



WAGENINGEN
UNIVERSITY & RESEARCH

Booklet with thesis opportunities at the Forest and Nature Conservation Policy Group (FNP)

Version 2023



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The 'global-local nexus' in forest governance



Forest governance is about the 'steering' (regulation, facilitation, nudging) of human behavior in order to achieve certain forest policy aims, goals and targets. Much of this governance is local in nature, for example to regulate the management of a village forest. But many forest issues are also transboundary in nature, like the climate change consequences of deforestation, so that we also observe international governance initiatives. However, local and international problems are often interconnected, as are the governance responses these evoke. Therefore one can speak of the 'global-local nexus' of forest governance. The following research questions are relevant for this theme:

1. How and to what extent do global governance initiatives affect local forest use, management and conservation?
2. How and to what extent do local forest governance initiatives feed back into national, European and global arrangements?

Possible thesis topics

- *The FLEGT/VPA program of the EU and illegal logging in country X
- *Forest governance in country Y and how it is impacted by global climate change policy
- *Participatory forest management in country Z and the role of the international donor community



For more information:
Bas Arts
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The 'global-local nexus' in forest governance

Country: multiple

Host institute: Wageningen University



Thesis topic description

Problem context

Forest governance is about the 'steering' (regulation, facilitation, nudging) of human behavior in order to achieve certain forest policy aims, goals and targets. Much of this governance is local in nature, for example to regulate the management of a village forest. But many forest issues are also transboundary in nature, like the climate change consequences of deforestation, so that we also observe international governance initiatives. However, local and international problems are often interconnected, as are the governance responses these evoke. Therefore one can speak of the 'global-local nexus' of forest governance.

Research Objective/Question

The following research questions are relevant for this theme:

1. How and to what extent do global governance initiatives affect local forest use, management and conservation?
2. How and to what extent do local forest governance initiatives feed back into national, European and global arrangements?

Topics

- The FLEGT/VPA program of the EU and illegal logging in country X
- Forest governance in country Y and how it is impacted by global climate change policy
- Participatory forest management in country Z and the role of the international donor community

Potential theories and methods (type of research)

Most appropriate theories/methods are the ones on multi-level governance and on the global-local nexus. But the student can also choose to apply any other theory that FNP is using, if applicable to the study concerned.

Thesis details

Group: Forest and Nature Conservation Policy
Project type: Thesis (FNP80436)
Start date: flexible
End date: six months later

Used skills: t.b.d.
Requirements: t.b.d.

Supervisor

Arts' research and teaching focus on international forest, biodiversity and climate change governance, local natural resource management and their interconnections (local-global nexus, multi-level governance).

Contact

Supervisor(s): prof dr Bas Arts
Examiner: prof dr Georg Winkel
Contact details: bas.arts@wur.nl

Human-environment interactions

locally, practically, conceptually

Local ecological knowledge and skill

Particularly connected to:

- Livelihoods, recreation or tourism
- Outdoor relational learning
- Capacities for transformative change
- Human rewilding



Community-based conservation

- Local peoples and nature conservation
- Indigenous knowledge and practice systems
- Environmentalism

Human-wildlife interactions

- Rewilding
- Animal reintroductions
- Human-wildlife co-existence and conflicts



Thesis supervision

Interested?

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I am a Lecturer at the FNP group working on human dimensions of nature conservation, specifically human-environment interactions at a local and practical level. I usually adopt critical qualitative social science approaches, drawing from (sub)disciplines such as political ecology, material anthropology, outdoor studies, ecosociology and ecophilosophy.

While my suggested methods are generally research-question driven, I encourage critical, situated and 'thicker' approaches to the topics above. This often entails qualitative social science methods such as ethnographies, in-depth interviewing, case studies, stakeholder analysis, participant observation, (historical) document analysis, or focus groups.

These thesis topics are suggestions and ideas. Instead of instructing you what to do, I encourage you to be pro-active, critical and to craft your own exact thesis topic. In my experience and opinion, this leads to the best results and the most rewarding learning-curves.



Rewilding in society and policy

Region: Europe

Host institute: Wageningen University



Thesis topic description

Rewilding is a contemporary and increasingly used concept both in literature and practice to describe processes which restore our natural environment in different ways. The exact definition remains challenging to pin down, which makes it an interesting topic for scientific research. Rewilding aims to **give room for natural processes** (Bakker, 2022) and can include a host of different biotic and abiotic processes. The **social dimension** of rewilding is what the FNP group is particularly focused on.

Several researchers at the FNP group are involved in the **wildE project**, which is dedicated to assessing the potential of the rewilding approach in different EU countries and combines a diversity of disciplines, expertise and methodologies. Within this project, there are numerous opportunities for students to conduct their thesis work, using the **contacts and network of this extensive project** and contributing to its aims.

CONCEPTUAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL DEBATES

- Visions on the concept of rewilding (Koen, Arjen, Ravi, Agata)
 - Including more philosophical understandings
 - Wild versus Romantic: How does rewilding relate to culturally embedded Romantic views on nature?

EMPIRICAL UNDERSTANDING REWILDING VIEWS AND CONFLICTS

- What are the attitudes towards and perceptions of rewilding? (Arjen, Angus, Sabrina)
 - Quantitative and qualitative studies in specific regions
 - Differences between socio-cultural groups
 - Assess impacts of rewilding on cultural landscapes

- What are the immaterial benefits of rewilding?
 - E.g. Identity and attachment, health and well-being, offering hope or opportunities to engage
- Human-human conflicts in rewilding (Agata, Ravi, Sabrina, Koen, Arjen)
 - Human wildlife conflicts
 - Comparative case studies
 - Conflict management strategies and approaches
- Rewilding (related) policies at different scales and involving different stakeholders (Sabrina, Georg)
 - EU and different European and non-European countries, NL, Staatsbosbeheer, Natuurmonumenten
 - Comparing wilderness and rewilding policies across contexts

SPECIFIC THEMES:

- Human rewilding (Koen, Ravi)
- Urban rewilding (Ravi, Arjen)
- Forest rewilding and restoration (Agata)
- Wildlife (Sabrina, Koen)
- Digital Rewilding (Koen, Agata)

Project details

Group: Forest and Nature Conservation Policy

Project type: Thesis (FNP80436)

Start date: flexible

Supervisor: topic dependent

wildE CASES SEEKING STUDENTS DOING RESEARCH

- WildE case studies in Portugal, Spain, Germany, The Netherlands, Sweden, Ireland, and on the border of Poland and Slovakia in the High Tatras mountains
- Interests of the group also lie in Scotland, Wales, and possibly outside of Europe with relevant motivations
- Seeking students especially with language competencies in any of the regions mentioned above



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Wild pedagogies - Exploring relational learning and inner transformation for young adult's being and becoming with(in) a liquid world

Country: The Netherlands

Host institute: Wageningen University



Thesis topic description

Problem context

Young people today grow up in a multiple crises world. They face climate change, biodiversity loss and a variety of other socio-ecological crises. Increasingly young people cope with anxiety about the future. To work towards a sustainable world together and to create a future of hope for young people, it seems necessary to radically change our mindsets, values and relationships towards the non-human and wider human world. Relational outdoor learning is one way to approach this problem and start creating solutions by re-building relationships to the world. But how exactly do we do this? Can such learning evoke transformation in a generation?

Research Objective/Question

The aim of the research is to explore methods of relational outdoor learning that aim to transform relationships towards the wider environment, to evaluate these teaching methods on impact and to explore their potential for wider transformative change in society.

Thesis students can potentially contribute to articles on these topics. Concrete research questions are:

1. How can wild pedagogies as an act of care inform student-teacher-environment relationships and mutual learning and being in the world?
2. To what extent can practices of Wild pedagogies act as emancipatory approaches to address eco-emotions among young adults?
3. (How) can Wild pedagogies act as deep leverage points for societal transformation towards sustainable co-existence in the world?

Potential theories and methods (type of research)

The project departs from a post-humanist, feminist theoretical lens, decentering the human being through working from a flat, relational and care-full ontological perspective. Further theories build around relational, outdoor pedagogy, including transformative and transgressive learning.

In this project the student will work with qualitative, relational methods, such as multispecies ethnography, micro-phenomenological and outdoor interviewing and reflective questionnaires.

Reineke van Tol - As lecturer and PhD candidate at FNP I study and teach on the relational being of humans in the world and the implications of that for nature conservation and care-full co-existence on the planet. My work departs from a post-humanist, eco-feminist lens, decentering the human and reflecting upon our conceptualizations of (the rest of) nature, our position in this complex web of interrelations and the agency of non-human beings in the web. I am currently working on a PhD around relational, transformative learning practices in 'wild' learning spaces, situated in a liquid modern world facing climate change and biodiversity loss.

Project details

Group: Forest and Nature Conservation Policy

Project type: Thesis (FNP80436)

Start date: From May 1st 2023, then flexible

Used skills: Creative & relational qualitative research methods

Requirements: Experience with qualitative research methods

Contact

Supervisor(s): Reineke van Tol, MSc

Examiner: Dr. Koen Arts/ Dr. Arjen Buijs/ Dr. Bas Verschuuren/ ..

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Urban green governance, stewardship, activism & environmental justice

Urban nature and biocultural diversity.

Next to biodiversity, urban nature also provides co-benefits for urban residents. Investigate quantitatively how local residents relate to urban nature, and what their preferences are.



Understand the cultural diversity in perceptions of urban nature and its co-benefits such as social cohesion from a social justice perspective

Fight the Power! Climate crisis and biodiversity loss require transformative change. What are aims, strategies and impact of activists and social movements?



Can social movements provide hope for a just and sustainable future where global collaborations and national governments fail?

Urban stewardship and mosaic governance.

Networks of active citizens increasingly contribute to urban green and nature-based solutions. What are aims and impacts, and how do they collaborate with governments?



Active citizenship requires social and cultural capital. Implicit exclusion mechanism may exist, resulting in justice issues and inequality in the benefits. Of local stewardship actions

Social perceptions of rewilding.

Increasingly, rewilding is being proposed as conservation strategy across Europe. However, local stakeholders and residents may hold different images of nature, resulting in conflicts and lack of implementation.



Explore social perceptions of rewilding quantitatively. What visions and preferences exist among the Dutch or European population, and how does this relate to values of nature, sense of place and the Nature Futures Framework scenarios?



Dr. Arjen Buijs
Forest and Nature
Conservation Policy Group

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Arjen Buijs is a senior scientist at FNP. He investigates transformative stewardship practices in urban and non-urban contexts related to the interaction between humans and non-human nature. He focuses on how citizens self-organize for stewardship or political actions, how they aim for sustainable transitions and the impact they have through collaborating with (or opposing to) local and national governments. In several European and Global projects, Arjen investigates nature-based solutions including urban green infrastructure, rewilding, and social movements and protest for transformative change. His theoretical interest include environmental justice, mosaic governance, images of nature, theories of care, and biocultural diversity.



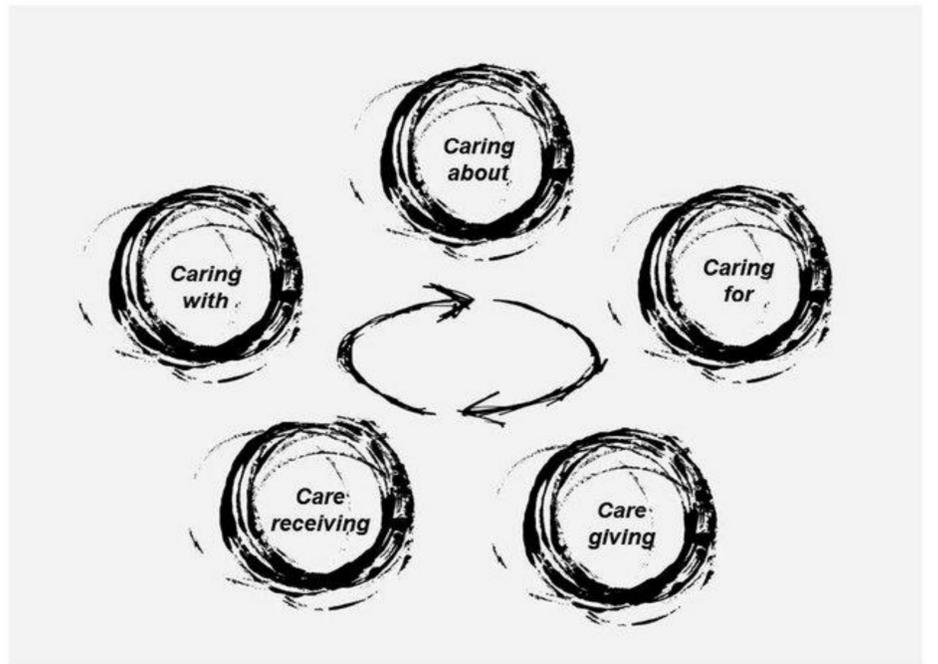
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Theories of care as driver for stewardship actions

Country: Europe

Host institute: Wageningen University



Thesis topic description

Problem context

Local communities are highly motivated to protect and manage their natural environment. Understanding these practices and the motivations behind them can contribute to increased conservation outputs and facilitate government instruments to support such practices. Community-based stewardship practices often focus on both environmental and social impacts, such as improving health or strengthening social capital and social cohesion in marginalized communities. Theories of Care provide a framework that connects caring for the natural environments with caring for other people and local communities.

Recently, theories of Care inspired by feminist theories have been suggested to understand and promote community-based stewardship practices. Theories of care focus on the motivational capacity of ethical motivations to protect nature as well as of the emotional connectedness with the natural environment, including moral emotions, such as empathy and compassion, but also anger on threats and destructive practices. Caring about our future is expected to inspire caring for our natural environment. Caring can be considered a reciprocal relationship, in which care giving also impacts the care givers, strengthening the relationship with non-human nature and providing meaning to our lives.

Research Objectives/Questions

This thesis can have a theoretical or an empirical focus. For example:

- Can we understand stewardship practices as caring practices?
- What are the interlinkages between environmental care and social care, and how can caring for our social environment contribute to caring for our natural environment and vice-versa?
- How is biocultural diversity related to theories of care?
- How can theories of care be applied to stewardship practices?

Project details

Group: Forest and Nature Conservation Policy

Project type: Thesis (FNP80436)

Start date: flexible.

Contact

Supervisor: Dr. Arjen Buijs

Examiner: prof dr Georg Winkel

Contact details: arjen.buijs@wur.nl

Arjen Buijs is a senior scientist at FNP. He investigates the interaction between humans and non-human nature and transformative stewardship practices in urban and non-urban contexts. He focuses on how citizens self-organize for stewardship or political actions, how they aim for sustainable transitions and the impact they have through collaborating with (or opposing to) local and national governments. In several European and Global projects, Arjen investigates nature-based solutions including urban green infrastructure, rewilding, and social movements and protest for transformative change. Theoretically, he is interested in theories of care, biocultural diversity, plural valuation and mosaic governance.



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Urban stewardship, Mosaic governance and environmental justice

Country: Europe

Host institute: Wageningen University



Thesis topic description

Problem context

Networks of active citizens and small-scale NGOs increasingly contribute to nature-based solutions, urban sustainability and eventually transformative change. We are interested in thesis projects focusing on the practices of stewardship through active citizens groups, the motivations of participants and the collaborations between stakeholders. We especially invite thesis topics focusing on *collaborations and challenges in the governance processes* between citizen, civil society and (local) governments. In addition, environmental justice is an increasingly important issues. Active citizenship requires social and cultural capital and implicit exclusion mechanism may exist, resulting in justice issues and inequality in its benefits.

Research Objectives/Questions

Different research objectives are feasible within this topic. E.g.:

- What are goals, motivations, practices, impacts and challenges of active citizens groups and how do they try to contribute to societal transformations?
- What collaborations and challenges exist in the collaborations between active citizens groups and governments and can mosaic governance approaches contribute to upscaling and institutionalizing sustainable practices
- What are (positive and negative) justice impacts of active citizenship? Who contributes and benefits, and why?

Potential theories and methods (type of research)

A qualitative comparative case-study design is appropriate for this kind of questions. Motivations of citizens and justice aspects can also be studied using quantitative approaches.

Project details

Group: Forest and Nature Conservation Policy
Project type: Thesis (FNP80436)
Start date: flexible.

Contact

Supervisor: Dr. Arjen Buijs or dr. Sander van der Jagt
Examiner: prof dr Georg Winkel
Contact details: arjen.buijs@wur.nl

Arjen Buijs is a senior scientist at FNP and Wageningen Environmental Research. He investigates human-nature interactions and their relationship with stewardship practices. He specifically focuses on how citizens self-organize for stewardship or political actions, how they aim for sustainable transitions and how these groups relate to local and national governments. In several European and Global project, Arjen investigates urban governance structures that foster collaborations between civil society and local governments.



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Urban green and urban rewilding

Country: free choice

Host institute: Wageningen University



Thesis topic description

Problem context

Increasingly urban green is managed with a focus on natural processes of rewilding. For example the German Ruhr area is famous for its urban rewilding. On previous industrial land, urban wildernesses are developed, combining the cultural history of the area with natural succession processes. Next to biodiversity hotspots, these areas also have important recreational functions for people living in the Ruhr Metropolitan area. In this thesis, you focus on the use and/or perceptions on urban rewilding of local residents in the Ruhr or elsewhere. We have special interest in the cultural diversity of such perceptions, related to the highly diverse urban population, both socio-economically as well as culturally.

Research Objective/Question

Different research objectives are feasible within this topic. E.g.:

- How is urban green and/or urban wilderness perceived by the local population?
- What cultural differences exist in the perception and use of urban wilderness?
- How to navigate conflicts and diverse vision regarding urban rewilding
- Comparative case study of urban rewilding projects in Europe

Potential theories and methods (type of research)

The student can choose to apply one of the theories that FNP is using. Both qualitative and quantitative methods are possible

Project details

Group: Forest and Nature Conservation Policy

Project type: Thesis (FNP80436)

Start date: flexible.

Language: German

Contact

Supervisor: Dr. Arjen Buijs

Examiner: prof dr Georg Winkel

Contact details: arjen.buijs@wur.nl

Arjen Buijs is a senior scientist at FNP. He investigates transformative stewardship practices in urban and non-urban contexts related to the interaction between humans and non-human nature. He focuses on how citizens self-organize for stewardship or political actions, how they aim for sustainable transitions and the impact they have through collaborating with (or opposing to) local and national governments. In several European and Global projects, Arjen investigates nature-based solutions including urban green infrastructure, rewilding, and social movements and protest for transformative change. His theoretical interest include environmental justice, mosaic governance, images of nature, theories of care, and biocultural diversity.



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Resistance and change: social movements for sustainable change

Country: free choice

Host institute: Wageningen University



Thesis topic description

Problem context

Extinction Rebellion, Fridays for Futures, Red het Sterrebos, Amelisweerd niet geasfalteerd. Increasingly, people demand transformative change to halt biodiversity loss and climate change. Social movements launch environmental campaigns and local activists occupy forests to prevent further degradation of our natural environment. While global collaborations and national governments still fail to significantly change current trajectories, can the emergence and proliferation of social movements provide hope for alternative pathways towards more just and sustainable futures?

Research questions may include:

- What motivates activists and how do they self-organize?
- What is the Theory of Change and what strategies do they use in advocacy work for sustainable change?
- What is the impact of activists and social movements on policies and transformative change?
- What are dominant social imaginaries among activists and social movements
- How can inspiring imaginaries mobilise support and contribute to actual change?

Potential theories and methods (type of research)

You may choose appropriate theories, such as discourse theory, narrative analyses, social imaginaries theory or social representation theory.

We invite both qualitative as well as quantitative methods for this topic

Project details

Group: Forest and Nature Conservation Policy
Project type: Thesis (FNP80436)
Start date: flexible.

Contact:

Supervisor: Dr. Arjen Buijs
Examiner: prof dr Georg Winkel
Contact details: arjen.buijs@wur.nl

Arjen Buijs investigates human-nature interactions and their relationship with stewardship practices. He specifically focuses on how citizens self-organize for stewardship or political actions, how they aim for sustainable transitions and on collaborations and oppositions to local and national governments. He is especially interested in urban governance and how mosaic governance structures may foster collaborations between civil society and local governments.



Urban green governance

Country: free choice

Host institute: Wageningen University



Thesis topic description

Problem context

Through developing alternative pathways and organising power structures against unsustainable practices, communities, NGOs and active citizens increasingly contribute to urban sustainability, biodiversity and nature-based solutions. These contributions critically depend on social and cultural capital of communities, strong organizing skills and social informal and formal networks, and skills to navigate existing power structures. We are interested in topics focusing on urban governance and active citizenship, including motivations, strategies, power relations, impacts and contributions to transformations. In addition, we invite thesis topics focusing on collaborations and challenges in the mosaic governance processes between citizen, civil society and (local) governments including critical issues in collaborations.

Research Objective/Question

Different research objectives are feasible within this topic. E.g.:

- How can urban governance contribute to the mainstreaming of urban nature for urban sustainability?
- What are motivations, strategies and/or impact of political or stewardship actions from citizens and NGOs?
- What is the impact of urban development and sustainability approaches on environmental justice and green gentrification?
- The colour of urban green: Investigating place-making, place-keeping and place-use from a gender or justice perspective

Potential theories and methods (type of research)

The student can choose to apply one of the theories that FNP is using. Both qualitative and quantitative methods are possible

Project details

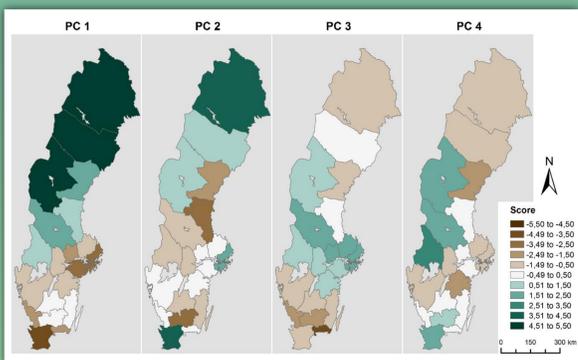
Group: Forest and Nature Conservation Policy
Project type: Thesis (FNP80436)
Start date: flexible.

Contact

Supervisor: Dr. Arjen Buijs
Examiner: prof dr Georg Winkel
Contact details: arjen.buijs@wur.nl

Arjen Buijs is a senior scientist at FNP and Wageningen Environmental Research. He investigates human-nature interactions and their relationship with stewardship practices. He specifically focuses on how citizens self-organize for stewardship or political actions, how they aim for sustainable transitions and how these groups relate to local and national governments. In several European and Global project, Arjen investigates urban governance structures that foster collaborations between civil society and local governments.

Human-Wildlife Relationships & Natural Resource Governance



- **Drivers of human-wildlife conflict and potential for coexistence**
- **Understanding of individuals' attitudes, norms and behaviours**
- **Social-ecological system analysis**
- **Collaborative and adaptive governance of human-nature interactions**
- **Invasive alien species management**

Potential study countries: Existing networks in the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Germany, Austria, South Africa, and others.

Potential research approaches: Qualitative (e.g. case study, interviews, focus groups, document analysis), quantitative (e.g. surveys, social-ecological modelling, network analysis, Q method), or mixed-methods (combination of quant. & qual. methods)

Dr. Sabrina Dreßel

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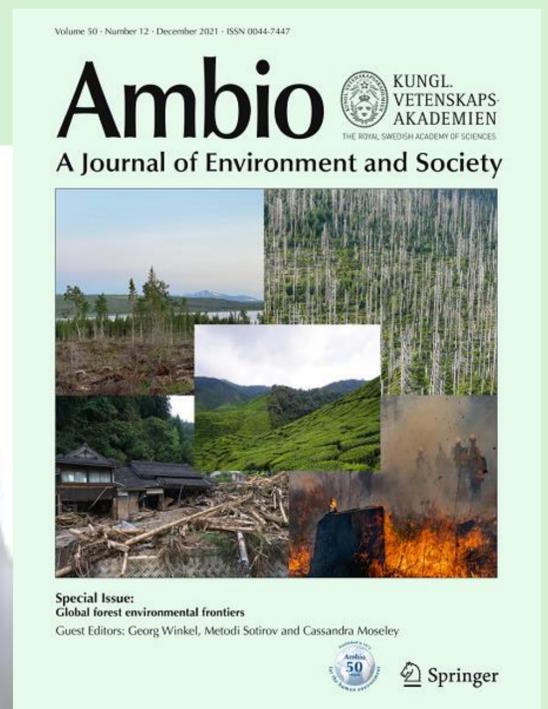
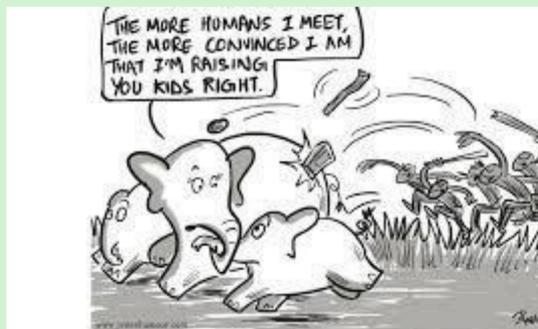
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Conflicts in conservation

Country: multiple

Host institute: Wageningen University



Thesis topic description

Problem context

Conservation can have multiple motivations and forms, and involves societal spheres such as science, media, policy making, and society at large. While conservation is often driven by emotions, culture and beliefs, it is at the same time backed by conservation science and our knowledge about biodiversity and biodiversity loss. In almost all cases, conservation ideas and interests interact in the landscape with other beliefs, interests and emotions connected to the land, ranging from agriculture to forestry and various other types of societal demands. This can lead to major controversies, connected to perceived failures of conservation policies, and polarization of societal debates.

Research Objective/Question

The following research questions are relevant for this theme:

1. What drives a specific conservation related conflict (in region X, country X)?
2. How do policies, science, media and society interact and what is perceived as (un-)successful conflict management?

Topics

Any conservation conflict students are interested in – I have myself a focus on forests and conservation conflicts, but the topic is not limited to forests.

Potential theories and methods (type of research)

Most appropriate theories/methods are relating to the understanding of societal conflicts as well as policy conflicts (e.g., relating to beliefs, worldviews and/or material interests). Student can choose to apply other theories that are applicable to the study concerned.

Thesis details

Group: Forest and Nature Conservation Policy
Project type: Thesis (FNP80436)
Start date: flexible
End date: six months later

Used skills: t.b.d.
Requirements: t.b.d.

Supervisor

Georg Winkel: [prof.dr. GCM \(Georg\) Winkel - WUR](#)

Contact

Supervisor(s): prof dr Georg Winkel
Contact details:
georg.winkel@wur.nl



Forest of origin as a market tool

Regional focus: European country/countries



Project: Nationally sourced wood - from forest to the building industry

The project explores challenges and opportunities of the use of nationally sourced wood for the building industry. Wood forms an interesting material for structural carbon storage and a replacement of carbon-intensive materials (e.g. concrete, steel). Although this wood does not necessarily have to come from forests, this has two major advantages, i.e. (1) shorter transportation distances, leading to financial and environmental gain, and (2) the credits for carbon storage of this wood are for the specific country.

Projectpartners: FNP, Bosgroepen, WEnR, AVIH, building companies, housing associations, investment companies

Thesis topics description

Using local wood has many advantages. However, at this moment, the majority of the wood is not labelled based on the origin (source) of the wood. Also FSC and PEFC, the two major wood certification systems, do not include information on the origin (source) of the wood. Origin can, next to carbon credit calculations, also be used as a guarantee of quality, as a symbol of prestige, or as a benchmark for social acceptability.

Topic 1: Wood origin traceability – needs, tools and challenges

Objective: Exploring experiences, possibilities and challenges of introducing information on forest of origin

Theory and methodology: Based on the Economics of Information (where institutions address asymmetric information problem in markets), a qualitative study based on case analyses supported by interviews is to be carried out.

Topic 2: The impact of origin on consumer wood choice

Objective: Explore **consumers' preferences** in terms of disclosure of forest of origin

Theory and methodology: Topic 2: Based on Random Utility (assuming that a decision-maker decides to select that option from different alternatives, based on the highest utility), a quantitative study in the form of a stated preference or a discrete choice experiment is to be developed and to be carried out.

Supervisor

Marjanke Hoogstra-Klein is Assistant Professor Forest Business Management and Economics at the Forest and Nature Conservation Policy group. Central focus of her research are forest businesses (enterprises), which play a crucial role to sustain or even enhance forest biodiversity and forest Ecosystem Services to halt the biodiversity crisis and to meet the (increasing) demands from the global human population.

Thesis details

Project: Thesis (FNP80436)/Research Practice (FNP79324)

Start date: flexible

Used skills: depending on topic

Requirements: depending on topic

Contact

Supervisor(s): dr Marjanke Hoogstra-Klein

Examiner: prof dr Georg Winkel

Contact details: Marjanke.Hoogstra@wur.nl



Forest business management

Regional focus: worldwide



Project: Forest business management

At every moment in time, forest and nature managers have to make choices about the use, management and conservation of forest and nature areas. They face a multitude of possibilities to choose from and need to select a certain course of action. The importance of the decision process is immense, as that what forest and nature eventually becomes, is a consequence of the decisions made. This project explores all kind of aspects related to decision-making of forest owners and managers.

Projectpartners: Internal FNP project

Thesis topics

Topic 1: Understanding forest management decision-making: psychological ownership

Objective: Exploring the effect of psychological ownership on forest management

Theory and methodology: Based on the theory of psychological distance and construal level theory, a qualitative or quantitative study is to be carried out.

Topic 2: Forest management decision-making: happenstance or design?

Objective: Exploring the role of surprising events (unplanned events) in forest and nature management

Theory and methodology: Based on the concepts of uncertainty and serendipity, this qualitative study can be a systematic literature review or is based on interviews with forest owners and/or managers.

Topic 3: Gendering of forest ownership and management

Objective: Exploring the interrelation between gender and forest ownership/management

Theory and methodology: This study uses a qualitative research approach, with semi-structured interviews with male and female forest owners/managers, based on the theory of gendering

Topic 4: Risk attitude and risk behaviour

Objective: Measuring and comparing risk attitude and risk behaviour of (different types of) forest owners/managers

Theory and methodology: Based on insights from (behavioural) economics, this study can use a quantitative or a qualitative research design.

Supervisor

Marjanke Hoogstra-Klein is Assistant Professor Forest Business Management and Economics at the Forest and Nature Conservation Policy group. Central focus of her research are forest businesses (enterprises), which play a crucial role to sustain or even enhance forest biodiversity and forest Ecosystem Services to halt the biodiversity crisis and to meet the (increasing) demands from the global human population.

Thesis details

Project: Thesis (FNP80436)/Research Practice (FNP79324)

Start date: flexible

Used skills: depending on research topic

Requirements: depending on research topic

Contact

Supervisor(s): dr Marjanke Hoogstra-Klein

Examiner: prof dr Georg Winkel

Contact details: Marjanke.Hoogstra@wur.nl



Wood production in the bioeconomy era

Regional focus: European country/countries



Project: Nationally sourced wood - from forest to the building industry

The project explores challenges and opportunities of the use of nationally sourced wood for the building industry. Wood forms an interesting material for structural carbon storage and a replacement of carbon-intensive materials (e.g. concrete, steel). Although this wood does not necessarily have to come from forests, this has two major advantages, i.e. (1) shorter transportation distances, leading to financial and environmental gain, and (2) the credits for carbon storage of this wood are for the specific country.

Projectpartners: FNP, Bosgroepen, WEnR, AVIH, building companies, housing associations, investment companies

Thesis topics

The forest sector is in a unique position to be at the forefront of an inclusive, low-carbon, bio-economy. Timber forms an important element in the bioeconomy. This is, however, only one of the ES a forest provide; how to balance all these forest ES but at the same time increase timber production?

Topic 1: Attitudes toward timber production and timber harvest of forest owners and managers

Objective: To determine values, attitudes and views of forest management decision-makers towards wood production

Theory and methodology: Using the concept of psychological distance thinking, a qualitative/quantitative or mixed methodology study among forest owners and forest managers.

Topic 2: How to mobilize wood?

Objective: Explore which interventions would be successful in mobilizing more wood

Theory and methodology: Based on the behaviour intervention wheel, a qualitative/quantitative or mixed methodology study among forest owners and forest managers.

Supervisor

Marjanke Hoogstra-Klein is Assistant Professor Forest Business Management and Economics at the Forest and Nature Conservation Policy group. Central focus of her research are forest businesses (enterprises), which play a crucial role to sustain or even enhance forest biodiversity and forest Ecosystem Services to halt the biodiversity crisis and to meet the (increasing) demands from the global human population.

Thesis details

Project: Thesis (FNP80436)/Research Practice (FNP79324)

Start date: flexible

Used skills: depending on topic

Requirements: depending on topic

Contact

Supervisor(s): dr Marjanke Hoogstra-Klein

Examiner: prof dr Georg Winkel

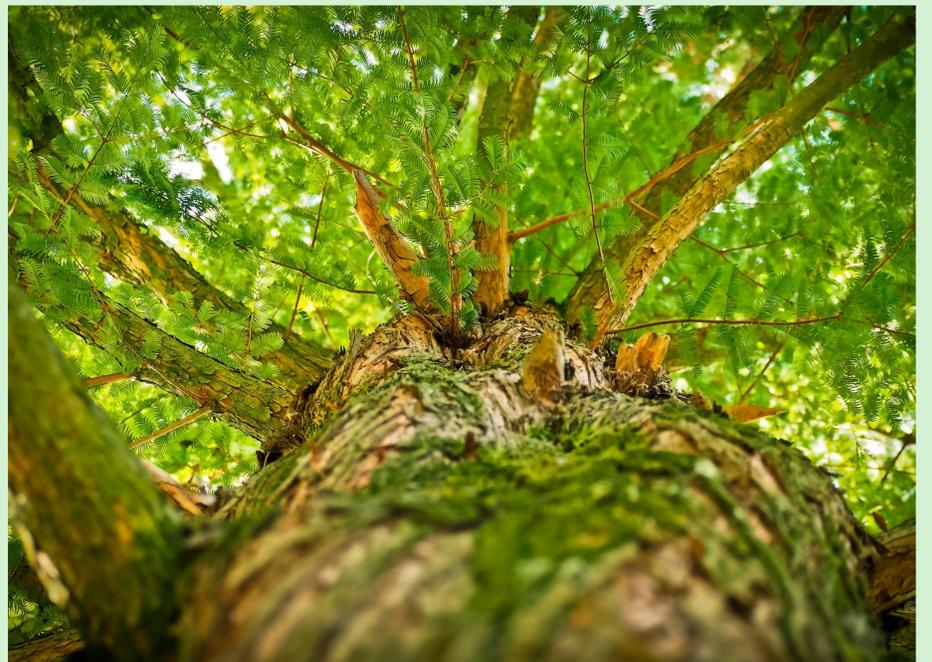
Contact details: Marjanke.Hoogstra@wur.nl



WAGENINGEN
UNIVERSITY & RESEARCH

Wood certification based on origin: exploring Consumer preferences

Country: Netherlands (or a different country or multiple countries)



Project: Dutch wood - from forest to the building industry

The project explores challenges and opportunities of the use of Dutch wood for the building industry. Wood forms an interesting material for structural carbon storage and a replacement of carbon-intensive materials (e.g. concrete, steel). Although this wood does not necessarily have to come from Dutch forests, Dutch wood has two major advantages, i.e. (1) shorter transportation distances, leading to financial and environmental gain, and (2) the credits for carbon storage of Dutch wood are for the Netherlands.

Projectpartners: FNP, Bosgroepen, WEnR, AVIH, building companies, housing associations, investment companies

Thesis topic description

Using Dutch wood has many advantages. However, at this moment, Dutch wood is not labelled based on the origin (source) of the wood. Also FSC and PEFC, the two major wood certification systems, do not include information on the origin (source) of the wood. Origin can, next to carbon credit calculations, also be used as a guarantee of quality, as a symbol of prestige, or as a benchmark for social acceptability.

Research Objective/Question

The aim of the research is to explore consumers' preferences in terms of disclosure of forest of origin.

Potential theories and methods (type of research)

Theoretical underpinnings: Random Utility Model, assuming that a decision-maker (in this research: consumer) decides to select that options from a set of alternatives that provides the decision-maker the highest utility.

Methodological approach: Quantitative research, for example setting up and carrying out a stated preference or a discrete choice experiment.

Supervisor

Marjanke Hoogstra-Klein is Assistant Professor Forest Business Management and Economics at the Forest and Nature Conservation Policy group. Central focus of her research are forest businesses (enterprises), which play a crucial role to sustain or even enhance forest biodiversity and forest Ecosystem Services to halt the biodiversity crisis and to meet the (increasing) demands from the global human population.

Thesis details

Group: Forest and Nature Conservation Policy

Project: Thesis (FNP80436)/Research Practice (FNP79324)

Start date: flexible

Used skills: setting up and carrying out experiment, statistical analysis

Requirements: R or SPSS

Contact

Supervisor(s): dr Marjanke Hoogstra-Klein

Examiner: prof dr Georg Winkel

Contact details: Marjanke.Hoogstra@wur.nl



Estates as keepers of the land

Regional focus: Netherlands/other European country



Project: Estates as keepers of the land

The project explores an underexplored topic in research, i.e. the role and contribution of (Dutch) estates to forest and nature conservation and management

Projectpartners: internal FNP project

Thesis topics

Topic 1: Estates: ideologies and identities

Objective: To determine ideologies and identities of estate owners and how this affects forest and nature management

Theory and methodology: Using the concept of social identity theory, either interviews, literature review or media analysis (or a combination) is/are to be carried out.

Topic 2: Estates and biodiversity conservation

Objective: to provide (quantitative and qualitative) measures at the national scale to assess the value of estates, owned by different owner types.

Theory and methodology: A range of indicator metrics are available for assessing biodiversity outcomes as a measure of performance or effectiveness. Data will be collected using a combination of secondary data analysis and interviews.

Topic 3: Estates: power, roles and relationships

Objective: To explore the position of estate owners in the forest and nature sector

Theory and methodology: A qualitative study using stakeholder mapping and social network analysis.

Topic 4: Estates and forest resilience

Objective: To explore resilience and forest culture through individual perceptions of estate managers.

Theory and methodology: Resilience mapping, using spatially tracked walking interview as the primary research method to examine the relationships between the manager/owner, land use practice and landscape at estates

Supervisor

Marjanke Hoogstra-Klein is Assistant Professor Forest Business Management and Economics at the Forest and Nature Conservation Policy group. Central focus of her research are forest businesses (enterprises), which play a crucial role to sustain or even enhance forest biodiversity and forest Ecosystem Services to halt the biodiversity crisis and to meet the (increasing) demands from the global human population.

Thesis details

Project: Thesis (FNP80436)/Research Practice (FNP79324)

Start date: flexible

Used skills: depending on the topic

Requirements: depending on the topic

Contact

Supervisor(s): dr Marjanke Hoogstra-Klein

Examiner: prof dr Georg Winkel

Contact details: Marjanke.Hoogstra@wur.nl



WAGENINGEN
UNIVERSITY & RESEARCH

Food Consumption based on Culture, Livelihood, and Tropical Landscape

Country: Mexico



Project:

The project aims to contribute to establishing the sustainable food systems of rural areas in tropical regions in Mexico based on rural livelihood, food culture, and land use.

The food system could take advantage of the complexity of the tropical landscape with local agriculture. Local residents often obtain their food not only from the cropland but also from various land uses, including home gardens, agroforestry, pasture, and forest. Such minor-food consumption has gained less attention.

It is crucial to reveal the potential of food production and the food culture of local people to discuss landscape management.

Thesis topic description

Research Objective/Question

The project's objective is to explore the important factor that influences the local food consumption and to co-produce the food landscape with local people to find the better food consumption practice in terms of nutrition and land management.

The factor may include cultural norms, knowledge, consumption habit, livelihood activities, agriculture, policy and more. Main focus will depend on the interest of the participant (student).

Potential theories and methods (type of research)

Theoretical underpinnings: Food sovereignty can be a key concept.

Methodological approach: participatory research, group discussion, possibly includes quantitative data and qualitative data collection through interview and analysis, ethnobiological research.

Research site: Tropical forest region in Chiapas, Mexico.

Supervisor

Natsuho Fujisawa Endo is a postdoctoral researcher at the Forest and Nature Conservation Policy group. Her research's central focus is how agroforestry contributes to sustainable livelihood and landscape in the Latin American region. In line with that, recently, she has researched the relationship between local food consumption and land use. She has field experience in Panama, Mexico, Malaysia, and Japan.

Thesis details

Group: Forest and Nature Conservation Policy

Project:

Start date: flexible

Used skills: planning, setting up, and carrying out collaborative research with local people

Requirements: Spanish

Contact

Supervisor(s): Natsuho Fujisawa

Examiner: prof dr Georg Winkel

Contact details: natsuho.fujisawaendo@wur.nl



WAGENINGEN
UNIVERSITY & RESEARCH

Coffee agroforestry in policy and livelihood in Panama

Host institute: Wageningen University



Thesis topic description

Problem context

In the tropics, the conservation and restoration of forests is an important challenge, contributing to, among other things, biodiversity conservation and carbon emission reduction. At the same time, rural development is essential for the sustainable future of many small farmers. In Panama in recent years, environmentally friendly agriculture, such as agroecology and agroforestry, has been seen as an important strategy to tackle both of these problems, and both the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Agricultural Development have attached increasing importance to it. In this context, there is a movement in central Panama to establish sustainable rural landscapes through the agroforestry of Robusta coffee in lowland areas and the establishment of small-scale brands. Robusta coffee cultivation is usually monoculture, but Central Panama is a unique example of the spread of agroforestry cultivation for the domestic market.

Research Objective/Question

- How is the direction of policies on agriculture and the environment changing due to the growing interest in agroecology and sustainable agriculture in Panama?
- Has policy promotion of agroforestry brought about changes in the market and local livelihood?
- How are perceptions of coffee cultivation changing at the policy and local farmer levels?
- Can the domestic coffee market trigger sustainable rural development for human society and landscape management?
- What are the differences and affinities between the policies implemented by the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Agricultural Development?

Potential theories and methods (type of research)

The students will choose relevant theories or frameworks, social ecological systems,

Project details

Group: Forest and Nature Conservation Policy

Project type: Thesis (FNP80436)

Start date: until April 2023

End date: six months later

Used skills: literature review, Spanish, Interview

Requirements: Spanish for the fieldwork

Contact

Supervisor(s): Natsuho fujisawa

Examiner: prof dr Georg Winkel

Contact details: natsuho.fujisawaendo@wur.nl



WAGENINGEN
UNIVERSITY & RESEARCH

Sustainable Food system based on Culture, livelihood, and Tropical Landscape

Country: Mexico

Host institute: Wageningen University



Thesis topic description

Problem context

The project aims to contribute to create the sustainable food systems of tropical rural area in Mexico based on local livelihood, food culture, and land use. The local food system can take advantage of the complexity of the tropical landscape shaped by local agriculture. Local people often obtain their food not only from the cropland but also from various land uses, including home gardens, agroforestry, pasture, and forest. At the same time, there are drastic landscape change according with the socioeconomic change, such as market, labor migration, nature conservation regime. The daily food consumption have potential to invite all people living in the area to the discussion about rural livelihood and landscape management.

Research Objective/Question

- How is daily food consumption habits connected to landscape management?
- How does perception of the food and cooking method influence local food intake?
- You will explore the important factor that influences the local food consumption and landscape and its potential with local people to find the better food consumption practice in terms of nutrition and land management.
- The factor may include local knowledge, consumption habit, livelihood activities, culture, agriculture, markets, policy and more. Main focus will depend on your interest.

Potential theories and methods (type of research)

- The students will choose relevant theories or frameworks.
- Keywords: food consumption, food sovereignty, agroforestry, landscape.
- You will do field work in rural area in Mexico including interview to local people and institutions, quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis, literature review
- You will collaborate with researcher on agrodiversity and local organization working on sustainable food systems.
- Communication in Spanish is necessary.

Project details

Group: Forest and Nature Conservation Policy

Project type: Thesis (FNP80436)

Start date: until April 2023

End date: six months later

Used skills: literature review, Spanish, Interview

Requirements: Spanish for the fieldwork

Contact

Supervisor(s): Natsuho Fujisawa

Examiner: prof dr Georg Winkel

Contact details: natsuho.fujisawaendo@wur.nl

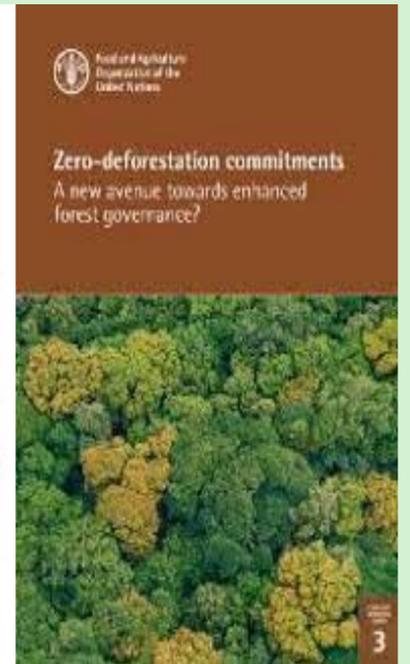


WAGENINGEN
UNIVERSITY & RESEARCH

Governing zero deforestation and restoration through market-based, state and other regimes

Country: multiple

Host institute: Wageningen University



Thesis topic description

Problem context

Many market-based, private sector governance initiatives seek to reduce the impact of commodity value chains (such as cocoa, coffee, beef, timber, palm oil, and soy) on deforestation. These have increasingly been backed up by national programs and new EU regulations. A plethora of NGO and civil society initiatives also seek to monitor and introduce new governance mechanisms. What's the impact on people's livelihoods and forests of such multiple governance arrangements? Are they reducing deforestation, at what scale (from farm to landscape, nationally and regionally), how and where? What do local actors in the value chains in forested countries perceive and behave according to these new regimes? How do actors such as pension funds, financial institutions and large investors drive and support or confound these actions?

Research Objective/Question

The aim of the research is to Value chain analysis, policy and discourse analysis, impact evaluation.

Potential theories and methods (type of research)

Value chain analysis, policy and discourse analysis, impact evaluation.

Verina Ingram's research focuses on the social and environmental impacts of the governance of the landscape - value chain nexus. With Wageningen Economic Research, Verina works on impact evaluations of agricultural and forest commodities and their value chains, and the links between food, energy, water, climate and land use.

Project details

Group: Forest and Nature Conservation Policy
Project type: Thesis (FNP80436)
Start date: flexible
End date: six months later

Used skills: t.b.d.
Requirements: t.b.d.

Contact

Supervisor(s): dr Verina Ingram
Examiner: prof dr Georg Winkel
Contact details: verina.ingram@wur.nl



WAGENINGEN
UNIVERSITY & RESEARCH

Governing synergies and trade-offs with SDG15 in Ethiopia: a local-to-global study of landscape restoration in Lake Tana sub-basin

Host institute: Water & Land Resources Center, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia



Thesis topic description

Problem context

In the Lake Tana sub-basin, Ethiopian highlands, agricultural expansion, overgrazing, and fuelwood collection have led to ongoing deforestation and soil erosion. Land degradation threatens food security and impacts water quantity and quality downstream. This combination of challenges reinforce each other, making the Lake Tana sub-basin an important and relevant case study for understanding how integrative landscape management may address multiple SDGs, linked to national and international levels of decision-making.

Research Objective/Question

You can study trade-offs and synergies between SDGs and how they are addressed in landscape restoration policies in Lake Tana, Ethiopia

Potential theories and methods (type of research)

It takes a local-to-global approach, starting from the actions of local actors, to trace how their role in landscape restoration and governance shapes, and is shaped by, national and international actors i.e. how and to what extent an integrative landscape management can guide interactions between various SDGs.

Verina Ingram's research focuses on the social and environmental impacts of the governance of the landscape - value chain nexus. With Wageningen Economic Research, Verina works on impact evaluations of agricultural and forest commodities and their value chains, and the links between food, energy, water, climate and land use.

Project details

Group: Forest and Nature Conservation Policy

Project type: Thesis (FNP80436)

Start date: flexible

End date: six months later

Support: with data, logistics & office space

Used skills: t.b.d.

Requirements: t.b.d.

Contact

Supervisor(s): dr Verina Ingram

Examiner: prof dr Georg Winkel

Contact details: verina.ingram@wur.nl



WAGENINGEN
UNIVERSITY & RESEARCH

The *Prunus africana* Africa to Europe, US and China value chain

Host institute: Wageningen University in collaboration with CITES



Thesis topic description

Problem context

Prunus africana is an IUCN Red listed, CITES regulated tree growing only in Africa, whose bark is exported for use in pharmaceuticals and natural products worldwide. Exports to China have increased, as have re-exports of processed products from China. There is no scientific knowledge about the Africa-China trade and it is suspected that the tree is now being grown in China. We also want to understand the trade in pygeum based pharmaceutical and health products in Europe, the US and Asia. CITES is concerned and there offers support to help investigate and unravel the value chain and gain more clarity about demand and supply.

Specific topics can be identified on value chain analysis, protected species, governance, trade economics.

Research Objective/Question

You are asked to generate scientific knowledge about the Africa-China trade of *Prunus africana* products.

Potential theories and methods (type of research)

You could include (online) interviews, web review, field observation, market surveys a.o.

Verina Ingram's research focuses on the social and environmental impacts of the governance of the landscape - value chain nexus. With Wageningen Economic Research, Verina works on impact evaluations of agricultural and forest commodities and their value chains, and the links between food, energy, water, climate and land use.

Project details

Group: Forest and Nature Conservation Policy

Project type: Thesis (FNP80436)

Start date: flexible

End date: six months later

Used skills: t.b.d.; English; Chinese and French is useful

Requirements: t.b.d.

Contact

Supervisor(s): dr Verina Ingram

Examiner: prof dr Georg Winkel

Contact details: verina.ingram@wur.nl



WAGENINGEN
UNIVERSITY & RESEARCH

Beekeeping and woodfuel value chains in Cameroon

Host institutes: Wageningen University & CIFOR



Thesis topic description

Problem context

Beekeeping and wood fuel are two forest-based activities that can be critical for livelihoods, crop and food security, and have major impacts on land use and forests. We want to understand more about the social, economic and environmental impacts of the value chains of woodfuel & charcoal and honey & wax and how they are governed.

Specific topics can range from value chain analysis, governance, tenure, collective action, gender, and cross border trade.

Research Objective/Question

The aim of the research is to generate scientific knowledge on the social, economic and environmental impacts of the value chains of woodfuel & charcoal and honey & wax.

Potential theories and methods (type of research)

This could include interviews, literature study, GIS, market surveys, and observations.

Research on woodfuel can take place in collaboration with Dr. Jolien Schure & Dr. Davison Gumbo, CIFOR

Verina Ingram's research focuses on the social and environmental impacts of the governance of the landscape - value chain nexus. With Wageningen Economic Research, Verina works on impact evaluations of agricultural and forest commodities and their value chains, and the links between food, energy, water, climate and land use.

Project details

Group: Forest and Nature Conservation Policy

Project type: Thesis (FNP80436)

Start date: flexible

End date: six months later

Used skills: t.b.d.

Requirements: t.b.d.

Contact

Supervisor(s): dr Verina Ingram

Examiner: prof dr Georg Winkel

Contact details: verina.ingram@wur.nl



RESEARCH
PROGRAM ON
Forests, Trees and
Agroforestry



WAGENINGEN
UNIVERSITY & RESEARCH

Gender aspects of forest and tree product value chains

Country: multiple

Host institutes: Wageningen University, Biodiversity International & CIFOR



Thesis topic description

Problem context

The CGIAR Forests, Trees & Agroforestry Research Program has collected substantial data on value chains and would like to analyze it further from a gender perspective, to understand more about how men and women are included or excluded from value chains and their benefits.

Research Objective/Question

The aim of the research is to generate scientific knowledge on how men and women are included or excluded from value chains and their benefits.

Potential theories and methods (type of research)

Quantitative and qualitative analysis of existing data gathered by FTA program; could include additional data collection in one of the target countries.

Research on gender aspects of forest and tree product value chains can take place in collaboration with Dr. Marlene Elias from Biodiversity International, and CIFOR.

Verina Ingram's research focuses on the social and environmental impacts of the governance of the landscape - value chain nexus. With Wageningen Economic Research, Verina works on impact evaluations of agricultural and forest commodities and their value chains, and the links between food, energy, water, climate and land use.

Project details

Group: Forest and Nature Conservation Policy

Project type: Thesis (FNP80436)

Start date: flexible

End date: six months later

Used skills: t.b.d.

Requirements: t.b.d.

Contact

Supervisor(s): dr Verina Ingram

Examiner: prof dr Georg Winkel

Contact details: verina.ingram@wur.nl



RESEARCH
PROGRAM ON
Forests, Trees and
Agroforestry



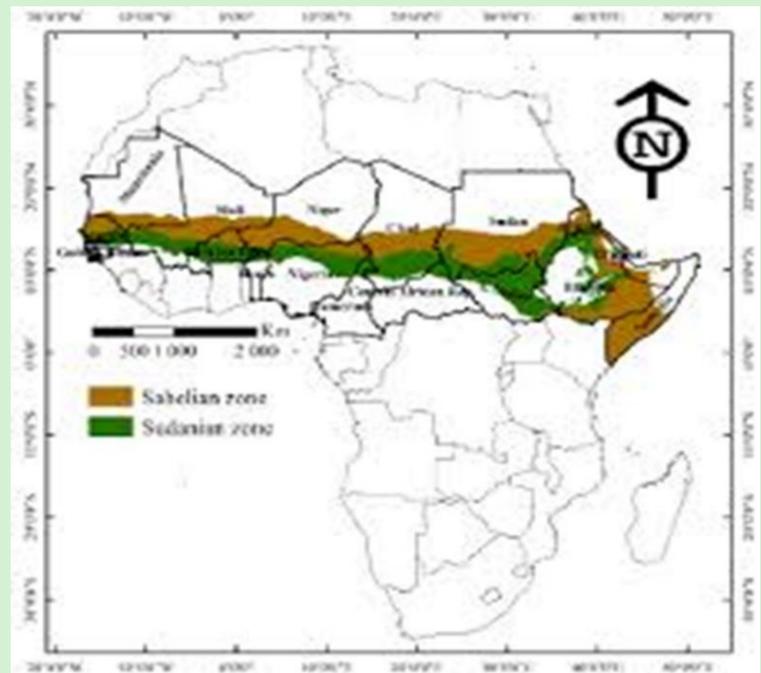


WAGENINGEN
UNIVERSITY & RESEARCH

Governing Roles of Agroforestry in sustainable intensification of small farms and food SEcurity for SocIeties in West Africa (RAMSESII)

Country: Senegal & Burkino Faso

Host institutes: Wageningen University & WEcR



Thesis topic description

Problem context

As part of the RAMSESII project, which is in its last year, a rich variety of ecological, socio-economic and political data has been gathered. There are 4 transects in Burkina Faso and Senegal with gradients from intense to extensive agroforestry parklands which can be delved into for deeper analysis.

Research Objective/Question

More specific topics within the project are: NTFP value chain analysis, assessing relationships between ecological aspects and markets and household level livelihoods.

Potential theories and methods (type of research)

Methods could include at a distance interviews, literature review, qualitative and quantitative data analysis.

Jolanda van den Berg is interested to contribute to the project as a senior researcher from Wageningen Economic Research

Verina Ingram's research focuses on the social and environmental impacts of the governance of the landscape - value chain nexus. With Wageningen Economic Research, Verina works on impact evaluations of agricultural and forest commodities and their value chains, and the links between food, energy, water, climate and land use.

Project details

Group: Forest and Nature Conservation Policy

Project type: Thesis (FNP80436)

Start date: flexible

End date: six months later

Used skills: t.b.d. English & French (reading and spoken) is very useful

Requirements: t.b.d.

Contact

Supervisor(s): dr Verina Ingram

Examiner: prof dr Georg Winkel

Contact details: verina.ingram@wur.nl



FOREST ANTHROPOLOGY

Forest's perception, understandings and uses



What:

- Different framings and understandings of disturbances & forest restoration practices -> forests for uncertain future
- Other-than-human actors
- Rewilding approaches
- Creation of 'green frontiers' in Europe
- Different approaches to forest and nature conservation (integrative forest management, hunting)
- Interdisciplinary research relating to forest and environmental topics

How:

Environmental Anthropology, Political Ecology, Environmental History, Environmental Humanities

Where:

Poland, Germany, Slovakia, Ireland



Dr. Agata A. Konczal

Forest and Nature Conservation Policy Group

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Human-Nature Relationships in Nature & Biodiversity Conservation

✓ **Creating common ground** among conservation actors within a plurality of ontologies, epistemologies and knowledge systems



Collaborate with WUR Science Shop Project: Connected Landscape Heelsumse Brook: Students build conservation scenarios with local stakeholders

✓ **Cultural and spiritual significance of nature** in the governance and management of protected and conserved areas



Collaborate with: IUCN and research Best Practice Guidelines or their application in protected areas and World Heritage sites across the world

✓ **Biocultural conservation approaches** beyond the nature culture dichotomy



Explore the merging of nature conservation and cultural heritage conservation in the UNESCO World Heritage Convention, the CBD or in local conservation sites

✓ **Faith-based conservation** and its role in global, regional and local conservation networks



Collaborate with WWF Beliefs & Values Programme: Research faith & conservation issues in Indonesia, Cambodia, Myanmar etc.

✓ **Conservation by Indigenous people and local communities** indicators and politics in global nature and biodiversity governance



Explore the role of Indigenous people and local communities in the development of multilateral environmental policy. Do applied research with local communities in Nepal, Guatemala etc. and support their local conservation efforts with your own research



Dr. Bas Verschuuren
Forest and Nature
Conservation Policy Group

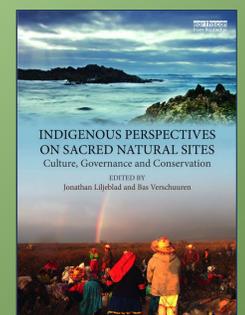
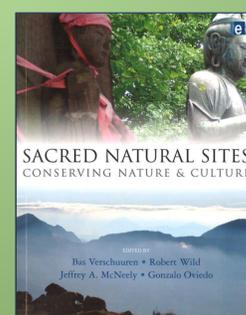
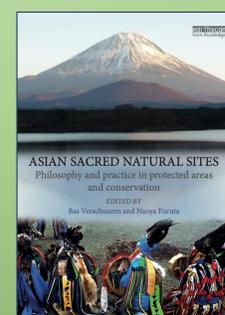
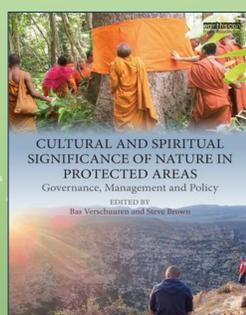
bas.verschuuren@wur.nl

My work as a Lecturer and Researcher focusses on the role of human-nature relations in the practices, management and governance of natural and cultural heritage conservation. Conceptual, theoretical and methodological approaches include: political ontology and ecology, cultural anthropology, phenomenology and ethnography.

My research covers the global local nexus and is applied, participatory and co-constructed with local communities, Indigenous peoples, conservation experts, NGOs and governments. I have worked extensively in Northern Australia, Ghana, Guatemala, Iceland and Mongolia with shorter engagements in many other countries.

I have published over 40 book chapters and journal articles as well as five edited books on human-nature interactions.

www.sacrednaturalsites.org - www.csvpa.org



WAGENINGEN
UNIVERSITY & RESEARCH

Forest and Nature Conservation Policy

Thesis Topics Georg Winkel 2023

✓ **Climate crisis politics.** Climate change is turning from an abstract concept to a physical reality impacting nature and people. But how do we deal with unprecedented change? How does and can policy respond to major crises – such as wildfires and droughts?

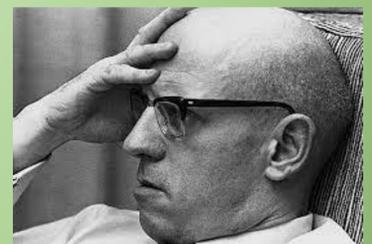
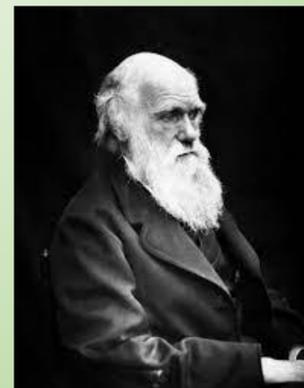
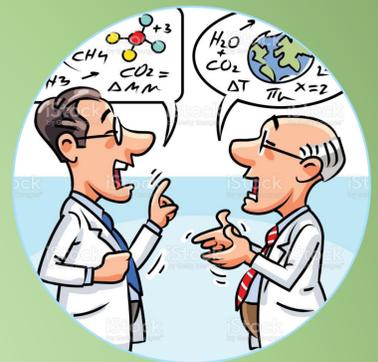
✓ **Grey interests and the Green Deal.** The EU has agreed on an ambitious policy package to advance sustainability transition in Europe and beyond. But what does this mean for forests and nature? What is behind ambitious EU policies? Who wins and loses in the transition? How are EU policies perceived in other world regions?

✓ **Science fiction.** Science is a critical driver in forest and nature politics. But science is also connected to values and interests, and (ideological) controversies become visible in policy debates. What role does science actually play in the policy making process? How can we turn academic trench wars into productive societal debates?

✓ **Baptists and Bootleggers.** An alignment of environmental and economic interests is often a precondition for policy change. But what happens when big economic interests and big environmental hopes meet? Who loses and who wins?

✓ **War and Environment.** The Russia-Ukraine war is a major humanitarian disaster with huge geopolitical consequences. But what does it mean for the environment and sustainability transition in Europe and beyond?

✓ **Darwin meets Foucault.** Seminal natural science concepts such as evolution theory or resilience provide fascinating explanations about ecosystem change and stability. Can they help us understanding social/policy change and sustainability transition?



Georg Winkel
Forest and Nature
Conservation Policy Group

Georg.winkel@wur.nl

I am a forester and an environmentalist. I am broadly interested in forest and nature policy and how society relates to nature, and how we can advance more sustainable ways of governing and managing nature. Having worked myself at the science policy interface in the past, I am fascinated by the major ideologies and interests that drive nature and natural resource policy across the globe. Read more about me here:

<https://www.wur.nl/en/persons/georg-prof.dr.-gcm-georg-winkel.htm>



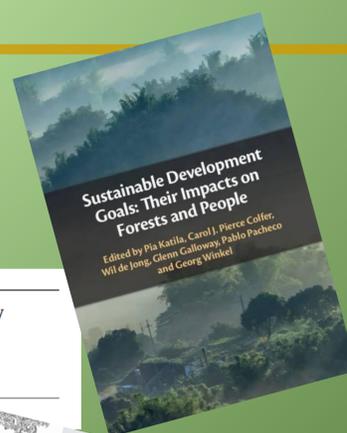
Whose integration is this? European forest policy between the gospel of coordination, institutional competition, and a new spirit of integration

Ambio 2021, 50:2129-2137
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s13280-021-01647-2>

GLOBAL FOREST ENVIRONMENTAL FRONTIERS

Forest environmental frontiers around the globe: Old patterns and new trends in forest governance
Georg Winkel, Metodi Sotirov, Cassandra Moseley

Governing abandoned land: Storylines on natural forest regrowth in France and Spain
Theresa Frei, Kim Edou, Carmen Rodríguez Fernández-Blanco, Georg Winkel



Global Environmental Change
Journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/gloenvch

When the pendulum doesn't find its center: Environmental narratives, strategies, and forest policy change in the US Pacific Northwest
Georg Winkel



WAGENINGEN
UNIVERSITY & RESEARCH



Forests in a changing climate – analyzing science policy debates and policy responses

Country: multiple

Host institute: Wageningen University



Thesis topic description

Problem context

Forests are in the center of climate debates and policies – on one hand, they are increasingly affected by climate change, partially related to large scale disturbances such as forest fires or insect calamities that put forest in the center of media attention. On the other hand, they are an essential compound of the carbon cycle and the climate system, making them at target of climate mitigation policies. Science plays a critical role in developing forest related climate policies, as do conflicting beliefs and interests towards forests, ranging from various forest use demands (for biomass, non wood forest products or agricultural expansion) to conservation or various cultural relations people have with forests. Increasing signs of climate impacts on forests accelerate the science policy debate and the need for policy making to respond, as do they increase uncertainty and controversies.

Research Objective/Question

The following research questions are relevant for this theme:

1. How forest related climate policies made (and implemented) in the interplay of conflicting beliefs and interests?
2. How does the policy system and society/media respond to large scale disturbances?
3. What role does science and multiple ways of knowing play in forest related climate policy development?

Topics (examples)

- Policy responses to major forest disturbances in country X
- Science policy debates relating to forests and climate change (at different levels/ in different contexts)
- Forests in climate policy making (in country X or EU/international levels)

Potential theories and methods (type of research)

Most fitting theories relate to the importance of knowledge & discourses but also beliefs and interests in policy making, or/and the role of science therein. Student are free to chose other theories that are applicable to the study concerned.

Thesis details

Group: Forest and Nature Conservation Policy
Project type: Thesis (FNP80436)
Start date: flexible
End date: six months later

Supervisor

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