

Summaries

Bettina Engels & Kristina Dietz: Land Grabbing: Starting Points for a Political Ecology Analysis of Land Grabbing in Ethiopia. Based on social theories of political ecology, this article develops a new analytical approach to understanding contemporary processes of land grabbing, shedding new light on the complexities of both global and local changes in land ownership relations that are currently taking place around the world. The authors maintain that contemporary land use, distribution and conflicts are moulded by history and that decisions over the use and distribution of land cannot be separated from the socio-political contexts from which they have emerged. Three interlinked analytical elements are identified as central to a political ecology perspective on land grabbing: 1) the historicity and contextuality of land use, 2) categories of social structure, and 3) political relations of power and domination. Using the example of land politics in Ethiopia, this article illustrates how such an analysis can be formulated and what insights it allows into current cases of land grabbing.

Markus Seiwald & Christian Zeller: The Commodification of the Forest as a CO₂-sink: Land Use Rights and Conflicts in the Context of Ecuador's National Development Plan. The REDD-mechanism (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation in Developing Countries) is being discussed as a major issue for a post-2012 climate change agreement. Led by Rafael Correa, the Ecuadorian government intends to join this mechanism through its Socio Bosque program, which seeks to protect four million hectares of primary forest mainly situated within indigenous territories. However, the indigenous peoples' organizations of Ecuador have serious doubts about this new policy and have organized cautious resistance to it. This article argues that REDD and national complementary programs, such as Socio Bosque, constitute a specific form of commodification – the forest as a CO₂-sink. Based on the enforcement of property rights, rent income is extracted, with a majority of the conservation payments being centralized in the government. Thus, the forest's capacity for CO₂ absorption is commodified and sold on the international market like any other natural resource and the government, not the indigenous peoples, will be the primary benefactor. This model of earning revenue matches the currently predominant paradigms of „Neodesarrollismo“ or „Neoextractivismo“, leading not only to new conflicts between indigenous peoples and the government but also to conflicts within indigenous organizations.

Peter Clausing & Christina Goschenhofer: Land Grabbing in Mexico. Confusion in the World Bank's Line of Argument. This paper analyses the World Bank's (WB) claim that Mexico presents a positive example of how land grabbing in poor countries can be turned into a „win-win“ situation with opportunities for rural development. The WB suggests that clear, affordable and accessible (collective) land rights – as they allegedly exist in Mexico – in combination with a voluntary code of

conduct for large scale land transactions, will help to ensure positive outcomes for rural development. However, WB documents and an analysis of the Mexican situation reveal that: (a) the 1990s attempt to privatise Mexico's communal lands only partially succeeded, which now, 15 years later, is being proclaimed by the WB as a success in preserving communal land; (b) the WB's conclusion that this cadastral project reduced land conflicts is drawn from a faulty database; and, (c) that numerous land conflicts belie this conclusion. Three case studies are presented in contra to WB claims. In conclusion, this text argues that in countries ridden by corruption and human rights violations, large scale land transactions reinforce social inequality instead of contributing to rural development.

Andreas Exner: Land Grabbing at the Frontiers of the Fossil Energy Regime: Tendencies, Agents and Conflicts in the Case of Tanzania. We are currently witnessing a new era of land grabbing. Assuming an agrarian transition, the World Bank has argued that if peasants are integrated into outgrower schemes and the landless employed in agribusiness, this new era could be a „win-win“ situation. In order to assess this perspective, this article looks at the *longue durée* of agriculture in its global context. While the periphery provided cheap food to the centre during the 19th century, fossil fuels reversed this after World War II. With the fossil energy regime's frontier looming on the horizon, the periphery is once again being asked to produce staple food stuffs and export materials to the centre, as well as produce biomass for energy. As a result, the direct access to land has become crucial again. However, the peak in fossil fuels also puts the agro-regime into question; since fossil fuels are vital to industrial food production, capital growth and consumer demand are likely to come under pressure as fossil fuels reach their limits. Drawing upon the case of Tanzania, this article looks at the *longue durée* of conflicts over land use under capitalist premises. The colonial state expanded raw material production, which then declined as a result of the boom in petrochemical fibres during the postcolonial era. Extensive land conflicts arose from socialist modernization, which were then intensified by neoliberal adjustment and the attempt to install land markets. Under such conditions, different Tanzanian agriculture trajectories are possible, yet none of them appear to provide a „win-win“ outcome.