

Green grabbing in Chile: exploring implications for local communities from a political ecology perspective

Abstract

Green grabbing is a type of land grabbing and is an emerging process which occurs in several countries of the world. In this way: Which are the implications of Green Grabbing for land use of local farmers and indigenous people in Chile?

The green grab: a short introduction

Green grabbing consists in a large-scale land acquisition by a wide group of players (private investors, governments, or national elites) for environmental ends (Fairhead et al., 2012).

From a political ecology perspective, green grabbing illustrates how elements of global environmental discourses such a climate change can conduct to marginalization of local land users (Scheidel and Work, 2018).

From this point of view, is important to understand the implications of the new power relationships and neocolonialism related to the private conservation, tourism and displacement processes in the South of Chile. Specially for Mapuche residents in the rural areas of southern Chile, who have been involved in conflict for land rights historically.

Geography of the Green Grabbing

As reported by several studies in East, West and Southern Africa, Southeast Asia, and Latin America, green grabbing implies contemporary modes to appropriation of nature. According to Fairhead et al. (2012: 238): "Appropriation' implies the transfer of ownership, use rights and control over resources that were once publicly or privately owned". At the same time, the mechanisms of lands control justifies the dispossession of local community and the displacement (Ojeda, 2012).

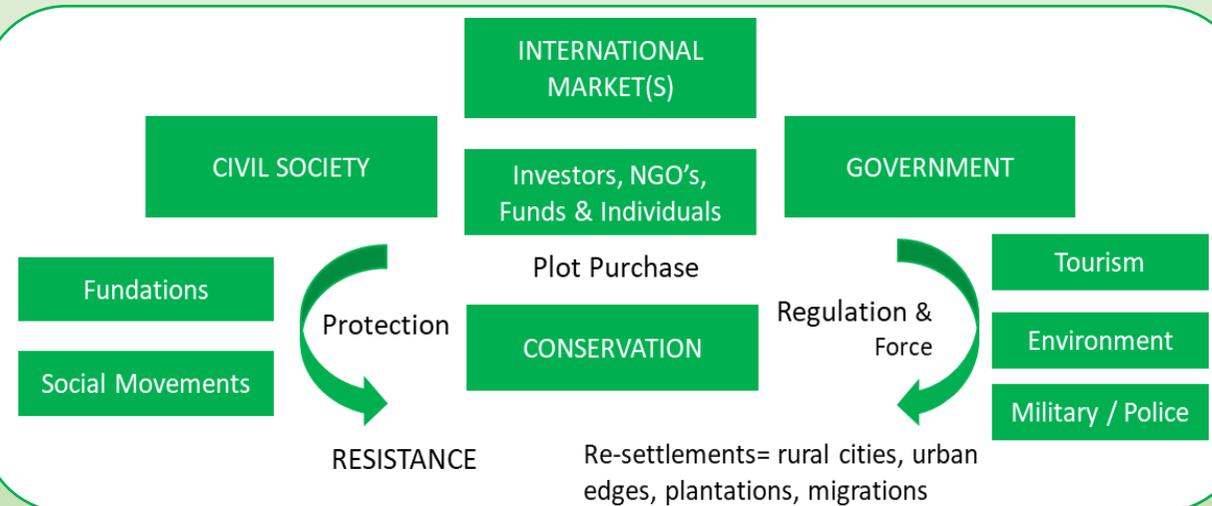


Figure 1: Green grabbing and resistance (Rocheleau, 2015)

Current green grabbing process in Chile

- More than 1,500,000 ha have been declared private projects (Chilean private protected areas – PPAs) of environmental conservation in Chile (Rivera and Vallejos-Romero, 2015).
- PPAs in Chile are heterogeneous in size from a few hectares to more than 300,000 hectares (Holmes, 2014).
- PPAs are owned by Chilean and international NGOs, individuals and corporations (Holmes, 2014).
- Although there is no evidence that the acquisitions are illegitimate and violate property land rights, there are historical precedents about how PPAs have an historic legacy of previous land grabs of indigenous lands (Rivera and Vallejos-Romero, 2015)..

Future of Green Grabbing in Chile

- A definitive regulatory framework for private conservation which establishes the rights and duties of non-State actors for PPAs (Rivera and Vallejos-Romero, 2015).
- To discuss in detail the cultural dimension of PPAs and a social inclusive conservation of nature in Chile.
- The role of local population in the deliberative process relate to the management of PPAs.

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