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Offsetting Justice?

Environmental justice in the age of
market and militarized conservation

Book of Abstracts

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Despite mounting evidence of their limited effectiveness in reducing emissions or halting biodiversity decline, techno-managerial and market-based approaches—such as carbon markets, biodiversity offsets, green bonds and protected areas—remain widely used. These approaches continue to dominate responses to environmental crises.

The global expansion of protected areas to meet biodiversity targets, along with newer forms of „green“ and „blue“ enclosures aimed at carbon and biodiversity offsetting, has drawn significant criticism from peasant movements, small-scale fishers, and indigenous rights activists worldwide. These communities are already burdened by the expansion of agro-industrial monocultures, industrial fisheries, mining (including for minerals essential to the energy transition), large-scale infrastructure projects, and the escalating impacts of climate change. Fisher, peasants, and forest dwellers find themselves at the heart of environmental conflicts that connect diverse actors and geographies—ranging from corporations pursuing carbon offset projects, to conservationists financing sometimes militarized protected areas through the sale of carbon and biodiversity credits, to local communities striving to retain or expand access to land and resources. These conflicts reflect deep contradictions and ambiguities inherent in environmental governance—specifically, efforts to sustain a fossil-fuel-based accumulation regime by outsourcing climate mitigation to supposedly low-cost regions and offsetting biodiversity loss elsewhere.

Biodiversity offsetting presents further challenges since their design and implementation are limited by our incomplete understanding of biodiversity. Even the most advanced biodiversity metrics capture only a fragment of the complex relations between species and ecosystems. Replicating biodiversity elsewhere is not only uncertain, but also ecologically slow—often taking decades to achieve similar conditions. Moreover, offsetting sites are not uninhabited voids—they are often homes to both human and non-human beings. Their creation raises fundamental questions of environmental justice: What kinds of nature are prioritized? Who decides what survives, dies or is displaced? What are the consequences of offsetting and energy transition for human and non-human life? The increasing demand for resources essential to the energy transition—such as lithium, cobalt, and rare earth elements—adds further complexity, with significant consequences for people, non-human life, and the planet.



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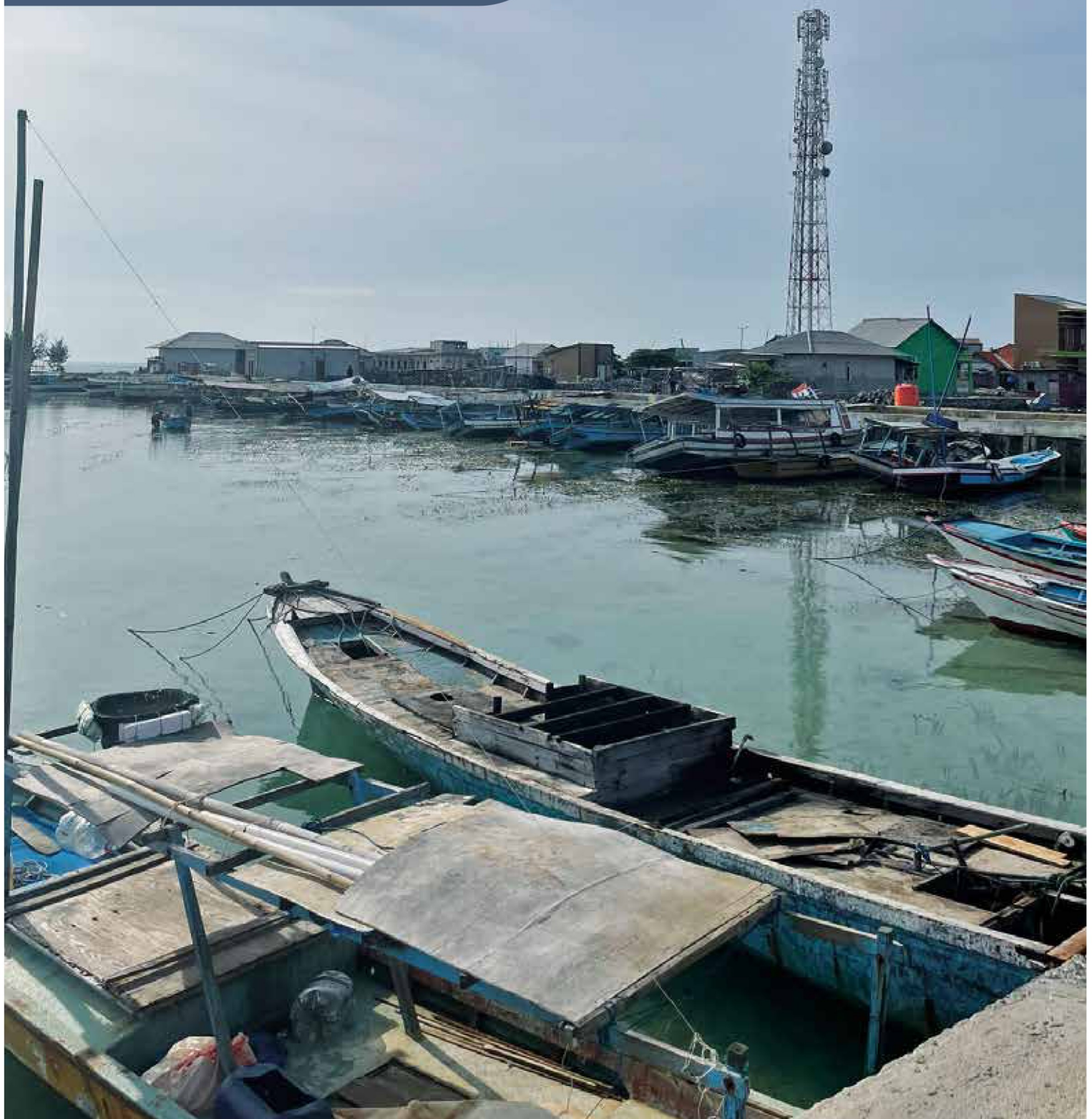
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Abstracts



Better Investments are Possible: Revolutionizing Environmental Markets for Justice and Pluralism

Lea Aigner, Rosalie Arendt

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At The Last Capital Trust (LCT), we know that nature has been our first and will be our last capital. Our mission is to transform natural and climate-related resources into sustainable capital, fostering innovative solutions for a healthier planet. We actively support young changemakers, climate researchers, and pioneering companies, empowering them to develop impactful projects that address urgent challenges. At LCT, we aim to create a resilient and sustainable future for all. LCT is an ecomodernist project. It is a community and a network of those who embrace change. Because in change, we trust. Lea Aigner and Rosalie Arendt explore the financialization of environmental crisis—the way nature becomes a site of speculative investment, and sustainability a marketable commodity. Their fictional Last Capital Trust (LCT) mimics the language and tactics of real-world green financiers, posing as a benevolent foundation funding „innovative solutions“ to climate collapse. At the Enjust Conference 2025, LCT will infiltrate the event in one of two guises: either as an unassuming market stand, blending into the conference format, or as a platform presentation announcing open grant calls. Lea Aigner and Rosalie Arendt will perform as LCT's representatives, offering grants to research different nature-based solutions: Living Air Gardens (Biofiltration Walls), climate change detox capsules, and Algae & Bamboo Carbon Bites marketed as „carbon capture through consumption.“ LCT will provide climate stress tests and climate counseling (as we know, fighting a crisis can wreck your nerves), and feature a confessional box (for your worst climate sins). By infiltrating the Enjust Conference, LCT performs a Landnahme of climate justice discourses—posing as a benefactor while subtly steering scholars toward an ecomodernist agenda. Their presence critiques the co-optation of sustainability by capital, blurring the line between genuine support and ideological capture.

Currents of Justice: Integrating Environmental and Ecojustice in Marine Conservation

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Marine conservation often operates at the intersection of ecological and social justice, particularly in Indigenous territories where conservation, governance, and cultural relationships with more-than-human life are deeply interwoven. Drawing from a qualitative document analysis conducted during my master's research, this paper explores how conservation actors on the North Pacific Coast of Canada articulate and navigate principles of environmental justice and ecojustice. The analysis applies frameworks of distributional justice, procedural justice, and justice of recognition—extending these to include more-than-human perspectives rooted in ecojustice theory. The findings suggest an emergent model of marine conservation that emphasizes collaboration with Indigenous Nations, prioritizes non-invasive research methodologies, and recognizes marine species not only as indicators of ecosystem health but as beings with intrinsic value. Such approaches challenge conventional conservation paradigms by foregrounding respectful relationships, shared governance, and respect for both human and ecological communities. This contribution offers conceptual and practical insights for scholars and practitioners seeking to advance more equitable and inclusive forms of biodiversity protection. It aligns with the conference's call to reimagine conservation in ways that bridge environmental justice, ecojustice, and Indigenous sovereignty, especially in marine contexts increasingly shaped by global industrial pressures.

Rights of Nature: bringing together more-than-human-perspectives, the justice system and art/activism

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The debate around the »rights of nature« (RoN) is one of the most dynamic fields in legal theory and is gaining a lot of attention in public and professional discourse around the conservation and protection of nature (Mührel, 2024; Wesche 2023). One of the underlying assumptions in the debate is that RoN are both a powerful legal strategy and an expression of a different relationship of nature and humans. (Stone, 1972; Rodríguez Garavito, 2025) In my talk I will, first, give an overview of the main developments of RoN with a special focus on the entanglement of RoN with indigenous struggles for justice and recognition. My main aim at this point will be to show the potential of RoN for a locally connected type of conservation that respects the intimate relationships (economically, culturally, spiritually) between residents and environment. I will, secondly, critically discuss the role of RoN for the valuation and protection of nature and biodiversity – while some scholars are extremely hopeful that RoN fundamentally change our relation with nature towards a more biocentric framework, others are more hesitant, because of the persisting anthropocentrism in society, culture and politics. (Boyd, 2017) In a third step I will show how RoN and biodiversity are intimately connected on a conceptual and practical basis, e.g. RoN are predominantly granted to »biodiversity hotspots«. (Adloff, 2023) While the connection between biodiversity and RoN is promising in many aspects it could replicate common problems of outsourcing biodiversity protection to »elsewhere«, especially since RoN cases are currently predominantly negotiated and implemented in the global south. My presentation includes the discussion of some recent examples in artistic and/or activist projects around RoN. (Macfarlane, 2025)

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A 'sustainable' violence? Sustainability discourse and socio-territorial control in the Zapatista conflict

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With the rise of the 'environment' as an issue of post-20th-century politics, human-nature relations have been examined to address ecological 'crises'. In this context, sustainability and its derivatives have been widely debated in their capacity to deliver social, economic, and environmental benefits, as well as in their potential to perpetuate environmental business-as-usual and patterns of inequality and marginalisation. At the same time, notions such as 'environmental security', 'environmentally-induced conflicts', 'socioenvironmental conflicts', 'environmental peacebuilding', or 'conflict impacts on the environment' are utilised to describe the intersection between environmental change and violence. However, this field is also in question, critiqued for an essentialist reading of human-environment relations and the obscuring of the various knowledges, practices, and imaginaries that compete when nature is part of conflict politics. This paper brings together those fields of debate to provide a critical reading of both. It examines how internationally backed sustainability discourse can become a tool for socio-territorial control in conflict settings. Forestry, decarbonisation, natural resource use, the 'green' economy, or biodiversity conservation are some examples where a reified 'sustainability' narrative can facilitate the conditions of security measures, such as militarisation. Through the case of the Zapatista conflict (Chiapas, Mexico), I examine how governmental actors find in sustainability narratives a vehicle to reinforce their legitimacy, build political mobilisation, and construct sympathetic external networks to strengthen their on-the-ground presence and contain the insurgency. Drawing on Foucault-inspired environmental discourse analysis, I reflect on how ecological knowledge production and policy-making are entwined with the politics of violence, the governance of the social, and territorial control. I also explore how resistance movements – in this case, the Zapatistas – also find discursive resources in alternative environmental narratives linked to justice, rights, and global-to-local community

Towards Transformative Justice in Conservation and Climate Finance. The Case for Basic Income for Nature and Climate (BINC)

Georg Buchholz

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Text fehlt noch

Justice in scaling Nature-based solutions – A new conceptual framework

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In recent years, Nature-based solutions (NbS) have emerged as a widely supported tool for achieving major sustainability objectives, supporting humanity to stay within planetary boundaries and revisioning our relationship with the environment. To deliver on these policy objectives, NbS will have to be implemented at tremendous scales across a diversity of social, economic and ecological contexts and be supported by multiple institutions.

NbS have been shown to work well in several local contexts, but have also led to concerns over justice as stakeholders are likely to be affected in different ways, potentially creating winners and losers. Such concerns are likely to be amplified when scaling NbS across contexts and places. Scaling NbS therefore raises complex questions of justice, but the issue of scaling has so far received little attention in justice scholarship. In particular, key knowledge gaps remain around how to enact and evaluate justice in NbS scaling.

Our proposed paper therefore provides a targeted review of literature concerned with NbS scaling that systematises current and often dispersed knowledge on the potential justice implications associated with the scaling of NBS. We draw on a five-fold scaling framework that includes i) scaling up to higher policy level changes in laws, policies, or norms to foster institutional change for NbS; ii) scaling out by replicating localised NbS over wider spatial scales; iii) scaling down by (re-)allocating necessary resources and means, e.g. incentives, regulations, funding, to support NbS implementation and impact; iv) scaling in by ensuring organisations have the structure, capacity, functions or skills to deliver NbS; and v) scaling deep through achieving transformative change in practices, norms, beliefs and values and reflexive learning. We categorize observations of justice in these scaling practices based on an environmental justice framework, including – among others – dimensions of distributive, procedural, recognition, intergenerational, and ecological justice. The result will be a comprehensive description of the state-of-the-art and knowledge gaps on the links between scaling and justices, possible synergies and tradeoffs, with the aim of generating relevant considerations for designing NbS scaling strategies.

Where the fish still dance: A Creative Counter-Narrative to Militarized Conservation

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This exhibition invites visitors into the lived reality of La Bonita (pseudonym), a coastal community in southern Ecuador, through an immersive storytelling experience that combines creative non-fiction with original watercolor art. Born from three months of ethnographic fieldwork -including fishing trips, participant observation, and interviews- this work challenges dominant narratives around militarized conservation by centering community voices and more-than-human perspectives. The story unfolds through three acts narrated by „La Corvinita,” a small croaker fish who witnesses La Bonita’s struggle. This community faced systematic dispossession when industrial fishing fleets illegally invaded the 8 nautical miles reserved for artisanal fishing. Between 2015-2016, these operations allied with armed pirate groups linked to criminal bands, threatening marine resources and community survival. Industrial fleets depleted their fish while pirates opened fire when fishermen tried to defend their waters. Lacking state support, this community faced a tough choice: surrender their ancestral waters or organize their own defense. The decision to arm themselves was not an easy one. Resilience emerged in the shape of organized community security system with nighttime patrols, radio communications, and a siren that summons 70 armed boats when threats appear. Rather than celebrating militarized approaches to conservation, this work interrogates the complex ethics of community self-defense in contexts of state abandonment. Through the intertwining gazes of community members and La Corvinita, this exhibition reveals how community justice emerges from below when state institutions fail. It poses uncomfortable questions: Who has the right to judge communities defending territories through means they’d prefer to avoid? How do we honor resistance while acknowledging its ethical complexities? Our work, currently competing for the Rachel Carson Center’s Environmental Writing Competition, transforms ethnographic encounters into an artistic experience visibilizing the courage, fear, and solidarity of these fishers and bringing La Corvinita’s underwater world to life.

Enhancing climate justice and sustainable development through market mechanisms in an era of failing multilateralism

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Climate change is driving biodiversity loss, poverty and inequality in Africa. For example, Muluneh (2021)¹ reported that all three climate change variables – temperature, precipitation, and the number of natural disasters occurrences – increase biodiversity loss; and Filho et al. (2021)² posited that the depletion of natural resources can increase social inequality and poverty. The international development framework is facing criticism since Official Development Assistance levels are declining and taking on new competitive forms such as blended finance.³ Many African countries are therefore banking on innovative finance instruments such as Voluntary Carbon Markets (VCMs) and green bonds as viable options for mobilising finance for climate action and protected areas to reduce poverty and inequality. This study aims to assess the regulations and approaches that can enhance the impact and inclusivity of VCMs and green bonds programmes. The research methodology included key informant interviews and case study analyses on best practice in designing and implementing VCMs and green bonds programmes.

The study identified that SSA has a low potential to mobilise finance, whereby domestic climate finance mobilisation stands at 23%, in comparison to East Asia and Pacific at 95%.⁴ The paper concluded that efforts to increase the environmental and socio-economic impacts of VCM and green bond programmes may focus on creating equitable and inclusive public consultation processes to increase credibility and participation of marginalised groups/stakeholders.

Literature

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Offsetting through a Social-Ecological Systems Perspective: Bridging the Human/Nature Dualism with Science and Art

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Offsetting practices have evolved along separate policy, disciplinary, and methodological lines, with different types of offsets often treated in isolation. This fragmented development reflects patterns of siloed decision-making and knowledge production, overlooking that offsets are embedded within social-ecological systems. These systems involve complex relationships, feedbacks, and emergent properties that challenge conventional accounting, resist universalized assessment, and disrupt constructed human/nature dualisms.

To address this complexity, this research applies the Social-Ecological Action Situation framework as its central analytical lens. The framework offers a structured approach to identifying and analysing the key interactions among social actors, institutions, and ecological entities that shape relations and outcomes within social-ecological systems. Using this framework, we conduct an in-depth, context-specific single case study of a carbon offsetting project in Brandenburg, Germany, tracing how local relationships power dynamics, and ecological entities are entangled and co-produce outcomes that often diverge from simplified theoreticwal expectations and policy assumptions. Rather than aiming to universalize findings, this approach foregrounds the situational specificity of offsetting while fostering cross-disciplinary and transdisciplinary dialogue.

However, we acknowledge that the Social-Ecological Action Situation framework, while valuable, does not fully escape human/nature dualisms or capture the relational, experiential and affective dimensions of offsetting fully. To push beyond these limits, the project integrates an artistic collaboration. The installation 'Biophilic Panopticon' visualizes these tensions: an empty gallery holds a metal cage where visitors, wearing rain boots, can step inside to encounter an artificial wetland—lush, sunlit, and alive with plants and water, yet surveilled by sensors and soothing sounds designed for human relaxation. Outside the cage, the space remains barren. This stark juxtaposition critiques the commodification of nature while exposing contradictions in how offsetting mediates human-nature relationships—both exploiting and aestheticizing ecosystems.



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International Organizations, Global Commons, and Environmental Stewardship: The Case of the Runaway International Seabed Authority (ISA)

Alexandra Ehresmann

This paper presents an unusual case of agency slack within the International Seabed Authority (ISA), which is advancing industrial mining interests despite growing resistance from its member states concerned with protecting the deep seabed environment. It ultimately argues that environmental stewardship should be adopted as an alternative guiding principle for the ISA's decision-making. The international deep seabed, one of the last untouched natural environments, is increasingly under threat as states and corporations seek to mine it for valuable minerals. The ISA, the international organization (IO) responsible for regulating activities in this global commons, holds a dual mandate: to facilitate and regulate extractive activities and to protect the marine environment. This mandate is outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the foundational treaty that governs the ocean and created the ISA. This paper first explores the phenomenon of agency slack, where IOs (the agents) act in ways misaligned with the preferences of their member states (the principals), often in pursuit of a perceived common good. It shows that the ISA has engaged in agency slack in an unusual form—pursuing mining activities despite increasing calls from member states and stakeholders for a moratorium or precautionary pause until more is known about the ecological risks. Second, the paper argues that environmental stewardship should guide the ISA's future actions. I show that key elements of environmental stewardship, such as strong sustainability, intergenerational equity, and the precautionary principle, are valuable tools that build upon and strengthen the Common Heritage of Mankind principle, which underpins UNCLOS's environmental mandate. Adopting this framework would enhance the ISA's ability to fulfill its environmental responsibilities and advance environmental justice: protecting fragile ecosystems already burdened by pollution and climate change, and defending the rights of communities that rely on them against exploitation by powerful actors.

Wicked Environmental Politics for an Age of Simulated Sustainability: Environmental Offset Programs and the Neoliberalization of Nature

María Fernanda Figueroa Díaz Escobar

National Autonomous University of Mexico

This talk is centered on presenting a critical overview of environmental offset systems. From a political ecology perspective, I will examine the assumptions and main ethical, environmental, political, economic, and cultural implications of these schemes. Secondly, I will discuss a case study from the Mexican tropics that illustrates how inequities operate in the implementation of offset systems, producing socio-environmental injustices. Finally, I develop the argument that these mechanisms actually function as a simulation of conservation, furthering capital accumulation. I conclude with a reflection on the paradigm shifts needed for more just and sustainable futures.

Matter and Scale: Rethinking Resistance at Climate COPs

Marie Fischer

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This paper advances the environmental justice lens by bridging Foucauldian discourse analysis with political ecology (PE) to better understand resistance within global climate governance. Specifically, it brings Foucault's concept of counter-conduct into dialogue with PE's insights on scale and agency, revealing how acts of contention are entangled across sites. This conceptual synthesis responds to the need to explain how resistance emerges at international climate conferences (COPs), which shape the 'global' climate solution space and constrain what becomes thinkable and doable 'locally'. At the COPs, practices like carbon offsetting are negotiated as viable solutions. However, these so-called false solutions often reproduce control over land and natural resources, sabotaging climate justice endeavors. Existing analyses too often overlook the discursive power that wields across scale, framing climate problems and permissible responses. Drawing on Foucault, this paper demonstrates that power and resistance are inherently entangled, generating multiple forms of counter-conduct that contest false solutions. Methodologically, the study combines a critical literature review with empirical insights from participatory observation at UNFCCC intersessional meetings (SB58, SB60, SB62) and COP28, alongside civil society publications. The paper foregrounds the constrained yet active role of agency within structures of power. It, moreover, shows how situating counter-conduct within PE's multi-scalar lens exposes contradictions between 'global' climate problematizations and 'local' implementation. Finally, by linking Foucault's notion of architecture to infrastructure, it illustrates how resistance materializes discursively and materially. This framework invites scholars to rethink the COPs as sites of contestation from both – a Foucauldian and PE perspective – to expand the space of the possible in climate politics.

A More-than-Human Justice Approach to Warfare Against Nature: The Case of Attacks on Oil Infrastructure in Colombia as Environmental War Crimes

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Nature has historically been, and continues to be, both a victim and a military target in the context of international and non-international armed conflicts. Following the 2016 peace agreement between the Colombian government and the FARC-EP guerrilla, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP, Jurisdicción Especial para la Paz) was established as a transitional justice mechanism to prosecute the most serious crimes committed by this armed group and other actors during the conflict. In its Macro Case 02, the JEP focuses on the southwestern region of Colombia, an area inhabited by Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities, characterized by exceptional biodiversity and ecosystem diversity, and bordering both the Amazon basin and Ecuador. Within this case, the JEP recognized nature as a subject of rights. Moreover, the JEP brought charges against mid- and high-ranking members of the FARC-EP for environmental war crimes, specifically related to the use of explosives against the Trans-Andean oil pipeline. These attacks resulted in large-scale oil spills and the contamination of ecosystems and water sources, causing environmental damage. From a more-than-human justice perspective, this case raises critical questions: What lessons can be drawn from the JEP's experience in adjudicating environmental war crimes involving fossil fuel infrastructure? How can transitional justice processes account for warfare against nature, especially when such violence is entangled with fossil fuel dependency and extractivist logics? Furthermore, what are the broader implications of the fact that these attacks targeted fossil fuel infrastructure? How might this inform emerging debates at the junction of more-than-human justice and climate justice, particularly in settings where ecological destruction is both a tactic of war and a reflection of extractivist energy regimes?

Ocean Militarization and Environmental Governance in a Contested Marine Area of the Western Caribbean Sea

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This presentation examines the entanglements between ocean militarization, contested maritime jurisdictions, and environmental governance in the Western Caribbean Sea. Framed within critical ocean studies and drawing on insights from critical legal geography and the anthropology of law, the analysis explores how in contemporary ocean governance, the militarization of the ocean has been predominantly state-driven and legitimized by dominant legal frameworks such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS, 1982). The sovereign rights granted to states over their Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs), including the exploitation of available resources and the control over any activities within this area, enable them to deploy military force and security infrastructures as part of ocean ordering practices. Framed by policies on national security and environmental protection, such practices carry significant implications for ocean justice. Drawing on the maritime boundary dispute between Nicaragua and Colombia (ICJ rulings of 2012, 2013, and 2023), this intervention explores how the Colombian state has used legal justifications for the display of military power and protect industrial fishing operations within the Seaflower Biosphere Reserve, a designated Marine Protected Area that falls within the territorial contestation. The Colombian government has framed these actions as compliant with international law and necessary for regional security, including efforts to curb illegal fishing and drug trafficking. However, these state practices stand in contrast to the testimonies of AfroIndigenous fishers in the region. Empirical data collected from these communities reveal how increased militarization, border patrols, and state support for industrial fishing have resulted in the criminalization of artisanal fishing, overexploitation of marine resources in protected areas, and exclusion from ancestral fishing grounds. This case illustrates the contested meanings of security, legality and sustainability, that are driving ocean injustice embedded in ocean governance regimes.

Resisting the Tide: Blue Justice and Collective Actions in Fishing Communities of Latin America and the Caribbean

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Between nets, hooks and salt-laden horizons, the fishing communities of Latin America and the Caribbean write stories of resistance that this exhibition seeks to make visible. This photographic-artistic exhibition documents the multiple strategies of struggle developed in response to structural violence that threatens not only their material subsistence, but also the continuity of ancestral knowledge, cultural identities and spiritual relationships with their maritories. Industrial fishing, the privatisation of maritime-coastal spaces, pollution and overexploitation of resources, together with the growing militarisation of maritime borders, constitute a web of historical and daily aggressions. Faced with this reality, fishing peoples do not remain passive. Their struggles materialise in collective mobilisations, territorial alliances, recovery of traditional practices and the construction of economic alternatives that challenge the commercial logic imposed upon their seas. Women occupy a central place in these resistances through their multidimensional participation. They sail alongside men in boats, participate in fishing, manage commercialisation processes and, simultaneously, sustain the domestic and community sphere. This double shift constitutes in itself a form of resistance, whilst their integral knowledge of marine and coastal ecosystems represents an essential counterpoint to fragmented visions of territory. Their daily practices, from the transmission of knowledge to the collective management of resources, constitute political acts that challenge the extractive and patriarchal logic that attempts to marginalise their fundamental role in fishing economies. Young fishers, for their part, claim hybrid identities that combine traditional knowledge with new technologies to document environmental aggressions, map ancestral territories and connect apparently isolated struggles. Their boats, nets and fishing gear are not mere working instruments but symbols of dignity and autonomy in contexts where public policies frequently criminalise or seek to „reconvert“ artisanal fishing practices. Through this visual journey, we invite recognition that struggles for blue justice transcend sectoral demands to pose fundamental questions about our relationships with the sea and amongst ourselves. To whom do the oceans belong? Who has the right to define their uses and meanings? How can we build models of marine governance that respect collective rights and traditional knowledge? The photographs-artistic posters gathered here do not seek to romanticise precarity nor aestheticise conflict. Rather, they seek to make visible the powerful ways in which apparently vulnerable communities transform adversity into collective creativity and convert the defence of their maritories into living laboratories where another way of understanding and inhabiting our shared seas germinates.

The Transformation of West African Forests into “Climate Capital” and the (Missing) Link Between Decarbonization and Decolonization

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In this presentation, I will delineate the emerging pattern of transformation of West African forests into “climate capital,” which is mediated through forest carbon offsetting, and the colonial eco/logics permeating such a practice, underpinning thereby the creation of an economy of dispossession (Byrd et al., 2018). To this purpose, I will trace a number of developments in the carbon markets and unpack the missing link between decarbonization and decolonization. My aim will be to unravel how the amplified racialized sense of crisis that becomes a source of value, or more precisely, an inextricable part of the process of forests’ e/valuation, is equally historically conditioned and speculatively demarcated. To this purpose, I will reflect on some narratives revolving around colonial development policies from the late 1920s onwards in different colonies and protectorates following from the eruption of environmental disasters and the emergence of ecology as an imperial scientific project, and I will discern the persistence of the epistemologically reflected relationality between racial difference and inefficient as well as deficient environmental utilisation. Within the scope of my analysis will be to suggest how and why these policies persist despite evidence regarding their negative socio-ecological consequences: carbon credits are used on behalf of the seller countries for mitigation and adaptation purposes. Reflecting on feminist political ecologist Farhana Sultana’s notion of “climate coloniality” which addresses both climate impacts and solutions, I will argue that this policy persistence verifies colonialism’s ongoing de/formative capacity, due to the fact that the sale of carbon credits provides one of the few climate financing sources. For West African countries’ differential vulnerability demanding higher climate financing rates than those of the global North countries, should be attributed not only to their geographical location but also to structural inequalities accruing from the way in which “imperial durabilities” shape the present (Stoler, 2016).

Reconciling Biodiversity Conservation and Community Livelihoods: Practitioner Insights from the Ngorongoro Conservation Area in Tanzania

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The Ngorongoro Conservation Area Ordinance of 1959, established by the British Colonial authorities, designated the Ngorongoro Area (NCA) as a conservation zone in northern Tanzania. Specifically, NCA has since served as a multi-use protected zone where wildlife coexists with the livelihoods of indigenous communities, notably the Maasai pastoralists. It was accorded the status of an International Biosphere Reserve in 1981 and declared a World Heritage Site in 2010 and 2018. In 2022, the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania forcibly evicted the indigenous Maasai communities from NCA, citing justification on biodiversity conservation and wildlife protection. This article aims to critically examine the legal and ethical tensions inherent in balancing justice for indigenous communities with biodiversity conservation efforts in the NCA. The article employs primary methods of data collection, i.e., interviews, questionnaires, and observation, to examine the legitimacy of practitioner experiences, and the evolution of governance mechanisms, stakeholder engagement processes, and the tensions between top-down conservation policies and local, customary land-use practices. It explores case laws from national courts and the East African Court of Justice that have addressed the conflict between the Government and the indigenous Maasai communities regarding the NCA. While assessing the UNESCO/International Union for Conservation of Nature's recommendations on the voluntary relocation of indigenous communities from conservation areas, the article seeks to draw lessons from other international forums, such as the Inter-American human rights system, in the same area of conservation. The article concludes with practical recommendations for various stakeholders on reframing conservation strategies to recognize and support Indigenous stewardship, and to encourage inclusive approaches that are not only ethically imperative but also essential for longterm ecological and social sustainability in protected area management.

The (In)visible Hands of Carbon Markets. The Political Economy of Regulating Carbon Markets in Brazil

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Carbon offset markets and Payments for ecosystem services (PES) continue to rise as Global South countries like Brazil regulate them at greater scales, despite the technical and human rights issues critics continue to raise. Political ecology critiques emphasize that market mechanisms displace the burden of climate mitigation to Global South countries, increasing and greenwashing rather than curbing big polluters' gains. They focus on project-level resistance to nature commodification but less on the politics of regulating national carbon markets. This study uses the lens of environmental justice and critical state literature to investigate the extent to which Brazil's national legislation incorporates collective socioenvironmental demands or reproduces the dominance of polluting sectors. When carbon offsets emerged in the 2000s, Brazil's federal government and rural social movements opposed the mechanism, while Amazon state governors and conservation NGOs promoted it. Back then, PES seemed to primarily be directed towards local communities. In opposition to the right-wing anti-environmental backlash, political elites have now embraced market principles almost unequivocally as a "rational" alternative to populism. While Brazil's 2009 Climate Policy included a national carbon market, the latter was only approved in 2023. The mechanism excludes and, at the same time, benefits the agribusiness sector, which is responsible for three thirds of the country's emissions. This study examines archival, interview, and media sources to understand the struggles around regulating the carbon market. It considers which interests dominate this process and to what extent marginalized rural actors engage in it to defend socioenvironmental justice demands.

Viewing human-elephant conflict in South Asia through an expanded environmental justice lens – evidence from Sri Lanka and South India

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Human-elephant conflict (HEC) is a politically charged and salient topic in elephant range countries. India and Sri Lanka respectively hold the largest and second-largest population of Asian elephant (*Elephas maximus*), and the management and conservation of wild elephant populations is a considerable social-ecological problem in both countries. The paper is informed by empirical data on human-elephant conflict and coexistence in two geographical regions that spot a relatively high density of elephants: Sri Lanka's dry zone and in Karnataka state, South India. As megaherbivores, elephants invade fields and engage in crop foraging, causing economic harm and distress, and humans are also hurt and killed in encounters. In turn, retaliatory killings of animals, although illegal, are frequent.

Political ecology research and critical agrarian studies are adequate approaches to analyse the root causes of human-elephant conflict (HEC). The complex issues that emerge around what is here called "elephant politics" are heavily influenced by different factors –institutions of wildlife governance, modes of agricultural production, cultural values, and ecological conditions. The violence of infrastructure (Barua 2024), the conservation-agrarian squeeze (Siddharta 2025), and the continued adherence to fortress conservation in the two countries (Rai et al. 2021; Köpke et al. 2021) explain the geographical dimension of elephant politics.

HEC, as an instance of human-wildlife conflict, can be perceived as an environmental justice issue (Nalbo 2025) since the distribution of harm and benefits of wildlife presence is highly uneven, resulting in massively injustice suffered by local populations in areas close to parks and elephant corridors. At the same time, non-human animals are increasingly recognized as subjects of environmental injustice (Schlosberg 2013), expanding the scope of environmental justice studies. The ideal of "convivial conservation" (Büscher & Fletcher 2020) seeks to harmonize social and ecological justice claims, but it is contested how these can be realized on the ground.

The instrumental importance of considering local equity perceptions for the viability of incentive-based conservation in Vietnam

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Perceptions of justice are powerful determinants of human behaviour and, consequently, many environmental conflicts arise from contested visions of what constitutes as 'equitable' environmental management. Therefore, equity can play an instrumental role in shaping outcomes of incentive-based conservation measures. In this talk I present findings of empirical studies that I have conducted focusing on the distribution of benefits in Vietnam's national Payments for Forest Ecosystem Services scheme. Drawing on a review of national legislation and government reports, expert interviews on the national and provincial level, as well as indepth interviews with local land users, I reveal that equity outcomes of incentive-based policy instruments are very much affected by contextual factors, such as how the Forest Land Allocation regulation determines the distribution of use rights. Furthermore, I show how the national aspirations and rationales of equity as outlined in legislation of the national PES scheme were not met at local levels due to technical constraints, financial costs, and social and institutional conflicts, leading to an implementation on the ground that contrasts local interests. I then present findings on how these perceptions of (un)fairness effect the implementation of the scheme's conservation measures. This part builds on the results of two incentivized lab-in-the-field experiments that were implemented with 259 land users in NorthWestern Vietnam and 448 land users in the Vietnamese Central Annamites. We find that participants who perceived the payment as inequitable exerted significantly less conservation effort than other participants who perceived (the same) payment as fair. The results show that equity perceptions can have consequences for the effectiveness of incentive-based conservation instruments. Overall, the findings highlight that just distribution is not only a moral obligation but also instrumental for the effectiveness of conservation measure. Furthermore, the findings emphasize the need to consider social comparisons, local equity norms, and gender in environmental policies that use monetary incentives to motivate behavioral change.

Three decades of scientific debate on the additionality of offset projects: are we going in circles?

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Carbon markets have been a central part of climate governance for decades and look set to remain so for the foreseeable future. While debates on carbon project integrity focus on a variety of issues, questions of additionality and how to define the baselines against which it can be measured have proven a particularly fickle issue. Here, we take a historical perspective to review the scholarly literature on additionality within carbon markets. We focus on forestry projects, which have gained renewed impetus under the guise of carbon removal agendas. We analyze the literature as it unfolds through three overarching and overlapping periods: 1) the period following adoption of the Kyoto Protocol, when scholars discussed operationalizing additionality in early carbon market mechanisms; 2) the emergence of the REDD+ scheme, when discussions centered on issues with establishing deforestation baselines for developing countries; and 3) the post-Paris rise in the voluntary carbon market, which featured attempts to develop dynamic and synthetic baseline methodologies. Throughout these three periods, scholars continued to acknowledge that additionality can never fully be proven while still attempting to establish more provable methodologies, effectively chasing an ever-receding horizon of the perfect baseline and additionality test. We thus argue that scholarly discussion on additionality is going in circles, chasing technical design solutions to a problem that is ultimately unsolvable, while distracting from more transformative alternative approaches to fostering socio-ecological sustainability. Chasing additionality in other words is not just unhelpful but helps render alternatives less and less feasible, undermining opportunities for transformation.

Perceptions of Procedural Justice in Benefit Sharing under Payments for Ecosystem Services Schemes in Vietnam

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Incentive-based policy instruments, such as Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES), are at the forefront of global efforts to achieve biodiversity conservation. Given their distributional impacts, equity objectives are often integrated into their design and implementation, with a growing body of research highlighting the need to develop a more nuanced understanding of how PES schemes interact with local socio-ecological contexts, including decision-making processes. This study focuses on local decision-making processes with regards to the sharing of benefits provided under Vietnam's Payments for Forest Ecosystem Services scheme. The aim is to reveal what preferred elements of fair procedures are in the local contexts studied and if procedural preferences differ between ethnic groups. Our conceptual basis form the constituting elements of just processes that we identified in the theoretical literature on procedural justice. We applied those elements in 57 in-depth interviews that we conducted with participants from six ethnic groups in 15 villages across three provinces to describe the process of decision-making. Drawing on the insights gained from these interviews we implemented a factorial survey experiment with 400 participants to investigate which elements of the process were most influential in forming perceptions of a fair process. Our findings reveal that, it was important to villagers to have the ability to express their interests, needs, and priorities and to have the capacity to influence decisions. Although decisions were often reported as being made by majority vote, they were typically decided during meetings of village elites. Meetings involving all villagers were generally informational, with limited consultation. Interestingly, in villages where broader consultation occurred, villagers expressed higher satisfaction with the decisions; and a lack of transparency and trust were key reasons for dissatisfaction with the decision-making process. Overall, our findings contribute to the debate on plural (procedural) justice perceptions and their recognition in local contexts.

Political Ecology of Small Islands in Indonesia

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This article examines the political ecology of small islands in Indonesia through two representative case studies: the conflict regarding a National Strategic Project on Rempang Island, Riau Archipelago, and the contestation over marine reclamation in the Thousand Islands. By highlighting the interlinkages between ecological degradation, state policy, territorialization processes, and social resistance, the study demonstrates how small islands occupy a strategic position within Indonesia's national development agenda and resource extraction regimes.

Using a political ecology perspective, the analysis uncovers the structural roots of agrarian-environmental conflicts in coastal and small island regions. In Rempang, the Rempang Eco-City project has led to the criminalization and forced displacement of indigenous Malay communities. Despite its claims as a green development initiative, the project relies on coal-based energy and extensive land transformation, contradicting the discourse of sustainability. In the Thousand Islands, small island tourism, reclamation projects, and fragmented marine governance have displaced traditional fishers and undermined ecological resilience, revealing how asymmetrical power relations and capital interests reconfigure spatial and ecological orders.

The article asserts that the marginalization of customary rights, the erasure of local ecological knowledge, and the militarization of development spaces are not incidental but represent systemic and structural consequences of a centralized development model and neoliberal conservation. These two cases reveal how the state, in alliance with corporate interests, deploys territorialization to dispossess local communities while extracting ecological value from coastal territories.

Ultimately, the article calls for a reevaluation of coastal development paradigms, emphasizing ecological justice, regenerative governance, and the recognition of customary tenure systems. Sustainable futures for small islands cannot be achieved through top-down, technocratic interventions, but rather require democratic, inclusive, and ecologically grounded approaches. The political ecology of small islands, therefore, concerns not only human-nature relations but also contested struggles over space, authority, and justice in the Anthropocene.

Water and Energy Infrastructure Governance in Northern Kurdistan

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Launched in the 1970s, Turkey's Southeastern Anatolia Project (GAP) aims to address the Kurdish question through economic development. The project involves 22 dams and 19 hydroelectric power plants on the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, with the goal of irrigating 1.8 million hectares of land. This ongoing initiative seeks to cover 46% of the planned irrigation canal areas. Ample scholarship exists on GAP's adverse effects, such as village inundation, water deprivation for small farmers, and soil/nutrient loss. Examining the Qoser/Kızıltepe plain, we discuss impacts in areas where GAP is anticipated but not yet implemented, and where laws issued in the name of environmental protection overlap with infrastructures that monopolize access to water and energy. By focusing on farmer built and farmer-managed irrigation infrastructures, such as boreholes, transformers, and solar panels, we unveil how farmers access water 'illicitly' in areas where the state did not build irrigation canals. Additionally, we explore how farmers resist not only state authority but also the climate crisis through self-built and self-governed irrigation infrastructures.

The Climate Justice of Carbon-Tax Financed (Partial) Basic Income

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„CaTaBi“ is a specific concept for the refunding and implementation of a Carbon Tax. It is based on the principles of “New Ordoliberalism” which, as a social contract approach, takes into account aspects of ex ante and ex post justice, strategy proofness, and renegotiation proofness. CaTabi is an essential part of the decarbonization regulation by a tax-transfer system. Its central justice aspects are, first, the equal reimbursement (lump sum refunding) of the tax revenue, and, second; the visibility and incentivization of ecological behavior in a “gross” scheme, reflecting the deficiencies of “net” schemes. Furthermore, the refunding payment Climate Basic Income, as a residual, therefore, departing from usual basic income approaches, target efficiency, and challenges of the concept will be discussed.

Wildlife governance in African countries

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When one envisions wildlife in Africa, one often conjures images of a safari, observing “big game” in a pristine environment. These “pristine environments” are a creation of colonial governments in Africa after they agreed to the Convention Relative to the Preservation of Fauna and Flora in their Natural State, 1933, which established Protected Areas (PAs) as the primary tool for wildlife governance. The rationale for establishing PAs was to preserve African wildlife from emerging threats caused by European settlers and tourists who hunted animals for trophies and cleared habitats for agriculture. However, PAs came at an immense cost for Africans as they were ejected from their lands to create these spaces for exclusive wildlife inhabitation. The colonial government nationalized the convention, and wildlife institutions were thereafter established to enforce these laws and regulations.

The work of wildlife institutions has considerable consequences for Africans, whose compliance with the various measures seems necessary for successful preservation outcomes. My study examines how wildlife institutions legally facilitate access and use of wildlife, as well as address threats to wildlife, and how this impacts community livelihood and culture. This study employs doctrinal legal analysis to examine the environmental provisions of African constitutions and wildlife laws and regulations. Findings reveal that the constitution provides a primarily rights-based approach, along with other measures for standardization. The resulting wildlife laws, for example, establish militarized institutions whose primary purpose is to preserve wildlife and prevent the encroachment of PAs. Enforcement, per se, has not effectively addressed the increasing demands of communities for access and use, nor has it halted biodiversity loss. This conundrum, where institutions struggle to meet societal expectations, presents an opportunity to reform the laws and provide a framework of governance that paves the way for a future that holds promise for conserving Africa’s rich biodiversity.

In Defense of a Reborn River: How Un Río En El Río Forged Relational Values for Environmental Justice

Lizeth Ovalle Saldaña

Un Río En El Río movement in defence of the Santa Catarina River, México.

Monterrey's Santa Catarina River, channelized under concrete for seventy years, lay lifeless until Hurricane Alex (2010) removed much of the invasive concrete infrastructure, allowing its riparian ecosystem to re emerge (Vega Nagel Vega 2025). Today, techno managerial proposals for a dam, a motorway, and further deforestation threaten this revival and perpetuate environmental injustice by sidelining local voices. As a grassroots environmental movement, Un Río En El Río counters these top down schemes by fostering relational values (Chan et al. 2016) and advancing transformative biodiversity governance (Visseren Hamakers et al. 2021) through diverse strategies: community led expeditions that blend citizen science, art, and lived knowledge; citizen participatory mechanisms; and collective stewardship of the river. Through this talk, we aim to share our grassroots experience of mobilizing relational stewardship, conducting ground level research, and deploying participatory mechanisms to defend the river and reforge urban–nature connections. Our framework draws on Environmental Justice (Matuk et al. 2020), Relational Values (Chan et al. 2016; Whiteheadian alternative), and Transformative Biodiversity Governance (Visseren Hamakers et al. 2021). Each month, our inclusive River Expeditions invite citizens to safely explore and engage with the waterway—increasing iNaturalist observations from 3,209 to 8,737 and recorded species from 732 to 1,280. In parallel, restorative reconnection spaces offer dialogic experiences that deepen communal bonds and foster awareness of the river's well being. To bridge participation gaps, we host workshops, plain language guides, expert drop in clinics, and open hearings that ensure every voice is heard. By leveraging community generated evidence and accessible participation, Un Río En El Río has so far halted three major infrastructure projects, such as a motorway and a dam upstream of the river, while reframing biodiversity governance as a co creative, justice oriented process. Our key lessons include closing the expertise divide, demonstrating urban biodiversity value through lived encounters, and scaling grassroots governance for inclusive conservation.

How to Reimagine Climate Futures – The Role of Future Agency in Climate Justice Movements

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Climate change is an urgent and existential threat; however, policy responses and societal action remain inadequate, despite recent mobilizations. There are signs indicating a decline of the , promissory legitimacy' of the post-political consensus that endorsed technocratic and market-driven solutions. However, alternative emancipatory imaginations have yet to gain traction and contour. Social movements are often seen as vital spaces for cultivating transformative discourses, yet research on the recent wave of climate activism has remained inconclusive, acknowledging its potential to promote alternatives to the status quo, but also noting concerns about the ongoing attachments to post-political understandings and apocalyptic temporalities. How can we account for the apparent scarcity of emancipatory futures? Given the pressing need for transformative responses to the socio-ecological crises, it is essential to deepen our understanding of , futuring practices' and the scope of change-oriented actors to shift discourses towards just and emancipatory alternatives.

Through a comparative analysis of German and U.S. climate movements, this study explores the intersection of climate movements' future agency and the structural contexts for climate action. I identify different , modes of futuring' in climate activism as well as a series of dilemmas faced by activists, including an urgency, a system, an epistemic, and a , spatial dilemma', stemming from the , super wicked' nature of climate change. , Theories of change' inform how climate activists strategically-affective engage with these dilemmas to construct, perform, and enact climate futures. The findings contribute to our understanding of societal agency in driving transformative changes. They suggest that the potential for popularizing emancipatory visions in climate discourses hinges on effectively navigating inherent dilemmas. While the study highlights structural barriers for change-oriented actors to popularize alternatives within the , politics of non-sustainability', I will also present emerging bottom-up practices through which activists challenge dominant perspectives and cultivate more justice- and transformation-oriented visions.

Advancing Just Environmental Governance through Tree-Ring Science in Tropical Forests of Southern Ecuador

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This contribution introduces DendroRegulation, a dendrochronological framework developed to support just environmental governance under Ecuador's Código Orgánico del Ambiente (COA), the country's national environmental law. Grounded in six recent research manuscripts, this approach integrates ring-width chronologies, vessel anatomical traits, stable isotope ($\delta^{13}\text{C}$ and $\delta^{18}\text{O}$) records, and multivariate modeling to understand how tropical dry and Andean forests respond to hydroclimatic variability.

The proposed framework provides scientifically grounded tools for assessing forest resilience, climate sensitivity, and ecological integrity across diverse forest types. By doing so, DendroRegulation enhances the implementation of environmental regulations, offering a pathway to more inclusive and evidence-based policy decisions. Rather than focusing on market-based conservation, this approach emphasizes ecological monitoring rooted in local forest realities, drawing attention to slow-onset climate impacts that are often underrepresented in mainstream offsetting schemes.

The work engages with questions of environmental justice by advocating for context-specific governance based on long-term ecological data and community-relevant insights. It also explores the challenges associated with resource exploitation linked to energy transitions—particularly in mountainous forest areas—highlighting the need to balance development and conservation through justice-centered approaches.

DendroRegulation emerges as both a scientific and regulatory contribution: it fills data gaps in tropical dendrochronology while simultaneously informing governance processes at the national level. Through collaborative platforms such as ECUADENDRO 2025, it also builds bridges between researchers, policymakers, and forest-dependent communities.

This contribution aligns with the conference's focus on "just alternatives," offering an empirical, non-market-based framework for conservation and regulation. It invites reflection on how placebased scientific knowledge can challenge dominant conservation paradigms and foster more equitable strategies for protecting life on Earth.

The Violence of Territory and Property in Conservation Spaces: What Options for Justice?

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The concept of territory gained currency in the context of the state space, but its meanings have expended over time to reflect processes and struggles shaping society. Inherent in the concept of territory are forms of power and control that are deployed in defence of territory as evidenced by the conduct of the state. Viewed from the perspective of the state, territory legitimizes and enables the use of violence. The links between violence and territory trace to the evolution of territory. This observation is important for thinking about conservation areas as territories or estates overlain by protectionist assumptions like those of the modern state. In this paper, I focus on these assumptions and the practices flowing from them to argue that the globalised idea of conservation and the consequent design of conservation areas invite and naturalizes violence. This process is enabled by merging territory and property into a composite whole. Redefining biodiversity as an asset or property legitimizes the need to exert control over natural resources – land, forests, fisheries, and so on – and over people. The growing trend of valuing property by its location in conservation spaces means that private individuals can also serve as agents of violence. The minimum tasks of critical scholarship and activists in the domain of nature conservation are (a) to expose the violence of conservation territories and of parcelling planet earth as property, and (b) to offer alternatives to violent conservation. Taking these tasks seriously is an important step towards promoting equity and justice.

The River That Could Not Be Straightened: Infrastructures, Margins, and Multispecies Life in Buenos Aires, Argentina

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This paper explores the role of hydraulic infrastructures as technologies of multispecies governance in the transformation of the Riachuelo River in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Drawing from political ecology, posthuman geography, and philosophy of technology, I analyze how canalization and dredging—historically undertaken to reshape the river for navigation and sanitation—and more recent riverbank clearance—implemented under the guise of environmental restoration—operate as techniques of socio-ecological selection. These interventions reorder not only hydrological flows but also determine which forms of life are allowed to stay, be displaced, or be extinguished.

Building on Ashley Carse's notion of nature as infrastructure, I examine how the canalized segments of the Riachuelo were historically managed as functional landscapes—engineered, cleaned, and maintained to serve technical and political agendas. In contrast, the Brian Meander—a portion of the river that escaped rectification—hosted a dense coexistence of waste-pickers, their horses, feral dogs, and informal uses of the land until its clearance. Rather than a residual zone, the Meander embodied a form of infrastructural indeterminacy, where human and nonhuman lives coexisted in ways that exceeded the ordered logic of canalization.

This contrast raises broader questions about the politics of artifacts (Winner, Joerges): do infrastructures carry political effects beyond their designers' intentions? My hypothesis is that hydraulic artifacts—once built—exceed their original purposes, giving rise to unexpected human-nonhuman associations and ecologies. The Meander thus becomes not only a site of marginal cohabitation, but a point of friction from which to rethink river restoration.

This contribution calls for a more-than-human approach to environmental justice. By foregrounding fluvial margins and infrastructural residues, it interrogates the ontological assumptions of techno-managerial restoration and advocates for river justice attentive to the entangled lives—human and nonhuman—that flow along its edges.

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“You have to plant more and more mangroves for the sake of the planet”: bureaucratic violence, precarization of life and privatization of the commons in the implementation of blue carbon projects on the coast of Chiapas, Mexico.

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New private conservation narratives position the mangrove ecosystem as a key agent in the fight against climate change due to its high CO₂ absorption capacity. Thus, a large number of blue carbon initiatives are being developed on the coastlines of Global South countries with the intention of offsetting the emissions of large corporations from the Global North. However, this creates a fundamental tension between environmental objectives and social justice, as climate solutions risk becoming mechanisms of dispossession and exploitation. Little is known about the social impacts that blue carbon projects are having on the coastal territories where mangroves are located, such as conflicts and environmental injustices that emerge during their implementation. Based on the contributions of Critical Political Ecology, this research studies the development of a blue carbon initiative in six ejidos on 800 hectares of mangroves on the coast of Chiapas, México. The process is being led by a Mexican private company that connects with brokers in Canada and the United States to sell carbon credits to large corporations. This research asks: How do blue carbon projects transform social-ecological relations in coastal communities, and what forms of resistance emerge in response to these interventions? Our empirical data reveal that blue carbon initiatives in this context operate as mechanisms of carbon colonialism, where Global South coastal communities provide ecosystem services while Global North corporations capture financial benefits through carbon offset markets. The project has redefined the meaning of the mangrove ecosystem by assigning it a monetary value, which has legitimized its privatization and enclosure and, simultaneously, has exacerbated conflicts and disputes between communities over ownership rights to the land where the mangrove is located. In addition, we observed that the bureaucratic violence of the certification project is expressed in the precarization of the working conditions of local actors, given that the companies and brokers seek to „discipline“ the actors to reforest as many hectares of mangrove as possible in the shortest possible time and with very low salaries to make the carbon credit business more profitable. But local communities are not passive entities as they challenge the carbon project if the company does not respond to their demands and new forms of collective action emerge to empower them in decision-making processes. We conclude that it is necessary to overcome the hegemony of mainstream certification instruments that reproduce carbon colonial dynamics and deepen power asymmetries at different geographic scales, in order to revalue community autonomy initiatives to protect and care for mangroves as a collective good and territory of life with ancestral, cultural and alimentary meanings.

Solutions for Whom? Forests Monocultures, Carbon Offsets, and Environmental Justice in South America & Chile

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This work examines the expansion and impacts of forestry monocultures in Chile and South America, interrogating prevailing narratives that frame these plantations as tools for climate change mitigation. Applying a critical human geography perspective, the study investigates how forest monocultures generate significant socio-environmental problems—such as soil degradation, biodiversity loss, and elevated wildfire risk—even as they are promoted regionally and globally as carbon sinks. Combining discourse analysis with illustrative case studies, the research highlights the contradictions between the rhetoric of environmental protection and the material realities of ecological destruction associated with large-scale monocultures. The analysis further explores the role of carbon markets and technologies like BECCS in the commodification of nature, revealing how these mechanisms reinforce existing North-South power asymmetries in environmental governance. The study underscores the uneven burdens borne by local communities and the intersection of monoculture expansion with broader struggles for environmental justice. In the context of increasingly severe forest megafires and an escalating climate crisis, the findings point to the urgent need to rethink forestry and climate policies in ways that address—rather than perpetuate—the root causes of socio-environmental injustice.

“Now everything we do is illegal!”: governing Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing by punishment and the criminalisation of artisanal fisheries

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Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing is discussed in global forums as an international problem that threatens fisheries sustainability and marine biodiversity. IUU fishing is primarily governed via fisheries and environmental frameworks, which are not necessarily aligned and bring together a complex constellation of state agencies, regional and international organisations to support coordination and cooperation efforts across different scales and jurisdictions. In this paper, we examine the ways in which the governance of IUU fishing is regulated and translated into practice, focusing on the interactions and implications for artisanal fisheries in Colombia. We study this at the national level and locally, focusing on two case studies in the Caribbean and Pacific coasts, analysing the experiences of artisanal fishers living in proximity to industrial ports and marine protected areas. Our findings evidence an overreliance on undemocratic punitive framework that completely excludes the participation of artisanal fisheries and fails to follow a human rights-based approach to fisheries. Here, the fight against IUU fishing is centred on law enforcement, which forms the basis to criminalise and control artisanal fishing ways of life rather than halt industrial overexploitation. We conclude by discussing how this undermines international fisheries frameworks and constitutional mandates to promote and protect fisher peoples' human rights, thus, hindering opportunities for social and environmental justice within and beyond the oceans.

The future of carbon markets. Integration, digital technology and geopolitical competition

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Since the 1990s, market-based approaches have dominated international climate policy, including highly contested offsetting schemes, such as the Clean Development Mechanism of the Kyoto Protocol. Although there have always been two distinct forms of global carbon markets—the state-based „compliance“ markets of the UN and the less regulated voluntary carbon markets aimed at consumers and private companies— both schemes have significantly influenced each other in terms of rules and implementation practices. Following a shift in international climate policy, with the 2015 Paris Agreement obliging not only industrialized countries, but all signatory parties, to reduce their emissions, and repeated criticism of „carbon colonialism,“ compliance carbon markets have lost importance over the last decade. Meanwhile, the less-restricted voluntary carbon markets have struggled with repeated crises of legitimacy.

However, at the 2024 UN Climate Conference in Baku, Azerbaijan, Art. 6 of the Paris Agreement was finalized after nearly a decade of negotiations. Not only does it foresee the creation of a new carbon trading scheme under the Paris Agreement, but it also paves the way for the future integration of compliance and voluntary carbon markets – with far-reaching socio-ecological impacts. In this contribution, I analyze the implications of this development for the future of carbon markets and the relationship between compliance and voluntary carbon markets. I explore how it is discussed and criticized by global climate justice movements, and which potential impact it might have on humans and ecosystems. I argue that, although social movements and states in the Global South were partly able to shape the outcome of UN negotiations, these efforts were neutralized by the successful promotion of digital technologies as a means of securing reliable emission reductions and by heightened geopolitical tensions and struggles over contested modes of capitalist accumulation.

Environmental Justice or Contested Economic Driven Conservation? Case of Frontier Conservation in Zimbabwe

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The global environmental governance landscape is increasingly dominated by economic-driven and techno-managerial approaches. These remain contested at accruing trickle down effects to people living adjacent to transfrontier conservation initiatives in Africa, particularly Zimbabwe. In 2002 the first transfrontier conservation initiative in Zimbabwe, the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area (GLTFCA) was formalised. Since then five more initiatives were implemented, promoting regional cooperation with six SADC countries. In subtle terms, TFCAs seek to promote bottom up approaches to sustainable conservation of natural resources. While these mechanisms aim to address biodiversity decline and ultimately contribute towards reducing carbon footprints and the climate crisis, their effectiveness remains questionable, often exacerbating socio-ecological inequalities. Top-down or militarized conservation practices and the expansion of protected areas, driven by carbon and biodiversity offsetting, have sparked resistance from local residents and part of the civic society. These communities face natural resource access restrictions and forced migration, with effects on local livelihood options.

Using the GLTFCA's biodiversity conservation drive, this article critically examines the contradictions inherent in TFCAs' approaches, highlighting the ecological uncertainties of biodiversity offsetting and the justice implications for human and non-human life. It explores the prioritization of certain forms of nature, the decision-making processes behind conservation strategies, and the socio-political consequences of offsetting schemes. By integrating more-than-human perspectives and emphasizing inclusive, equitable alternatives, this contribution seeks to reimagine conservation practices that align with environmental justice principles. Ultimately, it aims to foster dialogue among scholars, activists, and practitioners to shift discourses toward sustainable and just solutions for the biodiversity and climate crises.

Disaster capitalism & forest offsets: from Small Island Developing States to the UNFCCC negotiations

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Negotiations over the Reduction of Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) have been shown to challenge international power hierarchies. More to this, traditional coalition groups, which are great resources for smaller and weaker states, have experienced fragmentation with states opting to pursue the issue individually. The Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), known for its successes at gathering microstates into influential players, and where consensus is often the order of the day, has not been immune to this trend. Indeed, AOSIS members with vast forest covers such as Papua New Guinea, Belize and Fiji, have much to gain from the REDD+ initiative, as opposed to low-lying atolls such as Tuvalu. As such, a key strand of opposition has been over the inclusion of REDD+ activities in carbon markets, marking a divide over the commodification of forests and its implications for climate mitigation. In this contentious context, the present paper seeks to investigate how AOSIS member states behave when their usual vehicle cannot be used to drive this issue forward. This study helps to uncover the negotiation strategies that these micro-states have used to compensate for their lack of unity: from joining the ranks of new alliances, gaining expertise, claiming competence, or moral authority. In particular the latter is explored, as to how differing views on carbon markets can withhold this moral legitimacy, acquired through AOSIS-shared climate vulnerabilities. To explore these power performances, the paper uses both primary sources from UNFCCC records (written submissions, COP reports) and the Earth Negotiations Bulletin (oral interventions), combined with a set of negotiators' interviews. These sources prove relevant to investigate not only the 'what' of REDD+ in terms of discourses deployed, but also the 'how', as to the forms of 'local' influential resources enacted across REDD+ contentious items.

Rethinking Protected Area Governance in the Hindu Kush Himalaya: Advancing Environmental Justice Under Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework in Marginalized and Underdeveloped High Mountain Landscape

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The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), adopted at COP15, articulates an ambitious vision to conserve 30% of the planet's ecosystems by 2030. While the "30x30" target has revitalized global commitment to expanding protected areas (PAs), its implementation in ecologically sensitive, densely populated and economically under-resourced regions such as Himalaya demands critical examination. This is because local communities have historically depended on forests for their farming and livelihood—area-based conservation policies often intersect with deep-seated socio-ecological complexities. This paper presents a critical appraisal of protected area regimes in Indian Himalaya Region (IHR), examining their effectiveness, equity and alignment with KMGBF's goals. This paper offers a critical appraisal of PA governance in Himalaya, with a focus on its alignment with KMGBF Target 3 (area-based conservation) and Target 22 (inclusive and participatory governance).

Drawing on field studies, institutional assessments and secondary datasets, the paper interrogates the expansion of PAs network in biodiversity-rich landscapes where Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs) continue to face livelihood constraints, historical marginalization, restricted access to resources and exclusion from environmental decision making. Despite their rich biocultural heritage, diverse traditional ecological knowledge and historical stewardship of mountain ecosystems, IPLCs remain underrepresented in the governance structures of national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, conservation reserves and biosphere reserves across the Indian Himalayan Region. The study reveals a persistent conflict between top-down technocratic conservation paradigms and the community rights-based, people-centric approaches envisioned in the KMGBF. The paper argues for a transformative shift toward co-managed and culturally responsive PA governance frameworks in Himalaya that uphold both ecological integrity and social equity. By situating the Himalayan experience within broader global biodiversity discourses, this paper strongly advocates to rethinking conservation and moving beyond quantitative targets towards adaptive, just and inclusive conservation models to realize the goals of the 2030 agenda.

Ecologies on Trial: The Art of Nature's Legal Standing. Researcher and Visual Artist

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This art project responds to the theme “More-than-human perspectives on conservation and environmental justice” through a solo exhibition of figurative and abstract paintings in the Expressionist style. Inspired by the U.S. Supreme Court case *Sierra Club v. Morton* (1972), especially Justice William O. Douglas's dissent, the exhibition reimagines his argument that natural entities, such as rivers, trees, and valleys, should have legal standing and be represented in court. Featuring approximately 12 to 15 original works, the exhibition gives emotional voice to non-human entities impacted by environmental degradation, enclosure, and extractive conservation practices. Figurative pieces portray ecosystems as sentient beings, while abstract compositions express the energies and tensions of deforestation, displacement, and silencing. The Expressionist approach transforms ecological harm into form and color, opening space for empathy and ethical recognition. The project brings visibility to the lives and losses of beings excluded from traditional legal frameworks. By treating ecological entities as subjects with agency, it invites reflection on the limitations of anthropocentric justice and the possibilities of multispecies ethics. It raises questions such as: Who speaks for nature? What are the consequences of denying voice to non-human life? To deepen the experience, background music, such as *Plantasia* by Mort Garson, or sound compositions derived from the vibrational frequencies of plants, will create an immersive atmosphere in harmony with the artworks. Bridging art, ecological thought, and legal imagination, this exhibition contributes to the EnJust 2025 Conference's call to rethink conservation through inclusive, interdisciplinary, and affective approaches centered on the more-than-human world.

Collaborative narratives for social-ecological struggles: reflections on the creation of a story for children in the Colombian Andes highlands.

Juan Sebastián Vélez Triana

IOB-UNAntwerp & Center for Alternatives to Development (Cealdes)

Inspired by the principle of critical recovery of the Colombian tradition of participatory action research as a way to reconstruct the past in order to strengthen the social struggles of the present and future, and by magical realism as a literary strategy to narrate the implausible yet real stories that make up the history of Colombia's most beautiful corners, this children's story recounts the process of settlement and the transformations of territory over more than five decades in the upper part of Venecia (Cundinamarca), as experienced and narrated by its inhabitants. This is the story of a long process of struggle and care for the land by the peasant families of the region, which has culminated in the creation of a Zona de Reserva Campesina (Peasant Reserve Zone)—a community-driven future plan aimed at building peace, strengthening the peasant economy, and protecting the forest, the páramo, and the water in this corner of Sumapaz, in the Colombian Andes highlands, in the context of conservation conflicts related with the demarcation of the highlands as protected areas. Through seven fantastic adventures, this story seeks to transform a research process carried out with the community of Upper Venecia, into a series of lessons for the new generations of the territory, who today grow up with both the fortune and the responsibility of continuing the dreams of their grandmothers and grandfathers, their mothers and fathers—who, like so many others across Colombia, have fought tirelessly to dignify campesino ways of life and their relationship with the land. This piece is part of my doctoral research on social-ecological struggles, peasant autonomy and alternative relationalities in the Colombian Andes highlands, in collaboration with the peasant organization AGUA Campesina and the Center for Alternatives to Development (Cealdes).

The book can be consulted at: <https://heyzine.com/flip-book/valentia-montes>

Socio-environmental conflicts in the construction of floodplain parks on riverbanks in Recife, Brazil

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DEHIST - UFRPE

Edvânia Torres A. Gomes

The city of Recife has the ninth largest population in Brazil, 1.5 million inhabitants. According to the IPCC report (IPCC, 2018), Recife ranks 16th in the world for vulnerability to the effects of climate change, presenting the following risk factors: high population density; low altitude; vulnerability to sea level rise; rising temperatures; increased rainfall; high occupation of risk and vulnerable areas; and susceptibility to infrastructure damage, linked to uneven urbanization processes and aggressive real estate speculation. The population distribution highlights the uncorrected environmental injustice that has persisted since the colonial period, with those with higher incomes living in the more stable areas of the plains and those with lower incomes in the hills or river floodplains, as highlighted below in the socioeconomic vulnerability-socioenvironmental vulnerability relationship (Maior, M. M. S.; Cândido, G. A, 2014). The Recife city government has implemented floodplain parks along the rivers that run through the city. The idea is that these parks will be adaptable to the recurrent flooding of the rivers. However, conflict arises because creating these parks requires the displacement of a large contingent of low-income people living on these riverbanks. Therefore, the objective of this work is to analyze the conflicts between the implementation of floodplain parks and the local population, identifying the processes of governance and social mobilization. We are analyzing floodplain park implementation projects, participating in forums and workshops, conducting field observations and interviews with the representatives of social movements. The floodplain park proposal is aimed at mitigating the risks of climate change in the city, however, these environmental compensations have had a significant impact on the lives of the people who live in these areas, resulting in evictions and exacerbating social problems, with a trend toward the complete gentrification of Recife, although social movements are resisting and questioning the municipality's actions.

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Directions to IDOS



Tulpenfeld 6, 53113 Bonn, Germany



Closest tram station

Heussallee/Museumsmeile
5 minute walk to IDOS



Closest train station

Bonn UN Campus
10 minute walk to IDOS



Closest bus stop

Heussallee/Museumsmeile
5 minute walk to IDOS

B&B Bonn City

Vorgebirgsstraße 33, 53119 Bonn, Germany

Option 1:

Walk to Stadthaus tram station

- Take the 66 towards Ramersdorf OR Bad Honnef
- Exit at Heussallee/Museumsmeile
- Walk to IDOS (Tulpenfeld 6)

Option 2:

Walk to Bonn West tram station

- Take the 16 OR 63 towards Bad Godesberg Stadthalle
- Exit at Heussallee/Museumsmeile
- Walk to IDOS (Tulpenfeld 6)

Hotel Aigner

Dorotheenstraße 12, 53111 Bonn, Germany

Option 1:

Walk to Stadthaus tram station

- Take the 66 towards Ramersdorf OR Bad Honnef
- Exit at Heussallee/Museumsmeile
- Walk to IDOS (Tulpenfeld 6)

Option 2:

Walk to Bonn Central tram station

- Take the 16 OR 63 towards Bad Godesberg Stadthalle
- Exit at Heussallee/Museumsmeile
- Walk to IDOS (Tulpenfeld 6)

Explore Bonn



Hike to Drachenfels
Take a walk along the Rhine
Visit the Rheinaue
Visit the Botanical Gardens



Visit the Bundeskunsthalle
Visit the August-Macke-Haus
Theatre Bonn
Kleines Theater Bad Godesberg



Saigon Restaurant
Mr and Mrs Humus
Pie Me Café -Frankenbad
Café Bar Rheinpavillon
Café von & zu



Visit the Christmas Market
Visit Beethoven's Birthplace

