



LANDac ANNUAL
INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE
4-5 July 2019

LAND GOVERNANCE IN TRANSITION
How to support transformations that
work for people and nature?

CONFERENCE SESSIONS

**Theme 3a: Shifts in Land Control and
Realities of Dispossession**

PANEL

Energy and land, cases of community engagement and resistance from North and South

Michiel Köhne, Sociology of Development and Change, Wageningen University and Research

CONTACT: Michiel Köhne michiel.kohne@wur.nl

Although fossil fuels are often seen as the problem to which renewable energy could be the solution, both ways of energy production constitute vast long-term alterations to landscapes that often greatly affect local inhabitants' daily lives. Such projects make people's lived spaces into areas of industrial production changing local values and meaning of the land. Local people become affected by this in sometimes very differentiated ways regarding their envisaged use of the land in relation to such energy projects and may choose to resist, welcome or remain passive towards them. This often leads to conflicts not only between communities and the corporate and governmental parties behind the project, but also within communities between its proponents who hope to get some benefits from the project and its opponents who mostly fear the losses it may entail. In this session we look specifically at how local people engage with energy projects to understand how the changes they bring to land use may be either welcomed or resisted.

We welcome contributions that explore questions relating to:

- The ways in which people may become displaced
- The ways in which people claim a voice
- The differences and similarities between cases from North and South
- The differences and similarities between fossil fuels and renewable energy cases

This session welcomes abstract submissions.

PANEL

Accumulation by dispossession. The case of Special Economic Zones

Anh Nguyen Quoc, National University of Vietnam & Álvaro Germán Torres Mora, University of Helsinki-National University of Colombia.

CONTACT: Álvaro Germán Torres Mora germantorresmora@gmail.com

Currently, land grabbing is happening in the most remote zones of the world, as far as capitalism expands its models of production. This phenomenon is strongly linked to the increased need of biofuels such as ethanol and biodiesel, extracted mainly from Sugarcane, Oil palm and Soy. These crops often are cultivated by investors who have resources for carrying out large scale projects.

Small land holders are often portrayed as incapable of profitable production, given their backwardness and lack of resources. Such argument has been widely used for grabbing their lands and converting them into salaried workers.

In some places of the world Especial Economic Zones have been implemented. The model entails the liberalization of local economies, benefiting companies with lower or no taxes and other incentives for production and exportation. The expansions of such zones has forced the displacement of traditional populations, which have received compensations (such as money and jobs). The model has facilitated the dispossession of ancestral lands through completely legal mechanisms, which have been fostered by local governments at expenses of their own populations.

Unlike violent strategies that have been used for grabbing land in Colombia and Africa, legal strategies have been implemented in other regions of the world, especially in those where no current armed conflicts occur. Accumulation by dispossession has, therefore, succeeded in places such as India, Laos or Philippines, where Especial Economic Zones have taken large extension of lands, making large profits though displacing peoples unable to compete

Conference theme: Land access for smallholders and visions of development

Potential speakers:

- Markus Kröger. Professor of Development Studies at the University of Helsinki
- Anh Nguyen Quoc. Lecturer of Economics at National University of Vietnam
- Álvaro Germán Torres Mora. Expert on land law. Currently working for the National University of Colombia

This session welcomes abstract submissions.

PANEL / ROUNDTABLE

Increasing Farmland Concentration in Central and Eastern Europe - Causes, Challenges, Consequences

German-Ukrainian Agropolicy Dialogue, BVVG German AgriForest Privatisation Agency, National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine.

CONTACT: Christoph Gilgen gilgen.christoph@bvvg.de

In many post-socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe, land reforms are coming to an end. Large-scale privatization or redistribution of agricultural land has led to new ownership structures. However, in recent years, small and medium-sized farms are rapidly losing their viability, especially in non-EU countries. Significant areas of farmland are controlled by large agricultural holdings and non-agricultural investors. The agricultural land market is turning into a market for corporate rights of companies that control the land, as a result of which traditional methods of regulating the market turnover of land quickly lose their effectiveness. "Portfolio investors" show great interest into buying agricultural land, which leads to a rise in prices and crowding out small and medium-sized farmers from the land market. Industrialization of agricultural holdings also leads to a further decline in employment in rural areas and mass migration to cities. This especially concerns young people living in rural areas.

The proposed session shall serve as platform to discuss the main problems of current agricultural land tenure systems in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as to consider possible ways to minimize the negative effects of agricultural industrialization and excessive land concentration against the background that land is a limited resource. Special attention should be paid to identifying and measuring the level of concentration of agricultural land and to discuss possible solutions for regulating the access to land in order to prevent an unhealthy land distribution.

Conference theme: Land governance, access to land, land tenure security, investments

Potential speakers/presenters:

- Andrii Martyn, National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine
- Oleksandr Krasnolutskyj, State Service of Ukraine for Geodesy, Cartography and Cadastre
- Christoph Konrad Gilgen, German AgriForest Privatisation Agency
- N.N., National Center for Agricultural Support, Poland
- N.N., Belarusian State Academy of Agriculture
- N.N., State Institute for Land Management of the Republic of Belarus "Belgiprozem"
- N.N., Agricultural State University of Moldova

This session welcomes abstract submissions.

PANEL

Beyond the 'conflict-fetish' – land disputes and structural agrarian questions

Mathijs van Leeuwen, Centre for International Conflict Analysis & Management (CICAM), Radboud University Nijmegen; An Ansoms & Aymar Nyenyezi Bisoka & Rene-Claude Niyonkuru, Centre for Development Studies, Université catholique de Louvain; Gemma van der Haar, Sociology of Development and Change, Wageningen University and Research

CONTACT: Mathijs van Leeuwen m.vanleeuwen@fm.ru.nl

In sub-Saharan Africa, advocacy work and academic writing has effectively put land disputes on the peacebuilding and development agenda. Notably in conflict affected settings, many policy makers and development practitioners now promote mediation, transitional justice, intensification and land certification to prevent such disputes from threatening rural livelihoods and security. While preventing land-related insecurity is a legitimate concern, we are worried about the dangers of a 'conflict-fetish' (Goodhand 2000): the tendency to interpret everything occurring in conflict-affected areas as part of conflict dynamics. All too easily, land-related peacebuilding interventions overlook the more structural dimensions of conflicts around land. But also in more stable environments, interveners tend to focus on the visible, interpersonal violence around land rather than on the structural nature of land conflict. Yet, academic work on agrarian change has for long explored structural tensions around land access and distribution, exploring the embeddedness of land ownership in relations of patronage and political exclusion, the competition between tenure systems, or the tensions inevitably accompanying agrarian change and reform. To our mind, a focus on conflict mediation of land disputes risks ignoring or even normalising injustices, exclusion and problematic (large-scale) land-transfers from both the past and the presence.

In this panel, we want to build bridges between conflict and peace researchers interested in land, and political economic research on land matters, and so push thinking about land disputes beyond the 'conflict fetish'. By bringing in a critical perspective on agrarian change, we may highlight continuities between land issues in conflict-affected settings and those in more 'regular' settings of development, and explore what these imply for processes of agrarian change in both. We particularly invite contributions that:

- problematize the more structural dimensions of land issues in conflict-affected settings, and how they resonate with ongoing contention around land and labour relationships in settings that are not labelled as 'conflict-affected';
- explore the challenges to policy makers and development practitioners to combine strengthening dispute-resolving capacity in the short run with agrarian reform in the long run;
- explore the lessons to be learned from earlier efforts and experiences elsewhere in countering unjust labour relationships, marginalization, or large-scale enclosure, in a time when redistributive reform is not considered as a viable option any more.

Potential speakers:

Will be drawn from our joint projects + others interested to join.

This session welcomes abstract submissions.