

CfP Workshop

“Contested Nature - Conflicts on Large-Scale Land and Resource Deals”

Friday, 09 January 2015, 10:00am -17:30pm
desiguALdades.net, FU Berlin,
Boltzmannstr. 1, Room 003, D-14195 Berlin

In times of climate change, peak oil, and a combined energy, food and financial crisis, land as well as certain resources have become highly contested commodities. Resulting from a multiple crisis of capitalism, the current global land rush is facilitated by governments and (foreign) investors alike - often framed as a sustainable development strategy. Although far from being a new phenomenon, the dimensions of contemporary commercial land and resource acquisitions indicate a shift. Particularly, scale, pace and externalities such as displacement, marginalization and environmental damages are a hot topic of debate. However, the impact on human-nature relations and (potential) conflicts related to large-scale land acquisitions remain largely unattended. Changing land tenure poses a severe threat to livelihoods, which leads to different forms of resistance. Likewise, some deals are concluded in (post)conflict countries, which raises questions concerning the impact of land deals on peacebuilding dynamics.

In order to encourage interdisciplinary exchange, we understand “conflicts” in a rather broad sense, including protests, everyday resistance and social movement actions, but also armed conflicts and civil wars. At the same time we do not limit large-scale land acquisitions to agricultural projects. We also take into account conflicts and struggles around tourism projects, mineral extraction, as well as so called “green grabs” like carbon offsetting schemes or acquisitions with conservation purposes.

We welcome contributions tackling one of the following or related issues:

- Are there specific characteristics of conflicts around land and resources? How do they differ from other types of conflicts? What are differences and commonalities between conflicts around large-scale land acquisitions?
- What conditions influence the emergence, dynamics and results of conflicts around large-scale land acquisitions? What are the consequences for the society and environment?
- What actors are engaged in conflicts around land and resources? What strategies do they use? How do they frame their struggles and what are their aims?
- What are useful theoretical concepts in analyzing conflicts around large-scale land acquisitions? In what way is a political ecology perspective helpful in understanding these conflicts?
- What is the role of space, place, territory and scale in configuring conflicts? And how useful are these theoretical concepts?

This workshop aims to provide an open and interdisciplinary space for discussing research projects in progress, as well as methodological and empirical questions.

The workshop also serves as the kick-off meeting for the **AFK working group “Nature, Resources and Conflict”**. The working group aims to establish a network for junior and senior scholars working on issues of conflicts and struggles around land, resources and nature. For more information: <http://www.afk-web.de/arbeitskreis-natur-ressour-cen-konflikte.html>

We warmly welcome presentations of master theses, research projects, PhD chapters, PhD proposals, article drafts and other scientific work in progress on “conflicts around large-scale land and resource deals”. Presentations can be given in German or English but should take maximum 15 minutes. We strongly encourage interdisciplinary contributors and participants from the field of political and social sciences, human geography, or anthropology to submit or register!

Please send your proposals (max. 1 page) by 21 October 2014 to anne.hennings@uni-muenster.de; louisa.prause@gmail.com and david-schnabel@gmx.de.

To provide a solid ground for discussions, final papers should be submitted by 18 December 2014. If you would like to participate without presenting a paper, please let us know until 18 December 2014, so that we are able to organize coffee and cookies accordingly ☺

Best,

Anne, Louisa and David