



REFLECTIONS:

IOS Fair Transitions / LANDac Summer School 2023
*Fair transitions and the politics of land:
Institutions and Imaginaries for Inclusive Futures*

Period: July 3rd to July 14th, 2023 | **Course location:** Janserkhof 2-3, Utrecht City Centre, the Netherlands
| Organizing Institutions: Utrecht University (Faculty of Geosciences), LANDac, IOS Fair Transitions

BACKGROUND:

This year's Summer School links debates about fair transitions to questions about how land is governed and controlled in the context of multiple crises. The energy transition, net-zero ambitions, nature protection and food system transformation all involve claims on land, water and forests. How these claims are framed, analysed and governed, how access to land is organised and who gets a seat at the table to discuss key decisions are questions of urgent concern from both a fair transitions and a land governance perspective.

Working in groups of people from different backgrounds professionally (e.g.: water management, land governance, migration and mobilities, urban planning, law) and geographically (e.g.: Chad, Turkey, the Netherlands, Syria, Burkina Faso, Pakistan, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Afghanistan, Kenya) an integrated view was sought during the two-week course through the writing of essays.

Inspiration for the essays derived from own professional and sometimes personal experiences, the guest lectures, literature provided during the course and through workshops and excursions. This short report provides an insight into the two-week course and a reflection on the experiences. Lastly, it evaluates on how the Summer School can be improved in the years to come.



Image 1. July 3rd Tour around Utrecht City Centre

Daily bulletin: July 3rd

by Belén P. Martínez González

After a tour through Utrecht City Centre organized by dr. Guus van Westen, dr. Ir. Janwillem Liebrand provided an overview of the [IOS FT Platform](#). The platform serves as a knowledge hub, bringing together scholars from various disciplines to examine the fairness of transitions from an institutional perspective. Dr. Liebrand highlighted the significance of dialogue in this interdisciplinary endeavor. The central themes of interest for this platform were then outlined, focusing on the nonhuman aspects of institutions, the informality of institutions, and the fairness of institutions. These themes aimed to explore the multifaceted dimensions of fairness within societal transitions.

Dr. Wytse Chamberlain took the stage to introduce **LANDac**, a platform created in 2009 consisting of diverse individuals motivated by their deep engagement with land issues, representing academia, the policy world, the private sector, and activism. She emphasized that land is not merely an economic matter but also an emotional and political issue. A critical question was raised: if the table at which decisions are made is fundamentally flawed, how can fair and just outcomes be achieved?

1. Setting the stage: Land governance for inclusive and sustainable transitions? Rethinking the agenda

Hosted by Prof. A. Zoomers



Image 2. Students discussing Zoomers' topics

The session continued with a lecture by Prof. Annelies Zoomers, divided into two parts. The first part explored the concept of land grabbing or land acquisition. The changing landscape in different countries was discussed, highlighting phenomena such as the emergence of “new cities” or “new areas” catering to the affluent. Paradoxically, as these cities grow, slum areas proliferate around them. The discussion broadened to encompass the complexities of urbanization, where individuals from rural areas are not the sole migrants to cities; urban dwellers are also forced to seek alternatives as cities become prohibitively expensive. Zoomers stressed that any alteration in the landscape inevitably affects societal dynamics, using the example of the mining industry and its impact on sustainability debates.

The second part of Zoomers' lecture delved into the topic of land governance. The audience was prompted to consider examples of effective land governance that had improved people's lives. Policy interventions were explored, and the case of Somalia was presented, where an urban management law validated by the government was enacted. The importance of legal frameworks in land governance was underscored, with Mozambique cited as an example of having a sound land law.

However, the discussion highlighted the gap between the existence of favorable laws and their practical implementation, particularly for vulnerable populations. The understanding and comprehension of these laws by the intended beneficiaries were identified as crucial factors. Participants agreed that while good legal frameworks were essential, operationalization and challenging the assumptions behind these laws were often complex and challenging.

A key suggestion that emerged from the discussion was the need to reconsider the approach taken by external actors and businesses. Instead of designing programs in the Netherlands, it was proposed that initiatives be implemented within the countries themselves, directly benefiting the local population. The notion of reversing the conventional approach was emphasized, placing a focus on identifying desirable investors and partners.

Overall, the first day of the LANDac/IOS Fair Transitions Summer School 2023 offered a rich and thought-provoking exploration of the fairness of transitions within land governance. The discussions highlighted the intricacies of land grabbing, urbanization, and the operationalization of legal frameworks, urging participants to challenge assumptions and strive for equitable outcomes.

The stage has been set for further engaging sessions, fostering critical thinking and dialogue among participants in the days to come.

Daily bulletin: July 4th

by Belén P. Martínez González

On the second day of the course, the participants engaged in a World Cafe activity aimed at fostering better understanding and connections among each other. Furthermore, the World Café served to form groups for the Manifesto Assignment.

The following themes were democratically chosen:

- A. Adaptation and Mitigation
- B. Institutions and land policy
- C. Gender and Inclusion
- D. Conflict

2. REDD+: The win-win solution for climate and rural development?

Hosted by Dominique Schmid

Dominique Schmid from Utrecht University delivered a thought-provoking lecture on REDD+, an important climate change mitigation intervention in the forestry sector. The lecture began with an introduction to REDD+ and its framework established by the UNFCCC. It was highlighted that REDD+ aims to protect forests through monetary incentives, as forests play a vital role in reducing AFOLU emissions. The lecture further explored the concept of carbon commodification, where forests are valued for their carbon storage capacity, leading to the creation of carbon credits.

Various types of carbon projects in diverse economic sectors were discussed. The system of carbon credits was presented, with industrial actors compensating for unavoidable emissions by investing in carbon projects, ideally in forests at high risk of deforestation. Multiple supposed benefits of such projects were outlined, including climate change mitigation, ecosystem protection, socioeconomic development, and economic growth.

However, the lecture also highlighted several critiques of REDD+ since a lot of issues go wrong in the process. Environmental concerns included questions about the claimed benefits, additionality, inflation of baselines, permanence, and failure to address major drivers of deforestation. Lack of transparency, unequal distribution of benefits, and social issues were raised as additional concerns. Stakeholder consultations and safeguard actors were discussed as essential in this context, noting the need for enforcement at both multilateral and national levels.

Two case studies were presented to provide practical insights into the complexities of REDD+. The case study conducted in Colombia aimed to assess the role of land tenure in enhancing participation and mitigating negative impacts of REDD+ projects in the Colombian Amazon. The study revealed that Colombia's constitution provides strong protection for land rights, with carbon rights closely tied to land rights, and a carbon tax that promotes offsetting. However, most REDD+ projects in Colombia are privately initiated. Interestingly, the Colombian courts argue that prior consultation is not required for REDD+ projects as they are considered bottom-up initiatives initiated by communities and deemed to have no negative impacts.

The study had two main objectives: (1) to examine the extent to which these projects are truly bottom-up and (2) their cultural and economic impacts on the community.

The findings of the study highlighted several important aspects. First, 90% of the respondents were unaware of the projects or their consequences, indicating a lack of project knowledge among the communities. Second, transparency was limited, as only the highest-ranking leaders had knowledge of the most basic contract conditions. Third, 28 out of 38 respondents expressed a desire for prior consultation in REDD+ projects.

In conclusion, the study indicated that while land titling may enhance participation to some extent, it primarily benefits the highest elite within the communities rather than promoting broad participation. The second case study shifted its focus to Sub-Saharan Africa, where it examined the occurrence of violent and non-violent conflicts in relation to 22 REDD+ projects across the region. The results showed that violent events were 12 times more likely in wider project landscapes, with non-violent conflicts also increasing significantly. Lack of land tenure recognition beyond land ownership, unmet expectations, and other factors were identified as risk multipliers for conflict.

3. Land Rights Now Campaign Workshop

Hosted by Clémence Abbès



Image 3. Campaign workshop

Clémence from Oxfam conducted a workshop on the Land Rights Now campaign, an international alliance dedicated to securing indigenous and community land rights worldwide. The achievements of the campaign were highlighted, including the passage of land rights acts in Liberia and the advocacy for legislation protecting indigenous land rights in Panama and Paraguay. The workshop emphasized the campaign's approach, which involves mobilizing subscribers and followers through newsletters and social media. A successful campaign strategy was outlined, emphasizing the importance of setting clear goals, identifying target audiences, engaging allies, and employing powerful messages, tactics, and actions.

Day 2 of the LANDac/IOS Fair Transitions Summer School 2023 provided participants with valuable insights into REDD+ and its complexities, along with an inspiring workshop on advocating for land rights. These engaging activities contributed to the participants' knowledge and understanding of the diverse challenges and opportunities within the realm of land governance and fair transitions.

Daily bulletin: July 5th

by Belén P. Martínez González

4. Land, conflict and governance

Hosted by dr. Gemma van der Haar

Dr. Gemma van der Haar presented a thought-provoking lecture that challenged conventional thinking about land conflicts. She highlighted four different perspectives on land conflict, emphasizing that conflicts are not always solely about land itself. Instead, conflicts can be part of broader struggles related to governance, power dynamics, identity, and other complex factors. Van der Haar discussed the Kurdish people's struggles as an example, illustrating how conflicts can involve multiple intertwined issues.

The lecture explored the various scales and intensities of land conflicts, ranging from small-scale disputes over boundaries to large-scale conflicts such as the Mexican Revolution or the Colombian war. Van der Haar emphasized that the causes of land conflicts can vary, including issues of scarcity, distribution of land, or control and autonomy over specific areas.

Institutions were identified as intermediating factors in conflict development and the transition from a clash of interests to armed opposition. Van der Haar stressed the importance of understanding how institutions shape the evolution of conflicts.

Money also played a role, as conflicts can be motivated by profits gained from specific lands or resources. Additionally, the lecture highlighted the entanglement of war and profit, referencing the connection between conflict minerals and sustaining wars. Perspectives on land conflict encompass a range of theories that seek to understand conflicts related to resources and their broader implications.

Environmental Security Scarcity Direct violence Security Control/contain direct violence Protect interests	Political Ecology Resource capture/dispossession Multiple forms of violence Justice Distributive reforms, promote equality, change extractivism
Neo-institutional economics "bad institutions" Rational choice, Incentives Formalisation, blueprints Institutional reform	(legal) anthropology Lived experience, practice Multi-layered, relational, meaning Bottom-up conflict resolution, legal pluralism, contextualised

Image 4. Governing land conflict, according to different perspectives (van der Haar, 2023)

The following overview highlights key perspectives on land conflict:

1. Environmental Security

This theory emphasizes the role of scarcity in motivating violence and places a strong focus on security concerns. It suggests that when resources become scarce, conflicts over their control and access are more likely to occur. However, there is growing criticism of this view, questioning why scarcity varies across different places and how it dynamically changes over time. This perspective calls for zooming out to consider the larger picture beyond scarcity alone.

2. Political Ecology Perspective:

The political ecology perspective critiques the environmental security view and directs attention to addressing inequality, injustice, and power imbalances. It highlights that the root cause of conflicts is often not solely scarcity but rather the unequal access to resources. Dispossession emerges as a key concept in this perspective, suggesting that people may be fighting not only due to scarcity but also because they have been dispossessed by dominant actors. This perspective broadens the understanding of violence to include structural and cultural forms, such as the suppression of indigenous communities and restricted access to resources. It emphasizes the need for justice, going beyond a narrow focus on security.

3. Neo-Institutional Economics:

This perspective focuses on the role of institutions in managing conflicts. It argues that conflicts arise not only from scarcity or dispossession but from poorly designed or inadequate institutions that fail to facilitate effective conflict resolution. The emphasis is on developing institutions that enable different parties to settle conflicts in fair and constructive ways.

4. Legal Anthropology:

This perspective delves into understanding conflicts from a social relations standpoint, emphasizing how people experience and navigate conflicts on the ground. It examines who is involved in the conflicts, the underlying stakes, and the different ways in which conflicts are resolved. This perspective acknowledges that conflicts may involve more than just the land itself, emphasizing the importance of considering the broader social and cultural dynamics at play.

In summary, these perspectives offer diverse lenses through which to analyze land conflicts. While environmental security emphasizes scarcity and security threats, political ecology brings attention to inequality and injustice. Neo-institutional economics focuses on institutional arrangements, and legal anthropology explores conflicts through the lens of social relations. Understanding these perspectives allows for a comprehensive examination of land conflicts and opens up pathways for addressing the underlying causes and striving for just resolutions.

5. Engineering delta Transition? Negotiating land, technology, race and masculinity in sustainable and fair development

Hosted by dr. ir. Janwillem Liebrand

Dr. ir. Janwillem Liebrand's lecture focused on the post-colonial and decolonial debates and their implications for engineering interventions in land, water, and technology. He emphasized the need to critically examine the structural inequalities embedded in engineering practices and the colonial perspectives that often shape development initiatives.

Liebrand challenged conventional notions of technology, highlighting that it extends beyond mere calculations and mathematical aspects. A decolonial perspective acknowledges the role of community leaders, land workers, and religious intermediaries who contribute to technology through craftsmanship, collective action, and mediating connections with the spiritual realm.

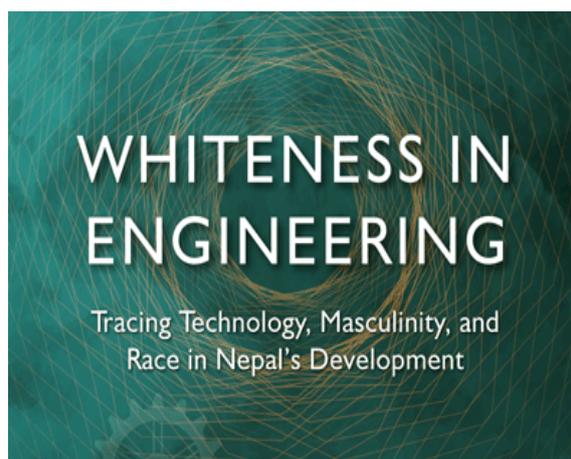


Image 5. Liebrand (2021). Whiteness in engineering. Gifted to the Summer School students during the opening

He underscored the loss incurred due to the dominance of Western engineering and science, urging participants to recognize alternative forms of knowledge and expertise.

The lecture delved into the concept of technology transfer, discussing the shift from the perception of a knowledgeable expert transferring knowledge to an ignorant farmer. Dr. Liebrand shared his collaboration with an independent, non-profit publisher in Nepal, emphasizing his commitment to promoting research in the social sciences in Nepal through lectures, workshops, libraries, and book publications. He viewed the publication of his book as a decolonial project aimed at challenging established publishing practices and promoting a diversity of perspectives.

Day 3 of the LANDac/IOS Fair Transitions Summer School 2023 provided participants with valuable insights into the complexities of land conflicts, the role of institutions, and the need for a decolonial perspective in engineering interventions. These thought-provoking lectures encouraged critical thinking and opened up avenues for further exploration and discussion on land governance and sustainable development.

Daily bulletin: July 6th

by Belén P. Martínez González

6. Urban land governance

Hosted by dr. Femke van Noorloos,
dr. Murta Shannon and dr. Ari Susanti



Image 6. Guest lecturers on urban land governance receive applause from the participants

Dr. Femke van Noorloos, dr. Murta Shannon, and dr. Ari Susanti led a interesting session on urban land governance, highlighting various aspects and challenges associated with displacement, informality, and land reclamation.

The discussion expanded beyond direct forms of displacement to explore indirect risks, such as new land value increases and gentrification, which can impact vulnerable communities. The modalities of displacement were examined, particularly the enclosure of commons and the prevention of mobile populations from accessing livelihood resources. Insecurity regarding land rights emerged as a significant issue, often exacerbated by fast-tracked projects attracting private actors that bypass proper consultation and transparency.

The session emphasized the dynamic and ever-shifting landscape of potential and actual impacts, where top-down investments frequently fail to address the complexities of informality. The concept of informality itself was critically examined, recognizing that it is a contested term and should not be viewed as a strict dichotomy.

The interconnections and hybrid combinations between informality and formality were emphasized, highlighting that informality is often produced by the state itself. The session also questioned the acceptance and legitimization of informal practices in gated communities controlled by the wealthy, driven by economic interests.

Dr. Murta Shannon shed light on the overlooked dynamics of land reclamation, highlighting how the creation of new land in areas with limited space is controlled by a few companies and dominating foreign states. The process involves mining sand from one location and depositing it in another, resulting in the destruction of entire marine ecosystems.

Impacts include displacement and loss of livelihoods for fishing communities, destruction of coastal and marine ecosystems, dwindling global sand stocks, and legal grey areas with inadequate regulatory oversight. The lecture also drew attention to the Dutch export strategy in the water sector and the role of publicly funded insurance, which makes infrastructural development less risky for companies.

7. Fair transitions and more-than-humans

Hosted by dr. Rick Dolphijn

Dr. Rick Dolphijn introduced the concept of the “Parliament of Things” and encouraged participants to envision the map of Utrecht from a non-human-centered perspective. The aim was to challenge anthropocentric thinking and consider alternative viewpoints, such as those of a cat, a river, or even trash.

Viewing the city through different lenses can be both practical and insightful. The lecture further explored the concept of recognizing rivers and other natural elements as actors within a “Parliament of Things.” Treating them as participants in decision-making processes could lead to a more respectful and responsible approach to their management.

The discussion drew parallels with movements in South America that advocate for granting rights to natural resources and representing them in court, holding polluters accountable.

Overall, the session encouraged attendees to challenge human-centered perspectives and consider the wider implications of land governance, displacement, and the agency of non-human actors in shaping our understanding of the world.

Daily bulletin: July 7th

by Belén P. Martínez González

8. Policy and donor perspectives

Hosted by Lisette Meij

Lisette Meij from RVO Netherlands provided insights into the LAND-at-scale project and presented the perspective of donors in land governance. The session began with an interactive exercise where participants were asked to agree or disagree with the statement that without political will and buy-in from local governments, funding for interventions cannot be sustainable.

Discussions around this statement revealed divergent views. Those who agreed emphasized the importance of political willingness for project success, citing examples from Somalia where projects cannot proceed without government support. On the other hand, those who disagreed argued that community-level interventions can still make a meaningful impact even without full government support, especially in cases where trust in the government is low. The conversation highlighted the complexities of navigating political dynamics in different contexts.

Lisette provided an overview of the history of Dutch land governance funding and highlighted the increased importance of linking land governance to legal frameworks and relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The launch of LAND-at-scale in 2019 as a land governance support program by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands was discussed, with a budget of 37.5 million euros. The program focuses on scaling successful pilots and innovations, with ideas submitted by embassies and selected through an assessment process.

The session also explored the involvement of embassies in the LAND-at-scale process, with participants raising questions about inclusivity and the potential challenges faced by local civic society organizations. Lisette acknowledged the initial skepticism but emphasized the added value of embassy involvement in terms of networking and legitimacy.

The importance of local engagement was universally agreed upon, with participants discussing strategies for involving locals in the process through informal settings and activities that resonate with the community. The need for mutual understanding between the Netherlands and the participants in LAND-at-scale was emphasized, recognizing the significance of balanced collaboration.

Lisette then delved into four key aspects of land governance from a donor's perspective: Collaboration, structural change, scaling, and results frameworks.

Structural change was discussed in terms of integrating rights into laws and ensuring lasting change beyond the duration of a program. Participants explored the question of achieving structural change in countries experiencing conflict or political instability, with varying viewpoints on the opportunities and challenges presented by such contexts.

Challenges related to results frameworks were also discussed, including the measurement of enabling factors and the linkages between land governance and other SDGs. Participants debated the significance of indicators and the need to balance quantitative and qualitative assessments. The limitations of impact assessments, particularly in the long term, were highlighted.

Overall, the lecture provided valuable insights into the perspectives and considerations of donors in land governance, emphasizing the importance of political will, structural change, collaboration, and the need for nuanced approaches to measuring results.

9. Excursion to Amelisweerd

Hosted by Jos Schmitz en Jan Morren



Image 7. Summer School students at Amelisweerd

In this excursion representatives from Kerngroep Ring Utrecht and Vrienden van Amelisweerd provided insights into the Amelisweerd project and the controversies surrounding the construction of the A27 highway. They highlighted the historical context, public participation, and subsequent actions that have shaped the project's trajectory.

The excursion began with a lecture in which the lobbying efforts for highways in the 1960s were discussed, driven by the significant increase in the number of cars in the Netherlands. The expectation of a growing population further emphasized the need for improved infrastructure. Public participation during this period was primarily informal, involving discussions with influential groups such as the Meeting Commission for Protection of Nature and Landscape. These discussions resulted in the relocation of the A27 highway from Amelisweerd to Nieuw Amelisweerd due to the archeological significance of the Roman Age findings near Fort Vechten.

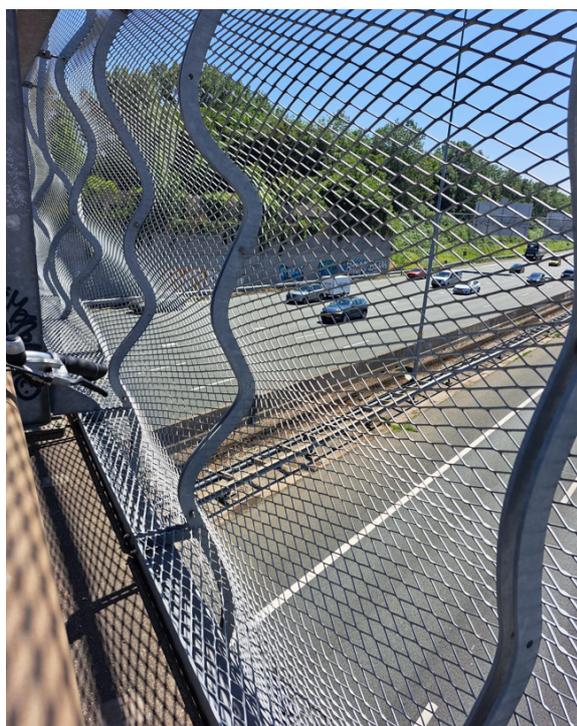


Image 8. The much contested A27 highway

The Amelisweerd Action in 1971 marked a turning point, coinciding with the emerging environmental awareness and the democracy movement of the 1960s. The action involved various methods such as committees, petitions, and lobbying, leading to significant publicity and a shift in the highway's alignment. The government promised that the Utrecht City Council would be consulted and have an influence on the final decision, reflecting a novel political approach at the time.

Further developments in the 1970s and 1980s saw more demonstrations and legal procedures, ultimately resulting in the decision by the State Council. The construction of the A27 highway was deemed necessary, but the minimal area of Amelisweerd to be cut down was emphasized due to its status as a natural habitat of international importance.



Image 9. Summer School students pose at the mansion of Nieuw-Amelisweerd

The climax of the resistance occurred in 1982 when the forest was occupied to defend the trees, but the state proceeded with the bulldozing despite ongoing legal proceedings.

The lecture highlighted the subsequent changes in legislation, particularly the Highway Planning Law in 1993, which prioritized infrastructure realization and viewed environmental concerns as problems to be mitigated or compensated. The lecture also discussed the Tracébesluit (Planning Approval Decision) in 2016, which proposed widening the highway and cutting down more trees than in previous phases. The risks to the hydrological system and the debatable "benefit and necessity" of the chosen configuration were emphasized. In response to these challenges, local environmental and neighborhood organizations formed the Kerngroep Ring Utrecht and took legal and political actions.

The lecture raised questions about citizen participation, the role of trust in citizens, and the potential impacts of the new Environmental Law (Omgevingswet). Demonstrations and actions were highlighted as ongoing and essential in shaping the project's future. It also provided valuable insights into the Amelisweerd project and its contested nature, emphasizing the importance of public participation, legal procedures, and the ongoing activism of local organizations. The complexities and challenges of infrastructure development and environmental concerns were addressed, raising critical questions about fair transitions and the involvement of citizens in decision-making processes.

Daily bulletin: July 10th

by Belén P. Martínez González

10. Reflecting on Amelisweerd

Hosted by dr. Wytske Chamberlain-van der Werf and Marit Meijer

During this activity, participants shared their reflections on the Amelisweerd project through various perspectives. Some participants presented pictures depicting the conflict between humans and nature, showcasing the impact of human intervention on trees.

Others focused on the resilience of nature, highlighting how dead trees can rejuvenate and thrive.



Image 10. Photo by Cindy Zongo of a tree that reminded her of resilience and opportunity

The group also discussed the human influence on water in Amelisweerd, such as the human-imposed regulations on rivers and the irony of bicycles being restricted in certain areas. The participants engaged in conversations about the significance of nature elements, and the need to recognize and appreciate them.



Image 11. 'Amelisweerd niet geasfalteerd'. Stephen Teeuwen introduces the concept of 'constructive vandalism' during the reflection

The concept of dynamic art pieces, where human interventions intersect with the interventions of nature itself, was also explored. The participants delved into the topic of constructive vandalism, noticing the graffiti and stickers along the way, and even encountered a tree with a sign of victory.

11. Fair food transitions

Hosted by dr. Julia Tschersich and dr. Julie Fraser

Dr. Julie Fraser and Dr. Julia Tschersich from Utrecht University delivered a lecture on fair food transitions. They examined the global food system, the concentration of power within it, and the need for governance structures that support fair transitions. Fraser, a university lecturer in Transitional Justice, Human Rights, and International Criminal Law, explored the role of international law in realizing the right to food for all. Tschersich, a Junior Assistant Professor of Transformative Governance and Democracy, focused on social-ecological transformations and agroecology.

The participants engaged in a reflection exercise, considering the connection between the summer school and food. They discussed the purpose and aim of activist groups, the inner workings of funding processes and land governance tools, and the importance of analyzing global issues through different lenses. The interconnectedness of global challenges, such as climate change, land issues, social issues, and food security, was emphasized. Food was seen as a unifying force, connecting different cultural values and perspectives.

Daily bulletin: July 11th

by Belén P. Martínez González

12. Inclusive business in agriculture

Hosted by dr. Wytske Chamberlain-van der Werf and dr. Guus van Westen

The lecture addressed the troubling status quo of the current food system, characterized by agricultural intensification, environmental challenges, disconnection from food sources, and market concentration.

The effects of climate change on agriculture were also discussed, with climate change being both caused by and impacting agriculture.

The concentration of power in the hands of a few major corporations, especially in the seed and other agri-input markets raised concerns about biodiversity and local communities' access to diverse crop varieties. The distinction between food security and food sovereignty was explored, with food sovereignty emphasizing political aspects and community empowerment in addition to access to food.

The speakers highlighted the need for justice in fair food transitions, discussing concepts such as distribution, procedural fairness, recognition of different knowledge systems, and restorative justice. Three paradigm shifts were identified as essential: moving beyond productivism and growth, reconnecting human and non-human relationships, and embracing plural perspectives and understandings of knowledge.

Agroecology was presented as a regenerative and holistic approach to agriculture that promotes the reconnection between humans and food systems.

The lecture concluded by examining the human right to food, its interconnectedness with other human rights (such as housing, water, health, education, and information), and the challenges of ensuring food justice and sustainability. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were discussed as policy initiatives that align with human rights principles. The emerging recognition of the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment was highlighted.

The participants engaged in discussions about the rights of nature and the challenges of representing non-human entities in legal frameworks.

The lecture provided insights into fair food transitions, emphasizing the need for justice, sustainability, and the recognition of diverse perspectives and knowledge systems. The participants were encouraged to consider the interconnectedness of food with other human rights and to envision transformative pathways towards a more equitable and sustainable food system.

Dr. Wytske Chamberlain from LAND-at-scale and Dr. Guus van Westen from Utrecht University delivered a lecture on inclusive businesses in agriculture. The lecture began with a discussion on the role of the private sector in development and the potential conflicts between profit and development goals. The participants expressed different viewpoints, with some emphasizing the importance of private actors in driving development and others raising concerns about the profit-driven nature of the private sector.

The need for governments to create a conducive context for the private sector was also highlighted, particularly in contexts where there is no private sector due to the lack of guarantees for success.

The lecture explored how to stimulate growth in the agricultural sector, challenging the assumption that state intervention is necessary for agricultural growth. It was noted that small-scale investments and local actors can contribute significantly to growth, and the definition of growth should extend beyond production to include transformation and distribution mechanisms. The legacy of colonialism and the structural challenges faced by family-based agriculture in competing with industrialized agriculture were discussed.

Examples were shared, such as the lack of infrastructure in certain countries leading to the misrepresentation of their products in the market. The concept of inclusive business was introduced, highlighting its nature as a profit-oriented partnership between commercial agribusinesses and other actors.

Inclusive businesses often operate in contexts characterized by uncertainty and power imbalances. The lecture discussed the Resource Dependency Theory, which explores the mutual dependency between businesses and other actors in reducing uncertainty about resources. Transaction cost economics and agency theory were also presented as factors influencing the organization structure of inclusive businesses.

Various instruments that support inclusive businesses were discussed, including lease agreements and supply contracts. These instruments address issues of land and produce dependency, transaction costs, equity, collective organization, and mentorship.

An example from South Africa was provided to illustrate these elements and highlight the dynamic nature of structures. The lecture emphasized the importance of considering the context in which projects are implemented and the need for continuous evaluation and adaptation.

The lecture concluded by highlighting the role of land governance as a driver of inclusive businesses. The potential of inclusive businesses to create economic success at the project level was acknowledged, but it was also noted that the social aspects of beneficiary development often lag behind. Inclusive businesses were presented as part of a larger puzzle rather than a panacea for addressing poverty and inequality.

13. Introduction to gender issues

Hosted by dr. Griet Steel and Lotte-Marie Brouwer

Dr. Griet Steel (independent researcher) and Lotte-Marie Brouwer from Bop Inc. led the session on gender issues. The lecture started by exploring the concept of fair transitions and the role of the private sector in driving sustainable and inclusive development. The social construct of gender was discussed, highlighting the nature-nurture debate and the concept of intersectionality.

The lecture focused on the importance of women's land rights and the challenges women face in accessing, controlling, and owning land and natural resources. The low representation of women as landholders and the limited implementation and enforcement of women's land rights laws were highlighted. The international and national attention given to women's land rights, including initiatives such as the Beijing Platform for Action, were discussed.

The lecture also examined the concept of inclusive agribusiness and the need to recognize the role of women in agricultural value chains. It was noted that women play a significant role in agrifood systems in sub-Saharan Africa and are often involved in micro informal businesses in less profitable parts of the value chain.

The lecture emphasized the importance of shifting the focus from encouraging a high number of startups to supporting women who are well-positioned to lead growth-oriented enterprises.

A case study from Kenya was presented to illustrate how agribusiness entrepreneurs navigate donor-driven inclusive business programs. The lecture highlighted the need to consider not only economic indicators of success but also social considerations. The importance of empowering women entrepreneurs and recognizing their achievements beyond charity cases was emphasized.

Recommendations were provided for donor-funded agribusiness programs, including the redesign of indicators and business metrics to give equal weight to economic and social considerations.

The lecture concluded by emphasizing the need for a holistic approach to inclusive business that considers gender dynamics and promotes economic and social empowerment for all.

Daily bulletin: July 12th

by Belén P. Martínez González

14. Participation and inclusion: A private sector perspective

Hosted by Willow Sommer



Image 12. Sommer (2023) uses this picture to illustrate the conflicting interests of business (efficient, quick and organized) and nature (chaotic and running at its own pace).

Willow Sommer from Metabolic delivered a presentation on the role of the private sector in driving sustainability and building a sustainable economy. Metabolic is an organization that advises the public and private sector, conducts research, develops software tools, scales impactful ventures, and empowers communities on the ground.

Sommer introduced the audience to Metabolic's ecosystem of organizations working together to drive systems change and build a sustainable economy. She emphasized the value of Metabolic's systemic and science-based approach, which bridges the gap between natural and social sciences and economics.

Task



Image 13. Sommer (2023) challenges the students to think like a consultant in a case study

By focusing on root causes instead of symptoms, Metabolic seeks to identify high-impact leverage points for change and understand the trade-offs involved. The consulting divisions of Metabolic were discussed, with a particular focus on the agrifood & biodiversity division.

Sommer highlighted the division's work in driving systemic change through regenerative roadmaps, measurement and monitoring frameworks, and the promotion of nature-positive business strategies. She emphasized that their client is the system, not the client, and their approach encompasses both quantitative and qualitative methods.

During the presentation, Sommer addressed the prevailing negative perception of the private sector in sustainability efforts, pointing out that not all private sector entities are destructive. She discussed the complex nature of sustainability, with inherent tradeoffs at societal and industry levels. She also engaged the audience in a discussion about the limits of cooperation with certain companies, highlighting the importance of assessing whether a company aligns with Metabolic's vision of the future economy.

The potential benefits and risks of corporate involvement in land tenure were explored during the discussion. Sommer acknowledged the enticing benefits such as economic incentivization, resource continuity, and raising industry standards. However, she also highlighted the risks, including agenda capture, role displacement, and weakened institutions.

Thinking like a consultant

In breakout groups, determine interventions to bring the company towards a net positive impact on one natural capital: habitats.

Think about:

- which farm landscape it targets;
- which stakeholders need to be included;
- what data/technology is required
- Is it financially feasible?

The concept of "slow violence" was introduced, referring to the gradual degradation caused by certain practices over time. The monetarization of nature goods was also raised as a potential risk.

A case study was presented to illustrate Metabolic's approach to project assessment and intervention design. Sommer emphasized the importance of considering interventions to avoid, reduce, restore, and transform impacts.

Participants actively engaged in an exercise where they defined interventions and reflected on their potential effectiveness. The challenges of disconnection between consultancy firms and local contexts were also discussed, highlighting the need for deeper engagement and understanding.

15. Contributions to Sustainable Development or Green Grabs? Private Sector Involvement in Biodiversity Conservation

Hosted by prof Marja Spierenburg

Prof Marja Spierenburg from Leiden University led the session on private sector involvement in biodiversity conservation. She provided insights into the historical context of nature conservation in Africa, emphasizing the separation of humans from nature and the impacts of colonization.

The concept of ecological modernization was discussed, tracing its emergence in the 1970s as awareness grew regarding the negative impacts of industrialization and resource extraction on nature, ecosystem services and natural capital.

Spierenburg emphasized the importance of including local and indigenous knowledge in conservation efforts and the need to combine scientific and local knowledge to address sustainability challenges effectively. The financial crisis and global land rush were discussed in the context of tenure security and the distribution of benefits and costs.

The session also examined community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) initiatives and game farming in South Africa. The successes and challenges of CBNRM programs were explored, including concerns about loss of income sources, insecurity of land rights, and centralization of revenues. The impacts of game farming on farm dwellers were discussed, highlighting the tensions between job opportunities and the rights-based approach to development.

Spierenburg concluded by emphasizing the need for a comprehensive and inclusive approach to biodiversity conservation that considers power relations, acknowledges social transformation, and combines scientific and local knowledge.

WORLD CAFÉ

As the Summer School drew to a close four groups were elected to write an essay about the core themes that were democratically chosen at the start of the week. The section below discusses the ideas that were exchanged during the World Café, followed by the essays that were drafted by the different groups.

A. Adaptation and Mitigation

Group members: Shezane Kabura Wambui, Asli Aygün Öztürk, Matthias Teunis and Karel Boers

The group focused on the extent of a fair transition in climate mitigation and adaptation. They highlighted the disparity between industrialized and Global North countries, which are more prepared to mitigate and adapt to climate change compared to Global South countries. The group emphasized that the transition will always be unfair and argued for the need to fight for fairer transitions within adaptation and mitigation.

During the presentation, the group discussed the responsibility of industrialized countries in mitigating emissions and emphasized the importance of global efforts to make them accountable.

They also explored the concept of fair transitions at a local scale, considering the role of land governance in providing fairer transitions. A case study from Somalia was presented to illustrate the challenges faced by a country that has contributed very little to emissions but is heavily impacted by climate change.

Participants engaged in a discussion about the focus on fair transitions and questioned the relevance of this narrative in the global south. They raised concerns about the daily consequences of climate change faced by countries in the Global South and whether the transitions being imposed upon them by the global north are suitable. The group debated the fairness of these transitions and whether they should be adapted to suit the cultural and contextual realities of the Global South.

In conclusion, the group acknowledged that a completely fair transition may not be attainable but emphasized the importance of striving for fairer transitions. They questioned the concept of “the right to development” and highlighted the need for global efforts to address the inequities in climate mitigation and adaptation.

B. Institutions and land policy

Group members: Borges Charle Romao, Stephen Teeuwen, Courage Rodwell Bakasa, Balolebwami Ngwasi and Bulcha Berecha

The second group's presentation focused on the importance of an inclusive perspective in land governance, with a specific emphasis on gender inclusion. They highlighted that land is a vital necessity and discussed the multifaceted crisis in land governance in Africa, which often results in conflicts and the exclusion of certain groups, including women, the poor, young herders, and migrants.

The group emphasized the need for participation and inclusion in land governance and the development of tenure arrangements that ensure equal access to land. They discussed the need for women and men to be equally engaged in the creation of laws and represented in various institutions and processes. The group also touched on the variations in land laws across African countries, highlighting both positive and negative examples.

C. Gender and Inclusion

Group members: Borges Charle Romao, Stephen Teeuwen, Kevin Kaole, Courage Rodwell Bakasa, Balolebwami Ngwasi and Bulcha Berecha

The second group's presentation focused on the importance of an inclusive perspective in land governance, with a specific emphasis on gender inclusion. They highlighted that land is a vital necessity and discussed the multifaceted crisis in land governance in Africa, which often results in conflicts and the exclusion of certain groups, including women, the poor, young herders, and migrants.

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During the presentation, there was a debate about the representation and power of African representatives in global agreements and the challenges faced in translating local laws and practices to a global level.

The group also touched on the role of the government in addressing agroecological matters in the context of fair transitions.

In the final discussion, participants reflected on the widening gap between rich and poor countries as the world moves towards green energy. They questioned the possibility of fair transitions and whether they can truly be achieved. The day concluded with participants reading a collective manifesto that highlighted action points for the future and marked the end of the summer school.

D. Conflict

Group members: Sara Khoury, Gore Mbaitoloum, Hassan Sibth Ul, Cindy Zongo, Amir Safi

The fourth group explored land-related conflicts and their causes. They highlighted various subcategories of land conflicts, including boundary disputes, ownership disputes, multiple sales or allocations of land, discrimination by law, peaceful land acquisitions, and more.

The group discussed different approaches to dealing with land conflicts, such as facilitation, mediation, arbitration, and decision by a powerful authority. The group emphasized the importance of preventing land conflicts through the establishment of an institutional framework and the use of assessment and monitoring tools. They discussed triggers of land conflicts and strategies to prevent foreseeable conflicts, with a specific focus on rural areas.