins para agradecerle por una donación de tierras. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <http://www.lanacion.com.ar/1856473-mauricio-macri-recibio-a-la-viuda-de-douglas-tompkins-para-agradecerle-por-una-donacion-de-tierras>]

La Política Online, 2011. Tompkins vende tierra a extranjeros en los Esteros del Iberá. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <http://www.lapoliticaonline.com/nota/51023/>]

Leguizamón, A., 2016. Environmental injustice in Argentina: Struggles against genetically modified soy. *Journal of Agrarian Change* 16(4), 684-692.

Loiselle, S.A., Bastianoni, S., Bracchini, L., Rossi, C., 2004. Neotropical wetlands: New instruments in ecosystem management. *Wetlands Ecology and Management* 12, 587-596.

Lunstrum, E., Bose, P., Zalik, A., 2016. Environmental displacement: the common ground of climate change, extraction and conservation. *Area* 48(2):130-133.

Margulis, M.E., McKeon, N., Borrás, S.M., 2013. Land grabbing and global governance: Critical perspectives. *Globalizations* 10(1), 1-23.

Messerli, P., Heinemann, A., Giger, M., Breu, T., Schönweger, O., 2013. From 'land grabbing' to sustainable investments in land: Potential contribution by land change science. *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability* 5, 528-534.

Mi Mercedes, 2007. Paraje Yahavere: Ahora alambran el agua. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <http://www.mimercedes.com.ar/masnotas.php?ampliar=6924>]

Ministerio de Justicia y Derechos Humanos, 2017. Dirección Nacional del Registro Nacional de Tierras Rurales, Cartografía. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <http://www.jus.gob.ar/tierras-rurales/cartografia.aspx>]

Minteer, B.A., Pyne, S.J. (eds.), 2015. *After Preservation: Saving American Nature in the Age of Humans*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Moulaert, F., Parra, C., Swyngedouw, E., 2014. Cities, neighbourhoods and multiscale governance in urban Europe. *EURE. Revista latinoamericana de estudios urbano regionales* 40(119), 5-24.

Murmis, M., Murmis, M.R., 2012. Land concentration and foreign land ownership in Argentina in the context of global land

- grabbing. *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 33(4), 490-508.
- Neiff, J.J., 2004. *El Iberá ¿En Peligro?* Buenos Aires: Fundación Vida Silvestre Argentina.
- Oakland Institute, Responsible Investment at Harvard Coalition, 2013. *Harvard In Iberá. Investigating Harvard University's Timber Plantations in the Iberá Wetlands of Argentina*. Oakland New York, USA. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: https://www.oaklandinstitute.org/sites/oaklandinstitute.org/files/OI_Report_Harvard_Ibera_O.pdf]
- Oliveira, G., Hecht, S., 2016. Sacred groves, sacrifice zones and soy production: Globalization, intensification and neo-nature in South America. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 42(2), 251-285.
- Overbeek, W., Kröger, M., Gerber, J.F., 2012. An overview of industrial tree plantations conflicts in the global South: Conflicts, trends, and resistance struggles. *EJOLT Report No. 3*, 100p. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <http://www.ejolt.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/EJOLT-Report-3-low1.pdf>]
- Parra, C., 2010. Sustainability and multi-level governance of territories classified as protected areas in France: The Morvan Regional Park case. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management* 53(4), 491-509.
- Parra, C., Moulaert, F., 2016. The governance of the nature-culture nexus: Lessons learned from the San Pedro de Atacama case-study. *Nature + Culture* 11(3), 239-258.
- Partido Comunista Revolucionario de la Argentina, 2014. *Tierra y soberanía. Histórico triunfo de la Unión Campesina de Corrientes*. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <http://www.pcr.org.ar/nota/campo/tierra-y-soberan%C3%AD>]
- Pittaro, F., 2011. *Harvard: la universidad tiene campos en Corrientes e incumple con la ley*. *Tiempo Argentino*. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <https://fabaexpresbiz.files.wordpress.com/2011/11/68369915-harvard.pdf>]
- PRI, 2016. *Principles for Responsible Investment. The Six Principles*. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <http://www.unpri.org/about-pri/the-six-principles/>]
- Proyecto Iberá, 2016. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <http://www.proyectoibera.org/>]
- Provincia de Corrientes, 2014. *Educación para un desarrollo forestoindustrial sustentable*. Buenos Aires: Imprenta La Stampa.
- Radio Mundo Real, 2013. *La otra cara de la moneda. Argentina: diálogo con Emilio Espataro de la organización 'Guardianes del Iberá'*. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <http://www.radiomundoreal.fm/6897-la-otra-cara-de-la-moneda?lang=es>]
- Rocheleau, D.E., 2015. Networked, rooted and territorial: Green grabbing and resistance in Chiapas. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 42(3-4), 695-723.
- Ruta de Arroz, 2011. *Una millonaria francesa se adueñó de un curso de agua en Corrientes*. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: http://www.rutadearroz.com/noticias/val/2385/val_s/95/una-millonaria-francesa-se-adue%C3%AD]
- Saverin, D., 2014. *The entrepreneur who want to save paradise*. *The Atlantic*. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2014/09/the-entrepreneur-who-wants-to-save-paradise/380116/>]
- Sili, M., Soumoulou, L., 2011. *The issue of land in Argentina: Conflicts and dynamics of use, holdings and concentration*. *The International Fund for Agricultural Development*. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <https://www.ifad.org/documents/10180/e2364b6f-036e-46e3-b611-1dadfa951ad5>]
- Silva, C., Boia, C., Valente, J., Borrego, C., 2005. *Pesticides in Esteros del Iberá (AR): Evaluation of impacts and proposal of guidelines for water quality protection*. *Ecological Modelling* 186, 85-97.
- Slutzky, D., 2014. *Estructura social agraria y agroindustria del Nordeste de la Argentina: desde la incorporación a la economía nacional al actual subdesarrollo concentrador y excluyente*. Misiones: Editorial Universitaria, Universidad Nacional de Misiones.
- Stolton, S., Dudley, N. (eds.), 2010. *Arguments for Protected Areas: Multiple Benefits for Conservation and Use*. London: Earthscan.
- Svampa, M., Viale, E., 2014. *Maldesarrollo: La Argentina del extractivismo y el despojo*. Buenos Aires: Katz Editores.
- Swyngedouw, E., 2005. *Governance innovation and the citizens: The Janus face of governance-beyond-the-state*. *Urban Studies* 42(11), 1991-2006.
- Swyngedouw, E., 2011. *Interrogating post-democratization: Reclaiming egalitarian political spaces*. *Political Geography* 30, 370-380.
- Temper, L., 2018. *From boomerangs to minefields and catapults: Dynamics of trans-local resistance to land-grabs*. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, DOI:10.1080/03066150.2017.1398144
- Tompkins Conservation, 2017. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <http://www.tompkinsconservation.org/milestones.htm>]
- Tujcheider, O., Perez, M., Paris, M., D'Elia, M., 2007. *The Guaraní Aquifer System: state-of-the-art in Argentina*. In: Chery, L., de Marsily, G. (eds.), *Aquifer Systems Management. Darcy's Legacy in a World of Impending Water Shortage*, 239-252. Abingdon: Taylor & Francis.
- United Nations, 1992. *Convention on Biological Diversity*. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/legal/cbd-en.pdf>]
- Vanclay, F., 2017a. *Principles to assist in gaining a social licence to operate for green initiatives and biodiversity projects*. *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability* 29, 48-56.
- Vanclay, F., 2017b. *Project induced displacement and resettlement: From impoverishment risks to an opportunity for development?* *Impact Assessment & Project Appraisal* 35(1), 3-21.
- Vanclay, F., Baines, J., Taylor, C.N., 2013. *Principles for ethical research involving humans: Ethical professional practice in impact assessment Part I*. *Impact Assessment & Project Appraisal* 31(4), 243-253.
- Veltmeyer, H., Petras, J. (eds.), 2014. *The New Extractivism: A Post-Neoliberal Development Model or Imperialism of the Twenty-First Century?* London: Zed Books.
- Vidal, J., 2008. *The great green land grab*. *The Guardian*. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2008/feb/13/conservation>]
- World Bank, 2010. *The Invisible Poor: A Portrait of Rural Poverty in Argentina*. Washington DC: The World Bank.
- Zammit, C., 2013. *Landowners and conservation markets: Social benefits from two Australian government programs*. *Land Use Policy* 31, 11-16.
- Zalba, S.M., 2010. *Pinos invasores en Iberá: La amenaza silenciosa*. *Boletín de los Esteros "Iberá en Peligro"*. Edición Especial, Número 8, 3-7.
- Zoomers, A., 2010. *Globalization and the foreignization of space: The seven processes driving the current global land grab*. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 37(2), 429-447.

Environmental justice
implications of land
grabbing for industrial
agriculture and
forestry in Argentina*

Abstract

Land grabbing leads to the displacement of smallholders, resulting in social impacts, injustice, and conflict. We use 'environmental justice' to analyse land grabbing and associated transformative actions, including resistance, protest, and proactive efforts by local communities. Qualitative research was undertaken in Argentina to investigate land grabbing for the expansion of tree plantations and agriculture. We found that local vulnerabilities mean people tend not to resist or proactively organize against land grabs. Resistance is influenced by historical, geographical, financial, political and social factors. Local people often consider pre-existing injustices to be more pressing than land grabbing issues. They often tacitly accept injustices resulting in communities becoming displaced, fenced-in, or forcibly evicted. Consequently, already-vulnerable people continue to live in unhealthy conditions, insecure tenure situations, and bear a disproportionate social and environmental burden. More attention should be given to pre-existing vulnerabilities and to improving the wellbeing of people affected by agriculture and forestry.

Keywords

Environmental justice; green grabbing; resistance; extractivism; industrial agriculture

4.1 Introduction

Rural areas in Argentina are experiencing considerable spatial change, with the restructuring of places, livelihoods and landscapes (Jara and Paz, 2013). This re-organization is occurring partly because of investments in agriculture, agroforestry, mining, conservation and land speculation (Borras et al., 2012; Goldfarb and van der Haar, 2016; Jara and Paz, 2013). These land investments are primarily being undertaken by foreign companies, but also by domestic companies, sometimes with foreign capital (Jara and Paz, 2013; Murmis and Murmis, 2012). This land grabbing results in a change in land use from family farming to industrial tree monoculture and intensive agriculture (Borras et al., 2012).

Land grabs typically occur at the detriment of the local rural populations, and have led to tenure insecurity, competing claims over land, resistance, protest, and violence (Brent, 2015; Gutiérrez and Gonzalez, 2016; Reboratti, 2008). One reason for contestation is the large extent of informal land use in Argentina (Goldfarb and van der Haar, 2016; Jara and Paz, 2013). Another issue is differences in the meaning of land between investors and local people (Escobar, 2000; Stanley, 2009). For many rural people, especially Indigenous peoples, land is essential for the continuation of their livelihood activities and for the reproduction of their social, cultural, and spiritual practices (Hanna et al., 2016a; Pilgrim and Pretty, 2011). However, this strong connection to land is not usually considered by investors or the state (Matulis, 2014; Zoomers, 2010).

Market driven land investments can have serious consequences, including social and environmental impacts, and human rights violations (Escobar, 2000; Vanclay, 2017; Veltmeyer and Petras, 2014). These include the lack of respect for customary and informal land tenure, the lack of influence of local communities in decision-making, diminishing resource access, and insecurity as land grabbing involves dispossession and violence (Garcia-Lopez and Arizpe, 2010; Grajales, 2011; Hanna et al., 2016a; Lapegna, 2012). Many countries in the Global South bear the "disproportionate negative environmental and social cost of global production" (Carruthers, 2008, 2). This burden is directly related to (over)consumption in many Western societies (Martínez-Alier, 2012). Differences in land prices, wages, legal frameworks, regulatory contexts, and commercial opportunities make these countries attractive to companies, thus exacerbating inequality (Jara and Paz, 2013; Murmis and Murmis, 2012).

The conflicts arising from these land investments and the inequities created within and between countries are now being analysed and theorized by environmental justice scholars. When the field originally emerged in the late 1980s, the field of environmental justice studies primarily focused on the disproportionate environmental burden of land use activities on certain racial, vulnerable and marginalized groups in rich countries (Bullard, 1996). Subsequently, the field ex-

panded to give greater consideration to gender (Schlosberg, 2007), the Global South (Schlosberg, 2004), and to the hierarchies and inequalities within the disadvantaged groups (Parra and Moulaert, 2016). Nowadays, new insights have shifted the focus from only considering impacts on humans to also include impacts on the environment (Agyeman et al., 2016). This shift has also led to analysing the importance of a healthy environment for people (Lakes et al., 2014; Schlosberg and Carruthers, 2010).

Drawing on Schlosberg (2013), we define environmental injustice as the procedures, processes and systems that lead to the unequal distribution of the burdens, harms and risks associated with policies, plans, programs and projects that impact on the environment. To understand environmental injustice, many environmental justice scholars have focused on protest movements, collaborations between movements, and on the processes, claims and outcomes achieved by these movements (Carruthers, 2008; Sebastien, 2017; Schlosberg and Carruthers, 2010; Urkidi and Walter, 2011). Notably, the environmental justice field has shown how social transformative action can reduce environmental injustice, increase wellbeing in communities, and build social capital (Hanna et al., 2016b; Mehmood and Parra, 2013). Drawing on thinkers like Arturo Escobar, Paolo Freire, Ivan Illich, Boaventura de Sousa Santos and others, we define social transformative action as a wide variety of forms and processes of proactive organization that seek redress for injustice and/or that strive for a better world. The field of environmental justice has stressed the importance of social transformative action to achieve sustainability (Martínez-Alier, 2012).

There are many people who do not overtly resist while experiencing environmental injustice but may use a wide range of passive resistance strategies (Hanna et al., 2016b; Leguizamón, 2016; Scott, 1985). An explanation for their apparent lack of political engagement may be their shortage of financial resources or the inadequacies of the local setting, given that political engagement is resource intensive and may not lead to any significant outcome (Piñeiro et al., 2016). However, populist governments, such as many of the former governments in Argentina, can incentivise political engagement as a means of co-opting local people (Piñeiro et al., 2016). Alternatively, the awakening environmental and political awareness facilitated by land use change can trigger political action (Hanna, Langdon and Vanclay, 2016; Kollmuss and Agyeman, 2002; Narain, 2014; Sebastien, 2017). We consider that the environmental justice literature does not sufficiently examine the preconditions necessary to initiate social transformative action. Therefore, we seek to explore the factors that hinder the ability of communities to address injustice in the context of land grabbing in Argentina.

Some scholars have pointed to the importance of studying pre-existing inequalities, hidden processes, and place-based specificities (Carruthers, 2008; Coenen and Halfacre, 2003; Cook and Swyngedouw, 2012; Lakes et al., 2014; Lapegna, 2016; Schlosberg, 2013; Walker, 2009). Therefore,

the main questions discussed in this paper are: (1) How does the environmental justice field help us to understand the socio-environmental conflicts created by land grabbing?; (2) What are the social processes and mechanisms that enable or constrain social transformative action?; and (3) How does land grabbing force people to change or adapt their livelihoods and construct alternative livelihoods? Environmental justice is used as an analytical lens to examine how land grabbing has initiated different types of environmental injustice. We also bring in Nixon's (2011) ideas about violence, which goes further in assisting our understanding of what type injustices local people faced. We use material from two case studies in Argentina, one being the agricultural expansion in the Province of Santiago del Estero and the other the tree plantation expansion in the Province of Corrientes.

Our main conclusions are that in the face of advancing agribusiness, in both cases, the ability of many people to maintain their way of living was under threat. Under the influence of the neoliberalist ideology that has existed in Argentina since about the mid-1990s (Teubal, 2004), most rural communities are now in a state of social deprivation, with little government investment in roads, education, healthcare, or basic services like water and electricity (Bidaseca et al., 2013; Neiff, 2004). This pre-existing social deprivation and the impoverished conditions in which communities live exacerbate the severity of the impacts of land grabbing. However, people face a range of other issues that are of greater concern to them than these impacts, such as meeting basic needs, having reasonable working conditions, and adequate access to clean water, electricity, education, and healthcare. Instead of resisting, people tended to adapt their livelihoods and accommodated to environmental injustice resulting from land grabbing. This assists in the spread of land grabbing. The deprived situation in which people live means that people have less possibilities to access civil society groups to advance social transformative actions. These constraints to the dissemination of their environmental justice claims often relate to historical, geographical, judicial, financial, political and social factors.

4.2 Environmental injustice, resistance, protest and social transformative action

Social transformative action, protest and resistance in response to environmental injustice come in many forms and range from overt, formally-organized group activities to covert informal 'weapons of the weak' (Hanna et al., 2016b; Scott, 1985; Urkidi and Walter, 2011). People may resist current or future environmental burdens, harms and risks. People may also desire redress for past harms in order to achieve closure and be able to move forward (Hanna, Langdon and Vanclay, 2016). Environmental justice claims tend to arise: when the environment in which people live is irreversibly modified in its quality and use value; when the possibility to access

common property resources is modified; when certain groups are not considered or do not benefit fairly; or when the capabilities of people are constrained because of land control and use changes (Bullard, 1996; Schlosberg and Carruthers, 2010).

Local environmental justice movements tend to work on local issues, the resolution of which requires action at the global as well as local level (Agyeman et al., 2016; Hanna et al., 2016b). These movements emphasise that environmental harms should not be situated in areas close to people, especially those who are more vulnerable (Schlosberg and Carruthers, 2010). Environmental justice movements are also active in initiating debates about systemic change. For example, the *agro-ecología* (agro-ecological) movement in Latin America aims at transforming agriculture from its current strategy of large industrial monocultures to a more environmentally and socially-just system benefitting small family farmers (Altieri and Toledo, 2011).

Solidarity between organizations and scale-jumping (i.e. moving between spheres or levels of action from the local to the global) are important strategies to strengthen social and environmental campaigns and increase their likelihood of success (Cook and Swyngedouw, 2012; Hanna et al., 2016b; Parra, 2010; Urkidi and Walter, 2011). This is demonstrated by the *Unión Asamblea Ciudadana* (Citizens Assembly Union) in Argentina, which unites and supports local movements protesting against environmental conflicts. Within the *Unión*, learning is achieved through the sharing of experiences and tactics. The strength of the solidarity is communicated via social media and helps in spreading messages of resistance. Urkidi and Walter (2011) showed how local environmental justice movements in Argentina successfully engaged with national and international networks to pursue their claims.

Covert weapons of the weak are tactics that relatively powerless people may use like “foot dragging, dissimulation, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance” to resist the policies, plans, programs and projects they oppose (Scott, 1985, 29). These people may have little option other than to stay in their communities, where they are often constrained in practicing overt action, requiring them to accommodate to the injustice they experience (Lapegna, 2016). Several factors limit the ability of local people to engage in overt resistance, including limited resources, a lack of access to information and external contacts, and uncertainty about responsibility and accountability for environmental hazards (Coenen and Halfacre, 2003; Lapegna, 2016). In our opinion, the factors that enable or constrain people to seek resolution of their environmental justice issues are not sufficiently understood.

Overt resistance has many characteristics and can lead to a wide range of outcomes. Resistance movements and other social movements have an important role to play in contributing to more sustainable and just societies (Hanna et al., 2016b; Martínez-Alier, 2012; Parra and Walsh, 2016;

Sebastien, 2017). Primarily, they provide hope and a prospect of a more just society which values nature (Martínez-Alier, 2012). Protest actions can increase community wellbeing, social capital and people’s appreciation of their local environment (Hanna et al., 2014, 2016b; Imperiale and Vanclay 2016; Sebastien, 2017). Therefore, studying the reasons why people are limited in their ability to resist or to initiate social transformative action is important, especially in land grabbing where social and environmental impacts are severe.

4.3 Quick overview of the field of environmental justice studies

Since the concept of environmental justice emerged in the 1980s in the United States, it has evolved considerably (Agyeman et al., 2016). The field has been used and shaped by environmental justice groups, social justice groups, civil society organizations, academics, politicians and practitioners (Agyeman et al., 2016; Schlosberg and Carruthers, 2010; Velicu and Kaika, 2015; Walker, 2009). How the concept is used or interpreted depends on the historical and geographical characteristics of specific localities (Velicu and Kaika, 2015). According to key writers, the main topics addressed in the field of environmental justice studies are: the unequal distribution of harms; the extent of participation in decision-making; procedural justice issues; recognition of and respect for local people and local cultures; and the Capability Approach (Agyeman et al., 2016; Bullard, 1996; Carruthers, 2008; Schlosberg, 2004; Schlosberg and Carruthers, 2010). Although additional topics have been suggested (Velicu and Kaika, 2015), this list provides a basis by which socio-environmental issues, including land grabbing, can be analysed, and we use these as the themes in our analysis in this paper. They are described in more detail immediately below.

The unequal distribution of environmental harms is the defining element of environmental justice. Problems around maldistribution are often localized issues that make certain marginalised groups and the most vulnerable people suffer disproportionately by inequitable exposure to environmental injustice. These groups typically include Indigenous communities, communities of colour, communities in poverty, immigrants, women, the elderly, and very young children (Agyeman et al., 2016; Darby, 2012; Krishnan and George, 2014; Laurian and Funderburg, 2014; Schlosberg and Carruthers, 2010; Tschakert, 2010; Walker, 2009). The distributional issues are initiated by and result in disrespect, discrimination, disempowerment, disintegration, despair and despondency (Schlosberg and Carruthers, 2010; Tschakert, 2010). Environmental justice pays attention to intra-generational and inter-generational distribution, focusing on safeguarding current and future environmental sustainability (WCED, 1987).

Participation refers to the ability of people to have a say in decision-making processes about the society and economy in general, and about specific issues such as, for example, a new agribusiness operation in their neighbourhood (Dare and Vanclay, 2014). Ideally, participation should be fully and effectively implemented as normal procedure and as best represented by the principle of Free, Prior and Informed Consent, which arguably applies to Indigenous communities giving them the possibility to withhold or consent to proposed projects (Hanna and Vanclay, 2013). However, participatory practices as implemented have often been woefully inadequate, partly because people do not have equal power in the processes, and are sometimes not considered as being equal (Cooke and Kothari, 2001; Velicu and Kaika, 2015). Local resistance and protest movements are increasingly refusing to participate in the limited consultation processes that are typically undertaken for projects that acquire land (Hanna et al., 2014; Kaika, 2017; Schlosberg, 2013). Another factor influencing participation is the risk associated with community involvement in certain projects (Gallagher and Jackson, 2008).

Procedural justice issues refers to the way procedures are implemented in practice. They should be applied in a manner consistent with the principles of transparency, accountability, equality, non-discrimination, and inclusion, and require that information about all possible environmental harms and risks be provided in a transparent, accessible way and in languages appropriate to the impacted peoples (Agyeman et al., 2016; Coenen and Halfacre, 2003; Hanna et al., 2014; Laurian and Funderburg, 2014; Schlosberg, 2004; Schlosberg and Carruthers, 2010).

The failure to respect other cultures, their ways of living and thinking, or to appreciate their non-static nature is also a form of environmental injustice. Sometimes, the connection people have with the places they inhabit is completely ignored by companies and/or the state. Other times, the perceived disconnection of these people with traditional ways of living is used as a justification to foist unwanted development on them. Modernization and exploitative modes of development are deemed more important than the wellbeing of local people (see Agyeman et al., 2016; Nixon, 2011; Parra and Moulaert, 2016).

Many environmental justice scholars use the Capability Approach (Schlosberg, 2013; Schlosberg and Carruthers, 2010; Tschakert, 2010), which was developed by Sen (1985) and Nussbaum and Sen (1993). The Capability Approach is a framework to identify and enhance the individual wellbeing, social arrangements and locational factors that enable people to live their life to its full potential (Sen, 1985). These factors include freedom of choice, opportunities linked with this freedom, and the ability to pursue these possibilities (Nussbaum and Sen, 1993). Environmental justice scholars are interested in this approach because changes in environmental quality affect people's livelihoods and ultimately their wellbeing, thus changing the conditions that allow people to develop and pursue their capabilities (Schlosberg and Carruthers, 2010).

4.4 Land grabbing as environmental injustice

This section describes the phenomenon of increasing land investments and its consequences for people and places. Land grabbing is “the capturing of control of relatively vast tracts of land and other natural resources through a variety of mechanisms and forms involving large-scale capital that often shifts resource use to that of extraction, whether for international or domestic purposes” (Borras et al., 2012, 405). Land grabbing is facilitated by unclear land tenure arrangements and it itself leads to competing claims over land (del Huerto Díaz Habra and Franzzini, 2016). Land grabbing primarily impacts smallholders (Banerjee, 2015). It leads to a wide range of outcomes including various forms of resistance, protest, rural-to-urban migration (Jara et al., 2016), communities that are surrounded or cut off (Goldfarb and van der Haar, 2016; del Huerto Díaz Habra and Franzzini, 2016; Narain, 2014), displacement and resettlement (Vanclay, 2017), and in the worst cases, even though a breach of human rights, to the violent dispossession and forced eviction of people (Grajales, 2011).

Land grabbing changes the normal life rhythm of communities (Lapegna, 2016). Local people are typically rooted in the places where they live, and the disruption caused by land grabbing can be momentous (Baker and Mehmood, 2015; Grajales, 2011; Narain, 2014). This situation is unfair in that companies are ‘globally mobile’, whereas local people are fixed in place and have few alternatives for making their living (Desmarais, 2002). The forced adaptation of local people to land use change and their context-specific prior disadvantages mean that they may not be able to organize or resist (Lapegna, 2016). Land use change may even result in communal conflict as the desires and interests in communities are diverse (Hall et al., 2015). The disadvantages they experience include geographical isolation, financial constraints, and limited knowledge about their legal rights and the judicial system (Goldfarb and van der Haar, 2016; del Huerto Díaz Habra and Franzzini, 2016). These place-based specificities are not sufficiently addressed in the field of environmental justice studies (Schlosberg, 2004; 2013).

4.5 The violence inherent within land grabbing

Nixon (2011) distinguished between actual, structural, and slow violence. All three types occur in conjunction with land grabbing. Actual violence “is event focused, time bound and body bound” (Nixon, 2011, 3). Around the world, every year thousands of rural people and land activist are attacked or criminalized, and hundreds are murdered because of their actions against land grabbing (Global Witness, 2016; GRAIN, 2016; Grajales, 2011; Jara and Paz, 2013; Lapegna, 2012; Sassen, 2017; Stover, 2016).

Structural violence refers to a deterioration or denial of human needs that could have been prevented if the political or social settings were more equal and just (Galtung, 1969). An example of structural violence is reflected in the high morbidity and mortality rates of certain vulnerable groups (Galtung, 1969; Ho, 2007). Structural violence is an inadvertent outcome of neoliberalism and other processes, affecting local communities with local people not benefiting from the corporate-oriented economic model (see Desmarais, 2002; Nixon, 2011). This type of violence is covert, and can act as a catalyst for actual overt violence (Nixon, 2011, 10).

Slow violence is understood as the long-term, insidious negative effects of human activities on other human beings or the environment, especially the negative consequences that are not known, are invisible, or overlooked (Nixon, 2011). In the context of land grabbing, first, people lose access to land. However, the subsequent processes and outcomes, like deforestation, land use change and reduction in water availability, cause other negative effects in the present (e.g. displacement, impoverishment) and in the future (e.g. climate change) (see for example Cernea, 1997; Malhi et al., 2008). A specific example of slow violence is the cumulative effects on the health of workers in the agricultural industries (Leguizamón, 2016; Ogut et al., 2015; Séralini et al., 2013). Another example is reduced water availability, one of the consequences of tree plantations, which causes major livelihood impacts and consequent hardships on local people (Overbeek et al., 2012). The focus on slow violence is particularly relevant to the field of environmental justice because slow violence is “a major threat multiplier; it can fuel long-term, proliferating conflicts in situations where the conditions for sustaining life become increasingly but gradually degraded” (Nixon, 2011, 3). Unfortunately, in land investments there is a lack of attention given to long term issues and/or to cumulative impacts (i.e. slow violence) (Jijelava and Vanclay, 2017; Vanclay, 2017). “Violence, above all environmental violence, needs to be seen – and deeply considered – as a contest not only over space, or bodies, or labour, or resources, but also over time” (Nixon, 2011, 8).

4.6 Land grabbing in Argentina

In Argentina, there are three types of actors who have a key role in the process of land grabbing, especially in the agricultural sector (Murmis and Murmis, 2012). First, and most obviously, are the companies (foreign or domestic) that buy or lease land. The second important type comprises the rural elite (i.e. the historic formal title holders or landed gentry), who are typically absentee land owners not using the land. The demand for land has increased land values to such a point that this rural elite, who previously were happy to hang on to their holdings, now aspire to selling off the land (Goldfarb and van der Haar, 2016). Third, the state plays an important role in facilitating land grabbing by, for example, lowering entry barriers for foreign investors, privatizing public

(state) land and authorizing deforestation (Costantino, 2015).

According to the NGO, GRAIN (2012), foreigners have grabbed one million hectares of land in Argentina. It is estimated that around nine million hectares are subject to some sort of dispute over land, affecting over 63,000 people (Bidaseca et al., 2013). The Civil Code (*Código Civil y Comercial de la Nación*) in Argentina recognises both formal title holders and the informal use of land. In Argentina, many historic formal title holders have not been actively using their land and, as a result, this land has been occupied and/or utilised by people from neighbouring communities and/or by migrants from further afield. Articles 4015 and 4016 of the Civil Code and Article 24 of Law 14.159 stipulate that informal land users can initiate a legal procedure (commonly known as *Ley Veinteañal*) to gain formal land title to a piece of land after they have lived there continuously for a minimum of 20 years, even if there was previously assigned formal title over that land (Goldfarb and van der Haar, 2016). Communities can also start this legal procedure when they possess informal use rights on public land. However, this *Ley Veinteañal* procedure is not well known among rural people. The steps necessary to start this procedure are relatively costly and time-consuming, which is a major disincentive to them pursuing this option. In extreme cases, the judicial process of claiming rights on public land on the basis of the *Ley Veinteañal* can take up to 20 years. The steps include having to take GPS coordinates of the land being used. Furthermore, even if they take all the necessary steps, the implementation of this law is not always done properly by the state (Goldfarb and van der Haar, 2016; del Huerto Díaz Habra and Franzini, 2016; Jara et al., 2016). The underutilisation of land by the historic formal title holders and its occupation/utilisation by others leads to contestation over the title, and potentially to legal claims to the title. This tension tends to persist for many years, creating long-term insecurity (Bidaseca et al., 2013; Goldfarb and van der Haar, 2016; Jara and Paz, 2013).

Historically, the uncertainty over land tenure was perhaps not a major issue for most stakeholders. However, the contemporary demand for land driven by land grabbing had made it a significant issue. Historic formal title holders who may previously not have been too worried about losing their land by *Ley Veinteañal* claims now have been very concerned to protect their ownership rights so that they can then sell (or lease) their land to the land grabbers. Thus, to thwart the *Ley Veinteañal* procedure, they have had to re-occupy/utilise the land themselves, and they have had to exclude the squatters from their land. Sometimes they have sold their land, with the informal users still in place, leaving the land investor with the issue. In the Argentinian context, the sale of land and a change in land title does not extinguish pre-existing claims to the land, such as might be generated by the *Ley Veinteañal* procedure (Personal communication with government official, 2017).

The tactics frequently used by the historic formal title holders and land investors to pressure

people to leave the land include: menacing actions, such as with bulldozers or other equipment; the use of private security forces; intimidatory behaviour and harassment, such as setting houses on fire; the illegal or unauthorised occupation and/or use of land by the investors; and the bribing of local police and judicial staff to facilitate their complicity (Jara and Paz, 2013), all of which are breaches of human rights (van der Ploeg and Vanclay, 2017). At the national level, there are laws intended to protect people against expulsion and, specifically, to protect Indigenous peoples (i.e. Law 26.160) (Bidaseca et al., 2013), however these are not adequate to provide the necessary protections, especially in the context of the state being complicit in the land grabbing (which is part of its national development strategy) (Jara and Paz, 2013; Costantino, 2015).

4.7 Methodology

Land use changes and conflicts in Argentina were studied by examining two rural regions (i.e. case studies), the Provinces of Santiago del Estero and Corrientes (see Figure 1), which were subject to much land investment. In Santiago del Estero, there has been a massive expansion of industrial agriculture, especially soy, because of the passing in 1996 of a national law allowing GMOs (Goldfarb and Zoomers, 2013). The shift in agricultural production trends has also led to a major increase in feedlotting and extensive livestock farming in this province (Jara and Paz, 2013). In Corrientes, there has been a major expansion of industrial tree plantations (Slutzky, 2014). The expansion of industrial agriculture and tree plantations throughout Argentina has been particularly problematic for local communities and has led to much conflict over land use and concern about security of land tenure (Bidaseca et al., 2013). In the two provinces studied, many smallholders reside in situations of informal title or precarious land tenure (Goldfarb and van der Haar, 2016; Jara and Paz, 2013; Slutzky, 2014). The expansion of industrial agriculture and plantation forestry typically ousts people off the land and/or severely disrupts their livelihoods (Goldfarb and van der Haar, 2016; Jara and Paz, 2013; Lapegna, 2016).

The insights presented in this paper, which is part of a larger project, are based on a total of 10 months of fieldwork in Argentina carried out between 2011 and 2016. In 2011 (October-December), fieldwork was conducted with the assistance of a local non-governmental organization (NGO) in Santiago del Estero. The purpose of this NGO is to assist communities to enhance their viability and vitality, and it provides support in relation to land conflicts. The collaboration with this NGO gave a broad understanding of the political, judicial and social issues relating to land grabbing. In 2014, two months (November-December) were spent in Argentina doing preliminary investigations and gaining an overarching perspective, with a couple of weeks in Buenos Aires interviewing key informants. In 2015 (April-July), fieldwork was primarily conducted in Corrientes. In 2016 (April-May), research was primarily conducted in Santiago del Estero. During

these fieldwork periods, supportive information was gained from fieldtrips to other provinces like Misiones, Buenos Aires, Córdoba, Jujuy, Santa Fe and Tucumán.



FIGURE 1. Map of Argentina, with Santiago del Estero and Corrientes highlighted.

Source: Author

While the larger project looked at the socio-environmental consequences of land acquisition in Argentina, the aim of this particular paper was to consider the potential value of an environmental justice perspective in analysing land acquisition processes. To achieve this aim, a multi-methods approach was adopted, with a wide range of social research methods used, including: document analysis (especially of documents pertaining to the case study area); analysis of media reports; in-depth interviews with key informants; and participant observation with field visits and attendance at village meetings where land use issues and land tenure were being discussed. For the overarching project, some 70 interviews were done. For this paper, we drew on the participant observation and 47 of the interviews that related specifically to the two case study regions. These 47 interviews included: 10 interviews with local residents, 10 with representatives of NGOs, 7 with representatives of companies, 8 with other researchers studying land grabbing, and 12 interviews with government officials. The purpose of these interviews was to get a good in-depth understanding of the characteristics and specificities of the study area, land

grabbing practices, adaptation strategies, obstacles to resistance, and policies related to land use change. All interviews were conducted by the lead author in Spanish. For some interviews, the second author was also present.

The quotes used in this paper have been translated into English by the authors. In translating the quotes, we have ensured that the inherent or implied meaning was preserved, rather than necessarily providing the exact literal translation. Informed consent was given for the interviews, although usually in an informal way (Vanclay et al., 2013). Only about half of the interviews could be recorded because of people's concerns about this, although they were happy to talk to the interviewer(s) and for interview notes to be taken. The interviews that were recorded were transcribed. After each interview, especially for those that were not recorded, additional notes were made regarding any significant observation or comments made. In some interviews, participants presented photos, documents or other materials. Where appropriate, the researchers took copies of these, made photographs, or took notes about them.

In addition to interviews, several meetings relating to tenure insecurity were attended in different villages. One of these was a workshop for members of a community facing eviction. It was organised by a group of students from the University of Misiones, who arranged for a lawyer specialized in land tenure to attend and give general advice. The aim of the workshop was to assist the community to formalize their land tenure and thus avert eviction. Another example is attending meetings between communities, the church and NGO staff in which another lawyer informed people about their land rights. A further example in Santiago del Estero was attendance at a meeting of 'Mesa Provincial de Tierra' (Provincial Roundtable for Land Issues), a formal mechanism that gathers together the different actors involved in land use conflicts. Field visits included visiting soy and tree plantations accompanied by the owners. All research activities contributed to gaining an integrated view of the implications of land grabbing and the local realities surrounding this.

The data for analysis comprised the interview transcripts, relevant documents, and field notes and our deliberations on these. Analysis of the data was done by reviewing all materials many times over and distilling the key issues relating to land grabbing and environmental justice issues. A limitation of this research is that the lead researcher was only able to visit communities that had external connections, as she was typically introduced to these communities through gatekeepers such as various NGOs in Argentina. This may have influenced the findings, because the research is only of communities that are reasonably well-connected and well-functioning. Other limitations related to language nuance, given the strong regional dialects in some of the rural villages. Statements about specific facts, events or happenings were cross-checked or triangulated as much as possible.

4.8 Description of the two case studies

Agricultural production in Santiago del Estero

The key products of Santiago del Estero are grain, maize and soy (INDEC, 2016; Jara and Paz, 2013). Argentina is currently the world's third largest producer of soy, with rapid expansion taking place. Nationally, soy covered 19.8 million hectares in 2014 (Leguizamón, 2016), up from 5 million in 1990 (Ministry of Agroindustry, 2017). Although the cultivation of soy primarily takes place in the provinces of Buenos Aires and Córdoba (Jara and Paz, 2013), the area sown is rapidly increasing in Santiago del Estero from 72,500 hectares in 1990 to just under 1 million hectares in 2014 (Ministry of Agroindustry, 2017). The further expansion of soy in both Argentina and Santiago del Estero is likely, as the demand for soy for food and biofuel is predicted to increase (Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, 2010).

The expansion of soy cultivation in Buenos Aires and Córdoba has led to the relocation of livestock industries (i.e. feedlots) from these provinces to Santiago del Estero, which now has over 1 million head of cattle, resulting in odour emissions, pollution, land conflict and deforestation (interview government official, 2016; see also Boletta et al., 2006; Leguizamón, 2014).

The expansion of agricultural industries is accompanied by processes of deforestation, ecosystem degradation, land grabs, and the extensive use of harmful chemicals (Costantino, 2015; Elgert, 2015; Goldfarb and Zoomers, 2013; Leguizamón, 2016). Santiago del Estero forms part of the Gran Chaco region, "one of the most active deforestation frontiers in the world" (Leguizamón, 2016, 687). Illegal deforestation is not uncommon, however, the provincial forest management agency has limited capacity to prevent it (Interview government official, 2016).

Santiago del Estero is the province in Argentina with the greatest number of violent conflicts over land, and the insecure land tenure situation has been an issue for decades (Bidaseca et al., 2013). The social movement *Movimiento Campesino de Santiago del Estero* (MOCASE) (Peasant movement of Santiago del Estero) has been at the forefront in addressing land tenure issues (Jara and Paz, 2013). In recent times, these conflicts have intensified (Leguizamón, 2014). There are confirmed incidences of the killing of peasants, violent confrontations with smallholders, and other inappropriate actions by private security firms (Bidaseca et al., 2013; Jara and Paz, 2013; Lapegna, 2012; Leguizamón, 2016).

Tree plantations in Corrientes

Corrientes has seen an increase in the area of land under tree plantations with 450,000 hectares of plantations in 2014 (Provincia de Corrientes, 2014). The provincial government intends that the amount of land allocated to plantations will increase by around 53,000 hectares an-

nually (Plan Estratégico Forestoindustrial Corrientes, 2010). The government is very supportive of this expansion, not only setting a very ambitious target of 1 million hectares to be planted by 2025 – about 12 percent of the total land area of Corrientes! – but also publicly flagging that up to 4 million hectares are potentially suitable for industrial tree plantations (Provincia de Corrientes, 2014). Due to its geographical features such as rainfall, water availability, low elevation, climate and the fertility of the soil, Corrientes is promoted as one of the most suitable regions in the world for pine and eucalyptus plantations (Provincia de Corrientes, 2014). Worldwide, tree plantations are associated with the high use of agrochemicals, ecological damage, excessive water use, land conflict, an increased risk of fire, loss of livelihoods, and poor working conditions (Gerber et al., 2009; Overbeek et al., 2012; Slutzky, 2013).

In the early 20th century, more so than other areas of Argentina, the rural areas of Corrientes exhibited a feudal-like class structure, with concentrated land ownership and a strong rural elite (Slutzky, 2014). Historical cultural acceptance of this feudal structure partially explains why there are only few well-organized initiatives of resistance. Nevertheless, one of the most active NGOs in the Province is *Guardianes del Iberá*. This NGO highlights the concerns associated with land tenure that arise because of the arrival of the agriculture and forestry industries. They also draw attention to the negative impacts of tree plantations by, for example, demonstrations in the capital city, Corrientes.

4.9 Environmental and social injustice from land grabbing: findings from the field

Pre-existing injustice

It was evident that there was a limited access to essential public services in the study areas, including a lack of access to electricity and limited access to (potable) water. While the lack of electricity can potentially be addressed by the installation of solar panels, there are few options available for the provision of safe drinking water, except for buying bottled water. Because of the cost and inconvenience of bottled water, many poor people in Santiago del Estero consumed water from local wells, which is often not fit for human consumption because of naturally-occurring arsenic (see Bhattacharya et al., 2006). Another difficulty in remote areas is the limited access to secondary education and the poor quality of education in general. School attendance is often low because of the distance to school, especially with the extreme weather conditions often experienced. Furthermore, children are often required to work in the fields. This results in high levels of functional illiteracy. The problem is compounded because these rural areas are not attractive to teachers and it is hard for rural schools to attract and retain quality staff. Because of the lack of capacity in the education system generally, and especially because of

the inadequate monitoring of schools and teaching staff, in some rural areas teachers frequently abscond. The lack of access to essential public services severely disadvantages rural people.

The poor quality of the rural roads, limited ownership of private vehicles, and the limited availability of public transport restricted the ability of rural people to advance their claims. Another inequality was the limited cell phone reception in remote areas. Moreover, rural people were vulnerable to climate change effects like heat waves, drought, and excessive rainfall. The ability to have regular work was challenging. Where people did work, it was often temporary, seasonal, based on subcontracting arrangements, and frequently under poor working conditions. Many people in the study areas lived from subsistence farming activities together with various forms of state benefit (welfare payments). There were many factors that restricted people in physically accessing the formal decision-making spheres. Even where they had access, the procedures were not always easy for rural people to follow. Overall, there was a strong historical marginalization of rural people that comes about from their geographical setting as well as from urban-rural bias that exists in all things. These characteristics of remote areas in Argentina are consistent with remote communities in most places in the world.

Injustice brought about by land grabbing

The increasing interest in land brings insecurity for local people, as they face the possibility of being displaced and dispossessed, expelled from their homes, and severed from their livelihoods. An important land issue in Argentina is the large extent of informal occupancy. Companies buying land tend not to be aware that formal land title does not necessarily imply vacant possession, as expressed in the following quote from a government official:

“Selling and buying land is a business ... you do not even have to visit the land to buy it, you can buy it based on photos or satellite images ... Basically, land sales are based on presumptions. When the buyer actually arrives at the site, it may be full of people. This is where conflict arises. People who buy a formal title have the economic ability to buy [the land] and to hire a surveyor, engineer, and a lawyer, and can gain permission from the forest management agency to start clearing [the land]. Rural people, however, live in the middle of nowhere, they raise goats, work as woodcutters, or they go to other provinces to seek an income ... they do not have the financial means to hire a lawyer [to defend their rights]. It has always been difficult for them to have access to justice. There is an economic obstacle to being able to reach it. These people are living ‘the quiet life’. Gaining land title is not high on their agenda. It only becomes part of their agenda when conflict has started. This complicates this issue.”

There is limited knowledge by rural communities about their land rights. This issue is being tack-

led by some NGOs that organize workshops on this and related topics. However, because of their limited financial means and because formalization of land title is not seen as an immediate issue, most rural people do not take action to formalise their land occupancy. In the words of one interviewee: “we have possession rights, but to gain formal titles we need money for the [GPS] measurements, the surveyor and a lawyer. But money is what we have least ... I know that one day we will have a problem with the land [titles] [but for now we have other things to worry about]” (Interview smallholder, 2016).

A complexity in the process of formalizing land use is the disorganized state of the land registry office. It is often the case that rural communities live on land belonging to a formal title holder who is not easily identifiable. This is problematic in their attempts to implement the *Ley Veinteañal* procedure, which requires the identification and active involvement of the formal land holder. Another complexity is that rural people have to deal with an institutional setting that strongly favours large-scale land use and actively discourages or suppresses the *Ley Veinteañal* procedure. Even if people achieve this, women are usually left disadvantaged as titling is predominantly done in the name of the men, creating problems in cases of land sale or divorce (Interview land registry, 2015).

The demand for land and the high returns that are now possible from it result in people engaging in various forms of malpractice, including falsifying papers and bribing officials (see also Jara and Paz, 2013). Moreover, staff from the land registry office, real estate agencies, and middle-men can be involved in illicit or dubious actions that facilitate land sales. One of our interviewees (Interview real estate agency, 2015) mentioned that laws are not respected [in Corrientes] when it comes to monitoring the area of land foreigners can own. It was stated in another interview (Interview government official, 2016) that there were cases where land was bought illegally or as a result of intimidation of the informal settlers.

Land grabbing for tree plantations brings about many other issues. For example, in Corrientes, some specific issues include diminished work opportunities, reduced water availability, increased risk of fire, and poor labour conditions. One smallholder vegetable producer articulated many of the impacts the tree plantations were having on her and her community.

“We cannot compete [with the companies in buying land]. They offer a lot ... and it is very tempting [for the villagers to sell out] ... The company might leave the house intact but will grow plantations right up to the house. I don't like that they are taking the land. ... Close to my house, there is a plantation of 150 hectares ... before it was a beautiful field. You have no idea how beautiful it was! ... Now, some of the lagoons have dried out [because of the plantations] ... There are not so many work opportunities

in the region anymore. People are leaving because of that ... It only takes 2 people to manage 1,000 hectares of plantation. Here on my 15 hectares, I provide work for 10 people ... [With the plantations] there are no more possibilities to expand my farm or to use other plots of land to let the soil rest and recover [fallow]. ... Another issue is water availability. We need to construct [new and deep] wells to be able to irrigate, we need equipment for this but this is expensive ... for the big producers these costs are okay, but for smallholders, it is a lot of money ... Maybe in a few years, the situation will change [and more work will come]. But I am afraid of the sawmills, because many people are injured or die working there.”

Another issue brought by land grabbing is that when strangers come, people's feelings of trust and safety change. During fieldwork, several families reported that they experienced conflict with the new land owners. These conflicts included cases of animals being killed when they would wander into the new owner's paddocks.

Yet another issue was increased exposure to agrochemicals arising from changed land use. People were not sufficiently aware of the risks associated with agrochemical use, and they engaged in behaviours that increased their exposure. For example, farm workers did not always follow the mixing instructions, did not always wear protective clothing, and did not properly dispose of the containers. Communities were exposed by spray drift and over spraying, as well as by residues getting into their drinking water. Given the long-term harmful effects of the chemicals, the spraying of agrochemicals can be seen as both instant and slow violence.

Although there are chemical company stated procedures and Argentinian regulations (usually varying by province), typically including withholding periods and distances from houses and watercourses, they are not observed or policed. One interviewee, a medical doctor and health advocate for rural people, told us that rural schools were routinely being sprayed by crop-dusters. He indicated that children were especially susceptible to the negative health impacts from agrochemicals.

Slow violence is insidiously experienced by local people in a number of other ways including diminished access to water, increased pollution of the environment with possible detrimental health effects in the future, climate change, and diminished livelihood options. These collective and progressively result in a declining situation in which living conditions and general wellbeing deteriorate to such an extent as to be almost unliveable.

4.10 Strategies and social transformative actions used by rural communities to cope with land grabbing

In this section, we distil the main strategies local people use to cope with and adapt to land grabbing. We have developed this list partly from our literature review, especially Goldfarb and van der Haar (2016), del Huerto Díaz Habra and Franzzini (2016), and Jara et al. (2016), and partly from our field observations. We identified five main strategies that can be used individually or collectively, sometimes with NGO support, which we describe below.

The first (and arguably strongest) is legal action and other forms of proactive organisation local people can use to formally defend and maintain access to land in the face of dispossession. Specifically, they can initiate *Ley Veinteañal* procedures to gain formal land title. They can also advocate for greater respect for informal land use (both on government as well as on private land) and for easier access to and operation of the *Ley Veinteañal* procedure. To draw attention to these issues, they can initiate a wide variety of protest actions.

The second strategy is proactive organization to improve the livelihood strategies and wellbeing of the rural community, and to engage in various forms of capacity building to improve the background conditions of the community so that they are better able to fight for their rights and to gain land title. A further dimension of this strategy is to enhance the capacities and ability of people to claim formal title. This includes collecting proof such as school enrolment data to establish the period of time spend in the locality, the marking of important locations like graves or ritualistic structures, and mapping and fencing to demarcate land claims. NGOs conduct workshops with local communities to increase their awareness of their rights, and how to act in ways that enhance their ability to claim their rights.

The third strategy is for local communities to negotiate with the historic formal title holders or intending buyer to secure formal title over a small proportion of the land on the condition that that they would not pursue a claim over the larger piece of land – in other words, to do a deal with the land owner.

The fourth strategy is to sell out (accept a payment) and vacate the land. This is sometimes done under duress, or because of a perception that there is likely to be no better option. One of our interviewees mentioned that, in her community, out of necessity due to rising costs at the time, many people had already sold out. The process of selling out fuels rural to urban migration.

The fifth strategy for rural people to cope with the land use changes is one of accommodation, basically to adapt their lives and adjust to the changes brought about by land grabbing. In this

strategy, people do experience many negative impacts, but generally consider that they do not have the possibility to overtly resist. Livelihood adaptation and accommodation is clearly reflected in the comments made to us by one smallholder who was impacted by the agricultural expansion that was slowly closing in on her community, diminishing her opportunities to maintain her livelihood activities. Because of the diminished land access she experienced by being forced out by the land grabbers, there was not enough feed for her animals, and consequently she had to reduce her herd of goats by half. In time, and out of necessity, together with a local small-scale farmers' association, this issue was addressed by establishing a small-scale animal feed manufacturing facility which could produce sufficient product to feed the livestock of the entire community – thus a shift from open grazing to trough feeding (Interview smallholder, 2016).

An important enabling mechanism for communities to initiate social transformative action is to connect with other people, communities, the church, NGOs, and other institutions. It was observed that, where local people were connected with people in capital cities, the options, likelihood and effectiveness of their efforts improved considerably. However, even though there were various assistance programs available, funded and/or run by various NGOs or public sector agencies, these programs were often inadequate and did not sufficiently address the needs of rural communities. One issue is that most agencies and NGOs are only able to act in response to an issue and after conflict has started; prevention of land conflicts is not their priority. Given the inadequate nature of the assistance, the inevitable outcome is that the interests of the rural communities are not protected, and rural people are rendered landless.

The various strategies described above all have limitations. Primarily, negotiations always take place in an unequal power arena. Furthermore, the state actively facilitates land grabbing as a development strategy and does not adequately protect its peoples. Where people are able to stay in their houses and retain some access to land, it is rare that they have access to the same piece of land as before, and while they may retain access to some land, it is seldom of the same total area or quality, thus they are made worse off. Even where they gain formal title, there are further complications, for example, land taxes and other charges need to be paid. The changes in land use practices alter the way people interact, which frequently leads to a loss of social cohesion, and can exacerbate pre-existing tensions in the community.

4.11 Conclusion

Land grabbing and land use change are a serious threat to the effective functioning and wellbeing of local communities. The operationalisation of land grabbing, injustice and slow violence is co-produced by the state, particularly with its endorsement of land grabbing as a development

strategy. Our paper has shown that, as a result of the expansion of land grabbing, vulnerable people in rural areas in Argentina face disproportionate environmental injustice and experience various forms of violence. Inequitable distribution, participation, procedural justice, and respect and recognition of difference are key issues in the land grabbing discourse. Local inequalities and specificities influence the differential distribution of benefits and harms, with some local people benefitting and others not. Thus, land grabbing actively creates social exclusion.

Pre-existing injustices exacerbate the impacts of land grabbing. The difficulties and injustices people face include the lack of basic needs, especially food, water, income, mobility, work, education, healthcare and adequate housing. Locational specificities influence the possibilities to protest against environmental injustice. This can lead to some people having to become almost accepting of environmental and social injustice. The possibilities to perform social transformative action depend on many things like the political setting, remoteness, available resources, access to information, and external contacts (see also Coenen and Halfacre, 2003; Lapegna, 2016). Some people affected by land grabbing can still take strong action to defend their interests, while others feel that they have little choice but to acquiesce.

We consider that land grabbing is a form of slow violence because it leads to a vast range of negative social impacts that are largely ignored or denied by most stakeholders, often including the impacted people themselves. In general, there is a lack of consideration of the health and wellbeing of the environment and of rural communities, as well as of the different meanings attached to nature by the different stakeholders. Slow violence is frequently not addressed by rural communities, partly because of its insidious nature, but also because of the difficulties they face, and because the changes invoked are often invisible, sometimes irreversible, as well as the perception that nothing can be done. However, we argue that local communities should not be considered as being powerless, rather that the power they inherently have cannot be sufficiently activated because of various local specificities. Depending on how opportunities play out in the future, local people may change their perceptions of their options and strategies, and the likely effectiveness of these strategies will also change.

Social and environmental justice movements assist in the fight for justice and inclusion. A more just and sustainable society will occur only through the efforts of the people who stand up for the environment and for a fairer society (Kaika, 2017; Martínez-Alier, 2012). There are many aspects that need to be addressed in order to facilitate and support these people. In particular, they need financial resources and agency to be heard and to propagate their claims. Another important ingredient in a fairer society is greater recognition of the informal use of land by local communities. This recognition would help local people strengthen their place in society by improving their livelihoods and by assisting individuals to reach their full potential as human beings

(Schlosberg and Carruthers, 2010). Investing in essential public services and basic needs such as water, housing, education, roads, healthcare, reasonable work and working conditions would improve social equality. Moreover, investing in essential public services would allow for better political engagement in land related issues by a wider range of people (Jara et al., 2016). Social transformative action has the potential to redress environmental injustice and to address some of the malpractices brought about by land grabbing.

References

- Agyeman, J., Schlosberg, D., Craven, L., and Matthews, C., 2016. Trends and directions in environmental justice: From inequity to everyday life, community, and just sustainabilities. *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 41, 321-340.
- Alden Wily, L., 2011. "The Law is to Blame". The vulnerable status of common property rights in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Development and Change* 42(3), 733-757.
- Altieri, M.A., and Toledo, V.M., 2011. The agroecological revolution in Latin America: rescuing nature, ensuring food sovereignty and empowering peasants. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 38(3), 587-612.
- Baker, S., and Mehmood, A., 2015. Social innovation and the governance of sustainable places. *Local Environment* 20(3), 321-334.
- Banerjee, A., 2015. Neoliberalism and its Contradictions for Rural Development: Some Insights from India. *Development and Change* 46(4), 1010-1022.
- Bhattacharya, P., Claesson, M., Bundschuh, J., Sracek, O., Fagerberg, J., Jacks, G., Martin, R.A., Storniolo, A.R., and Thir, J.M., 2006. Distribution and mobility of arsenic in the Rio Dulce alluvial aquifers in Santiago del Estero Province, Argentina. *Science of the Total Environment* 358, 97-120.
- Bidaseca, K., Gigena, A., Gómez, F., Weinstock, A.M., Oyharzábal, E., and Otaol, D., 2013. Relevamiento y sistematización de problemas de tierras de los agricultores familiares en Argentina. Buenos Aires: Ministerio de la Agricultura, Ganadería y Pesca de la Nación.
- Boletta, P.E., Ravelo, A.C., Planchuelo, A.M., and Grilli, M., 2006. Assessing deforestation in the Argentine Chaco. *Forest Ecology and Management* 228, 108-114.
- Borras, S.M., Kay, C., Gomez, S., and Wilkinson, J., 2012. Land grabbing and global capitalist accumulation: key features in Latin America. *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 33(4), 402-416.
- Borras, S.M., Franco, J.C., and Wang, C., 2013. The Challenge of Global Governance of Land Grabbing: Changing International Agricultural Context and Competing Political Views and Strategies. *Globalizations* 10(1), 161-179.
- Brent, Z.W., 2015. Territorial restructuring and resistance in Argentina. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 42(3-4), 671-694.
- Bullard, R., 1996. Environmental Justice: It's More Than Waste Facility Siting. *Social Science Quarterly* 77(3), 493-499.
- Carruthers, D.V., 2008. Popular Environmentalism and Social Justice in Latin America. In: Carruthers, D.V., ed. *Environmental Justice in Latin America. Problems, Promise, and Practice*, 1-22. Cambridge MA: MIT Press.
- Cernea, M., 1997. The Risks and Reconstruction Model for resettling displaced populations. *World Development* 25(10), 1569-1587.
- Coenen, F.H.J.M., and Halfacre, A.C., 2003. Local autonomy and environmental justice: Implementing distributional equity across national scales. In: Bressers, H.Th.A., Rosenbaum, W.A., eds. *Achieving Sustainable Development. The challenges of Governance across Social Scales*, 185-210. Westport: Praeger.
- Costantino, A., 2015. El capital extranjero y el acaparamiento de tierras: conflictos sociales y acumulación por desposesión en Argentina. *Revista de Estudios Sociales* 55, 137-149.
- Cook, I.R., and Swyngedouw, E., 2012. Cities, social cohesion and the environment: towards a future research agenda. *Urban Studies* 49, 1959-1978.
- Cooke, B., and Kothari, U., ed., 2001. *Participation: The New Tyranny?* London: Zed Books.
- Darby, K.J., 2012. Lead astray: scale, environmental justice and the El Paso smelter. *Local Environment* 17(8), 797-814.
- Dare, M., Schirmer, J., and Vanclay, F., 2014. Community engagement and social licence to operate. *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal* 32(3), 188-197.
- Desmarais, A.A., 2002. Peasant Speak - The Via Campesina: Consolidating an international peasant and farm movement. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 29(2), 91-124.
- Elgert, L., 2015. 'More soy on fewer farms' in Paraguay: challenging neoliberal agricultures claims to sustainability. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 43(2), 537-561.
- Escobar, A., 2000. El lugar de la naturaleza y la naturaleza del lugar: ¿globalización o postdesarrollo? In: Lander, E., ed. *Colonialidad del saber: eurocentrismo y ciencias sociales. Perspectivas latinoamericanas*, 131-161. Buenos Aires: Ediciones CICCUS.
- Fairhead, J., Leach, M., and Scoones, I., 2012. Green grabbing: a new appropriation of nature? *Journal of Peasant Studies* 39(2), 237-261.
- Gallagher, D.R., and Jackson, S.E., 2008. Promoting community involvement at brownfields sites in socio-economically disadvantaged neighbourhoods. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management* 51(5), 615-630.
- Galtung, J., 1969. Violence, peace, and peace research. *Journal of Peace Research* 6(3), 167-191.
- García-Lopez, G.A., and Arizpe, N., 2010. Participatory processes in the soy conflicts in Paraguay and Argentina. *Ecological Economics* 70(2), 196-206.
- Gerber, J.F., Veuthey, S., and Martínez-Alier, J., 2009. Linking political ecology with ecological economics in tree plantations conflicts in Cameroon and Ecuador. *Ecological Economics* 68, 2885-2889.
- Global Witness, 2016. *On Dangerous Ground*. London: United Kingdom.
- Goldfarb, L., and Zoomers, A., 2013. The drivers behind the rapid expansion of genetically modified soya production into the Chaco Region of Argentina. In: Fang, Z., ed. *Biofuels: Economy, Environment and Sustainability*. Rijeka: InTech, 73-95.
- Goldfarb, L., and van der Haar, G., 2016. The moving frontiers of genetically modified soy production: shifts in land control in the Argentinian Chaco. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 43(2), 562-582.
- Gutiérrez, M.E., and Gonzalez, V.G., eds., 2016. *Desarrollo Rural, Política Pública y Agricultura Familiar. Reflexiones en torno a experiencias de la Agricultura Familiar en Santiago del Estero*. San Miguel de Tucumán: Magna Publicaciones.
- GRAIN, 2012. GRAIN releases data set with over 400 global land grabs. Available from: <https://www.grain.org/article/entries/4479-grain-releases-data-set-with-over-400-global-land-grabs> [Accessed on: June 6 2017].
- GRAIN, 2016. *The Global Farmland Grab in 2016. How Big, How Bad?* Available from: <https://www.grain.org/article/entries/5492-the-global-farmland-grab-in-2016-how-big-how-bad> [Accessed on: June 2 2017].
- Grajales, A., 2011. The rifle and the title: Paramilitary violence, land grab and land control in Colombia. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 38(4), 771-791.
- Hall, R., Edelman, M., Borras Jr. S.M., Scoones, I., White, B., and Wolford, W., 2015. Resistance, acquiescence or incorporation? An introduction to land grabbing and political reactions 'from below'. *Journal of Peasant Studies*

- 42(3-4), 467-488.
- Hanna, P., Langdon, J., and Vanclay, F., 2016. Indigenous rights, performativity and protest. *Land Use Policy* 50, 490-506.
- Hanna, P., and Vanclay, F., 2013. Human rights, Indigenous peoples and the concept of Free, Prior and Informed Consent. *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal* 31(2), 146-157.
- Hanna, P., Vanclay, F., Langdon, E.J., and Arts, J., 2014. Improving the effectiveness of impact assessment pertaining to Indigenous peoples in the Brazilian environmental licensing procedure. *Environmental Impact Assessment Review* 46, 58-67.
- Hanna, P., Vanclay, F., Langdon J., and Arts, J., 2016a. The importance of cultural aspects in impact assessment and project development: Reflections from a case study of a hydroelectric dam in Brazil. *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal* 34(4), 306-318.
- Hanna, P., Vanclay, F., Langdon J., and Arts, J., 2016b. Conceptualizing social protest and the significance of protest action to large projects. *Extractive Industries and Society* 3(1), 217-239.
- Ho, K., 2007. Structural violence as a human rights violation. *Essex Human Rights Review* 4(2), 1-17.
- Huerto Díaz Habra, del, M. and Franzini, M., 2016. Políticas Públicas Fiscales: La Reforma del Código Procesal Penal en Frías. Diferentes Estrategias de Intervención en el Territorio. In: Gutiérrez, M.E., Gonzalez, V.G., eds. *Desarrollo Rural, Política Pública y Agricultura Familiar. Reflexiones en torno a experiencias de la Agricultura Familiar en Santiago del Estero*, 51-65. San Miguel de Tucumán: Magna Publicaciones.
- Imperiale, A.J., and Vanclay, F., 2016. Experiencing local community resilience in action: Learning from post-disaster communities. *Journal of Rural Studies* 47, 204-219.
- Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos, 2016. Available from: http://www.indec.gov.ar/uploads/informesdeprensa/opex_09_16.pdf [Accessed on: 28 February 2017].
- Jara, C., and Paz, R., 2013. Ordenar el territorio para detener el acaparamiento mundial de tierras. La conflictividad de la estructura agraria de Santiago del Estero y el papel del estado. *Proyección* 15, 171-195.
- Jara, C., Gil Villanueva, L., and Moyano, L., 2016. Resistiendo en la frontera. La Agricultura Familiar y las luchas territoriales en el Salado Norte (Santiago del Estero) en el período 1999-2014. In: Gutiérrez, M.E., Gonzalez, V.G., eds. *Desarrollo Rural, Política Pública y Agricultura Familiar. Reflexiones en torno a experiencias de la Agricultura Familiar en Santiago del Estero*, 33-49. San Miguel de Tucumán: Magna Publicaciones.
- Jijelava, D., and Vanclay, F., 2017. Legitimacy, credibility and trust as the key components of a Social Licence to Operate: An analysis of BP's projects in Georgia. *Journal of Cleaner Production* 140(Part 3), 1077-1086.
- Kaika, M., 2017. "Don't call me resilient again!" The New Urban Agenda as Immunology... or what happens when communities refuse to be vaccinated with 'smart cities' and indicators. *Environment and Urbanization* 29(1), 89-102.
- Krishnan, J., and George, A., 2014. Tribal communities, the forests, the fisher folk and the river: whither water justice? *Local Environment* 19(9), 1012-1023.
- Lakes, T., Brückner, M., and Krämer, A., 2014. Development of an environmental justice index to determine socio-economic disparities of noise pollution and green space in residential areas in Berlin. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management* 57(4), 538-556.
- Lapegna, P., 2012. Notes from the field. The expansion of transgenic soybeans and the killing of Indigenous peasants in Argentina. *Societies Without Borders* 8(2), 291-308.
- Lapegna, P., 2016. Genetically modified soybeans, agrochemical exposure, and everyday forms of peasant collaboration in Argentina. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 43(2), 517-536.
- Laurian, L., and Funderburg, R., 2014. Environmental justice in France? A spatio-temporal analysis of incinerator location. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management* 57(3), 424-446.
- Leguizamón, A., 2014. Modifying Argentina: GM soy and socio-environmental change. *Geoforum* 53, 149-160.
- Leguizamón, A., 2016. Environmental injustice in Argentina: Struggles against genetically modified soy. *Journal of Agrarian Change* 16(4), 684-692.
- Malhi, Y., Roberts, J.T., Betts, R.A., Killeen, W.L., and Nobre, C.A., 2008. Climate Change, Deforestation and the Fate of the Amazon. *Science*, 319, 169-172.
- Martínez-Alier, J., 2012. Environmental Justice and Economic Degrowth: An alliance between two movements. *Capitalism Nature Socialism* 23(1), 57-73.
- Matulis, B.S., 2014. The economic valuation of nature: A question of justice? *Ecological Economics* 104, 155-157.
- Mehmood, A., and Parra, C., 2013. Social Innovation in an unsustainable world. In: Moulaert, F., MacCallum, D., Mehmood, A., Hamdouch, A., eds. *The International Handbook on Social Innovation: Collective Action, Social Learning and Transdisciplinary Research*, 53-66. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
- Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, 2010. Plan Estratégico Agroalimentario y Agroindustrial Participativo y Federal 2010-2020. Available from: http://inta.gov.ar/sites/default/files/inta_000001-libro_pea_argentina_lider_agroalimentario.pdf [Accessed on: 6 February 2017].
- Ministry of Agroindustry, 2017. Datos Abiertos Agroindustria. Available from: <https://datos.magyp.gov.ar/reportes.php?reporte=Estimaciones> [Accessed on: 8 June 2017].
- Murmis, M., and Murmis, M.R., 2012. Land concentration and foreign land ownership in Argentina in the context of global land grabbing. *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 33(4), 490-508.
- Narain, V., 2014. Whose land? Whose water? Water rights, equity and justice in a peri-urban context. *Local Environment* 19(9), 974-989.
- Neiff, J.J., 2004. *El Iberá ¿En Peligro?* Buenos Aires: Fundación Vida Silvestre Argentina.
- Nixon, R., 2011. *Slow Violence and Environmentalism of the Poor*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Nussbaum, M., and Sen, A., eds., 1993. *The Quality of Life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ogut, S., Kucukoner, E., Gultekin, F., and Gurbuz, N., 2015. A Study of Long-Term Pesticide Application Amongst Agricultural Workers: Total Antioxidant Status, Total Oxidant Status and Acetylcholinesterase Activity in Blood. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, India Section B: Biological Sciences 85(1), 155-159.
- Overbeek, W., Kröger, M., and Gerber, J.F., 2012. An overview of industrial tree plantations conflicts in the global South. Conflicts, trends, and resistance struggles. EJOLT Report No. 3. Available from: <http://wrm.org.uy/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/EJOLTplantations.pdf> [Accessed on: 9 January 2017].
- Parra, C., 2010. Sustainability and multi-level governance of territories classified as protected areas in France: the Morvan regional park case. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, 53(4), 491-509.
- Parra, C., and Moulaert, F., 2016. The governance of the nature-culture nexus: lessons learned from the San Pedro de Atacama case-study. *Nature+Culture* 11(3), 239-258.
- Parra, C., and Walsh, C., 2016. Socialities of nature beyond utopia. *Nature+Culture* 11(3) 229-238.

- Pilgrim, S., and Pretty, J., eds., 2011. *Nature and Culture: Rebuilding Lost Connections*. London: Routledge.
- Piñeiro, R., Rhodes-Purdy, M., and Rosenblatt, F., 2016. The Engagement Curve. Populism and political engagement in Latin America. *Latin American Research Review* 51(4), 3-23.
- Plan Estratégico Forestoindustrial Corrientes, 2010. Available from: http://recursosforestales.corrientes.gob.ar/assets/articulo_adjuntos/832/original/Plan_Forestoindustrial_de_Corrientes.pdf?1413392814 [Accessed on: June 8 2017].
- Ploeg, van der, L., and Vanclay, F., 2017. A human rights based approach to project-induced displacement and resettlement. *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal* 35(1), 34-52.
- Provincia de Corrientes, 2014. *Educación para un desarrollo forestal sostenible*. Buenos Aires: La Stampa.
- Reboratti, C., 2008. Environmental conflicts and environmental justice in Argentina. In: Carruthers, D.V., ed. *Environmental Justice in Latin America. Problems, Promise, and Practice*, 101-117. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Sassen, S., 2017. Land Grabs Are Partly To Blame For Skyrocketing Violence In Central America. Available from: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/landgrabs-central-america_us_586bfa6e4b0eb58648abe1f [Accessed on: June 2 2017].
- Schlosberg, D., 2004. Reconceiving environmental justice: Global movements and political theories. *Environmental Politics* 13(3), 517-540.
- Schlosberg, D., 2007. *Defining Environmental Justice: Theories, Movements, and Nature*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Schlosberg, D., and Carruthers, D., 2010. Indigenous struggles, environmental justice, and community capabilities. *Global Environmental Politics* 10(4), 12-34.
- Schlosberg, D., 2013. Theorising environmental justice: the expanding sphere of a discourse. *Environmental Politics* 22(1), 37-55.
- Scott, J.C., 1985. *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Sebastien, L., 2017. From NIMBY to enlightened resistance: a framework proposal to decrypt land-use disputes based on a landfill opposition case in France. *Local Environment* 22(4), 461-477.
- Sen, A., 1985. *Commodities and Capabilities*. New York: Elsevier.
- Séralini, G.E., Mesnage, R., Defarge, N., Gress, S., Hennequin, D., Clair, E., Malatesta, M., and Vendômois, J.S., 2013. Answers to the critics: Why there is a long-term toxicity due to a Roundup-tolerant genetically modified maize and to a Roundup herbicide. *Food and Chemical Toxicology* 53, 461-468.
- Slutzky, D., 2013. La forestoindustria en Misiones y Corrientes: impactos sociales, económicos y territoriales. Documentos del CEIA 9, 143-158.
- Slutzky, D., 2014. *Estructura social agraria y agroindustria del Nordeste de la Argentina: desde la incorporación a la economía nacional al actual subdesarrollo concentrador y excluyente*. Editorial Universitaria, Universidad Nacional de Misiones.
- Stanley, A., 2009. Just space or spatial justice? Difference, discourse, and environmental justice. *Local Environment* 14(10), 999-1014.
- Stover, C., 2016. The Farmer Becomes the Criminal. Human Rights and Land Confiscation in Karen State. Available from: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2016/11/03/farmer-becomes-criminal/human-rights-and-land-confiscation-karen-state> [Accessed on: June 2 2017].
- Svampa, M., and Viale, E., 2014. *Maldesarrollo: La Argentina del extractivismo y el despojo*. Buenos Aires: Katz Editores.
- Teubal, M., 2004. Rise and collapse of Neoliberalism in Argentina. *Journal of Developing Societies* 20(3-4), 173-188.
- Tschakert, P., 2010. Digging deep for justice: A radical re-imagining of the artisanal gold mining sector in Ghana. In: Holifield, R., Porter, M., Walker, G., eds. *Spaces of Environmental Justice*, 118-152. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Urkidi, L., and Walter, M., 2011. Dimensions of environmental justice in anti-gold mining movements in Latin America. *Geoforum* 42(6), 683-695.
- Vanclay, F., 2017. Project induced displacement and resettlement: From impoverishment risks to an opportunity for development. *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal* 35(1), 3-21.
- Vanclay, F., Baines, J., and Taylor, C.N., 2013. Principles for ethical research involving humans: Ethical professional practice in impact assessment Part I. *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal* 31(4), 243-253.
- Velicu, I., and Kaika, M., 2015. Undoing environmental justice: Re-imagining equality in the Rosia Montana anti-mining movement. *Geoforum*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2015.10.012>
- Veltmeyer, H., and Petras, J., eds., 2014. *The new extractivism. A Post-Neoliberal Development Model or Imperialism of the Twenty-First Century?* London: Zed Books.
- Walker, G., 2009. Globalizing environmental justice. The geography and politics of frame contextualization and evolution. *Global Social Policy* 9(3), 355-382.
- World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987. *Our Common Future*. Oxford: Oxford University.

State-civil society
collaborations in the
context of land
grabbing in Argentina*

Abstract

We examine the collaboration between the state and civil society in the context of land grabbing. Land grabbing provokes many governance changes including collaborations. The incentives for, limitations to, and contradictions inherent to these type of collaborations are examined. We explore how the collaboration between the provincial government of Santiago del Estero and social movements played out. This province has witnessed many land grabs for agriculture and livestock production. In response to protest and political pressure, two agencies were established to address the precarious land tenure situation. Even though many scholars consider these collaborations to be introduced by nation states only to gain and maintain political power, we show how rural communities are supported by these initiatives. By empowering rural populations, active social movements can make a difference in addressing the negative implications of land grabbing. Nevertheless, the agencies operated in a space of ongoing tension between global forces, political power plays, and stakeholder struggles.

Keywords

Argentina; land grabbing; social movements; agribusiness; agrarian change; land tenure.

5.1 Introduction

Social movements and governments increasingly collaborate to jointly address social and environmental issues (McKay, 2018; Lapegna, 2017; Uitermark & Nicolls, 2013; Vergara-Camus & Kay, 2017). However, the ability of alliances between social movements and governments to contribute to social equality has been questioned (Vergara-Camus & Kay, 2017). Within Latin American literature, many scholars have analysed these collaborations in the context of progressive, popular, left-wing governments. According to these scholars, the ultimate goal of this collaboration is to gain and maintain electoral power and build legitimacy (Lapegna, 2017; McKay, 2018; Vergara-Camus & Kay, 2017). Conversely, collaborations like these allow people who were previously excluded to have a political voice (McKay, 2018; Reilly, 1995). These collaborations exist at the municipal and provincial levels, as well as at the national level (Masseti, 2010; Reilly, 1995; Torres, 2017). Collaborations like these have been present in Latin America since the 1980s when countries transitioned from military regimes to democratic systems (Reilly, 1995). These alliances were a strategy used by governments that lacked the resources to confront social and environmental challenges on their own. The neoliberal austerity and decentralization measures that were introduced as a result of the implementation of structural adjustment programs in the 1990s, are part of the context in which these collaborations have arisen (Reilly, 1995).

This paper explores how such collaborations unfold in the context of land grabbing in Argentina. The incentives for, limitations to, and contradictions inherent in these collaborations between the state and social movements (and NGOs) are examined in this paper. Conflict over access to land produces many types of interaction between different actors, including individuals, NGOs, social movements, governments and companies (Dangl, 2010; Jessop, 2016; Vergara-Camus & Kay, 2017). In Argentina, global demands for commodities trigger agrarian change, altering governance at all levels. The state (represented at the national, provincial and municipal level) plays a central role in the process of agrarian change (Vergara-Camus & Kay, 2017). The outcomes of agrarian change threaten social equity, as resource access for local communities becomes restricted (Reilly, 1995). Different social movements protest against land grabbing and its effects, and have been addressing these issues for decades (Brent, 2015; Jara & Paz, 2013). The exacerbation of unequal land distribution resulting from the commodity export boom in Argentina was another factor in encouraging NGOs to form alliances with the government or to openly support their policies, in the hope that this would improve the situation of rural people (Lapegna, 2017; Vergara-Camus & Kay, 2017). These collaborations clearly show the nexus between the state, society and capital (McKay, 2018).

To understand these collaborations, we build on the concepts of 'governance' and 'collaborative governance' (Ran & Qi, 2017) in their various forms, including state-society-capital nexus

(McKay, 2018), joint venture governance (Reilly, 1995), and policing (Uitermark & Nicholls, 2013). In this context, joint venture governance means collaborations between NGOs and municipal governments. Uitermark and Nicholls (2013, p.975) define policing as the attempt by the state “to neutralize and pre-empt challenges to the legal and social order ... and refers to the range of governmental technologies, rationalities and arrangements – partly centrally orchestrated, partly self-organized locally – developed to align subjects with the state (Foucault 1991, 2009).”

Governance is a concept that implies the presence of a diverse set of actors in the political and social arena. In this paper, governance is defined as a system of regulation involving the interactions between and within a variety of actors across, a variety of geographical scales and the socio-institutional arrangements they take part in (Agnew, 2013; Parra, 2010). The interactions between government at various levels, civil society and market actors also mean a constant renegotiation, restructuring and readjustment of their roles, responsibilities and interests (Agnew, 2013; Corson & MacDonald, 2012; Swyngedouw, 2005). In theory, governance aims to empower people and create equal opportunities for people to participate in decision-making (Swyngedouw, 2005). However, in practice this is not always the case, and therefore governance is sometimes seen as being undemocratic (Cooke & Kothari, 2001; Swyngedouw, 2005). Local communities are often excluded, or not considered as equal, and therefore, governance is known for advancing the agenda of companies and governments (McKay, 2018). Nevertheless, under certain conditions, social movements and NGOs might be included in government structures. This collaboration may result in jointly addressing social issues, like programs for education, housing, public health, waste management, technical assistance, and environmental issues (Reilly, 1995). However, this collaboration can also imply a narrowing of the operational domain of social movements (Reilly, 1995; Uitermark & Nicholls, 2013). The literature highlights different features of the collaborations between state and civil society, which are discussed in this paper, including examples from national, provincial and municipal government.

The governance dynamics of state-civil society collaborations are studied in the Province of Santiago del Estero in Northern Argentina. For decades, there have been many major conflicts over the way agricultural expansion has played out in this province, including murders, death threats, physical harassment, and the burning of crops and houses (del Huerto Díaz Habra & Franzini, 2016; Jara & Paz, 2013; Lapegna, 2012; 2017). After an alarming period of social unrest due to agricultural expansion and the consequent political pressure by social movements, the provincial government established two agencies to assist rural communities to improve land tenure security and reduce land conflict (Jara et al., 2016). Different social movements and NGOs are engaged with these agencies. Santiago del Estero is the only province in Argentina that provides social movements and NGOs with such a space (Interview government official, 2016). The establishment of these agencies can be analysed as being the result of left-wing Latin American

governments granting decision-making power to civil society with the goal of avoiding further social conflict (Jessop, 2016; Lapegna, 2017; McKay, 2018). In the academic literature, the potential co-optation of social movements in government structures is much debated (Uitermark & Nicholls, 2013; Vergara-Camus & Kay, 2017). It is therefore interesting to analyse the mechanisms and characteristics by which this takes place in the agricultural expansion in Argentina. Such collaborations pose questions like: why do they arise?; how do they operate?; and is society transformed for the betterment of rural communities? (McKay, 2018). This paper offers a theoretical overview of the different perspectives on collaborative governance specifically in the context of social movements and NGOs collaborating with the provincial government. This focus brings an original contribution to the scholarship of state-civil society collaborations in the context of left-wing governments in Latin America. Even though the leaders of this period are no longer in power, a reflection on the specific programs that have unfolded at the provincial level around this time is valuable to understand their contributions to social development.

5.2 A critical analysis of state-civil society collaborations

Agrarian change alters the logic of how actors operate (Jessop, 2016). The changes can provoke processes in which it becomes desirable for actors to initiate negotiated collaborations with less obvious partners (Agnew, 2013). In the words of Ran & Qi (2017, p.9), collaborative governance is a phenomenon “where diverse stakeholders from public, private, and civic sectors work together based on deliberative consensus and collective decision making to achieve shared goals that could not be otherwise fulfilled individually.” Institutional arrangements adjust to political settings such as the resistance and political pressure of social movements and NGOs. As a pragmatic step of government institutions to maintain or gain power or to fill an institutional void they include social movements and NGOs (Lapegna, 2017; Vergara-Camus & Kay, 2017; Reilly, 1995). However, this does not mean that these new partners are necessarily fighting for the same ideals (McKay, 2018).

The state's perspective

Many state-civil society collaborations result as a consequence of civil society pressuring governments in one way or another (Dangl, 2010). Often tensions unfold in the context of natural resource exploitation and territorial issues (Dangl, 2010; Torres, 2017). Because social movements can destabilize societal processes and challenge the credibility of the state (Lapegna, 2017), governments prefer to collaborate only with social movements that are not confrontational or that are moderately critical of government policy (Gera, 2016).

State-civil society collaborations have become an important strategy for the government, espe-

cially when social movements are a potential threat to the state. Social movements that are in alliance with the state are more controllable (Uitermark & Nicholls, 2013). By collaborating with governments, it is more difficult for them to denounce government policies (Uitermark & Nicholls, 2013). Sometimes, connecting with social movements will involve the provision of funding for activities that may flow from this collaboration. This might persuade NGOs to specialize to a narrow scope of activities and/or reduce their use of confrontational tactics directed towards the government (Uitermark & Nicholls, 2013). Alternatively, other scholars argue that collaborations with social movements are especially valuable when provincial or municipal governments lack resources or where social movements have better relationships with certain groups of people they want to target in their policies (Reilly, 1995).

Uitermark and Nicholls (2013) consider that some other strategies for governments to control social movements are 'temporal delimitation' and 'territorial encapsulation'. Temporal delimitation means that through collaboration governments can delimit the scope and vision of the movements to current and near future issues, rather than having to address historical matters. By territorial encapsulation, they mean that the social movements' activities can be limited to a prescribed territory, zone, district or region. This fragmentation (i.e. divide and conquer) helps governments control the activities of the social movements. Moreover, it prevents social movements from growing bigger and more powerful.

The social movement/NGO perspective

In an attempt to pursue their agendas and to push for change, social movements use diverse strategies, including mechanisms of protest as well as becoming a collaborative partner of the government (Hanna et al., 2016; Reilly, 1995). Collaborations between the state and social movements can be seen as a transformation from confrontation to collaboration. Uitermark and Nicholls (2013) conceptualized this as being a transformation from 'politicizing' to 'policing'. By politicizing they mean the process of "taking an explicitly antagonistic stance against extant institutions, values and practices", thus state policies and practices become changed and challenged through the confrontational actions of social movements (Uitermark & Nicholls, 2013, p.974). By policing, they mean the range of technologies, rationalities and arrangements by which governments facilitate alignment of subjects (and social movements) with the state. Policing, therefore, implies the narrowing of the operation domain of social movements (Uitermark & Nicholls, 2013).

Socio-spatial factors influence how and why social movements choose to be included in governmental decision-making spaces and why they might choose to adhere to their independence (Agnew, 2013; Gupta, 2015; Uitermark & Nicholls, 2013). As mentioned by Gera (2016, p.507), "often more radical movements condemn the motivations of their counterparts who decide to cooperate within the government."

In practice, policing means that governments give social movements an active role in decision-making and participation in policy implementation, possibly extending the meaning of democracy (Masseti, 2010; Uitermark & Nicholls, 2013). The manifestation of the transition from politicizing to policing is especially observed where civil associations stop representing marginalized groups of people in order to become agents of the state in assisting and monitoring the groups of people in need that are being targeted by the state (Uitermark & Nicholls, 2013). A criticism of policing expressed by Uitermark and Nicholls (2013, p.8) is that these (former) social movements "now increasingly serve as the eyes, ears, and hands of the state" while "their spatio-temporal horizons are truncated." Arguably, this potentially diminishes the range of actions they can use to address inequality, injustice and other socio-environmental issues and wrongdoings of the state and companies (Masseti, 2010; Uitermark & Nicholls, 2013; Reilly, 1995). Moreover, social movements that are busy being agents of the state have less time and energy to spend on the building of alternative societies and/or alternative futures (Uitermark & Nicholls, 2013; Reilly, 1995).

Another outcome of policing is that social actors gradually put less effort into organizing actions and focus instead on managing concrete social problems in cooperation with state administrators. In this context, these social movements might continue to seek collaborations and transnational alliances at other scales to resolve conflict, exercise power, seek to make policy and get across their message (Jessop, 2016) yet the probability that this will happen is diminished severely, according to more critical scholars (Uitermark & Nicholls, 2013).

Several factors should be considered in the analysis of the alliances between the state and civil societies. Some considerations include that collaboration may be a necessity to achieve real change, or a pragmatic choice and opportunity for both parties to learn (Gera, 2016; Gupta, 2015; Moulaert et al., 2013; Reilly, 1995). The ideological convictions that were once important for the social movements may have to be put aside. Whether social movements are adversaries, collaborators, or surrogates of the state is contestable (Reilly, 1995). The scalar dimension and political elements of these collaborations should not be overlooked. Global agendas influence the politics of space (Jessop, 2016). A successful governance system is subject to much more than just the national, provincial and municipal governance activities (Jessop, 2016). Thus, the influence of the state is relative when considered from a global perspective. As Jessop (2016) argues, the multi-scalar influence on governance systems is considerable, which makes it hard to assess the performance of the functioning of a governance system in achieving social goals, given that advances at one level may be offset by regressions at other levels.

5.3 State-civil society collaborations in Latin America and Argentina

In Latin America, collaborations between social movements and the government started around the 1980s, when many Latin American countries were still developing the 'contours of democracy' (Reilly, 1995). At that time, engagement of civil society was seen as fundamental to development and democracy building, which was especially important after the fall of the military dictatorships, notably Argentina, Chile and Uruguay (Martinez Nogueira, 1995; Reilly, 1995; Parra & Moulaert, 2016). Social movements were severely repressed during the military dictatorships (Dangl, 2010; Reilly, 1995). However, after the fall of these regimes, provincial and municipal governments started to collaborate with social movements and NGOs to implement, co-develop and shape social policy and services throughout the continent. Social movements possessed the contacts with communities in need, which benefitted the governments to implement programs easily. These collaborations were considered a means to democratize society and to help alleviate poverty and other social and environmental issues neglected during dictatorships (Reilly, 1995). This was very much needed, as the structural adjustment plans adopted in the 1990s and consequent austerity made the provision of essential public services poor in quality and quantity (Casas, 2015; Reilly, 1995). Economic crises in Latin American countries also contributed to poor infrastructure, public healthcare and education, and widespread poverty (Casas, 2015; Martinez Nogueira, 1995; Reilly, 1995). These state-civil society collaborations were useful as municipal and provincial governments in Latin America were ill equipped to address the issues and needs of local residents, but the outcomes are contested (Reilly, 1995).

The collaboration between the national government and social movements in Latin America reached its peak during the so called 'pink tide' or 'left turn' (Vergara-Camus & Kay, 2017). This period started with the presidency of Hugo Chávez in Venezuela in 1999 (Dangl, 2010; Massetti, 2010). The support of and alliances with social movements has been crucial for the election of left-wing governments in Latin America (Dangl, 2010; Massetti, 2010; Vergara-Camus & Kay, 2017). The social movements severely criticised the neoliberal policies introduced by former right-wing governments (Vergara-Camus & Kay, 2017). The new left-wing governments made electoral promises to social movements to support them and alleviate the impacts of the neoliberal policies that had been introduced. This included promises relating land redistribution in favour of rural peasants and the introduction of various welfare programs (Dangl, 2010; Vergara-Camus & Kay, 2017). One example of state-civil society collaborations and the rise of social movements is illustrated in the collaboration between the Ecuadorian Government and the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONIAE). Another example is the election of *Movimiento al Socialismo* (MAS) (Movement towards Socialism) in Bolivia (Dangl, 2010; Massetti, 2010; McKay, 2018). Conflicts have arisen as not all governments met their promises (Vergara-Camus &

Kay, 2017). Even though some advancements were made, some scholars questioned whether the social movements adequately confronted the governments (Vergara-Camus & Kay, 2017). MAS in Bolivia, for example, has been criticized for losing sight of their original transformative political project. When MAS was elected, the party goals were seen as more important than advocating for their communities (Dangl, 2010). This shows that, in some cases, social movements might lose direction when working together with the nation state.

Lapegna (2017) highlighted that in Argentina the governments of the former Presidents, Néstor Kirchner (from 2003-2007) and Cristina Kirchner (from 2007-2015), sought collaborations with social movements to 'repoliticize' society, meaning that they intended for social issues to be put back on the agenda and for people to become re-engaged politically. These collaborations, for example with the *Movimiento Nacional Campesino Indígena* (National Peasant-Indigenous Movement), underpinned the promise to change social structures and to invest in rural development (Dangl, 2010; Lapegna, 2017). From 2003 onward, this policy of including social movements in government structures was transferred to the provincial and municipal level (Masseti, 2010; Torres, 2017). However, the outcomes for rural people were less than expected (Vergara-Camus & Kay, 2017). It is questioned whether these movements were strong enough in terms of organizational capacity to adjust to the new situation (Masseti, 2010). Thus, the pink tide in Argentina had little impact (Lapegna, 2017; Massetti, 2010). Another reason that explains the limited impact on social equality outcomes is the strong ties that the government of Cristina Kirchner had with the agro-industry, leading the country towards large-scale production at the expense of rural people (Newell, 2009).

In many cases, forming an alliance with or supporting the state is the only real way for social movements to influence policies. However, collaboration with the nation state may lead to the demobilisation of movements altogether (Dangl, 2010). These collaborations can also lead to building human capital, emancipation, empowerment, and the use of local knowledge (McKay, 2018; Reilly, 1995). Governments are often afflicted by elite capture. In Argentina, the federal system means that lower levels of governments have to implement the laws of the higher levels, and may be resource constrained, which means that they are not always able to implement their own policies (Reilly, 1995). Thus, collaborations between the state and civil society always is a paradox.

5.4 Methodology

This paper is based on fieldwork carried out between 2011 and 2016. In total, ten months were spent in Argentina (in 2011 from October-December; in 2014 from November-December; in 2015

from April-July; and in 2016 from April-May). This fieldwork was part of a larger study, which focuses on understanding the socio-environmental implications and governance dynamics of land grabbing for conservation, tree plantations and agricultural expansion. A multi-methods approach was used including document analysis, analysis of media reports, participant observation and in-depth interviews. In total, 70 in-depth interviews were conducted in Spanish with different type of actors including government officials, researchers, NGOs, social movements, local communities, company representatives and government institutions. These interviews were conducted in the provinces of Santiago del Estero, Corrientes, Tucumán, Misiones (see Figure 1), as well as Buenos Aires, Córdoba, Entre Ríos and Santa Fe. Moreover, during the fieldwork visits were made to many of the locations mentioned in the paper, including to forestry plantations, large-scale soy farms, and conservation reserves. The lead author also participated in community meetings, demonstrations, and institutional stakeholder engagement activities. From October to December 2011, fieldwork was conducted with the assistance of a local NGO in Santiago del Estero. Aside from enhancing the resilience of local communities, this NGO supports them in issues relating to land tenure. As part of this collaboration, the lead author visited several communities experiencing land conflict. The strategies used by two communities to defend their land rights were intensively studied. To preserve anonymity of sources, they are not named in the paper.

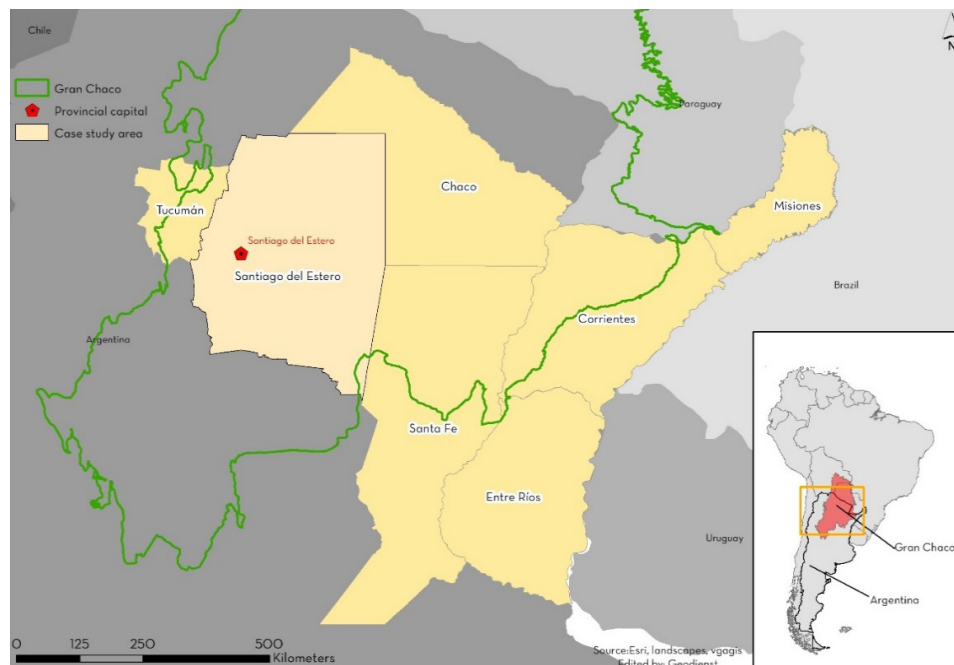


FIGURE 1. Map of Argentina, with Santiago del Estero highlighted and Gran Chaco encircled.

Source: Authors

The aim of this paper is to consider the wider political processes that land grabbing provokes. It zooms in on the various collaborations between the provincial government and social movements (and NGOs) in Santiago del Estero. We specifically focus on two examples of such collaboration: *El Registro de Poseedores* (a registry of informal landholders) and *El Comité de Emergencia* (the Emergency Committee). Both agencies were established in a context of social movements and NGOs pressuring the provincial government to address land conflict. This pressure was primarily applied by *La Mesa Provincial de Tierras* (the Provincial Roundtable for Land Issues), a shared platform involving social movements, NGOs and the Catholic Church, and which provides a forum for discussion and action on land issues. These agencies are central to governance dynamics in the province. *El Registro de Poseedores* and *El Comité de Emergencia* were both established in 2007 to assist communities by facilitating land title formalization and to support communities in situations of violence relating to land access.

For this paper, we draw primarily on 20 interviews undertaken specifically for the issues discussed here. Interviews were conducted in Santiago del Estero with community members, researchers, NGO representatives, persons representing (or collaborating with) the agencies being studied, social movement representatives, a land investor, and the key representative of the Provincial Government on these agencies (the Director of *Dirección de Relaciones Institucionales*). In 2018, prior to submission of the paper, we followed up by email with various contacts to verify and update certain information.

Interviews were recorded where appropriate and permission was granted. Where they were not recorded, detailed notes were taken during the interview. Field notes were also taken after all encounters. Informed consent was obtained for all interviews and other aspects of ethical social research were observed (Vanclay et al., 2013). Recorded interviews were transcribed. The transcripts and notes were read several times by the lead author, with condensed summaries made. The quotes used in this paper have been translated into English by the authors. In translating the quotes, we have ensured that the inherent or implied meaning was preserved, rather than necessarily providing the exact literal translation from Spanish.

5.5 Background to land grabbing in Argentina

Land grabbing can be understood as a wide range of strategies to control and gain access to land (Borras, 2012; Hall et al., 2015). It leads to local people being expelled or ousted from their land, and a conversion of family farming to industrial farming (Borras, 2012; Cáceres, 2015; Cravio, 2018; Giarracca & Teubal, 2014; Matteucci et al., 2016). The expansion of large-scale agriculture, plantation forestry, and conservation initiatives has led to many issues related to land use,

including rural violence, land tenure insecurity for smallholders, and the violation of the rights of Indigenous peoples (Brent, 2015; Cáceres, 2015; Goldfarb & van der Haar, 2016; Leguizamón, 2014; Murmis & Murmis, 2012). The expanding production frontier has led to food security issues for local communities, as well as to environmental degradation and health issues associated with agrochemical use (Leguizamón, 2014; Otero & Lapegna, 2016). Another impact is the increase in land prices (Bidaseca et al., 2013; Jara & Paz, 2013).

The social and environmental issues associated with land grabbing and the expanding production frontier have led to much conflict. Violence occurs in various ways, most frequently in the form of armed bands pressuring informal land holders to leave their customary land (Lapegna, 2012). There was also the criminalization of environmental defenders by governments (at various levels) (Brent, 2015). A state of hostility existed, which led to social movements being provocative in their activities and protest actions, which, in turn, led to retaliatory and punitive actions by the state, and a downward spiral (Brent, 2015; Lapegna, 2012). The effects of land grabbing can also constitute a type of 'slow violence'. Slow violence refers to the long-term, insidious, negative consequences on communities and individuals that are ultimately severe and that are caused by people, companies, governments and even the processes of change at all levels. It especially refers to the consequences that are not known, are invisible, or overlooked (Nixon, 2011). An example of slow violence is the slowly-diminishing amount of land and water available for communities in locations where land grabbing is rife.

A factor that aggravates the impact of agricultural expansion on rural communities is that land tenure is not adequately formalized in many locations. As stipulated in the Argentinian Civil Code (*Código Civil y Comercial de la Nación*), there is recognition that formal title holders and informal land use can coexist on the same piece of land. Articles 2351, 2385, 2469, 2470 and 4015 of the Argentinian Civil Code describe the rights of informal landholders (see also Fundapaz, n.d.). It suggests that there are three ways by which people have rights over the use of land. The first is *el propietario* (owner, i.e. formal titleholder), someone who possesses formal documentation of ownership of the land. Their possession is independent of its use. The second is *el poseedor* (possessor, i.e. informal titleholder), someone who does not have proof of ownership, but behaves as if they did, and may actually be able to make a legal case for their ownership. The third is *el tenedor* (holder, i.e. renter), a person who uses the land but recognizes that another person (or entity) is the owner, but has certain rights established through lease or rental arrangements.

For *el poseedor* to benefit fully from judicial protection there are two important elements. First, they should undertake activities on the land on a regular basis, for example, having constructed a house, having demarcated the property with fences, utilized the land for grazing, orcharding,

cropping, and/or constructed water wells, dams and/or pens for livestock. These activities are called *actos posesorios* (possession acts). A person's (or group's) ability to claim rights depends on their ability to demonstrate that they have engaged in *actos posesorios* for at least 20 years. Second, they should behave as if they were the real owners and defend it against people who pose a threat to this. In legal terms, they should be able to demonstrate *ánimo de dueño* (the spirit of being owner of the land). The *poseedor* can occupy land that is in hands of the state, individuals or companies.

To obtain formal land title, *poseedores* can apply for a *prescripción veinteañal* (i.e. twenty year procedure). This is a legal procedure meant to enable informal titleholders to gain formal title over land. The most important prerequisite is that people have to have lived on the land continuously for a minimum of 20 years. It is very important that occupation of the land is not interrupted. Occupation rights are inheritable when an informal titleholder dies. Another requirement is that the claim to possession of *el poseedor* must be acknowledged by other people in the community.

As discussed above, land that *poseedores* occupy can be formally owned by the state, a company or a person. Because of the land rush, there are many new buyers present in Argentina (Jara & Paz, 2013). The sale of land by the formal land owners does not necessarily change the rights that *poseedores* have. This generates tension, especially when a land investor unknowingly encounters communities living on the land. Furthermore, the sale of the land is often the moment when local communities start a *prescripción veinteañal*. From a community rights perspective, one issue is that there is a lack of knowledge by local communities regarding their rights and the law, which may mean that they are sometimes persuaded (coerced) to leave the land and thus forfeit their ability to claim the right in the future. There are many factors that constrain people in commencing a *prescripción veinteañal* procedure, including the costs involved, the bureaucracy, as well as the amount of time it takes (Goldfarb & van der Haar, 2016; Jara & Paz, 2013). The agencies studied in this paper play a key role in assisting communities in the *prescripción veinteañal* procedure and in supporting communities in instances of conflict with a formal titleholder.

5.6 Land grabbing and land use change in Santiago del Estero

Santiago del Estero is part of the Gran Chaco region, which includes areas in Argentina, Paraguay, Bolivia and Brazil (Matteucci et al., 2016) (see also Figure 1). Gran Chaco is "the biggest continuous dry forest in the world" (Matteucci et al., 2016, p.9). Gran Chaco is also one of the most active deforestation hotspots in the world (Leguizamón, 2016; Volante et al., 2016).

A high percentage of the population of Santiago del Estero are smallholders (Bidaseca et al., 2013). Most of them are descendants of Indigenous populations that historically populated the area. Their production is for subsistence livelihoods or sale in local markets (Lapegna, 2016). Their activities include subsistence and market gardening, livestock raising, hunting and foraging (Altrichter & Basurto, 2008; Jara & Paz, 2013; Volante et al., 2016). Many smallholders practice livelihood and land use strategies in a communal way (Jara & Paz, 2013; Matteucci et al., 2016).

The province has a history of foreign companies exploiting its natural resources, including the Quebracho tree (a hardwood useful for railway sleepers), with severe contemporary ecological and socio-economic impacts for the province (Jara & Paz, 2013). In order to build the railway system in the early 1900s, a large amount of hardwood was required, with British companies being responsible for the deforestation of large areas (Altrichter & Basurto, 2008). After these companies left, many workers stayed on the land without formalizing land titles or adequately demarcating their land use, resulting in contemporary land tenure insecurity for rural communities (Jara & Paz, 2013).

For various reasons, the conflict over land is much more severe in Santiago del Estero than in other provinces in Argentina (Bidaseca et al., 2013). There are many cases of forced eviction, violence towards smallholders, and intimidation (Bidaseca et al., 2013). The sub-secretary of Human Rights of Santiago del Estero reported that from 2004-2011, 422 conflicts over land were registered. This involved 6,747 families (Jara & Paz, 2013). Land tenure insecurity intensified around the 1960s when the influx of investors became more prominent in the province (Dargoltz, 2003; Jara & Paz, 2013). Originally, the investors were interested in cultivating cotton, beans, and conventional soy. From 1988, the expansion of genetically-modified soy cultivation led to a major increase in land tenure conflict. Commercial farming is regarded as superior to small-scale farming and is seen as a strategy to obtain larger returns to governments (Rudi et al., 2014).

Among the land grabbers that buy or lease land are investors from other provinces as well as foreign investors. In Santiago del Estero there are large investments from Chongqing Grain, a Chinese company, and Adecoagro, a company that is partly owned by George Soros and investment groups from the Middle East (Infocampo, 2011; Jara & Paz, 2013). The extent of foreign land ownership was limited under the presidency of Cristina Kirchner by Law 26.737 of 2011, but foreign ownership remains an issue of contention (Jara & Paz, 2013). The established rural elite also plays a role in land grabbing in that these historic land owners (*propietarios*) are now increasingly inclined to sell land (Goldfarb & van der Haar, 2016).

Another important issue relating to agricultural expansion is deforestation (Volante et al., 2016). The agency responsible for approving land clearance is the *Dirección de Bosques* (i.e. Director-

ate of Forest). This agency implements the Forest Law of 2007. Despite an extensive zoning, the law is criticized for not being effective regarding controls over clearing and the amount of land cleared (Bidaseca et al., 2013; Volante et al., 2016). In Santiago del Estero, there is much illegal clearing (Foro Ambiental, 2017).

The agricultural expansion in Santiago del Estero has promulgated a change in governance dynamics (Jara & Paz, 2013). Many social movements and NGOs address the insecure land tenure situation, the most important being *Movimiento Campesino de Santiago del Estero* (MOCASE) (Peasant movement of Santiago del Estero). MOCASE was founded in 1990 as a response to the expulsion of peasants in rural areas of Santiago del Estero (Jara & Paz, 2013; Lapegna, 2012). The establishment of this movement can be seen as the most important expression of resistance in the province at the time (Jara & Paz, 2013). In the province, several people have died in defence of the land, including Eli Sandra Juárez (2010), Cristian Ferreyra (2011) and Miguel Galván (2012) (Jara & Paz, 2013; Lapegna, 2012).

5.7 State-civil society collaborations in the face of land grabbing

The history of conflict and issues faced in Santiago del Estero were responsible for promoting innovative ways to address these issues. Since 1990, MOCASE had been pressuring the provincial government to find more effective ways to solve land tenure conflict. A turning point was the election of Néstor Kirchner as President in 2003. With the support of the provincial government Néstor Kirchner and Cristina Kirchner implemented policies for greater participation of civil society (Jara et al., 2016). Santiago del Estero's governor Zamora has been very supportive of their politics (Ortiz de Rozas, 2011). Building on the legacy of Néstor Kirchner, Cristina Kirchner continued promotion of social justice policies and left-wing populism (Calvo & Murillo, 2012). At the provincial level, the government entered into a range of collaborations with social movements and NGOs. This was particularly embodied in the two agencies we study in this paper: the '*Registro de Poseedores*' and the '*Comité de Emergencia*'. These agencies were formally established and constitute a joint effort between the provincial government and civil society to address land conflicts. The roundtable, '*La Mesa Provincial de Tierras*', played a fundamental role in the initiation of these collaborations.

According to Law 7.054, the overarching aim of '*Registro de Poseedores*' and the '*Comité de Emergencia*' is the management of land tenure issues. The agencies take actions to ensure safe land tenure for rural inhabitants not holding formal land title. The agencies aim to preserve natural resources and ecosystems by safeguarding individual and collective rights. The intention

was that land tenure security would lead to greater community resilience and the development of sustainable and efficient land use, which in turn would assist the communities in establishing formal land tenure. Overall, the law promotes respect for the values and the ways of life of the local communities.

The *Registro de Poseedores* collects and provides accurate and precise information about land in conflict between its *propietario* and the *poseedor*. The *Registro de Poseedores* facilitates the obtaining of technical documentation for those inhabitants who want to formalize their land tenure situation but lack sufficient resources to do so.

The *Comité de Emergencia* will intervene when the possessory rights of an individual, family, group of families, or rural community are threatened, such as by acts of physical or psychological violence, intimidation, harassment, property being damaged, or destruction of natural resources. The committee has responsibilities for: (1) receiving notifications of cases to examine; (2) visiting the site to collect evidence; (3) mediating to resolve conflict; and (4) documenting the case. The *Comité de Emergencia* is also responsible for liaison between the different government agencies in order to contribute to resolving conflict.

One of our interviewees (a social movement representative, 2011) explained the context in which the agencies were created. “It was chaos, the police and the judges did not do anything regarding the violence.” According to our interviewee, there were armed bands active attempting to evict people off the land. ‘The creation of *Comité de Emergencia* and *Registro de Poseedores* was a response to the pressure created by our mobilizations and marches’. An employee of the *Registro de Poseedores* (Interview 2011) gave more detail:

“The *Registro de Poseedores* started in 2007 after a period of many problems like the deaths of some peasants, as well as other issues. MOCASE and *La Mesa Provincial de Tierras* started a series of demands with marches and all of that. At that moment, an agreement was reached. *La Mesa Provincial de Tierras* made a proposal, which led to where we are now. The arrangement was that the provincial government would provide the logistics, which includes paying the salaries, the transport and providing the physical space. In addition, *La Mesa Provincial de Tierras*, would put in the manpower.”

As expressed by the Director of the two agencies (Interview 2016):

“Because of the creation of the two agencies, we have a mixed situation: the convergence of the state [Provincial Government] and the organizations. There is constant interaction. I am not sure that I want to say it is a relationship of tension, but it surely is

an interaction of great challenge with respect to the execution of tasks. I am no longer a lawyer fighting against the state [as he was in his last job]; now I see all the conflict, and the challenge is to see how we can seek to influence and address conflicts together with the state.”

According to an interview with two government officials (2011), the work of *El Registro de Poseedores* contains a number of tasks. The first task is to do a technical survey and develop the documentation (*plan de levantamiento territorial para la prescripción*) needed to start a legal procedure. This includes taking GPS coordinates, measurements, determining surface area, and establishing evidence of having occupied the land for over 20 years. This information has to be approved by the provincial cadastral office/register of land titles (*Dirección de Inmueble*) before a legal procedure can be commenced. The second task is the legal part, especially the assemblage of the documentation to establish continued occupation of the land. A variety of documents can be used including sworn testimonies, photos, statements of payment of taxes and utility bills, birth certificates, school records, and records of vaccination of children and/or animals. An assessment is done to establish the validity, legitimacy and adequacy of the survey details and the documentation about occupation. If the results of the assessment are satisfactory, the community can apply for inscription of their property in the property registry (*Registro de la Propiedad de Inmueble*). However, as a response to this registration, it is possible that the legal title holder will start a counter claim (*Juicio de Reivindicación*). For all these steps, a lawyer needs to be contracted, a notary and a surveyor. The whole legal procedure, which is relatively expensive for local communities, can take years. The *Registro de Poseedores* does assist with the costs involved.

The *Registro de Poseedores* also has a role to assist *poseedores* to be able to strengthen their case to claim possession. To the frustration of one employee (interview 2011), this role was not regarded as important by the Provincial Government. He argued this was unfortunate because: “It’s like you send them [the *poseedores*] to box against Mike Tyson, but you do not give them boxing gloves, nor do you teach them how to box.” To ensure that *poseedores* can retain their possessory rights, assisting communities to remain independent and viable is very important. If at any time they would become vulnerable, they could get into a precarious situation, where they may have to move and potentially lose their continuity of occupation and forfeit their rights. The *Registro de Poseedores*, therefore, actively promotes actions that enable people to continue to live on their land, including through the creation and maintenance of roads, and the provision of water supply and other infrastructure necessary for the livelihoods and wellbeing of rural communities. Rural decline has affected many rural areas in the province as there is an absence of the state from key responsibilities. During an interview, local government officials indicated that Santiago del Estero has been historically marginalized in terms of the allocation of

funding by the national government, leading to poor essential service provision. If there would be no support for strengthening rural communities, they feared that there would be little future for peasants in Santiago del Estero.

The commodity boom in Argentina has led to an increasing demand for land, changing who the land owners are, and how they relate to the pre-existing rural people (see Jara & Paz, 2013; Murmis & Murmis, 2012). The federal and provincial governments actively support agricultural expansion by various policies, which results in land grabbing. The historic land owners were often indifferent regarding the occupation of land by local communities and the condition of the property, and therefore formal title was not always high on the list of priorities of local communities. However, the new land owners (i.e. the land grabbers) have a strong motivation to get rid of *poseedores*, and their lack of formal land title puts them in a precarious situation. Sometimes, the new investors do not inspect the land before acquisition, and subsequently encounter people and communities living on what they consider to be their land, leading to conflict. In some cases, communities first hear about their land being for sale by seeing advertisements from real estate agencies in newspapers. For them, an impending change in land ownership is a harbinger of future conflict.

Investors have several ways of coping with the presence of *poseedores*. They may try to expel *poseedores* using various tactics both legal and illegal, make a deal to entice them to leave, hire them as employees, and/or let them stay on a smaller part of the land (thus making them worse off). When there is a new investor, it is only in very rare circumstances that the status quo will prevail. The reason there is an emphasis by the *Registro de Poseedores* on strengthening possession is because this improves the position of *poseedores* in cases of conflict with new buyers, and is a precaution against being evicted while a legal procedure is underway.

As observed during our fieldwork, many communities in the province are assisted in one way or another by the two agencies. To provide an example, we discuss the case of one community assisted by the *Comité de Emergencia*. In this case, a local businessman inherited formal land title of over 3,600 hectares of land, on which a local community had lived for generations. Although this man's family did not actively use the land, when he inherited it, he developed the plan of establishing a major ranching operation and initially wanted to expel the community. The behaviour and manner of him and his staff led to some members of the community feeling threatened, and it was evident that their continued occupation was at risk. The community contacted the *Comité de Emergencia*, which clarified their rights and assisted them in negotiating with the formal land owner. People from *Comité de Emergencia* were present during community meetings, and the negotiations with the *propietario*. They also assisted the community to take steps that would enable them to stay on the land. This made the community members feel safe

and assisted. With the help of the *Comité de Emergencia* and a local NGO, and without judicial involvement, the community was eventually able to negotiate with the *propietario* to have formal land title to 1,400 hectares. The owner paid all legal costs. He settled on owning 2,200 hectares. The case is regarded as an exemplar and as proof of the success of the two agencies. This was especially the case because during the course of negotiations, the *propietario* came to realise the rights of the community and changed from being an adversary to being a champion of the community, of the two agencies, and of the rights of *poseedores*.

5.8 Potential limitations to collaboration

One issue is that the agencies can only work on demand and only have limited capacity and resources. This means that communities often encounter situations and only then ask for assistance, which may be too late. In some situations, conflict may have already escalated before the communities ask for and receive assistance. As one interviewee said:

“*El Registro de Poseedores* works on demand. This means we do not need to have a publicity campaign to get work. We go where the communities call for us. And when they call for us, this means that they already have a conflict, or where there is a real necessity to work with the community. It is not like we are going out of our way to look for the communities in need. There are only a few of us. We are talking about a team of 20 persons for the entire province.”

Another issue is potential constriction on the operational space of social movements that are in collaborations with government. Constriction can occur in several ways: by self-imposed reprioritisation of the issues considered to be important; a conscious awareness of being tolerant of new friends, even when you don't agree with them about everything; or actual or perceived external restriction. In our interviews, there was very little mention of constriction, perhaps because of a reluctance to talk about this issue, given the general approval of the current collaboration arrangements. When the lead author of this paper raised this topic in the interviews, most interviewees were evasive, non-committal or vague in their responses.

A third issue is that the creation of the two agencies did not stop the violence towards rural communities or all of the expulsions taking place. The violence meant that the agencies could not focus only on their core tasks but had to deal with the pressing issues. It also made employees feel unsafe. This fear affected their willingness to visit communities. Social movements again took up action strategies against the provincial government. As a response to the presence of armed bands and the other tactics of the land investors, and especially because of the

death of Eli Sandra Juárez in 2010, MOCASE blocked Highway 34 for almost two months and held demonstrations in the capital city. This suggests that, even though the social movements (including MOCASE) were working together with the provincial government, political pressure was able to continue. Another example of violence relates to the actions of the beverage company, Manaos, which had been expelling people by using armed bands who had been firing threatening shots to scare people off their land. Foro Ambiental (2017) has claimed that Manaos' employees were involved in deforestation activities. A government official we interviewed in 2016 stated that illegal deforestation was common in the province and forms a major issue in land grabbing practices.

A fourth issue was the difficulty in maintaining security of funding. In an interview with some staff members of the *Registro de Poseedores* they indicated that after one year of operation, the provincial government stopped paying the subvention. This is why the two agencies started looking for other sources of income and identified that the *Subsecretaría de Agricultura Familiar* (Sub-secretary for family farming, part of the Ministry of Agroindustry) at the national level was willing to support the program. However, after a while, they discovered that there was a strong political motivation associated with its support. Therefore, the team from the *Registro de Poseedores* successfully re-initiated a dialogue with the provincial government. A lack of funds was another reason the two agencies had to suspend visits to communities for a time.

The collaboration between social movements and the provincial government in the context of land grabbing in Santiago del Estero has different outcomes (see Table 1). As a final reflection on this matter:

“MOCASE has been key [for the establishment of the *Registro de Poseedores* and *Comité de Emergencia*]. We are now in discussion with organisms of the state, we are part of the state! Before we would oppose the state and fight them. Today we have the possibility, of course with some progress and regression, to contest issues. We have 20 colleagues assigned to doing this. And they do not do it in their free time! They dedicate themselves to it. Today we have two pickup trucks. Before, we would travel by bus from our own money. Before we did not have lawyers, today we have 4, 5 or even 10. Of course, it is few, and there is still a lot to improve, but from the situation where we came from it has been an extremely interesting transformation. We are able to take charge of the situation. All these issues are forging a political entity of peasant subject.”

TABLE 1. Overview of the incentives for, limitations to and contradictions inherent in collaborations

Social movements/NGOs		Provincial Government	
Incentives for collaborations with the provincial government	Limitations and contradictions	Incentives for collaboration with social movements	Limitations and contradictions
Better access to judicial system for rural communities	Dependence on the intervention of the provincial government	The government is informed of the whereabouts of social movements and the conflicts in rural areas	Funding – provincial government is engaging in a collaboration that costs them considerable money
Better informed rural communities	Long-term commitment to the provincial government	Partially restore peace and quiet in a conflictive region	Long-term commitment
Better administration, structure and protocols to assist local communities	Possible influence on agenda setting by the government, narrowing down the scope of activities	Credibility of state is raised by including alternative voices	Continuation of violence which may provide reasons for social movements to put more political pressure on the government
Social movements are paid for their work and are provided with the means to do so like vehicles, equipment (before activist would pay it from their own pocket)	Continuation of violence and land grabbing	Influence the agenda of social movement	
The local communities trust the social movements they work with		Social movements are possibly limited in growing more powerful	
Knowledge sharing and skill building		Knowledge sharing	
Communal learning and awareness building		Adopting social movements' knowledge and practices to their benefit	
Seeing the problems in the entire province instead of a encapsulated view on land issues in different parts of the province		Using movements to reach people that might fail to fully trust state actors	

5.9 Conclusion

Land grabbing triggers governance dynamics that have contributed to a number of non-state and state actors to cooperate to actively strengthen land rights and defend the rural peasantry. The provincial government of Santiago del Estero took initiative to create arenas for discussion with NGOs, which led to a rethinking of the roles of the state and social movements. This collaboration developed and strengthened the institutional arrangements to protect and assist rural communities. Civil society has now seen land issues better addressed. Coming from a background of weak technical and institutional capacity, by joining with social movements the province was able to make a significant contribution to addressing land conflicts. The provincial government benefitted greatly from establishing these agencies. Social movements and NGOs also benefitted but still have many challenges ahead to improve land tenure for marginalized communities in Santiago del Estero. This state-civil society collaboration does show that creative initiatives can occur. Thus, our findings differ somewhat from the more critical literature on state-civil society collaborations.

Even though land titling and formalization are used as a solution to address land grabbing in Santiago del Estero, scholars such as Dwyer (2015), question whether this 'formalization fix' is the most appropriate and efficient way to address land grabbing. In fact, in certain cases, formalization may provide opportunities for land grabbing to occur (Loehr, 2012). The question is whether formal land titles mean that local communities safeguard access to their land on the long-run and whether formal land title can prevent distress sales in the face of demands by investors. As underlined by Loehr (2012), formalization can lead to a capitalization of land. Therefore, there is a need to protect communities against the pressure market actors may exercise to sell the land after formalization. These considerations arguably need more deliberation in the agencies studied.

As shown in the empirical data, there is a constant dialogue and an ongoing renegotiation of roles and responsibilities within the collaboration between the state and civil society. In fact, this collaboration is one of cooperation and tension. MOCASE, as a well-organized social movement, continues to pressure the government and is active on a global/continental scale to address land grabbing and its related effects. This is different from how the collaboration between the government and social movements is often portrayed in the literature; which is normally depicted as one of governments co-opting social movements (Uitermark & Nicholls, 2013). Because the state is forced to be adaptive, this creates opportunities for social movements to have their demands addressed and to participate in political decision-making (Hall et al., 2015; Jessop, 2016). Especially in a province like Santiago del Estero, where a majority supports Kirchnerism, this ethos of collaboration will arguably continue to be important.

Some specific outcomes of our research into the collaboration between social movements and the provincial government are a better-informed civil society, empowerment, and improved land tenure security. However, as also expressed by other scholars, the negative dimensions of agricultural expansion continue at the expense of local people (Lapegna, 2017; McKay, 2018; Vergara-Camus & Kay, 2017). *El Registro de Poseedores* and *El Comité de Emergencia* are not strong enough to stop companies from expanding their land acquisition at the expense of social equality. Given that the provincial government is keen on attracting foreign investments, social movements are not able to provide a counter balance against international companies, which seek to produce agricultural commodities for the global markets in Santiago del Estero. Communities continue to be seriously affected by land grabbing practices. This indicates, that these types of collaborations need to be seen as an attempt to create more equality but they include friction, dilemmas, contradictions, pragmatism and tactical politics. In this case of Santiago del Estero, we can conclude that without this collaboration, communities would have been worse off.

References

- Agnew, J.A. (2013). Territory, Politics, Governance. *Territory, Politics, Governance*, 1(1), 1-4.
- Altrichter, M., Basurto, X. (2008). Effects of Land Privatization on the Use of Common-pool Resources of Varying Mobility in the Argentine Chaco. *Conservation and Society*, 6(2), 154-165.
- Bidaseca, K., Gigena, A., Gómez, F., Weinstock, A.M., Oyharzábal, E., Ota, D. (2013). *Relevamiento y sistematización de problemas de tierras de los agricultores familiares en Argentina*. Buenos Aires: Ministerio de la Agricultura, Ganadería y Pesca de la Nación.
- Borras, S.M., Kay, C., Gomez, S., Wilkinson, J. (2012). Land grabbing and global capitalist accumulation: key features in Latin America. *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 33(4), 402-416.
- Brent, Z.W. (2015). Territorial restructuring and resistance in Argentina. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 42(3-4), 671-694.
- Cáceres, D.M. (2015). Accumulation by Dispossession and Socio-Environmental Conflicts Caused by the Expansion of Agribusiness in Argentina. *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 15, 116-147.
- Calvo, E., Murillo, M.V. (2012). Argentina: The persistence of Peronism. *Journal of Democracy*, 23(2), 148-161.
- Casas, S.L. (2015). Los Movimientos sociales en la Argentina: de los noventa a la actualidad. Origen, desarrollo y perspectivas. *Teoría y Praxis* 27, 31-47.
- Cooke, B., Kothari, U., ed. (2001). *Participation: The New Tyranny?* London: Zed Books.
- Corson, C., MacDonald, K.I. (2012). Enclosing the global commons: the convention on biological diversity and green grabbing. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 39(2), 263-283.
- Craviotti, C. (2018). Agrarian trajectories in Argentina and Brazil: *Multilatin* seed firms and the South American soybean chain. *Globalizations* 15(1), 56-73.
- Dangl, B. (2010). *Dancing with Dynamite. Social movements and States in Latin America*. Edinburgh: AK Press.
- Dargoltz, R.E. (2003). *Hacha y quebracho. Historia ecológica y social de Santiago del Estero*. Santiago del Estero: Marco Vizoso Libros.
- Dwyer, M.B. (2015). The formalization fix? Land titling, land concessions and the politics of spatial transparency in Cambodia. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 42(5), 903-928.
- Foro Ambiental (2017). Santiago del Estero: El dueño de Manaos otra vez acusado de usurpación y desmontes clandestinos. Available from: <https://www.foroambiental.net/archivo/noticias-ambientales/recursos-naturales/2380-santiago-del-estero-el-dueno-de-manaos-otra-vez-acusado-de-usurpacion-y-desmontes-clandestinos-2> [Last accessed on: April 18 2018].
- Fundapaz, n.d. Derechos Posesorios-Prescripción Veinteañal. Available from: <http://www.fundapaz.org.ar/cartillas/derechos-posesorios-prescripcion-veinteanal/> [Last accessed on: April 18 2018].
- García, M, Román, M., del Carmen González, M. (2014). Desmonte y soja en una provincia del norte argentina: implicaciones ecosistémicas y socio-económicas. *Ambiente y Desarrollo*, 18(34), 109-124.
- Gera, W. (2016). Public participation in environmental governance in the Philippines: The challenge of consolidation in engaging the state. *Land Use Policy*, 52, 501-510.
- Giarracca, N., Teubal, M. (2014). Argentina: Extractivist dynamics of soy production and open-pit mining. In: Veltmeyer, H., Petras, J., eds. *The new extractivism. A Post-Neoliberal Development Model or Imperialism of the Twenty-First Century?*, 47-79. London: Zed Books.
- Goldfarb, L., Zoomers, A. (2013). The drivers behind the rapid expansion of Genetically Modified Soya production into the Chaco Region of Argentina. In: Fang, Z., ed. *Biofuels: Economy, Environment and Sustainability*, 73-95. Rijeka: InTech.
- Goldfarb, L., van der Haar, G. (2016). The moving frontiers of genetically modified soy production: shifts in land control in the Argentinian Chaco. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 43(2), 562-582.
- Gupta, C. (2015). Return to Freedom: Anti-GMO Aloha 'ina Activism on Molokai as an Expression of Place-based Food. *Globalizations*, 12(4): 529-544.
- Gutiérrez, M.E., Gonzalez, V.G., eds. (2016). *Desarrollo Rural, Política Pública y Agricultura Familiar. Reflexiones en torno a experiencias de la Agricultura Familiar en Santiago del Estero*. San Miguel de Tucumán: Magna Publicaciones.
- Hall, R., Edelman, M., Borras, S.M., Scoones, I., White, B., Wolford, W. (2015). Resistance, acquiescence or incorporation? An introduction to land grabbing and political reactions from below. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 42(3-4), 467-488.
- Hanna, P., Vanclay, F., Langdon J., Arts, J. (2016). Conceptualizing social protest and the significance of protest action to large projects. *Extractive Industries and Society*, 3(1), 217-239.
- Huerto Díaz Habra, del, M. and Franzini, M. (2016). Políticas Públicas Fiscales: La Reforma del Código Procesal Penal en Frías. Diferentes Estrategias de Intervención en el Territorio. In: Gutiérrez, M.E., Gonzalez, V.G., eds. *Desarrollo Rural, Política Pública y Agricultura Familiar. Reflexiones en torno a experiencias de la Agricultura Familiar en Santiago del Estero*, 51-65. San Miguel de Tucumán: Magna Publicaciones.
- Infocampo, (2011). Adecoagro compró otro campo en Santiago del Estero por 18 millones de dólares. Available on: <http://www.infocampo.com.ar/adecoagro-compro-otro-campo-en-santiago-del-estero-por-18-millones-de-dolares/> [Last accessed April 18 2018].
- Jara, C., Paz, R. (2013). Ordenar el territorio para detener el acaparamiento mundial de tierras. La conflictividad de la estructura agraria de Santiago del Estero y el papel del estado. *Proyección*, 15, 171-195.
- Jara, C. Gil Villanueva, L., Moyano, L. (2016). Resistiendo en la frontera. La Agricultura Familiar y las luchas territoriales en el Salado Norte (Santiago del Estero) en el período 1999-2014. In: Gutiérrez, M.E., Gonzalez, V.G., eds. *Desarrollo Rural, Política Pública y Agricultura Familiar. Reflexiones en torno a experiencias de la Agricultura Familiar en Santiago del Estero*, 33-49. San Miguel de Tucumán: Magna Publicaciones.
- Jessop, B. (2016). *The State: Past, Present, Future*. Cambridge UK: Polity Press.
- Lapegna, P. (2012). Notes from the field. The expansion of transgenic soybeans and the killing of Indigenous peasants in Argentina. *Societies without Borders*, 8(2), 291-308.
- Lapegna, P. (2016). Genetically modified soybeans, agrochemical exposure, and everyday forms of peasant collaboration in Argentina. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 43(2), 517-536.
- Lapegna, P. (2017). The political economy of the agro-export boom under the Kirchners: Hegemony and passive revolution in Argentina. *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 17(2), 313-329.
- Leguizamón, A. (2014). Modifying Argentina: GM soy and socio-environmental change. *Geoforum*, 53, 149-160.
- Leguizamón, A. (2016). Environmental injustice in Argentina: Struggles against genetically modified soy. *Journal of Agrarian Change*. DOI: 10.1111/joac.12163.
- Loehr, D. (2012). Capitalization by formalization? Challenging the current paradigm of land reforms. *Land Use Policy* 29, 837-845.

- Martinez Nogueira, R. (1995). Negotiated Interactions: NGOs and Local Government in Rosario, Argentina. In: Reilly, C.A., ed. *New Paths to Democratic Development in Latin America: The Rise of NGO- Municipal Collaboration*, 45-70. Boulder USA: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Masseti, A. (2010). Limitaciones de los movimientos sociales en la construcción de un estado progresista en Argentina. *Revista de crítica social* 12, 81-108.
- Matteucci, S.D., Totino, M., Arístide, P. (2016). Ecological and social consequences of the Forest Transition Theory as applied to the Argentinean Great Chaco. *Land Use Policy*, 51, 8-17.
- McKay, B. (2018). The politics of agrarian change in Bolivia's soy complex. *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 18, 406-424.
- Moulaert, F., MacCallum, D., Mehmood, A., Hamdouch, A. (eds.) (2013). *The International Handbook on Social Innovation: Collective Action, Social Learning and Transdisciplinary Research*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.
- Murmis, M., Murmis, M.R. (2012). Land concentration and foreign land ownership in Argentina in the context of global land grabbing. *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 33(4), 490-508.
- Newell, P. (2009). Bio-Hegemony: The Political Economy of Agricultural Biotechnology in Argentina. *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 41(1), 27-57.
- Nixon, R., 2011. *Slow Violence and Environmentalism of the Poor*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Ortiz de Rozas, V. (2011). El gran elector provincial en Santiago del Estero (2005-2010). Una perspectiva desde adentro de un "oficialismo invencible". *Revista SAAP* 5(2), 359-400.
- Otero, G., Lapegna, P. (2016). Transgenic Crops in Latin America: Expropriation, Negative Value and the State. *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 16(4), 665-674.
- Parra, C. (2010). Sustainability and multi-level governance of territories classified as protected areas in France: The Morvan Regional Park case. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management* 53(4), 491-509.
- Parra, C. Moulaert, F., (2016). The governance of the nature-culture nexus: Lessons learned from the San Pedro de Atacama case-study. *Nature + Culture* 11(3), 239-258.
- Ran, B., Qi, H. (2017). Contingencies of Power Sharing in Collaborative Governance. *American Review of Public Administration*, 1-16.
- Reilly, C.A. (1995). Public Policy and Citizenship. In: Reilly, C.A., ed. *New Paths to Democratic Development in Latin America: The Rise of NGO-Municipal Collaboration*, 1-28 Boulder USA: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Rudi, L.M., Azadi, H., Witlox, F., Lebailly, P. (2014). Land rights as an engine of growth? An analysis of Cambodian land grabs in the context of development theory. *Land Use Policy*, 38, 564-572.
- Swyngedouw, E. (2005). Governance Innovation and the Citizens: The Janus Face of Governance-beyond-the-State. *Urban Studies*, 42(11), 1991-2006.
- Torres, F. (2017). Estado movimientos sociales: disputas territoriales e identitarias. La Organización Barrial Tupac Amaru - Jujuy- Argentina. *Revista NERA* 20(39), 86-106.
- Uitermark, J., Nicholls, W. (2013). From Politicization to Policing: The Rise and Decline of New Social Movements in Amsterdam and Paris. *Antipode*, 1-22.
- Vergara-Camus, L., Kay, C. (2017). Agribusiness, peasants, left-wing governments, and the state in Latin America: An overview and theoretical reflections. *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 17, 239-257.
- Vanclay, F., Baines, J., Taylor, C.N. (2013). Principles for ethical research involving humans: Ethical professional practice in impact assessment Part I. *Impact Assessment & Project Appraisal* 31(4), 243-253.
- Volante, J.N., Mosciaro, M.J., Gavier-Pizarro, G.I., Paruelo, J.M. (2016). Agricultural expansion in the Semiarid Chaco: Poorly selective contagious advance. *Land Use Policy*, 55, 154-165.

Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

Land grabbing is a serious issue. Land grabbing has major negative social impacts on the lives and livelihoods of people living in areas where land grabbing is taking place. It also leads to serious environmental degradation. The pre-existing injustices experienced by local communities are exacerbated by, and exacerbate, the impacts of land grabbing. Land grabbing brings economic hardship that may eventually lead to people selling off or leasing their land. Even where people are not displaced, land grabbing still has severe impacts on their livelihoods. This thesis has shown that land grabbing can be considered to be a form of 'slow violence', and that there is a lack of consideration by governments of the long term issues and cumulative impacts of land grabbing.

In my PhD research, I sought to understand the social, political and environmental dynamics underlying the contemporary governance of land grabbing and the environmental justice implications of land grabbing. This is done by an extensive literature review on land grabbing and by studying different case studies in Argentina. The empirical data was derived from studying land grabbing in several locations and from complementary perspectives:

- the conservation program of Douglas Tompkins in the protected area, Los Esteros del Iberá;
- the investments of the Harvard Management Company in industrial tree plantations in the protected area, Los Esteros del Iberá;
- expansion of industrial tree plantations in Corrientes;
- agricultural expansion in Santiago del Estero; and
- state-civil society collaborations in the context of land grabbing in Santiago del Estero.

These case studies revealed the impacts of land grabbing on the lives of local people, as well as the roles, interests and responsibilities of different actors, the difficulties in addressing the negative impacts from land grabbing, and how resistance strategies were mobilized at different geographical scales in an attempt to influence land grabbing.

Two research questions were addressed in this PhD research. The first question sought to explore the social, political and environmental dynamics underlying the contemporary governance of land grabbing. The second question sought to understand the implications of land grabbing in terms of environmental justice. Both questions were addressed in each chapter of this thesis. Below, these findings are summarized.

6.2 The social, political and environmental dynamics underlying the contemporary governance of land grabbing

To understand the contemporary governance of land, there are many dynamics that influence how and why actors from different geographical scales interact. The interplay between actors over land is one of constant renegotiation, restructuring and readjustment. Social, political and environmental dynamics (or a combination of these) influence the modes of land regulation and governance in the context of land grabbing. These were especially discussed in Chapters 3, 4 and 5.

As discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, in many rural areas in Argentina, the state has failed to meet its key responsibilities. Therefore, most rural communities are in a state of social deprivation and people live in impoverished conditions. This was visible in the lack of basic needs such as access to adequate food, water, income, mobility, work, education, healthcare and housing. Most people also lacked formal land title. The obstacle of formalization of land rights and the pre-existing injustices experienced by local communities aggravated the negative impacts of land grabbing and the extent to which local communities could cope with land grabbing. The roots of the marginalization of local communities lie in past policies and practices that enabled unequal ownership and access to land. Even though communities might have known the risks of not formalizing land tenure, they would invest time addressing other pre-existing injustice rather than the fundamental issues of securing land access.

Responsibility for allowing land grabbing to occur is shared among many actors across geographical scales. As shown in Chapter 3 on the Harvard Management Company and Douglas Tompkins, land grabbers are attracted to relatively low land prices, but are also attracted by a business-friendly investment climate and weak environmental regulations in Argentina. In general, the national and provincial governments of Argentina have a weak regulatory role and therefore, social and environmental impacts of land grabbing are exacerbated.

Social movements played an important role in informing civil-society about their land rights, empowering people, and improving land tenure security. The role of social movements was exercised in different ways, from mobilizing people, scale jumping, to state-civil society collaborations (see Chapters 3 and 5). The possibilities to achieve social transformative action for social movements and local people depends on many things like the political setting, remoteness, available resources, access to information, and external contacts. Especially under the reign of Presidents Néstor and Cristina Kirchner, who promoted social justice policies and left-wing populism, social movements were given more opportunities to address social issues.

In Santiago del Estero, after years of political pressure, the provincial government gave different

social movements and NGOs a way to address issues provoked by land grabbing. The two agencies, the *Registro de Poseedores* and *Comité de Emergencia*, were established and constitute a joint effort between the provincial government and civil society to address land conflicts. With their activities, the barriers to formalize land tenure were somewhat lowered and communities were better assisted to deal with the violent confrontations they sometimes experienced with investors. However, the actions of these two agencies do not provide sufficient countervailing power against the actors, many of whom utilise violent strategies to dispossess people of their land.

As discussed in Chapter 3, protected areas can also be vulnerable to land grabbing. Even green initiatives can lead to land grabbing, as many uses of the environment promoted under the neo-liberal conservation discourse are destructive, with severe socio-environmental impacts. Even though the investments in protected areas may be ostensibly green, local people may suffer the same impacts as they do from conventional land grabs. The paradox of green grabs was shown in the case of the Harvard Management Company, where the socio-environmental issues local people experienced, like diminished water access, were a trigger for civil society groups to organize. Thus, these ostensibly-green investments foster new modes of governance.

6.3 The implications of land grabbing in terms of environmental justice

Land grabbing can be considered to be a major environmental justice issue, in that disadvantaged communities become displaced, fenced-in, or forcibly evicted. Vulnerable people in rural areas in Argentina face disproportionate environmental injustice and experience various forms of violence – actual, structural and slow violence (Chapter 4). The unequal distribution of harms, the limited extent of local participation in decision-making, procedural justice issues, and the lack of recognition of and respect for local people and local cultures, are key issues in the land grabbing discourse. Land grabbing has many socio-environmental impacts that are felt by already-vulnerable people, especially Indigenous peoples. As mentioned before, the impact of land grabbing is exacerbated by the pre-existing inequalities in rural areas, such as the lack of education, basic services and infrastructure.

Land grabbing and land use change are a serious threat to the effective functioning and wellbeing of local communities and to the way of life of many communities. Land grabbing endangers the continuation of diverse cultures and ways of living. These negative socio-environmental impacts were observed in the agricultural expansion, industrial tree plantations, and in nature conservation. The lives of rural people are disrupted by land access restrictions, being displaced, or fenced-in. Land grabbing structures of people's lives as it introduces a variety of changes, as discussed below.

To enable land grabbing to take place, local brokers may visit local people's land or announce the sale of the land, leading to profound concern and distress; or local people might be violently expelled without warning. However, the implementation of projects can also take years, meaning that there is insecurity and anxiety about how, when and with what impacts these developments will happen. When the projects are actually implemented, there is a wide array of possible consequences that befall local people. Often, local people are merely seen as a source of cheap labour by land grabbers and by governments. In the provision of labour, they are frequently exposed to a wide range of workplace and occupational risks. In Corrientes, for example, I observed many people who had amputated limbs due to accidents while working in the timber industry. In agribusiness, people face disproportionate exposure to agrochemicals. They experience having their homes being over-sprayed, diminished access to water, and the aesthetic aspects of their environment changed considerably. Their prospects for having a peaceful, enjoyable life become limited.

Even though land grabbing is often portrayed in the literature as being an abrupt happening, my research revealed that it is process that occurs over time (sometimes many years), with different impacts at different points in the process. Therefore, it is essential to study the temporal dimensions to grasp the real impact of land grabbing. Another key point in understanding the governance of land grabbing, is the crucial role of socio-political and socio-environmental particularities of different places. Land grabbing fosters complex processes that vary by locality.

Under certain circumstances, land grabbing can open-up spaces for reflecting on the environmental values and social responsibilities of individuals, communities, NGOs, governments and companies. This was shown in the case of Douglas Tompkins (Chapter 3) and also in Chapter 5 with the discussion of the collaboration between social movements and the provincial government. Nevertheless, these types of changes in governance are often only created under political pressure and may not achieve effective wellbeing outcomes for local communities.

6.4 Reflection on the theoretical approaches used in this thesis

Four bodies of literature were used in this PhD: land grabbing, political ecology, environmental justice, and governance. In the course of this PhD research, limitations were identified in each of these bodies of literature, and a corresponding contribution to them was made, as discussed below. The insights presented in this thesis suggest that the 'work-in-progress definition' of Borras et al. (2012) needs more nuance to fully explain the phenomenon of land grabbing, its governance and impact. Borras et al. (2012, p.405) stated that land grabbing is "the capturing of control of

relatively vast tracts of land and other natural resources through a variety of mechanisms and forms involving large-scale capital that often shifts resource use to that of extraction, whether for international or domestic purposes.” Several points identified in my research are important to consider for an improved understanding of land grabbing:

- (1) rather than being only vast tracts of land, land grabbing can occur through the aggregation of a series of individually small-scale acquisitions that collectively (cumulatively) add up to sizeable areas of land being acquired. These small-scale land acquisitions can have similar impacts as large-scale land grabs for local people;
- (2) land grabbing is a phenomenon that is influenced by global policies and practices;
- (3) the impact of land grabbing is exacerbated by unclear tenure and pre-existing inequalities;
- (4) green grabbing is land grabbing; and
- (5) given its spatial-temporal character and the fact that land grabbing can be considered slow violence, the processes and repercussions of land grabbing are complicated.

With these points in mind, the following description of land grabbing is proposed:

Land grabbing comprises the processes of gaining control of land and other natural resources through large land acquisitions or the accumulation of small-scale investments. It occurs through the use of a variety of mechanisms, including force and violence, that are often stimulated or regulated by governments. Land grabbing is influenced by global political dynamics that trickle down to the local level, and plays out differently in different locations. Land grabbing is facilitated by the lack of or unclear land tenure. Land grabbing results in a change in resource use to that of extraction or conservation. The impacts of land grabbing are exacerbated by pre-existing injustice, and can severely impact the environment and the lives of local people in varying ways over time.

This revised description brings greater clarity about contemporary land grabs. It emphasises that there is a need for policies and practices that are more responsive to local people and the environment. These types of policies perhaps should promote reduced consumption and the formation of alternative economies. Instead of focussing on growth, policies should pay more attention to pathways to a ‘moral economy’ (Vira, 2015), in other words, what improves people’s happiness, prosperity and wellbeing other than consumption and accumulation. A moral economy reinforces the need for companies to prove that they are not harming ecosystems and human beings. At present, the burden of proof in case of human rights violations and misconduct is the other way around, meaning that people have to organize against powerful companies, a battle that is implicitly unfair.

From a political ecology perspective, land grabbing in Argentina is a continuation of the extractivism/exploitation Eduardo Galeano (1971) was talking about in his book, *The Open Veins of Latin America*. In this book, Galeano explained how exploitation by Europe and the USA has shaped Latin America and its social fabrics. With the recent increase in land grabbing, the long-standing inequity between North and South, as well as within countries, is exacerbated (Agyeman et al., 2016; Galeano, 1971; Martínez-Alier, 2012). In many Southern countries, commodities are exported unprocessed, meaning that there is almost no added value and few job opportunities (Gudynas, 2009). Therefore, income disparities will not be dissolved by land grabbing, especially in countries with a weak socio-political or economic status.

The roles of powerful actors and their use of the environment can be criticised. However, my PhD research has shown that there is a need for more nuance. In the field of political ecology the nuance is sometimes lost in the criticism of powerful actors taking control over land. First, under certain circumstances key actors are willing to listen to the concerns of people, or can be forced to do so. This can lead to positive socio-political developments resulting from land grabbing over time. Second, addressing negative impacts of land grabbing is complex because of local contextual factors. Sometimes, key actors are willing to address negative issues but face operational challenges including: aligning visions; getting people to think about the future; establishing participatory and deliberative processes; resolving pre-existing conflicts; or implementing an ongoing and sustainable process of development without entrenching dependency (Esteves & Vanclay, 2009). Therefore, it is important to consider the place-based particularities and histories of each location when analysing them from a political ecology perspective.

From an environmental justice perspective, my research has given a better understanding of the disadvantages local people experience, especially in their abilities to address environmental injustices. These place-based specificities are not sufficiently addressed in the field of environmental justice studies (Schlosberg, 2013). From my fieldwork, the difficulties and injustices people faced included the lack of basic needs, especially food, water, income, mobility, work, education, healthcare and adequate housing. These difficulties limited people’s ability to resist or to initiate social transformative action. Some people affected by land grabbing can still take strong action to defend their interests, while others feel that they have little choice but to acquiesce. Local inequalities and specificities influence the differential distribution of benefits and harms, with some local people benefitting and others not.

As explained throughout this thesis, land governance is dynamic, multifaceted, complex, and does not serve the interests of all actors. Governance is the idea that different actors at different levels should influence decision-making, albeit in various forms. Even though governance is presented as representing democratic decision-making and empowerment (Eden, 2009), these

promises are rarely fulfilled (Swyngedouw, 2005). As discussed in Chapter 3, land grabbing and its governance brings about socio-environmental awareness and can open-up arenas for dialogue and multi-level collaboration, but the interests, needs and demands of local people are seldom met.

As underlined in Chapter 4, the ability of citizens to be pro-active is greatly hindered by several disadvantages, including geographical isolation, financial constraints, and limited knowledge about their legal rights and the judicial system. This hampers people in influencing the debate on land grabbing. However, Chapter 5 discussed a case in Santiago del Estero where resistance to land grabbing and political pressure led to types of collaborative governance that benefitted local people. Here, social movements started collaborating with the provincial government. Traditionally, these actors would not work together. Coming from a background of weak technical and institutional capacity, by joining with social movements the provincial government was able to make a significant contribution to addressing land conflicts. Even though many scholars have been critical of these types of collaboration in Latin America (Lapegna, 2017; McKay, 2018; Vergara-Camus & Kay, 2017), this thesis has underlined the value of these collaborations in triggering procedural, policy and participatory changes. However, as also expressed by other scholars, even though more democratic spaces are created, the negative dimensions of land grabbing continue at the expense of local people (Lapegna, 2017; McKay, 2018; Vergara-Camus & Kay, 2017).

6.5 Comments regarding industrial tree plantations, nature conservation and agricultural expansion

This section briefly reflects on the different industries studied in this thesis, including industrial tree plantations, nature conservation and agriculture. What becomes clear from the data is that all land grabs are shaped at the global level by various discourses, policies and programs, and they impact local communities, which are limited in their ability to stop these investments or to negotiate a fair deal. More serious consideration of the socio-environmental impacts of these land grabs is needed, especially because this thesis has clarified how the negative effects of these industries unfold. This includes the negative consequences that are not known, are invisible, or overlooked (Nixon, 2011). Because of the slow violence local communities experience, their living conditions and general wellbeing is deteriorating to such an extent as to be almost unliveable. This situation is co-produced by the state, particularly with its endorsement of land grabbing as a development strategy.

Industrial tree plantations

The arrival of industrial tree plantations in the vicinities of local communities means tremendous

changes in their day to day life. Not only an aesthetic change in being enclosed by trees, but the changes experienced also encompass issues like diminished water access, cultural changes in that traditional cultural practices can no longer be performed, and that the only available work has extremely poor conditions. Other scholars have confirmed that the impacts of industrial tree plantations, whether eucalyptus, palm or any other monoculture, are severe (Li, 2017; Overbeek et al., 2012). The diverse farming systems that were once in place are destroyed, and monocultures severely impact biodiversity (Li, 2017). In areas where large-scale industrial production is being promoted, Li (2017) describes the existence of a 'mafia system' that is slowly unfolding, meaning that, in every step of the production cycle, illegitimacy and practices that are dishonest, exploitative or deceitful are exercised. The current methods of production of tree monocultures are based on an ever-intensifying unsustainability ranging from how the land is obtained, the type of social injustice that is created, the work that is offered, and the way natural resources are exploited.

Nature conservation

Nature conservation has become more complex. As market mechanisms are introduced to the field of nature conservation, increasingly-varied strategies for protecting nature can be observed. One reason for this and an outcome is that the state is withdrawing from nature conservation and other actors are taking over this task (Büscher et al., 2012; Corson, 2011). The limited capacity of states is frequently given as a justification for neoliberal conservation (Igoe & Brockington, 2007). This thesis has shown that, generally speaking, current conservation strategies have severe social impacts. Even though some initiatives aim to do good, local communities are rarely seen to benefit from eco-tourism, the increasing number of conservancies dedicated to biodiversity protection, or the presence of environmental NGOs. As many rural communities, especially Indigenous communities, are living in areas of high biodiversity that are under threat of being commoditized, there is a need to pay more attention to these social impacts (Parra, 2018; Vanclay, 2017). Also, there is a need for better environmental regulation of the areas of high biodiversity.

Agriculture

Large companies such as Monsanto, Cargill, Bunge and ADM promote agricultural change that introduces a shift from family farming to large-scale industrial production, often by using genetically modified seeds and agrochemicals (Yousefi et al., 2018). Many explanations are given for the shift from small-scale to large-scale production, such as the contested explanation of the inability to feed the world with small-scale diverse farming systems (Gillam, 2018; Kapstein, 2018). As this thesis has shown, there are many negative impacts experienced by local people from large-scale industrial agriculture, including dispossession and health issues related to agrochemical use (Leguizamón, 2018). Agricultural expansion also triggers deforestation. For agri-

culturalists, cleared land is generally worth much more than land with trees (especially if there are legal controls to clearing), and therefore illegal clearing frequently occurs in conjunction with land grabs.

6.6 The outlook for land grabbing and environmental justice in Argentina and beyond

In 2015, the Argentine government changed presidency from Cristina Kirchner (from 2007-2015) to Mauricio Macri (from 2015-present) (Leguizamón, 2018). In recent years, all over Latin America, liberal centre-right presidents have taken over from former left-wing presidents (Belem Lopes, 2017; Niedzwiecki & Pribble, 2017). Neoliberal policies are again at the forefront of Argentine and Latin American politics (Belem Lopes, 2017; Niedzwiecki & Pribble, 2017).

The former left-wing Argentine Presidents, Néstor Kirchner (from 2003-2007) and Cristina Kirchner (2007-2015), introduced various policies that promoted social justice, sovereignty, participation and improved environmental management (Costantino, 2017). However, critical scholars have considered these policies to be primarily a way to maintain electoral power and legitimacy, rather than a genuine commitment to these causes. The Kirchners are generally considered to be Janus-faced in terms of their contradictory policies and practices (Costantino, 2017; Lapegna, 2017). In theory, policies were implemented to restrict foreign investments and to protect those most in need, however, in practice the agro-industry expanded, foreign investments increased, and local communities suffered expulsions (Lapegna, 2017; Murmis & Murmis, 2012). Another example of these contradictions is the use of export taxes to pay for social programs intended to benefit vulnerable groups. These social programs arguably assisted local people, although they depended on the income from soy and other extractive industries which threatened the very ability of local people to maintain their livelihoods (Gudynas, 2009; Leguizamón, 2018).

According to Costantino (2017), Macri eliminated the contradictory nature of the laws that were introduced by the Kirchners and openly supported foreign companies to invest in Argentina. For example, to incentivize agricultural production, Macri lowered the agro-export tax introduced under the Kirchners (Leguizamón, 2018). Under Macri's reign, the Land Law (26.737) introduced by Cristina Kirchner was modified so that it no longer limits the amount of land foreigners can own (Costantino, 2017). The Macri government also cut the social welfare programs that were at the forefront of left-wing politics (Associated Press, 2016). A recent loan from the IMF raises the fear that the IMF will promote more neoliberal measures, which have already proven to be detrimental to equality in the country (Belem Lopes, 2017).

A change that has occurred since the Macri government is increasing violence towards protesters (Costantino, 2017; Grinsberg, 2017; Mason-Deese, 2018; Telesur, 2017). In 2016, Macri authorized new rules giving the police more latitude in controlling demonstrations (Aaronson, 2016). The consequence of these measures was seen in the demonstrations against the pension reforms in 2017, where water cannons, teargas and rubber bullets were used to repress protest (Grinsberg, 2017; Mason-Deese, 2018; Telesur, 2017).

The case of Santiago Maldonado also exemplifies the use of excessive violence, the complicity of the government in the use of violence, and a failure of the state to protect people's right to protest against injustice (Costantino, 2017; Global Witness, 2017; Kapstein, 2018). Santiago Maldonado was a 28-year old man from Buenos Aires who assisted a Mapuche Indigenous community in their conflict with the Italian textile company, United Colors of Benetton. With 930,000 hectares, Benetton is among the largest landholders in Argentina (Murmis & Murmis, 2012). In the town of Cushamen in Chubut, this Mapuche community has been in protracted conflict with the Benetton Investment Group over access to land. In August 2017, this conflict reached an all-time high (Kapstein, 2018). The national government instructed the Argentine National Gendarmerie to intervene in the protest. The protesters were met with disproportionate violence by the Gendarmerie, and Santiago was taken by them. He disappeared for 78 days before his body was found. His disappearance gained national and international attention. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights requested that the Argentine state investigate his disappearance (IACHR, 2017). All over the world, on social media people called for his return using the phrase, "Where is Santiago Maldonado?" (Goñi, 2017). Responsibility for his disappearance was never accepted by the government, nor was it fully clarified what happened. The disappearance of Santiago Maldonado provoked memories of the around 30,000 forced disappearances during the military dictatorship period (during the late 1970s and early 1980s) (Mason-Deese, 2018). In the year Santiago was killed, an Indigenous Mapuche, Rafael Nahuel, was shot by a soldier during a planned eviction (Global Witness, 2017; Mason-Deese, 2018). These incidents damaged the reputation of the Macri government and it gives an impression of how land grabbing conflicts will most likely unfold in the future.

In 2017, 60% of the murders of environmental defenders were in Latin America, with Argentina ranked in eleventh place (Global Witness, 2017). Currently, Latin American politics are characterized by a fierce repression and criminalization of voices critical of governments and companies, especially around land issues. With the introduction of neoliberal policies, the cutting of education budgets and social programs, the outlook for vulnerable people of this continent is bleak, at least in the short term (Associated Press, 2016; Belem Lopes, 2017; Mason-Deese, 2018; Portillo, 2018).

6.7 Recommendations

The severity of the issues discussed in this research suggest it is highly desirable to develop recommendations for the various groups of actors involved in land grabbing. These recommendations suggest varying courses of action for local communities, social movements/NGOs, governments, international organisations and companies.

Recommendations for local communities

- It is in the local community's interest to gain formal land title, and it is highly desirable for this path to be pursued where it is available.
- Local communities should give greater consideration as to how to strengthen their ability to claim land rights, by improving their documentation and action that demonstrate occupation of the land (*actos posesorios*).
- Local communities should invest in sharing information on land rights and land tenure issues with other communities and with local, national and international NGOs.
- Local communities in regions undergoing spatial transformation are encouraged to develop a range of community initiatives to assist in community development and natural resource management in order to better respond to land grabbing.
- Local communities should be more proactive in engaging with land investors to make the investors aware that there are communities resident in the area and that they intend to defend their rights.

Recommendations for social movements/NGOs

- NGOs should actively disseminate information to local communities on land rights, data on land use changes, tools for mapping, and the actions necessary to establish land entitlements, in order to improve the ability of local people to maintain their land access and to defend their land.
- NGOs should build solidarity and share ideas with kindred organizations at all levels.
- NGOs should continue to dialogue with government actors and companies.

Recommendations for governments

- Governments should enable the efficient and affordable formalisation of land title for people with customary land tenure.
- Governments should provide clear information about how land title can be formalised.
- Governments should assist communities involved in land tenure conflict.
- Governments should ensure adequate protection of people who defend their land rights.
- Governments should provide appropriate access to justice for local communities.
- Governments should ensure that essential public services are adequately provided in

deprived areas.

- Governments should provide effective monitoring of working conditions, especially in the dangerous industries.
- Governments should introduce effective environmental policies to avoid environmental harm.
- Governments must hold companies accountable for malpractice.
- Governments should establish a transparent registry of land ownership.

Recommendations for international organisations

- International organisations should promote the strengthening of corporate social responsibility policies and practices at all levels.
- International organisations should strengthen global standards for activities involving land investments.
- International organisations should pay greater attention to monitoring the impacts of land investments, especially over time.
- International organisations should stimulate the development of international law so that companies will be held to account for misconduct, including human rights violations and the destruction of the environment.

Recommendations for companies engaged in activities that might be perceived as land grabbing

- Companies should be mindful of the social and environmental consequences of their investments.
- For all land acquisitions, companies should conduct a due diligence assessment to establish whether there are people living on the land being acquired or that previously lived on the land in question.
- Companies should acknowledge the potential for local people to have rights over and interests in the land being acquired.
- Where people are (or were) living on land being acquired, companies must ensure that there is a fair process, adequate compensation, and adequate restoration of livelihoods.
- Companies should comply with international standards and community expectations regarding project-induced displacement and resettlement.
- Companies must ensure that there is a meaningful process of community engagement and procedural justice.
- Companies should demonstrate respect for local people and local cultures.
- Companies should provide the ability for local people to say 'no' to projects, and they should respect the outcome of such determinations by local communities.
- Companies should provide the resources to affected communities so that the communities can engage an independent consultant.

- Corporate headquarters must ensure that local operations comply with corporate policies and procedures and international standards, especially in relation to working conditions, etc.

6.8 Final remarks and future research directions

The literature on land grabbing suggests that land politics is entrenched with inequality and has never been more diverse (Borras, 2016). Even though there are various attempts to democratize land (at many levels), these initiatives are criticized for not being effective or sufficient (Cook & Swyngedouw, 2012; Fortin & Richardson, 2013). The Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure (FAO, 2012); the Forest Stewardship Council (2015); the Roundtable on Responsible Soy (RTRS, 2014) exist at the international level to promote sustainability. As all these initiatives fall short (Cook & Swyngedouw, 2012; Fortin & Richardson, 2013), there remains a need for more redistributive land politics, and institutional and political change to safeguard local communities (Borras, 2016). Therefore, the future research directions highlighted below focus on ways to redress the inequalities land grabbing brings about. These research directions also draw attention to the several issues that remained unanswered in understanding land grabbing and its governance dynamics. Based on the main research findings of this research and data on contemporary land politics in Argentina, the following five key issues are distilled.

Firstly, there is an immediate need for action research on improving communal and collective tenure security for local people. There is a need for researchers to participate in mapping activities, to consider how to strengthen the ability of communities to document land possession, and to contribute to the legal procedures to gain formal title, as well as to advocate for an improved process by which local communities can gain land tenure. Formalization of tenure could lead to better access to credit, and may assist farmers to create other sources of income by accessing machinery for the cultivation of crops. Another important action would be to conduct research on how local people and communities can be protected from the adverse or perverse outcomes that can arise from the formalisation of land tenure. Although the formalization of land title is a recommendation given above, there needs to be a better understanding of how customary tenure can be respected and protected.

Secondly, there is a need to understand under what conditions companies, philanthropists and company and conservation staff are willing to listen and positively respond to the issues faced by local communities. Especially when projects are already being executed, local people have many concerns. As observed in my research, there is little comprehension by company and conservation staff of the issues local people experience with their projects and programs. This

leads to a situation in which local people feel discontent and company staff consider them to be adversaries of their projects and programs, which is not a fruitful ground for change.

Thirdly, an interesting focus for future research in the context of the violence and repression in Latin America is to understand when and how social movements are likely to achieve their goals. Current political developments in Latin America are worrisome. Therefore, research should also be done on how community-focussed government agencies can establish their value in current political systems.

Fourthly, in research on land grabbing there is a need to stimulate different disciplines to work together. Many mainstream economists proclaim the expansion of industrial tree plantations, soy production, and other extractive industries like mining, as progress, whereas from an ecological or social perspective, they are destroying communities and ecosystems. If more attention would be paid by universities to combining economics with environmental and social sciences, heterodox economic approaches could regain popularity and influence in promoting natural resource use and distribution that are socially inclusive and environmentally friendly.

Fifthly, another direction for future research is to work on exposing the injustices created throughout commodity chains. These injustices could be presented more clearly to the end consumer. If consumers were more aware of the social and environmental harms that are involved with the production of commodities, consumer choices are likely to change.

As a final remark, I consider that it is important to take an explicitly normative stance in research and that this should be respected in academia. At present, academic research, guidelines, certification schemes and roundtables are not sufficiently assisting local communities. The objectivity-obsessed culture of academia has served the interests of global capitalism, enhancing inequality. The importance of remedying inequality is reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations (UN, 2015). Social and economic inequalities are detrimental for the environment, because the sustainable use of the environment improves when there is greater equality (Boyce, 1994; Dorling, 2017). These notions support scholarly activism to actively address inequality and the issues communities face. Borras (2016, p.2) defines scholar activism as “rigorous academic work that aims to change the world, or committed activist work that is informed by rigorous academic research, which is explicitly and unapologetically connected to political projects or movements.” Scholar activism should be stimulated by universities by giving immediate attention to wider dissemination of research findings and in a variety of formats.

References

- Aaronson, S.A., 2016. Repression, civil conflict, and leadership tenure: A case study of Argentina. IIEP-WP-2016-21. [Accessed August 27 2018 on: <https://www2.gwu.edu/~iiep/assets/docs/papers/2016WP/AaronsonIIEPWP2016-21.pdf>]
- Agyeman, J., Schlosberg, D., Craven, L., Matthews, C., 2016. Trends and directions in environmental justice: From inequity to everyday life, community, and just sustainabilities. *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 41, 321-340.
- Associated Press, 2016. Argentina's unions stage mass protest against government cuts. [Accessed 7 August 2018 on: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/sep/02/argentina-unions-protests-government-cuts-mauricio-macri>]
- Belem Lopes, D., 2017. Why is neoliberalism back in Latin America? [Accessed 7 August 2018 on: <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2017/07/neoliberalism-latin-america-170711085354385.html>]
- Borras, S.M. Kay, C., Gomez, S., and Wilkinson, J., 2012. Land grabbing and global capitalist accumulation: key features in Latin America. *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 33(4), 402-416.
- Borras, S.M., 2016. Land politics, agrarian movements and scholar-activism. Inaugural lecture April 14 2016, International Institute of Social Sciences, the Hague, the Netherlands. [Accessed August 10 2018 on: <https://repub.eur.nl/pub/93021>]
- Boyce, J.K., 1994. Inequality as a cause of environmental degradation. *Environmental Economics* 11,169-178.
- Büscher, B., Sullivan, S., Neves, K., Igoe, J., Brockington, D., 2012. Towards a synthesized critique of neoliberal biodiversity conservation. *Capitalism Nature Socialism* 23, 24-30.
- Cook, I.R., Swyngedouw, E., 2012. Cities, social cohesion and the environment: towards a future research agenda. *Urban Studies*. 49, 1959-1978.
- Corson, C., 2011. Territorialization, enclosure and neoliberalism: non-state influence in struggles over Madagascar's forests. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 38(4), 703-726.
- Costantino, A., 2015. El capital extranjero y el acaparamiento de tierras: conflictos sociales y acumulación por desposesión en Argentina. *Revista de Estudios Sociales* 55, 137-149.
- Costantino, A., 2017. La extranjerización de la tierra en Argentina. Continuidades y cambios entre el Macrismo y el Kirchnerismo. *Estudios Internacionais* 5(2), 103-120.
- Dorling, D., 2017. Is inequality bad for the environment? [Accessed 8 August 2018 on: <https://www.theguardian.com/inequality/2017/jul/04/is-inequality-bad-for-the-environment#img-3>]
- Eden, S., 2009. The work of environmental governance networks: Traceability, credibility and certification by the Forest Stewardship Council. *Geoforum* 40, 383-394.
- Esteves, A.M., Vanclay, F., 2009. Social Development Needs Analysis as a tool for SIA to guide corporate-community investment: Applications in the minerals industry. *Environmental Impact Assessment Review* 29(2), 137-145.
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2012. Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of lands, fisheries and forests in the context of national food security. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/016/i2801e/i2801e.pdf>]
- Forest Stewardship Council. FSC International Standard, 2015. FSC Principles and criteria for Forest Stewardship. FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2 EN. [Last accessed 21 September 2017 on: <https://ic.fsc.org/preview.fsc-principles-and-criteria-for-forest-stewardship-fsc-std-01-001-v5-2-en-print-version.a-4843.pdf>]
- Fortin, E., Richardson, B., 2013. Certification schemes and the governance of land: enforcing standards or enabling scrutiny? *Globalizations* 10 (1), 141-159.
- Galeano, E., 1971. *Las venas abiertas de América Latina*. Montevideo: Ediciones Akal.
- Gillam, C., 2018. *Whitewash. The Story of a Weed Killer, Cancer, and the Corruption of Science*. Washington: Island Press.
- Global Witness, 2017. At what cost? Irresponsible business and the murder of land and environmental defenders in 2017. [Accessed August 7 2018 on: <https://www.globalwitness.org/en/campaigns/environmental-activists/defenders-annual-report/>]
- Goñi, U., 2017. Santiago Maldonado: missing backpacker takes center stage in Argentina's elections. [Accessed 7 August 2018 on: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/oct/06/santiago-maldonado-argentina-election-missing-backpacker>]
- Goñi, U., 2018. Argentina seeks IMF loan to rescue peso from downward slide. [Accessed 7 August 2018 on: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/may/08/argentina-seeks-imf-loan-to-rescue-peso-from-downward-slide>]
- Grinberg, G., 2017. Argentina: Thousands of Protesters Face Violent Repression in the Fight over Pension Reforms. *Left Voice*. [Accessed August 27 2018 on: <http://www.leftvoice.org/Argentina-Thousands-of-Protesters-Face-Violent-Repression-in-the-Fight-over-Pension-Reform>]
- Gudynas, E., 2009. Diez tesis urgentes sobre el nuevo extractivismo - Contextos y demandas bajo el progresismo sudamericano actual. In: Schuldt, J., Acosta, A., Barandiarán, A., Bebbington, A., Folch, M., CEDLA, Alayza, A., Gudynas, E. *Extractivismo, Política y Sociedad*, 187-225. Quito: CLAES CAAP.
- Hill, D., 2018. Rights not 'fortress conservation' key to save planet, says UN expert [Accessed 8 August 2018 on: <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/andes-to-the-amazon/2018/jul/16/rights-not-fortress-conservation-key-to-save-planet-says-un-expert>]
- Igoe, J., Brockington, D., 2007. Neoliberal conservation: A brief introduction. *Conservation and Society* 5(4), 432-449.
- Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), 2017. IACHR Grants Protection Measure for Santiago Maldonado in Argentina. [Accessed 14 August 2018 on: http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2017/125.asp]
- Kapstein, E.B., 2018. Governing the Global Land Grab. *Global Policy* 9(2), 173-183.
- Lapegna, P., 2017. The political economy of the agro-export boom under the Kirchners: Hegemony and passive revolution in Argentina. *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 17(2), 313-329.
- Leguizamón, A., 2018. The Gendered Dimensions of Resource Extractivism in Argentina's Soy Boom. *Latin American Perspectives*. DOI: 10.1177/0094582X18781346.
- Li, T.M., 2017 (in press). After the land grab: Infrastructural violence and the "Mafia System" in Indonesia's oil palm plantation zones. *Geoforum* <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2017.10.012>
- Martínez-Alier, J., 2012. Environmental Justice and Economic Degrowth: An alliance between two movements. *Capitalism Nature Socialism* 23(1), 57-73.
- Mason-Deese, L., 2018. Repression Intensifies in Argentina After President Empowers the Military. [Accessed 17 August 2018 on: <https://truthout.org/articles/repression-intensifies-in-argentina-after-president-empowers-military/>]
- McKay, B., 2018. The politics of agrarian change in Bolivia's soy complex. *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 18, 406-424.
- Murmis, M., Murmis, M.R., 2012. Land concentration and foreign land ownership in Argentina in the context of global land grabbing. *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 33(4), 490-508.
- Niedzwiecki, S., Pribble, J., 2017. Social Policies and Center-Right Governments in Argentina and Chile. *Latin American Politics and Society* 59(3), 72-97.

- Nixon, R., 2011. *Slow Violence and Environmentalism of the Poor*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Overbeek, W., Kröger, M., and Gerber, J.F., 2012. An overview of industrial tree plantations conflicts in the global South. Conflicts, trends, and resistance struggles. EJOIT Report No. 3. [Accessed 16 August 2018 on: <http://wrm.org.uy/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/EJOITplantations.pdf>]
- Oxfam, 2015. Wealth: having it all and wanting more. [Accessed 15 August 2018 on: <https://oxfamilibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/338125/ib-wealth-having-all-wanting-more-190115-en.pdf;jsessionid=61EA5AD70B7773DC3B20DC9166074F74?sequence=8>]
- Parra, C., 2018. What can culture in and for sustainable development learn from protected areas?. In *Cultural Sustainability and the Nature-Culture Interface* (pp. 49-65). Routledge.
- Portillo, Y., 2018. Water Wars: El Salvador Social Movements Resist Water Privatization. [Accessed August 7 2018 on: <http://upsidedownworld.org/archives/el-salvador/water-wars-el-salvador-social-movements-resist-water-privatization/>]
- Roundtable on Responsible Soy, 2014. [Accessed 15 August 2018 on: <http://www.responsiblesoy.org/>]
- Schlosberg, D., 2013. Theorising environmental justice: the expanding sphere of a discourse. *Environmental Politics* 22(1), 37-55.
- Swyngedouw, E., 2005. Governance innovation and the citizens: The Janus face of governance-beyond-the-state. *Urban Studies* 42(11), 1991-2006.
- Telesur, 2017. Repression in Argentina 'Worst Since 1983': New Report. [Accessed 27 August 2018 on: <https://www.telesurtv.net/english/news/Repression-in-Argentina-Worst-Since-1983-New-Report--20171223-0016.html>]
- United Nations, 2015. Sustainable Development Goals. [Accessed 15 August 2018 on: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>]
- Vanclay, F., 2017. Principles to assist in gaining a social licence to operate for green initiatives and biodiversity projects. *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability* 29, 48-56.
- Vergara-Camus, L., Kay, C., 2017. Agribusiness, peasants, left-wing governments, and the state in Latin America: An overview and theoretical reflections. *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 17, 239-257.
- Vira, B., 2015. Taking Natural Limits Seriously: Implications for Development Studies and the Environment. *Development and Change* 46(4), 762-776.
- Yousefi, A., Bellantonio, M., Hurowitz, G., 2018. The Avoidable Crisis: The European Meat Industry's Environmental Catastrophe. [Accessed July 17 2018 on: <http://www.mightyearth.org/avoidablecrisis/>]

English summary

Nederlandse
samenvatting

About the Author

Acknowledgements

Appendix I - *interview guide*

Appendix II - *consent form*

A

English summary

Land grabbing and its environmental justice implications

Introduction to this PhD

For over a decade there has been an increase in the commodification of land to meet the demand for food and materials, resulting in land acquisitions by a wide range of actors, especially companies and investment funds. This phenomenon is also known as land grabbing. Land grabbing causes the displacement of people creating inequality, social impacts and human rights impacts. Land grabbing has major negative social impacts on the lives and livelihoods of people living in areas where land grabbing is taking place. It also leads to serious environmental degradation. Land grabbing can take many forms, can happen under different conditions, occurs in a variety of contexts, and has different drivers and implications.

At the time of starting this PhD, in 2013, pressing topics were to analyse the impacts of land grabbing more rigorously, to understand the legal and political context in which land grabbing takes place, to explore the historical and political antecedents exacerbating the impact of land grabbing, and how agency and resistance shapes land grabbing dynamics. These topics have shaped this PhD research.

To fully grasp crucial issues in land grabbing and its multi-scalar character, a governance perspective was chosen for this research. A focus on governance allows exploration of the multi-scalar political context and dynamics in which land grabbing takes place. Also, it helps to understand which policies and practices lead to injustice and how affected communities resist. The interplay between actors over land is one of constant renegotiation, restructuring and readjustment. Social, political and environmental dynamics (or a combination of these) influence the modes of land regulation and governance in the context of land grabbing.

This research combines the scholarships of *political ecology*, *environmental justice* and *governance* as they add value to the study of land grabbing in various ways. First, this combination brings on board an understanding of the power dimensions of different actors, including the role of the state in land grabbing. Second, it links broader multi-scalar socio-political dynamics of actors negotiating control over land. Third, the synergy between land grabbing, political ecology, environmental justice and governance helps to identify in more detail the vulnerable groups that suffer the consequences of land grabbing. Finally, analysing land grabbing from an environmental justice perspective also strengthens the discussion on why land grabbing leads to injustice.

The main research questions that guide this research are:

- What are the social, political and environmental dynamics underlying the contemporary governance of land grabbing?; and
- What are the implications of land grabbing in terms of environmental justice?

Case studies and methodology

In order to answer these research questions, Argentina was chosen to understand the phenomenon of land grabbing. Over the past decade, Argentina has dealt with a large variety of land grabbing, including land grabbing for industrial tree plantations, agriculture and nature conservation. Land grabbing throughout Argentina has been particularly problematic for local communities and has led to much conflict over land use and concern about security of land tenure. In the two provinces studied, Corrientes and Santiago del Estero, many smallholders reside in situations of informal title or precarious land tenure.

An extensive literature review was done on land grabbing and different case studies were studied in Argentina. The empirical data was derived from studying land grabbing in several locations and from complementary perspectives:

- the conservation program of the philanthropist Douglas Tompkins in the protected area, Los Esteros del Iberá, Corrientes;
- the investments of the investment fund Harvard Management Company in industrial tree plantations in the protected area, Los Esteros del Iberá, Corrientes;
- expansion of industrial tree plantations in Corrientes;
- agricultural expansion in Santiago del Estero; and
- state-civil society collaborations in the context of land grabbing in Santiago del Estero.

This research is the result of four visits to Argentina, totalling 10 months of fieldwork. During the research, a multi-methods approach was adopted, with a wide range of social research methods used, including: document analysis, analysis of media reports, in-depth interviews and participant observation with field visits and attendance at village meetings where land use issues and land tenure were discussed.

Outline and content of the thesis

In **Chapter 2**, ‘political ecology’ and ‘environmental justice’ frameworks are linked to analyse land grabbing and its implications for governance. This chapter stresses that examinations of land grabbing that are inflected by political ecology and environmental justice frames will allow for a better comprehension of the multi- and inter scalar mechanisms, processes, and practices that lead to inequality.

In **Chapter 3**, the Harvard Management Company’s investments in industrial tree plantations, and the conservation project of Douglas Tompkins in the protected area, *Los Esteros del Iberá* are examined. Their activities have increased the complexity of socio-political dynamics in the

region, leading to contradictions and conflicts, as well as to a strengthened commitment to manage the *Iberá* region better. Nevertheless, local communities perceived little difference between land grabbing for conservation and industrial tree plantations, with all land transfers increasing inequality.

In **Chapter 4**, the environmental justice implications of land grabbing are examined. This chapter highlights that local people in Santiago del Estero and Corrientes often considered pre-existing injustices to be more pressing to address than land grabbing issues. They often tacitly accepted injustices, resulting in communities becoming displaced, fenced-in, or forcibly evicted. Consequently, already-vulnerable people continue to live in unhealthy conditions, insecure tenure situations, and bear a disproportionate social and environmental burden.

In **Chapter 5**, two agencies are studied that were established in response to protest and political pressure, to address the precarious land tenure situation in Santiago del Estero. Even though many scholars consider these collaborations to be introduced by nation states only to gain and maintain political power, this chapter shows how rural communities are supported by these initiatives. By empowering rural populations in Santiago del Estero, active social movements can make a difference in addressing the negative implications of land grabbing. Nevertheless, the agencies operated in a space of ongoing tension between global forces, political power plays, and stakeholder struggles.

The findings of these chapters are presented below structured by the two research questions.

Findings

The social, political and environmental dynamics underlying the contemporary governance of land grabbing

In many rural areas in Argentina, the state has failed to meet its key responsibilities. Therefore, most rural communities are in a state of social deprivation and people live in impoverished conditions. This was visible in the lack of basic needs such as access to adequate food, water, income, mobility, work, education, healthcare and housing. Most people also lacked formal land title. The obstacle of formalization of land rights and the pre-existing injustices experienced by local communities aggravated the negative impacts of land grabbing and the extent to which local communities could cope with land grabbing. The roots of the marginalization of local communities lie in past policies and practices that enabled unequal ownership and access to land. Even though communities might have known the risks of not formalizing land tenure, they would invest time addressing other pre-existing injustice rather than the fundamental issues of securing land access.

Responsibility for allowing land grabbing to occur is shared among many actors across geographical scales. As shown in Chapter 3 on the Harvard Management Company and Douglas Tompkins, land grabbers are attracted to relatively low land prices, but are also attracted by a business-friendly investment climate and weak environmental regulations in Argentina. In general, the national and provincial governments of Argentina have a weak regulatory role and therefore, social and environmental impacts of land grabbing are exacerbated.

Social movements played an important role in informing civil-society about their land rights, empowering people, and improving land tenure security. The role of social movements was exercised in different ways, from mobilizing people, scale jumping, to state-civil society collaborations. The possibilities to achieve social transformative action for social movements and local people depends on many things like the political setting, remoteness, available resources, access to information, and external contacts. In Santiago del Estero, after years of political pressure, the provincial government gave different social movements and NGOs a way to address issues provoked by land grabbing. The two agencies, the Registry of Possessors (i.e. *Registro de Poseedores*) and the Emergency Committee (i.e. *Comité de Emergencia*), were established and constitute a joint effort between the provincial government and civil society to address land conflicts. With their activities, the barriers to formalize land tenure were somewhat lowered and communities were better assisted to deal with the violent confrontations they sometimes experienced with investors. However, the actions of these two agencies do not provide sufficient countervailing power against the actors, many of whom utilise violent strategies to dispossess people of their land.

As discussed in Chapter 3, protected areas can also be vulnerable to land grabbing. Even green initiatives can lead to land grabbing, as many uses of the environment promoted under the neo-liberal conservation discourse are destructive, with severe socio-environmental impacts. Even though the investments in protected areas may be ostensibly green, local people may suffer the same impacts as they do from conventional land grabs.

The implications of land grabbing in terms of environmental justice

Land grabbing can be considered to be a major environmental justice issue, in that disadvantaged communities become displaced, fenced-in, or forcibly evicted. Vulnerable people in rural areas in Argentina face disproportionate environmental injustice and experience various forms of violence – actual, structural and slow violence (Chapter 4). The unequal distribution of harms, the limited extent of local participation in decision-making, procedural justice issues, and the lack of recognition of and respect for local people and local cultures, are key issues in the land grabbing discourse. Land grabbing has many socio-environmental impacts that are felt by already-vulnerable people, especially Indigenous peoples. As mentioned before, the impact of

land grabbing is exacerbated by the pre-existing inequalities in rural areas, such as the lack of education, basic services and infrastructure.

Land grabbing and land use change are a serious threat to the effective functioning and wellbeing of local communities and to the way of life of many communities. Land grabbing endangers the continuation of diverse cultures and ways of living. These negative socio-environmental impacts were observed in the agricultural expansion, industrial tree plantations, and in nature conservation.

Even though land grabbing is often portrayed in the literature as being an abrupt happening, my research revealed that it is process that occurs over time (sometimes many years), with different impacts at different points in the process. Therefore, it is essential to study the temporal dimensions to grasp the real impact of land grabbing. Another key point in understanding the governance of land grabbing, is the crucial role of socio-political and socio-environmental particularities of different places. Land grabbing fosters complex processes that vary by locality.

Under certain circumstances, land grabbing can open-up spaces for reflecting on the environmental values and social responsibilities of individuals, communities, NGOs, governments and companies. This was shown in the case of Douglas Tompkins (Chapter 3) and with the discussion of the collaboration between social movements and the provincial government (Chapter 5). Nevertheless, these types of changes in governance are often only created under political pressure and may not achieve effective wellbeing outcomes for local communities.

Final remarks

Several recommendations are given for local communities, social movements/NGOs, governments, international organizations, and for companies engaged in activities that might be perceived as land grabbing to address land issues. The most important recommendation concerns the formalization of land titles for local communities. It is highly desirable for this path to be pursued as it brings better protection for communities. Pursuing this path also includes giving greater consideration to improving their documentation and action that demonstrate occupation of the land (*actos posesorios*). NGOs should actively disseminate information to local communities on land rights, data on land use changes, tools for mapping, and the actions necessary to establish land entitlements, in order to improve the ability of local people to maintain their land access and to defend their land. Governments also have a role as they should enable the efficient and affordable formalisation of land title for people with customary land tenure. As land title formalization is of great importance in the recommendations of this thesis, there is an

consequent need for understanding how local people and communities can be protected from the adverse or perverse outcomes that can arise from the formalisation of land tenure. Other important recommendations are that international organizations should promote the strengthening of corporate social responsibility policies and practices at all levels, and that companies should be mindful of the social and environmental consequences of their investments.

In conclusion, this thesis has shown that there is an immediate need for addressing the long term issues and cumulative impacts of land grabbing, as well as to addressing the pre-existing injustices experienced by local communities.

Nederlandse samenvatting

Landroof en de consequenties voor de lokale gemeenschap

Inleiding tot dit doctoraat

Het afgelopen decennium is de grootschalige commercialisering van land toegenomen om te voorzien in de vraag naar voedsel en goederen, wat resulteert in landaankopen door een breed scala aan actoren, waaronder bedrijven en investeringsfondsen. Dit fenomeen wordt ook wel landroof genoemd. Landroof leidt tot het verdrijven van de lokale bewoners, wat ongelijkheid en mensenrechtenschendingen in de hand werkt. Landroof heeft grote negatieve sociale gevolgen voor het leven van mensen die wonen in gebieden waar landroof plaatsvindt. Het leidt ook tot ernstige milieuschade. Landroof kan vele vormen aannemen, kan onder verschillende omstandigheden plaatsvinden, komt voor in verschillende gebieden en heeft verschillende drijfveren en implicaties.

In 2013, tijdens de aanvang van dit doctoraat, was het belangrijk om verschillende onderwerpen op het gebied van landroof verder te analyseren: het beter in kaart brengen van de gevolgen van landroof; het beter begrijpen van de juridische en politieke context waarin landroof plaatsvindt; het onderzoeken of en hoe de politieke geschiedenis van een gebied de impact van landroof mogelijk beïnvloedt; en hoe weerstand en protest landroof praktijken beïnvloedt. Deze onderwerpen hebben dit promotieonderzoek vorm gegeven.

In dit onderzoek is een 'governance'-perspectief gekozen om de gevolgen van landroof beter te begrijpen en de processen die van invloed zijn op landroof op verschillende schaalniveaus te onderzoeken. Een governance perspectief maakt het mogelijk om de politieke processen en context te analyseren. Daarnaast helpt een governance perspectief te begrijpen wat voor type beleid en welke praktijken tot onrecht leiden en hoe de getroffen gemeenschappen zich trachten te verzetten. Wanneer het gaat over land bezit en toegang tot land is de wisselwerking tussen actoren één van constante heronderhandeling, herstructurering en aanpassing. Sociale, politieke en ecologische processen (of een combinatie hiervan) beïnvloeden de wijzen van landregulering en bestuur in de context van landroof.

Dit onderzoek combineert de onderzoeksvelden '*politieke ecologie*', '*milieurechtvaardigheid*' en '*governance*'. Deze combinatie van onderzoeksvelden voegt op verschillende manieren waarde toe aan de studie van landroof. Ten eerste brengt het inzicht in de machtsverhoudingen tussen verschillende actoren, inclusief de rol van de overheid bij landroof. Ten tweede ligt de nadruk binnen deze vakgebieden op het bestuderen van actoren op verschillende sociaal-politieke schaalniveaus. Ten derde helpt een synergie tussen landroof, politieke ecologie, milieurechtvaardigheid en governance om de kwetsbare groepen die de gevolgen van landroof ondervinden, nader te identificeren. Ten slotte versterkt het analyseren van landroof vanuit een milieurechtvaardigheidsperspectief ook de discussie over waarom landroof ernstig onrecht met zich meebrengt.

De volgende onderzoeksvragen staan centraal in dit onderzoek:

- Wat zijn de sociale, politieke en ecologische processen die ten grondslag liggen aan de governance van landroof?; en
- Wat zijn de milieurechtvaardigheidsimplicaties van landroof?

Case studies en methodologie

Om deze onderzoeksvragen te beantwoorden, is in Argentinië onderzoek gedaan om het fenomeen landroof te bestuderen. Het afgelopen decennium heeft Argentinië te maken gehad met een grote verscheidenheid aan landroof met verschillende doeleinden, inclusief landroof voor industriële boomplantages, landbouw en natuurbehoud projecten. Landroof in Argentinië is bijzonder problematisch voor lokale gemeenschappen die afhankelijk zijn van het land en het heeft geleid tot veel conflicten over landgebruik. In de twee provincies waar onderzoek is gedaan, Corrientes en Santiago del Estero, wonen veel boeren die geen eigendomsbewijs hebben van het land, wat leidt tot onrust over de voortzetting van hun manier van bestaan.

Een uitgebreide literatuurstudie is uitgevoerd over landroof en er zijn verschillende case studies uitgevoerd in Argentinië. De empirische data is verkregen met het bestuderen van landroof op verschillende locaties en vanuit complementaire perspectieven:

- het natuurbehoud programma van de filantroop Douglas Tompkins in het natuurgebied, Los Esteros del Iberá, Corrientes;
- de investeringen van de Harvard Management Company in industriële boomplantages in het natuurgebied, Los Esteros del Iberá, Corrientes;
- de expansie van industriële boomplantages in Corrientes;
- de expansie van landbouw in Santiago del Estero; en
- de samenwerking tussen de provinciale overheid en protestbewegingen om landroof aan te pakken in Santiago del Estero.

Dit onderzoek is het resultaat van vier veldwerkbezoeken aan Argentinië. In totaal is er 10 maanden veldwerk uitgevoerd. Tijdens het onderzoek werd een multi-methoden-aanpak toegepast, met een breed scala aan sociale onderzoeksmethoden, waaronder documentanalyse, analyse van mediaberichten, diepte-interviews en observatie. Tijdens het onderzoek zijn verschillende dorpsbijeenkomsten bijgewoond waar problemen over landgebruik en grondbezit werden besproken.

Overzicht en inhoud van het proefschrift

In **hoofdstuk 2** worden de inzichten van 'politieke ecologie' en 'milieurechtvaardigheid' samengevoegd om landroof en de implicaties daarvan voor governance te analyseren. Dit hoofdstuk

benadrukt dat de combinatie van politieke ecologie en milieurechtvaardigheid een beter beeld geeft van de processen en praktijken die tot ongelijkheid leiden bij landroof.

In **hoofdstuk 3** worden de investeringen van de Harvard Management Company in industriële boomplantages en het natuurbehoud programma van Douglas Tompkins in het beschermde natuurgebied Los Esteros del Iberá onderzocht. Hun activiteiten hebben de complexiteit van de sociaal-politieke dynamiek in de regio vergroot, wat heeft geleid tot conflicten, maar ook tot programma's om het natuurgebied *Iberá* beter te beheren. Desalniettemin ervoeren de lokale gemeenschappen weinig verschil tussen landroof voor natuurbehoud en industriële boomplantages, waarbij beide typen landroof ongelijkheid in de hand werkten.

In **hoofdstuk 4** worden de gevolgen van landroof onderzocht vanuit een milieurechtvaardigheidsperspectief. Dit hoofdstuk benadrukt dat de lokale bevolking in Corrientes en Santiago del Estero vaak bestaand onrecht als urgenter ervoeren, en het aanpakken van deze type onrecht een hogere prioriteit gaf dan problemen rondom landroof. Ze accepteerden vaak stilzwijgend onrecht dat landroof veroorzaakte, waardoor gemeenschappen ontheemd raakten, werden ingesloten door plantages of met geweld werden verdreven. Reeds kwetsbare mensen werden onevenredig hard geraakt door de sociale en ecologische gevolgen van landroof.

In **hoofdstuk 5** worden twee agentschappen bestudeerd die zijn opgezet naar aanleiding van protest en politieke druk, om de situatie rondom land conflicten in Santiago del Estero aan te pakken. Hoewel veel onderzoekers van mening zijn dat deze samenwerkingsverbanden alleen door nationale staten worden geïntroduceerd om politieke macht te verwerven en te behouden, laat dit hoofdstuk zien dat lokale gemeenschappen juist worden ondersteund door deze initiatieven. Sociale bewegingen in Santiago del Estero konden een verschil maken bij het aanpakken van de negatieve implicaties van landroof door de lokale gemeenschappen weerbaarder te maken.

De belangrijkste bevindingen van deze hoofdstukken worden hieronder gepresenteerd, gestructureerd door de twee onderzoeksvragen.

Bevindingen

De sociale, politieke en ecologische processen die ten grondslag liggen aan de governance van landroof

In veel rurale gebieden van Argentinië is de overheid er niet in geslaagd zijn belangrijkste verantwoordelijkheden te vervullen. Hierdoor verkeren de meeste lokale gemeenschappen in een staat van sociale deprivatie en leven mensen in precare omstandigheden. Dit was zichtbaar in

het gebrek aan basisbehoeften zoals toegang tot voldoende voedsel, water, inkomen, mobiliteit, werk, onderwijs, gezondheidszorg en huisvesting. De meeste mensen beschikten ook niet over eigendomsbewijzen van het land waar ze al decennia woonden. De lokale bevolking ervoer verschillende obstakels om landrechten te formaliseren. De reeds bestaande ongelijkheid, zoals het missen van scholing, ervaren door lokale gemeenschappen, verergerde de negatieve gevolgen van landroof en de mate waarin lokale gemeenschappen zich konden weren tegen landroof. De wortels van de marginalisering van lokale gemeenschappen liggen in eerder uitgevoerd beleid en praktijken die ongelijke eigendom van land mogelijk maakten. Hoewel gemeenschappen zich misschien bewust waren van de risico's van het niet formaliseren van grondbezit, investeerden ze meer tijd in het aanpakken van andere reeds bestaand onrecht in plaats van de fundamentele kwesties, zoals het veilig stellen van landeigendom.

Vele actoren op verschillende geografische niveaus delen de verantwoordelijkheid voor landroof. Zoals te zien is in hoofdstuk 3 over de Harvard Management Company en Douglas Tompkins, worden land investeerders aangetrokken door relatief lage landprijzen, maar worden ze ook aangetrokken door een bedrijfsvriendelijk investeringsklimaat en zwakke milieuregels in Argentinië. Over het algemeen hebben de nationale en provinciale regeringen van Argentinië een zwakke regulerende rol en daarom worden de sociale en ecologische gevolgen van landroof nog groter.

Sociale bewegingen speelden een belangrijke rol in kwesties van landroof, bijvoorbeeld door het informeren van de lokale bevolking over hun landrechten en het verbeteren van de veiligheid van grondbezit. Daarnaast werkten sociale bewegingen aan het mobiliseren van mensen, zochten ze samenwerkingen met instanties en bewegingen op verschillende schaalniveaus om zo de kans op het bereiken van hun doelen te vergrootten, en zochten ze toenadering tot de overheid om samen de lokale bevolking te assisteren in de problematiek van landroof (zie hoofdstuk 3 en 5). De mogelijkheden om veranderingen teweeg te brengen hangen af van veel componenten zoals de politieke context, de afstand, beschikbare middelen, toegang tot informatie en externe contacten. In Santiago del Estero gaf de provinciale overheid, na jaren van politieke druk, verschillende sociale bewegingen en non-gouvernementele organisaties (NGOs) de mogelijkheid om de problemen van landroof aan te pakken in samenspraak met de overheid. Er werden twee agentschappen opgericht, namelijk het Register voor Landbezitters (*Registro de Poseedores*) en het Noodcomité (*Comité de Emergencia*). De agentschappen verlaagden de barrières om grondbezit te formaliseren en stonden lokale gemeenschappen beter bij om de gewelddadige confrontaties met investeerders aan te pakken. Ondanks deze positieve impact van de twee agentschappen, kunnen ze niet voldoende tegendruk bieden tegen de actoren die gewelddadige strategieën gebruiken om de mensen van hun land te verjagen.

Zoals besproken in hoofdstuk 3 zijn beschermde natuurgebieden niet immuun voor landroof, omdat zelfs 'groene initiatieven' tot landroof kunnen leiden. Onder het neoliberale natuurbehoud-discours is een type natuurbehoud gepromoot dat ruimte geeft aan o.a. bedrijven om land te kopen in natuurgebieden. Dit is vaak destructief voor de mensen die gebruik maken van deze grond, alsmede met ernstige gevolgen voor de biodiversiteit. Hoewel de investeringen in natuurgebieden ogenschijnlijk "groen" zijn, kan de lokale bevolking dezelfde gevolgen ondervinden als bij conventionele landroof.

De milieurechtvaardigheidsimplicaties van landroof

Landroof kan worden beschouwd als milieuonrecht, omdat achtergestelde gemeenschappen ontheemd worden, in hun vrijheid ingeperkt worden of met geweld verdreven worden. Kwetsbare mensen in rurale gebieden in Argentinië worden geconfronteerd met disproportioneel onrecht en ervaren verschillende vormen van geweld (hoofdstuk 4). De ongelijke verdeling van leed, de beperkte mate van lokale participatie in besluitvorming, de procedurele rechtvaardigheidskwesties, en het gebrek aan erkenning en respect voor lokale mensen en culturen zijn kernthema's in het landroof-discours. Landroof heeft vele socio-ecologische gevolgen die worden gevoeld door mensen die reeds kwetsbaar zijn, vooral inheemse volken. Zoals eerder vermeld, wordt de impact van landroof verergerd door de bestaande ongelijkheid in rurale gebieden, zoals het gebrek aan onderwijs, basisvoorzieningen en infrastructuur.

Landroof en verandering van landgebruik vormen een ernstige bedreiging voor het effectief functioneren, het welzijn en de manier van leven in lokale gemeenschappen. Landroof brengt het voortbestaan van verschillende culturen en manieren van leven in gevaar. Deze negatieve socio-ecologische gevolgen werden zowel waargenomen in de expansie van de industriële landbouw en industriële boomplantages, als in de expansie van natuurbehoud projecten.

Hoewel landroof in de literatuur vaak wordt geportretteerd als een abrupte gebeurtenis, onthult dit onderzoek dat het een proces is dat zich in de loop van de tijd (soms vele jaren) ontvouwt, met verschillende gevolgen op verschillende momenten in het proces. Om de werkelijke impact van landroof volledig te omvatten is het daarom essentieel om de gevolgen van landroof over een lange periode te bestuderen. Ook is het belangrijk om de sociaal-politieke en socio-ecologische kenmerken van verschillende plekken beter in kaart te brengen, aangezien de processen van landroof per plaats verschillen.

Onder bepaalde omstandigheden kan landroof de mogelijkheid geven om zowel te reflecteren op sociale waarden en de waarde van een gezond functionerende ecosysteem, als de verantwoordelijkheden van individuen, gemeenschappen, NGOs, overheden en bedrijven hierin. Dit werd aangetoond in het geval van Douglas Tompkins (hoofdstuk 3) en ook in de samenwerking

tussen protestbewegingen en de provinciale overheid (hoofdstuk 5). Desalniettemin worden dit soort governance-veranderingen vaak alleen onder politieke druk gevormd en resulteren ze mogelijk niet in de gewenste resultaten voor lokale gemeenschappen.

Tot slot

Er worden in dit proefschrift een aantal aanbevelingen gedaan om conflicten over toegang tot land aan te pakken voor verschillende actoren, zoals lokale gemeenschappen, sociale bewegingen/ NGO's, overheden, internationale organisaties en voor bedrijven die zich bezighouden met activiteiten die kunnen worden gezien als landroof. De belangrijkste aanbeveling betreft de formalisering van landtitels voor lokale gemeenschappen. Het is zeer gewenst dat, wanneer mogelijk, hierop actie wordt ondernomen, omdat het een betere bescherming voor deze gemeenschappen biedt. Het nastreven van het formalisering van landgebruik houdt ook in dat er door lokale gemeenschappen meer aandacht besteedt moet worden aan het versterken van hun vermogen om landrecht te claimen. Dit kan door middel van het beter op orde brengen van de documenten waarmee ze kunnen aantonen dat zij het land gebruiken (*actos posesorios*). NGOs moeten actief informatie over landrechten aan lokale gemeenschappen verstrekken, en moeten voorzien in hulpmiddelen voor het in kaart brengen van landgebruik. Overheden hebben ook een rol, namelijk het ontwikkelen van een efficiënte en betaalbare manier om de formalisering van land mogelijk te maken. Aangezien formalisering van de landtitels van groot belang is in de aanbevelingen van dit proefschrift, is er tegelijkertijd behoefte aan inzicht in hoe lokale gemeenschappen beschermd kunnen worden tegen de ongunstige en perverse uitkomsten die kunnen voortvloeien uit de formalisering van grondbezit. Een andere belangrijke aanbeveling is dat internationale organisaties maatschappelijk verantwoord ondernemen moeten verbeteren en stimuleren. Daarnaast wordt bedrijven aangeraden de sociale en ecologische gevolgen van hun investeringen veel meer in acht te nemen.

Dit proefschrift heeft aangetoond dat er een onmiddellijke behoefte is voor het aanpakken van de lange-termijn gevolgen en cumulatieve effecten van landroof en het reeds bestaand onrecht ervaren door lokale gemeenschappen.

About the Author

Nienke Busscher

Nienke Busscher (1986) conducted this PhD research at the University of Groningen, the Netherlands and the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium. Nienke holds a Bachelor degree (2008) in International Business and Languages from the Hanze University of Applied Sciences, Groningen and a Master degree (2012) in International Development Studies from the Wageningen University and Research centre in the Netherlands.

For her Master thesis she collaborated with the local NGO Fundapaz in Argentina. She conducted research on land conflicts, focusing on the strategies rural communities used to maintain access to customary used land. She also participated in several mapping activities, communal meetings on land use and capacity building activities. Building on her Master thesis, she wrote a research proposal which led her to starting a PhD position in September 2013 at the Faculty of Spatial Sciences, University of Groningen.

In 2014, she obtained the scholarship 'Excellence scholarship for Latin Americans and Europeans'. This is a program of Erasmus Mundus Action 2 of the European Union. As part of this scholarship, she collaborated with the Argentinian scholars Brian Ferrero and Alejandro Oviedo from the National University of Misiones, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Nienke taught in several courses during her PhD. In 2014, Nienke was a tutor during the 'Intensive Program - Spatial Development Planning' in Ankara, Turkey. In 2016, she supervised five working groups in the course 'People, Place and Culture'. These student groups investigated environmental justice issues in the North of the Netherlands. In 2017, she designed, coordinated and taught the course 'Reading Seminar: Key debates in Development Studies' at Globalisation Studies Groningen.

During her employment as a PhD she attended various workshops and she presented her work at several conferences in Japan, Uruguay, Argentina and the Netherlands. These presentations included presentations in Spanish.

Acknowledgements

“The single greatest cause of happiness is gratitude.”
(Auliq Ice)

I would like to start by thanking Constanza and Frank for giving me guidance and supervision the past years. Coming from three different continents and speaking three different languages, we have learnt a lot from each other. Constanza, thank you for your enthusiasm, encouragement and efforts in guiding me throughout this PhD. I really enjoyed the fieldwork we did together in Argentina! Frank, thank you for your patience, your efforts in correcting my work, sharing your knowledge and challenging my thoughts.

I am eternally grateful to all the people in Argentina that accepted to share and discuss their stories with me. I have been received with such love and openness by so many people. My PhD has highly depended on their efforts to receive me and taking the time to tell their stories, struggles and dreams. I want to give a special thanks to David Morelos for taking me on fieldtrips, Pedro Orieta for introducing me the legal aspects of land grabbing, Abel Fleita and Jorge Mazzochi for your guidance in Corrientes, and lastly Paola Marozzi for helping me out in Santiago del Estero.

Muchas gracias Brian Ferrero and Alejandro Oviedo for assisting me during my research stay at the Universidad Nacional de Misiones. You both received me very warmly and assisted me greatly by taking me on fieldtrips. Also, *mil gracias* Carolina Gomez and Erica Gomez for your help, sharing your ideas, contacts and thoughts on my research and most importantly, for your friendship. *Muchísimas gracias* Raul Paz for your interest in my research and for putting me in contact with your research team in Santiago del Estero.

I am also grateful for the different friendships that I have established during my PhD, thank you all for your encouragement, help, motivation, and laughs. A special thanks to ‘Team Awesome’: Steven and Jing, I am very happy to have had you as my office buddies. We made a great team, and we were always there for each other in times of need. Also, a big thanks to our adopted roomie Koen! Your visits were always fun!!

Lidewij van der Ploeg, a special thanks to you. It has been such a pleasure to share my PhD journey with you. Not only could we discuss our research and the ins and outs of the faculty, we also spent a lot of time together outside of the office: on the yoga mat, in Italy and now in Utrecht. Thank you for being there for me and motivating me! I am very grateful that you and Jing are my paranymphs and that we can support each other once again, this time at my defense.

Also a big thanks to all my colleagues, I hold great memories to the beach volley, running at Zernike, parties and lunches with you! A special thanks to Melanie, the Jaspers, Britta, Ward, Marije, Jessica, Karina, Bernal, Koen, Mohammed, Barend, Liesbeth, Mufty, Annemarel (issie), Marijn, Cristina, Elen, and Diana for being such great colleagues.

Also, I want to express my gratitude to my friends who supported me along the way; Jildou, Sophie, Nina, Caro, Julia, Wilma, Eva and Marieke. Thank you Anouk for the design of my cover. I enjoyed to explore my creative side with you and I am really happy with the result. Last but not least, Tjeerd and Esther, thank you for making proposition writing fun!

I also want to thank my family for their love and support during my PhD, I could not have done this without you. Also, a big thank to Doppio, not only for providing a great place to work (Sharon, thank you for all the coffees you poured me last summer), but mostly for the fact that I met Dirk here. Lieve Dirk, dankjewel dat je me hebt gesteund in de laatste, meest uitdagende fase van mijn promotie. Je stond altijd voor me klaar om mijn stukken te verbeteren, je hielp me relativeren wanneer ik het niet meer zag zitten en je gaf me de energie om door te gaan. Laten we volop genieten van de afronding van mijn PhD! ♥

Nienke
Groningen, oktober 2018

Appendix I

Interview guide (Example)

Pauta de entrevista - Interview guide

Fecha y lugar: xx

Me encuentro realizando una investigación doctoral en la universidad de Groningen en los Países Bajos. La investigación se trata del uso contemporáneo y manejo de los recursos naturales en Argentina, notablemente del creciente demanda por tierra global por agricultura, forestaciones y conservación. Estoy investigando casos en las provincias de Santiago del Estero y Corrientes. Son casos muy distintos que sirven para entender el desarrollo (in)sostenibles en América Latina. Estoy interesado como los procesos de tenencia de tierra y uso de los recursos naturales están desarrollándose en Argentina tal cual sus implicaciones sociales, políticas y ecológicas. En este contexto, le invité para participar en esta investigación.

Preparé un formulario de consentimiento, antes de empezar la entrevista, me gustaría explicarte el eje y el contenido del formulario.

EI ENTREVISTADO XX

Para comenzar me gustaría que me contara un poco acerca de su formación, trayectoria y trabajo en el área de xx. Por qué llegó a interesarse en estos temas? Qué proyectos de investigación/desarrollo ha desarrollado o está desarrollando?

TIERRA

- Cuáles son los objetivos de xx (empresa, programa, institución)?Cuál es la labor que xx está realizando? Como se relaciona su trabajo e institución con el tema del manejo y compras de tierras?Cuál es su área de conocimiento?

Me gustaría que conversáramos sobre el tema de la tierra.

- En este momento, quiénes son los principales compradores/ inversionistas y especuladores en tierra en Argentina? Quien está comprando tierras y para qué? Y que objetivos tienen?
- Como se lleva a cabo el proceso de compra y venta de tierras? Que caminos y estrategias siguen las empresas involucradas? Qué tipo de tierra están comprando? Es tierra que pertenece al estado? A privados? A comunidades? Como se materializa el proceso de compra de tierras? Que barreras y/o dificultades enfrentan los compradores?
- Usted podría explicarme cómo ha cambiado a lo largo de los años la composición de actores que tiene en sus manos el manejo, la propiedad y el cultivo de las tierras? (por ejemplo, la división entre extranjeros y nacionales, y multinacionales, indígenas, etc. etc.)
- Cuáles son los momentos históricos claves dentro del proceso que ha permitido un creciente acaparamiento de tierra en manos de unos pocos? Cuales han sido los puntos de

inflexión y cambios que han permitido esta transformación?

- Qué tipo de regulación y leyes ha facilitado/permitido/acelerado esta transformación?
- Cuáles serían, según usted, las razones principales para que un país como Argentina este permitiendo/facilitando esta alta concentración de la propiedad de la tierra en las manos de unos pocos?
- Cuál es el impacto de este proceso? Y que desafíos sociales, políticos y ecológicos trae esta transformación en términos de acaparamiento?
- Geográficamente y de acuerdo a los diferentes sectores productivos, como está organizada la distribución de la compra de tierra? Como se organiza territorialmente? Existen regiones o territorios más afectados?
- Cuál es su punto de vista y opinión sobre las transformaciones que han dado origen a los acaparamientos de tierra y a una eventual desigualdad en la distribución de los beneficios de este proceso? (leyes, estrategias de empresas)
- Quienes son los principales beneficiados o ganadores de este proceso? Y los más perjudicados? Podría por favor explicar concretamente que se ha ganado y perdido en términos sociales, políticos y ecológicos?
- Ve alguna posibilidad de revertir este proceso? Hay gente protestando contra este proceso?

RECURSOS NATURALES

- Como caracterizaría a la Argentina en términos de regulación, leyes y toma de decisiones sobre el manejo y uso de recursos naturales? En que se parece y diferencia del resto del continente latinoamericano o por ejemplo de sus vecinos Chilenos, Brasileños y/o Bolivianos?
- La semana próxima habrá una consulta popular para rechazar o aceptar la construcción de una represa en Misiones. Según usted, que significa esta consulta dentro del marco de las políticas medioambientales y de recursos naturales en Argentina? Procesos participativos de este tipo son nuevos en Misiones/Argentina?
- He leído sobre la presencia de varias empresas extranjeras en Argentina. Qué rol tienen? Cual es por ejemplo el rol de China y su impacto en el uso de los recursos naturales Argentinos?
- Otro tema que me interesa es la diferencia en la regulación sobre el manejo y uso de recursos naturales en las diferentes provincias. Por ejemplo, en algunas provincias existe una prohibición de minería a cielo abierto (Tucumán, La Rioja, Mendoza, La Pampa, and Rio Negro). Por qué? Cuál es la razón? Qué tipo de consecuencias trae este manejo diferenciado? Como se puede explicar que esto pase en estas provincias y no en las otras?

JUSTICIA AMBIENTAL

- La concentración de recursos naturales en manos de algunos pocos y la desigualdad en la

distribución de los beneficios y consecuencias sociales y medioambientales de esta concentración genera injusticias. Quienes en Argentina están luchando por revertir esta situación? Quienes están liderando estos procesos de contestación? Quien protege y ayuda a los más vulnerables?

- Existen organizaciones comunitarias, indígenas luchando por un manejo y uso más justo de los recursos naturales? Como se lucha por mayor justicia en argentina? Cuáles son los efectos?
- Como han evolucionado los movimientos sociales-medioambientales en estas luchas? Qué rol tienen los indígenas dentro de estos grupos?

POLITICAS

- Cuál es el rol de los medios en el tema del manejo y uso de recursos naturales?
- Cuál es el rol de la universidad y del mundo académico en el tema del manejo y uso de recursos naturales?
- Considerando la conversación que hemos tenido, en su opinión en qué dirección o hacia donde se está moviendo la sociedad de Argentina? Le parece que la situación mejorara o empeorara?
- Cuán importante es para los Argentinos y para la clase política argentina el tema del uso sustentable y justo de los recursos naturales?
- En el futuro cercano hay elecciones en Uruguay, Brasil Argentina y Bolivia, cuál cree usted será la relevancia del tema de los recursos naturales en estas elecciones?

Muchas gracias por su entrevista. Me ha sido de mucha utilidad. Antes de terminarla, quisiera preguntarle si podría aconsejarme nuevas personas para entrevistar y conversar sobre estos temas. Muchas gracias.

Appendix II

Consent form

Acuerdo de Consentimiento - *Consent form*

Gobernanza de acaparamientos de tierras

The governance of land grabbing

Me encuentro realizando una investigación doctoral en la universidad de Groningen en los Países Bajos. La investigación se trata del uso contemporáneo y manejo de los recursos naturales en Argentina, notablemente del creciente demanda por tierra global. Estoy investigando casos en las provincias de Santiago del Estero y Corrientes. Estoy estudiando casos vinculados a compras de tierra para formar áreas protegidas, plantaciones industriales de pino/eucalipto y cultivos de soja. El objetivo es reflexionar sobre los desafíos de gobernanza multi-escalar asociados a la creciente demanda de tierras y recursos naturales en Argentina y las implicaciones rurales subyacentes. Los profesores Frank Vanclay and Constanza Parra de la Universidad de Groningen, Holanda y la Universidad Católica de Lovaina, Bélgica, son los supervisores de mi tesis doctoral.

I am currently conducting my doctoral research at the University of Groningen in the Netherlands. My research is about the contemporary use and management of natural resources, in the context of the increasing global demand for land. We have chosen Argentina as a case study and within Argentina we focus specifically on the provinces of Corrientes and Santiago del Estero where you can find land acquisitions for protected areas, industrial tree plantations and soy cultivation. The case studies serve to get more insights in the role of governance in the context of land acquisitions and the rural implications. My supervisors are Prof. Dr. Frank Vanclay from the University of Groningen and Dr. Constanza Parra from the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium.

Quisiera contar con su colaboración en relación a la investigación mencionada, y conversar con usted acerca de su experiencia y conocimientos sobre temas de gobernanza medioambiental y socio-económica en Argentina y en la provincia Corrientes o Santiago del Estero. Esta colaboración incluye entrevistas dirigidas a usted y/o a otros miembros de su organización o equipo de trabajo, solicitud de documentos, bases de datos y cualquier otra información que se considere relevante para esta investigación.

I would like to have your collaboration with regard to the previously mentioned topics and learn of your experiences with and involvement in governance in Argentina and especially in Corrientes or Santiago del Estero. This collaboration consists of interviews addressed to you and members of your organization or working group (if applicable), documentation, data bases and any other information that might be considered useful for the research.

Con respecto a la entrevista, le informo que me gustaría grabarla para poder tener un respaldo completo y fiel de la información que usted compartirá conmigo. Por favor, tome

en cuenta que únicamente mis supervisores y yo tendremos acceso al material grabado y transcripciones de las entrevistas. Encima, me gustaría hacer citas de observaciones útiles para fortalecer mis argumentos en mis artículos académicos. Eso será en forma anónima.

I would like to record the interview so that I can obtain an accurate record of your views. Only my supervisors and I will have access to the tapes and the transcripts. Next to this, recordings might be used to quote interesting insights to underline my argument in academic articles.

Todo cuánto usted mencione durante la entrevista o provea como documentación e información será tratado de manera confidencial. Es decir que cualquier información que se considere que pueda ocasionar un riesgo para usted o su organización será tratada con discreción. Si desea mantener nuestra colaboración anónima, su nombre no figurará en ningún documento, publicación, transcripción o parte de la investigación.

Everything you say during the interview will be treated confidentially. That is, any information that might jeopardize you or your organization will be treated with discretion. If you wish to stay anonymous, your name will not appear on the transcript or in any further publication.

Si usted está de acuerdo en formar parte de esta entrevista, tendrá los siguientes derechos:

If you agree to take part in the interview, you have the following rights:

1. **Abstenerse de contestar alguna(s) pregunta(s), terminar la entrevista cuando usted guste, solicitar detener la grabación (sí usted ha dado aprobación de grabar la entrevista) en cualquier momento.**

To refuse to answer any particular question, to terminate the interview at any time, and to switch off the voice recorder (if you have given permission to record the interview) at any time.

2. **Hacer preguntas sobre la investigación o la entrevista, en cualquier momento durante la entrevista o después.**

To ask any further questions about the interview or research project that occurs to you, either during the interview or after.

3. **Permanecer anónimo. Cualquier cosa que pueda revelar su identidad no será incluida en publicaciones o reportes sobre los resultados del proyecto sin su consentimiento explícito.**

To remain anonymous; anything that may reveal your identity will not be included in publications or any other report about the findings of the research without your explicit consent.

Los resultados de esta investigación serán divulgados en artículos académicos que serán firmados por mis supervisores y yo. Éstos serán publicados en revistas científicas o profesionales, y presentados en conferencias y seminarios internacionales.

The results of this research will be reflected in academic articles by my supervisors and me and may be published in academic or professional journals, and/or presented at international conferences and seminars.

Este acuerdo de consentimiento valida la información que se obtenga de las entrevistas y de cualquier otro documento o material que usted o su organización me faciliten para el desarrollo de mi investigación.

This consent form validates the information obtained by the interviews or any other material given to me by you and your organization or group for the development of my research.

Por favor rodee su respuesta - Please encircle your choice.

Doy consentimiento a ser entrevistado(a) para esta investigación bajo las condiciones antes mencionadas <i>I consent to be interviewed for this research on the above conditions</i>	SI	NO
Deseo permanecer anónimo <i>I wish to stay anonymous</i>	SI	NO
Accedo a colaborar con información y datos pertinentes para esta investigación <i>I accept to collaborate with information and data to this research</i>	SI	NO

Nombre del participante <i>Name participant</i>	Firma del participante <i>Signature participant</i>
Teléfonos <i>Telephone number</i>	Correo electrónico <i>E-mail</i>

Nombre del investigador <i>Name researcher</i> Nienke Busscher	Firma del investigador <i>Signature researcher</i>
Teléfonos <i>Telephone number</i> (54) 1156667391 Argentina (31) 6-50495991 Países Bajos	Correo electrónico <i>E-mail</i> n.a.busscher@rug.nl

Lugar (*place*) _____

Fecha (*date*) _____

