

LANDac Online Encounter 2020: Programme PhD Session

Date: Tuesday, 30 June 2020 – 10am-1pm

Organizers: Dr. Gemma van der Haar (Wageningen University) and Dominique Schmid (visiting PhD candidate, Utrecht University)

Chair: Dr. Gemma van der Haar

In this session, four PhD candidates from the LANDac PhD network will present their work in progress. The session is organised in four blocks, in which each author will first present their work in 15 minutes, then, 10 minutes are reserved for questions and comments from the paper's discussant, followed by a 10 minutes' open discussion with the entire audience. The session is open to everyone.

Session overview:

10:00 – 10:10 Welcoming of participants and introduction

10:10 – 11:20 Presentations 1 and 2

11:20 – 11:40 Break

11:40 – 12:50 Presentations 3 and 4

12:50 – 13:00 Closing

Presentation 1 (10:10-10:45am)

Playing soft or playing strong? Civil society's advocacy strategies in mining investments in Kenya

Author: Selma Zijlstra, Radboud University Nijmegen

Discussant: Dr. Kei Otsuki, Utrecht University

Abstract:

Amid Corporate Social Responsibility trends and globalisation, companies have come to be under increased scrutiny of civil society organizations (CSOs). As such, civil society engagement with business is being increasingly discussed in academic debates. In this debate, academics disagree whether confrontational and cooperative strategies can be combined within a single CSO. This same topic has been explored in civil society engagement towards the state. However, in

practice, CSOs often target both stakeholders. This is especially the case in local land rights struggles the Global South that has been typically overlooked in the above-mentioned debates. In this paper, we explore the opportunities and limitations of combining confrontational and cooperative strategies through an analysis of strategies of four CSOs directed at business and state in the context of two land investments in Kenya. We adopt a relational perspective to demonstrate that strategic choices are not made autonomously, but are shaped through dynamic interactions with advocacy targets, as well as with communities and donors. The paper shows how these relations constrain or enable opportunities for combining cooperation and confrontation within a single CSO. This gives insights for how CSOs strategize in interplay with other actors in the context of land and/or mining related investments.

Presentation 2 (10:45-11:20am)

Are We Not More Valuable Than Cows? – Understanding Variation in Land Governance Amongst Twa in Burundi

Author: Ladd Serwat, University of Sussex

Discussant: Lisa Trogisch, Wageningen University

Abstract:

Burundi has been in a process of land governance reforms including the decentralization of land administration and land registration. This paper considers the gendered effects of land reform among the Twa. The Twa ethnic group comprise around 1% of the total population but unlike other ethnicities in the country, a number of political, economic and social factors have increased Twa marginalization in respect to accessing and holding land. This paper draws on feminist institutional economics using a mixed methods research including individual interviews, focus groups and a survey of 800 people across five provinces of Burundi. Specific questions consider how Twa experience land certification and registration compared to other ethnic groups? Why are Twa being excluded from land certificates and registration? What is the response from government actors to Twa land tenure? How are outcomes gendered and differ across space? I argue that a state-directed process stripped Twa's customary land rights, where Twa women face further limitations to accessing land tenure than other ethnic groups. Weak land tenure rights have come about over a long process of exclusion and dispossession which continue into the present. The ongoing treatment of Twa land as 'vacant' despite its uses for pottery, hunting and gathering have resulted in increased landlessness and poverty. Harsh social discrimination has also limited access to integration and opportunities, as well as shaped government administrators positions to limit Twa land rights. Customary law and gender dynamics concerning land tenure vary significantly amongst Twa compared to Hutu and Tutsi.

Presentation 3 (11:40am-12:15pm):

Urban land use efficiency in Ethiopia: an assessment of land lease policy effectiveness

Author: Nesru H. Koroso, University of Twente

Discussant: Dr. Femke van Noorloos, Utrecht University

Abstract:

In Ethiopia, since 1993, urban land lease policy has been in place to facilitate land transfer for residential, commercial and industrial purposes. As a result, many cities, including Addis Ababa, have witnessed enormous boundary expansion mainly through farmland conversion. Over the past two decades, though Addis Ababa experienced rapid spatial boundary expansion, very little is known about urban land use efficiency (LUE). This paper analyzes the lease policy effects on LUE in the city. The analysis is done within the institutional framework. In order to assess LUE, satellite imagery has been analyzed. Emphasis has been given to the assessment of spatiotemporal land use changes since 2002. Satellite imagery analysis has been done using ArcGIS 10.5. Besides, quantitative and qualitative data from secondary sources have been studied. Moreover, field observation has been conducted. Research findings show that in almost all expansion frontiers (Bole and Akaki-Kaliti sub-cities) there is a prevalence of land use inefficiencies, i.e. pervasive practices of land hoarding and land use fragmentation. Urban sprawl is rampant with a significant part of the land transferred being left vacant or underutilized for years. The problem of LUE in the country mainly stems from institutional weaknesses, i.e. urban lease policy gaps in areas of policy implementation. To improve land productivity, limit eviction and ensure sustainable urban growth, the city should emphasize on improving urban LUE. This study highlighted that a mere policy formulation is not enough to ensure efficient land use. To achieve land policy goals, strengthening institutions, working towards improving institutional functionality, is what policymakers should focus on.

Presentation 4 (12:15-12:50pm):

Forest Carbon Projects in the Global South: Green but Mean?

Author: Dominique Schmid, Universitat Pompeu Fabra / Utrecht University

Discussant: Dr. Robert Fletcher, Wageningen University

Abstract:

As a climate change mitigation strategy, many industrialised nations are transitioning into a “green economy” and developing countries have adopted policies to capitalise their forests as a mean for economic growth. These processes have opened new worldwide business opportunities: Emission reduction projects, such as forest conservation, are developed around the globe for the voluntary and certified carbon markets. Under a multiple-win narrative, such projects are praised by multi-national organisations, project developers, and

investors as initiatives that simultaneously mitigate climate change and foster socio-economic development in the project countries. On the other hand, empirical evidence exist that forest carbon projects may affect communities negatively and some projects have been labelled as “green grabbing”. A great deal of scholarly literature claims that local communities often pay the price of forest conservation and that they fall short of promised benefits. Forest carbon projects have also been linked to violence within and between communities and violent dispossessions by the government. Although individual carbon projects have been analysed, only a few studies have explored its consequences on a wider scale, which is necessary to analyse these two conflicting narratives. Using geo-spatial information of 77 forest carbon projects in the Global South, this study provides evidence that such projects decrease the conflict likelihood in its surroundings, hence challenging the external validity of prior studies.