

## Session: Grabbing nature to save it – appropriating land for nature conservation

<b>Title</b>
<i>Grabbing Nature to Save It: appropriating land for nature conservation</i>
<b>Short summary of the session</b>
<p>This panel builds on earlier discussions of ‘green grabbing’ to analyse how discourses of nature conservation serve to justify the (further) marginalization of local residents in and around conservation areas. Recent alarmist narratives on ‘planetary boundaries’ may marginalize local residents even further, with the ‘social justification’ of mobilizing locals for conservation through promotion of sustainable development giving way to neo-protectionist discourse once more. Yet the need for conservation to ‘pay its own way’ has not disappeared; state conservation authorities increasingly need to generate their own funding, resulting in cooperation with the private sector (particularly through tourism), but also sometimes in competition over territory for conservation and tourism. Great hopes are often placed on the expansion of protected areas (including across national boundaries) for attracting tourists, with scant reflection on the viability of such options. Private land owners and investors also increasingly turn to conservation and tourism as a new form of land use, which can also constitute a form of land grabbing, especially where such initiatives obstruct land reform programmes intended to address skewed property relations.</p> <p>This panel aims to investigate these developments, examining the various ways in which land is being appropriated for conservation, with particular attention to changing relations between the public and private sectors, the influence of these on conservation initiatives, and socio-economic impacts of this on local residents. We would like to invite presentations on the following themes (but also welcome suggestions for additional themes):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Impacts of ‘alarmist’ discourses on the appropriation and securitization of land for conservation and the relation between conservation authorities and local residents;</li> <li>- The impacts of ‘tourism as a business model’ on how public conservation authorities interpret their responsibilities;</li> <li>- The growing importance of the private sector in nature conservation through CSR and philanthropy, public-private partnerships, and private wildlife conservation.</li> </ul>
<b>Format</b>
<i>Regular presentations followed by discussion</i>
<b>Organizers</b>
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