

CONSERVATION CONCESSIONS, NATIONAL PARKS,
BIOSPHERES, AND OTHER PROBLEMATIC CONCEPTS: TERRITORIAL RIGHTS
IN THE CONTEXT OF
WORLDWIDE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION EFFORTS

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ABSTRACT

Recent efforts to conserve threatened or fragile ecosystems have led to the development of new categories of land set-asides, such as Biosphere Reserves, Protected Areas, and Conservation Concessions. Additionally, activism by indigenous peoples or national minorities has sometimes led to the creation of large-scale “indigenous territories.” Such efforts often involve cooperation between international organizations and local non-governmental or governmental entities. Increasingly, financial and legal arrangements for delimiting, managing and defining resource use in these territories call national land tenure frameworks and local property relations into question. In this paper, I use the case of the establishment of a national park in Peru to show how property relations are affected by shifting global alliances, discourses of environmentalism, and local reactions to conservation efforts. I compare the Peruvian case with other examples in order to theorize about these shifts and examine their policy implications for conservation and the protection of local land rights. Research to date indicates that these new categories of territory can lead to new forms of alliances and new types of social relations which allow local residents to establish direct legal, political and economic ties with translocal or transnational entities. Such ties may, potentially, fortify tenure rights for peasants and indigenous peoples. Simultaneously, however, they create problematic new power relations that threaten to heighten social inequality. These contradictory trends and the tensions that arise as property relations are negotiated locally and globally force us to re-think the basis for social organization and land and resource use rights.

INTRODUCTION

A unique perspective of property relations is acquired when one flies at an altitude of 3000-6000 feet in a small 4 seat plane (as I had the opportunity to do on a recent trip to Bolivia). From here, one surveys the landscape while sandwiched between the earth and the sky--- high enough get a comprehensive look at the variation but low enough to distinguish the topographic features—the farm fields from the forests, the wetlands from the arid dunes. The relationships between the distinct features, the sharpness or blurred character of the geographic boundaries are also visible. Furthermore, a small plane flying at this height can easily descend to almost the tops of the trees to take a closer look at specific phenomena or equally easily ascend to skim the bottom of clouds and see the broader vista. This paper captures this perspective through an examination of the changing shape of property relations in the context of international efforts to protect threatened or fragile ecosystems. It is the perspective that I believe Chris Hann urges us to take in his introduction to the recent volume on *Property Relations*. Hann (1998) suggests that in order to understand the “embeddedness” of property relations, we must take a multi-level approach that accounts for the complexity of social relations that undergird property relations. Such an approach is required in the

case of understanding the creation and maintenance of new categories of protected areas that are emerging as a result of ongoing conservation efforts. In this paper, I discuss the implications for the relationship between property and social relations of these new constructions of land tenure within the context of the ongoing debate about the most efficacious models for protection of fragile ecosystems. I conclude that the picture, when examined from a perspective between the micro and macro levels (the local and the global), is far more ambiguous and fraught with contradictory trends than indicated by the current literature on the topic. Furthermore, I suggest that the relationships being constructed in the realm of environmental conservation efforts have implications for understanding trends in the broader spheres of relationships between local, national and transnational social institutions and property arrangements. I use case material from ongoing work in the northern sector of Peru, where I am a part of a team from the Field Museum to conduct applied research and provide technical assistance in conjunction with the design of a management plan for the recently created Cordillera Azul National Park. I first provide the background context for my theoretical position, both with respect to the discussion about property relations and specifically common property management schemes and with respect to the current developments in the creation of protected areas. I then describe the consequences of the new protected area arrangements for local people who live in or near the designated areas, what is changing and what is not changing, and third, I attempt to analyze the implications of these processes for understanding property relations in a global/local context. Finally, I conclude with some speculations on the policy implications of my analysis.

PART I: FLYING SOMEWHERE JUST BENEATH THE CLOUDS—A GLOBAL VIEW OF PROTECTED AREAS

The concept of setting land aside for the protection of natural landscapes emerged in the late Nineteenth Century. In the United States, the first National Parks were created to “set aside” significant landscapes for the edification and enjoyment of the fast-industrializing nation. Public lands were seen as an antidote to the “fencing” of the West, the great proliferation of private property that fueled America’s westward expansion. In Latin America, at this same time, large amounts of land, especially in the rural regions or tropical forests far from the cities and estates of the landed elites, land was apportioned on a use-rights regime, with indigenous peoples who had survived successive waves of colonist-migrants in search of gold, rubber and other natural resources governing their territories under their own systems of property relations. The concept that land needed to be set aside for the protection of nature did not really catch on in Latin America until the early 1960s, when the current version of the “environmental protection” movement took off as a world-wide effort. It was around this same time that Latin American governments (many of them military regimes) were beginning major efforts to initiate large - scale settlement and development schemes in the “hinterland” areas, especially in Amazonia.

From the late 1960s to the present time, the creation of protected areas has been a major strategy of major environmental organizations and their supporters. However, now, instead of justifying the set aside of “wilderness” land for purposes of edification

and recreation, advocates of protected areas argued that this was the only way to safeguard biological diversity. The movement to protect remote hinterlands then logically followed the push into these same areas by neo-colonialist states bent on an economic development strategy that called for greater integration of these regions into the nation through concerted economic exploitation of natural resources and investment in infrastructures of connection (roads, dams, oil and mining operations). It is interesting to note that among the first advocates (aside from various indigenous groups themselves who had been fighting for years in some cases for land rights claims) for land set-asides in Latin America were anthropologists and human rights advocates concerned about the plight of the indigenous peoples of the tropical forests (for example, the Vilas-Boas brothers in Brazil, whose efforts led to the creation of the Xingu National Park, one of the first such set-asides in Latin America. At the international level were spokespersons and advocates such as Shelton Davis, Terry Turner, Nelly Arevalo-Jimenez, John Bodley and others whose publications were seminal to bringing concerns about indigenous peoples' plight to human rights arenas: the Denmark-based International Work Group on Indigenous Affairs, the Anti-Slavery Society in Britain, Cultural Survival in the United States, and the Association of Brazilian Anthropologists to name a few).

The efforts to protect indigenous peoples lands, however, were relatively small-scale and underfunded as compared to the large-scale well-publicized campaigns by international environmental protection organizations.¹ These efforts have gone through different stages during which the focus has shifted. Broadly speaking, the initial stages of the movement focused on protecting endangered species, with campaigns to ban hunting, poaching and international trade in animal parts (such as elephant tusks, rhino horns, skins, furs, etc.). The de-valuing of luxury commodities manufactured from these parts (ivory objects, tortoise-shell combs, alligator-skin boots, fur coats) represents an interesting attack on property that could be a worthy paper in its own right. These efforts achieved great measures of success through the implementation of legislation and policy regimes to protect individual species (both within countries and internationally with the implementation of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species-- CITES-- in 1975).

Eventually it became evident that merely preventing the killing of animals would not provide adequate protection for endangered species in the long run. Habitats had also to be protected if extinction was to be prevented. It was at this stage that the focus shifted to efforts to support the creation of parks and other forms of protected areas around the world. International legislative frameworks were created through the United Nations bodies such as the United Nations Environmental Programme and UNESCO, as well as other international organizations such as the IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature). In 1971, the United Nations established the Man and the Biosphere program, which led to the designation of Biosphere Reserves—areas

¹ It is beyond the scope of this paper to delve into the details of how the international environmental effort grew and became the largest “institutionalized” social movement of the 1980s and 1990s, however, it is certainly true that it is the wealthiest of all the international efforts (for example, as compared to the human rights movement).

characterized as containing “spheres of protection”, with an inner core of “untouched” land, and successive rings with distinctive levels of resource and land exploitation.

Both of these foci for environmental efforts (which lasted into the mid-1980s), were replete with conflict centered on the rights of individuals and states to control property. The argument that endangered species needed protection was in direct conflict with the rights of individuals to trade in commodities in a free market. The conflict continues to the present day as elites continue to demand such commodities, and entrepreneurs continue to supply them through black markets where legal means are not possible, making enforcement of protection legislation extremely costly.

The argument for protected areas led to even more complicated conflicts as developmentalist states argued that they had sovereign rights to their territories and to the resources within these lands that could not be superseded by international efforts. Military regimes in Latin America (most classic of which was Brazil, subject to some of the most intense pressure for rainforest protection), resisted efforts to create protected areas and stop large-scale infrastructure projects such as dams and roads which were viewed as central threats to the fragile habitats of a large number of endangered species. Additionally, Latin American states argued that environmental organizations based in the already developed “North”, whose lifestyles, after all, were the cause of major environmental problems globally, had no right to impede impoverished nations of the “South” from pursuing a logic of development that had so benefited the North. Nevertheless, in some countries, such as Peru, the military governments did set aside natural areas by creating Parks or Reserves. In Peru, where the first National Park was created in 1961, the military regime created three new parks, five new National Reserves and three new national “sanctuaries” (designated to protect either natural or historical features) during the 1970s and established a government infrastructure to manage the protected areas (ParksWatch, 2002).

International environmental organizations fought back with concerted campaigns to exert pressure on multilateral development organizations (such as The World Bank and The Inter-American Development Bank) to place conditions on development assistance that would safeguard the environment. Nation-states in Latin America found themselves caught between their need for continued development assistance and the burden of meeting new requirements (see Wali and Davis, 1992 for a case study of one such conflict). Meanwhile, a growing group of non-governmental organizations, including some dedicated to environmental conservation, pressured the states from within, albeit in the context of constraints by military and police state repression.

In the mid 1980s, pressures on the governments grew as they faced large-scale debt crises. The economic debacles of large-scale development schemes coupled with growing internal unrest led to the fall of successive military regimes throughout Latin America in the 1980s, and the installation of fledgling democracies. These new governments, while still protective of sovereign rights to territories, began to soften their anti-environmental stances. Multi-lateral development agencies financed the creation of new ministries or agencies for environmental and natural resource protection (usually

housed within the Ministry of Agriculture), and leading national figures in the environmental movement were tapped to become members of new government cabinets. The process of creating protected areas accelerated.

The creation of these protected areas was still occurring in a context in which the State owned most of the land (tropical forest lowlands, especially). Land reforms in the 1980s varied from country to country, but one major pattern was to “de-collectivize” agrarian production systems by parceling out previously communal-held land, while in other instances, land that had been previously expropriated from large estates was returned to the previous owners (De Janvry, Sadoulet and Wolford: 1999: 279). These trends characterize what De Janvry et. al. describe as the second phase of land reform—one in which the role of the State diminished and where “policy emphasis turned to the promotion of market forces” (286-287). Privatization and decollectivization was part of the packet of structural adjustment neo-liberal economic reforms offered to Latin American governments by multilateral financial institutions in order to resolve the debt crises of the 1980s.

The push toward privatization of property, however, did not have a significant impact on land tenure in the tropical forests, where most of the territory remained in the hands of the national government (“*tierras fiscales*”). Even the large-scale settlement schemes in which poor peasants from land-impoverished zones had been given incentives to settle in lowland forest regions “privatized” a relatively small amount of territory. Most of the colonists who migrated to the lowlands did not receive title to their lands. Many who did, when they failed to make a living off the titled piece of land they had received, pushed on to settle in new areas where they established use rights but not title (the best documentation of the failures of these tropical colonization schemes comes from Brazil--c.f. Schmink and Wood 1992; Hecht and Cockburn 1989 for the most comprehensive documentation, but see also Heckadon and McKay 1987, and Wali 1989 on similar processes in Panama).

Indigenous people were somewhat more successful in the 1980s in some countries in getting reserves and communal areas demarcated to protect their lands. During this time, there was considerable tension between indigenous peoples’ organizations and their supporters (including many anthropologists) and the environmental organizations. Environmental organizations did not support the inclusion of any people within areas designated to protect wilderness, or what they considered “pristine” forest habitats. Anthropologists in their academic publications and advocacy work argued that indigenous peoples in the Americas had a long record of shaping the environment of lowland tropical forests, and that if biological diversity had been preserved, it was in part due to the cultural and subsistence practices of indigenous peoples (see Sponsel 1995 for one of many comprehensive volumes; also the work of Bill Balee and Darrell Posey was seminal; on a larger scale, Eric Wolf’s *Europe and the People Without History* published in 1982 was very influential in promoting the more complicated view of human-nature interaction; finally, archeological research in the Amazon by Anna Roosevelt, Clark Erickson and others started to demonstrate that large-scale, densely populated Amazonian societies had existed prior to European arrival and had significantly altered the

Amazonian landscape). Environmentalists countered that indigenous people were not protectors of the environment and thus could not be automatically included in protected areas (Kent Redford's work critiquing the concept of the "noble savage" was instrumental here). Environmentalists and indigenous groups clashed over issues such as hunting and fishing rights.

Thus, by the early 1990s, a patchy landscape of federal, private and communal forms of property characterized the lowland areas of South America accompanied by a contentious field of social relationships.² The effort to protect fragile ecosystems and "biological diversity" however, was firmly entrenched in the agendas of both multilateral agencies and national governments. The most cogent symbol of this process was the decision to hold the first "earth summit" in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Out of the summit emerged the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), which has been subsequently ratified by all of the Latin American Governments (although not by the United States). An unprecedented set of opportunities were opening up as international environmental organizations, multilateral entities (including the United Nations, the IUCN, the World Bank, and so on), and nation states entered into new relationships over property management—codified through treaties, contracts, or other frameworks.

However the cause of environmental protection through the setting aside of protected areas was still generating conflict and was deeply affected by the economic and political trends of the times. In this decade the forces of privatization and integration of local economies into the global market were absorbing large tracts of federal lands—not through private titling of land, but rather through the granting of vast and in some cases long-term concessions to exploit resources such as oil, natural gas, and timber. National governments, under the gun of structural adjustment reforms which were heightening inequality and contributing to social unrest, were in critical need of revenue streams and concessions for energy, mineral and timber exploitation seemed a convenient source.

International as well as national environmental organizations used two different strategies to mitigate the threat that these concessions posed to fragile ecosystems. First, they used publicity campaigns to portray the large corporations who were gaining concession rights as "anti-environment". This characterization at a time when "consumer-publics" (i.e. those in the industrialized countries who were the end points of global markets for the commodities that were extracted) had largely accepted the environmentalist discourse, was perceived by the large corporations as damaging to their image. By the mid-1990s, corporate leaders were therefore searching for a way to present their companies with a "green" image. Environmental organizations then began to search for ways that they could negotiate with large corporations on environmental conditions and frameworks for their operations that could win them a "green stamp" of

² Another key set of actors, which are also beyond the scope of this broad historical sketch are the guerrilla groups who sprang up in the 1980s—such as Sendero Luminoso and the Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru in Peru, the FARC in Colombia and so on. Also, there was the on-going "low-intensity" warfare in Nicaragua and El Salvador—all of which was affecting the social and political landscape and the efforts for environmental protection. By the late 1980s, the guerrilla groups were linked to the narcotics traffic in cocaine and cocaine cultivation as well as efforts to halt it had spread across wide swaths of the lowland tropical forest regions of Bolivia, Colombia, and Peru.

approval. It was at this time that such things as certification of environmentally-sustainable methods of harvesting wood, growing shade coffee, and other consumer products were developed and marketed.

Perhaps the boldest new idea to emerge during this most recent phase of environmental conservation efforts has been the concept of conservation concessions. Under this concept, an environmental organization acquires the lease for a timber or mining concession after the government has failed to auction it off to a corporation, or after a corporation has failed to secure a viable profit margin from the concession. In these cases, the environmental organization can “lease” the land for a very small amount of money (for example, The Nature Conservancy leased land adjacent to Bolivia’s Noel Kempf National Park for \$1. an acre in 1998 and Conservation International leased 200,000 acres of forest in southeastern Guyana for a \$20,000 fee with annual payments of .15 cents an acre for 99 years-- McCarthy, 2002:A26). Such concessions then give the environmental organizations an opportunity to manage the area as a protected zone, and to eventually have it declared within one of the IUCN categories of protected areas. Environmental organizations are attempting to establish trust funds or endowments for these concessions to insure stable funding. Recently, the newly created Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation (established in 2001) awarded \$261 million to Conservation International, in part to finance more concessions. According to key informants who are developing the conservation concession strategy, the most promising direction has been to partner with large scale corporations who are seeking to improve their public image to get the corporations to finance the concession. Also gaining in popularity is the idea of private management of National Parks. In these instances, governments are trying to establish a variety of relationships with nationally-based as well as international non-governmental organizations to allow them to not only finance but directly assume responsibility for the management of National lands. In 1992, Peru created the National Fund for Protected Areas (FONANPE) which is managed as a semi-autonomous agency and receives funds from private and multi-lateral financial entities. In 2001, further measures for privatization were taken with the amendment of the protected area legislation to allow for private administration of national parks or reserves.

Admittedly this global view of protected areas is blurred and lacking in specificity. Many trajectories varied from the account laid out above. Nonetheless, the view affords us the vantage of seeing that the creation of protected areas was intimately linked to and shaped by the social, economic and political processes of globalization and restructuring. Within this macro-context, the 1990s and the early years of the 21st century represent a new phase of negotiated arrangements for protected areas—one in which large scale international organizations and institutions are entering into entirely new relationships with national governments. Beyond treaties or private financing of locally-based management schemes, international organizations are entering into contracts which give them permission to directly manage large tracts of land theoretically still under the control of a national sovereign state. Such permutations are not only having reverberating effects at the international and national level, but also at the very local level of the protected areas themselves and their adjacent buffer zones. To better understand

such effects, we have to descend in our little plane to a lower altitude, where the complexities of specific relationships become much clearer.

PART II: FLYING JUST ABOVE THE TREES: A LOCAL EXAMPLE OF CHANGING PROPERTY RELATIONS IN PROTECTED AREAS CREATION

The story of the creation and implementation of Peru's newest National Park—the Cordillera Azul National Park (Spanish acronym- PNCAZ), which spans four different Departments in the North, well illustrates how shifting roles of international, national, private and public entities are affecting property relationships at the local level. The cast of characters includes some 70 –odd communities of varying sizes and distinct ethnicities located in the designated buffer zone of the Park, a newly formed environmental conservation organization that is seeking to manage the Park along with a host of other NGOs working in the region, the Government agency responsible for protected areas in Peru (INRENA) as well as other Government agencies that have interests in the region, a not-for profit private museum (The Field Museum of Natural History), several of the large environmental organizations with offices in the United States, Peru, and throughout the rest of the world, and the United States Government through both the Agency for International Development (AID) and various Anti-Narcotics agencies.

There are also several distinguishing features about the Park that make it an interesting case study:

- 1) It was created in an extraordinarily short time span (seven months after concerted efforts began).
- 2) It contains the most diverse habitats and among the richest biological diversity of any park in Peru and is second in size of all the parks.
- 3) Unlike the other large Park (Manu National Park), which is isolated and contains relatively few people, PNCAZ is located in part (on the Western Side) amidst a densely populated region with high rates of in-migration.
- 4) PNCAZ will be the first *national* park in Peru to be privately administered and is currently entirely supported with private funds.

This last-mentioned feature of the Park makes it noteworthy with respect to understanding how concepts of private and public or (“common”) property are on slippery slopes, but my focus for this paper is to discuss how the relationships between the various actors and the unique features of the Park are creating opportunities for the residents of the Park's buffer zone. These opportunities are arising as a result of changes in approach among some environmental conservationists toward people who live in or adjacent to protected areas. There is now quite a substantial body of literature discussing the myriad issues surrounding local peoples engagement with conservation and degradation of fragile ecosystems (for recent works, c.f. Gibson, McKean and Ostrom, 1999; Brandon, Redford, and Sanderson, 1998; Henkemans, 2000; McCay and Jentoft, 1998:21-29; Agarwal and Gibson, 2001, among others). We now have a clearer understanding of some of the mechanisms or variables that may determine the success or failure of community-based conservation efforts or resources management strategies.

Social scientists have moved beyond the debate about the “failures” or “advantages” of common property forms to more nuanced analysis of variation in common property relationships and their embeddedness in forms of social relationships (c.f. Hann, 1998; McCay and Jentoft, 1998: 21-29).

Yet, even as our understanding of the process seems to be clarifying, the process itself is shifting and new forms and permutations of property relations are emerging that do not lend themselves to an easy dichotomy between private-public, or common property management. This is the case in the buffer zone of the PNCAZ, where some of the key actors are creating new alliances that blur the boundaries between property forms. In these cases, the alliances lead to direct social relationships between local communities and international organizations who leverage financial resources and public visibility to increase access for these communities to more stable and long-term access to land and resources.

For example, the Field Museum is working directly with a Peruvian environmental organization (CIMA-Cordillera Azul) to provide technical and financial support for resource management plans that are compatible with conservation in return for communities working to protect the adjacent park lands. The Field Museum, based in Chicago, has research programs in over 90 countries. In 1999, the Museum’s Office of Environment and Conservation Programs (ECP) began a program of direct conservation action which has a three step process: 1) rapid biological inventories (RBIs) that identify regions with high levels of biological diversity needing protection, 2) follow-through efforts to place the scientific information gathered during the inventories into the hands of policy makers and local environmental organizations in order to assist and accelerate the process of obtaining protected area designation, 3) after an area is designated, continued support of local organizations who are involved in implementation of management programs, through applied research, training and information dissemination efforts as well as facilitation and coordination of relationships with international environmental organizations. This more direct engagement in conservation action is a new direction for the Field Museum, and one that is generating internal conflict among the scientific staff, but that has the support of the museum administration (c.f. McCarter, et. al., 2001). The approach has succeeded in garnering significant funding from private foundations.

Almost from the beginning of the program, the ECP has sought to integrate a social element in the work. Over the past few years, this social dimension has also evolved into a process that parallels the RBIs by working closely with the Center for Cultural Understanding and Change (CCUC), the museum’s public-interest anthropology branch which I direct. It consists of a rapid social inventory of communities in or adjacent to the region, recommendations for their incorporation into the process of obtaining protection, and finally, involvement in the follow-through efforts to implement management by engaging in participatory research and technical support for community based conservation efforts. The integration of the biological and social aspects of conservation, while under attack among some environmental organizations (c.f. exchange between Schwartzman, et. al., and Terborgh in *Conservation Biology*, 2000), has been

gaining in popularity since 1987 when the influential report of the World Environment Commission, headed by Gro Haarlem Brundtland (then Norway's Prime Minister), brought the concept of sustainable development to the forefront of international efforts. Now, some fifteen years later, the framework has shifted to the extent that the second "earth summit" – held in 2002 in Johannesburg- focused heavily on strategies for equitable development that is compatible with environmental protection. In Johannesburg, furthermore, the cause of social justice and greater equity for the world's poor was explicitly linked with the cause of environmental protection by no less a person than the Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan.

In the buffer zone of the PNCAZ, the Field Museum and its partners (specifically a Peruvian environmental organization who has the contract from the Government to develop a master plan for the management of the Park), are attempting to use lessons and experiences learned from community-based conservation elsewhere together with new forms of private-public relationships to secure long-term access to natural resources and land coupled with technical assistance designed to provide stability for livelihood strategies, and thus a greater measure of equity and self-determination for the rural poor. The work includes such efforts as:

- 1) The engagement of local communities in the process of developing a master plan for the management of the park through a participatory social "asset mapping" process that will enable communities to identify social institutions and organizations as well as resource use strategies that they view as collective strengths. For the first time in Peru, it is being contemplated that communities could continue to use resources within the park (through limited hunting and fishing rights for example), if they are doing so in a conservation-oriented manner.
- 2) The development of "conservation contracts" with specific communities (selected on the basis of the results of the asset mapping). These "contracts" will establish a relationship with the Park Management Team (private NGOs with the technical support of the Field Museum) through which it will be obligated to provide long-term technical support for sustainable management of the communities' natural resources, assistance with the securing of title or other long-term forms of property appropriation, and involvement with the stewardship of the Park in return for the communities' commitment to protect the Park.
- 3) Support for the communities (through negotiation and lobbying) for their stance against the cocaine-eradication programs of the joint U.S.-Peruvian anti-narcotics forces. In this instance, particularly on the western side of the Park which has been one of the centers of cocaine production in Peru, the Park Team has observed that the "alternative development" and eradication efforts of the anti-narcotics forces (including divisions within the US Agency for International

Development) have not succeeded in stabilizing communities but have instead led to further impoverishment. The Park Management Team has taken the position that further attempts to force eradication of cocaine or offers of development assistance that enmesh small scale farmers in poorly planned cash crop production schemes will endanger the park as they lead to land degradation and push people past the buffer zones into the park in search for fertile land.

- 4) Increased access to information for communities about the natural ecosystem in which they live and how choices they make can impact the environment.
- 5) Dissemination in regional urban centers about the efforts of the local rural communities to protect their lands through low-impact use strategies in order to increase awareness of and value for different lifestyles and to mitigate negative perceptions of small-scale farmers and indigenous peoples as “backwards”.

Other international organizations are also working in the region to strengthen the protection for the Park. For example, the World Wildlife Foundation (WWF) is in negotiations with USAID and other international funding sources to begin a program of managed forestry that would involve “green” certification of harvested wood. Conservation International (CI) is exploring the possibility of creating conservation concessions in the eastern sector of the Park’s buffer zone (along the Ucayali River), where the Peruvian Government has designated a large zone of logging concessions that it plans to auction off in 2003. Conservation International staff and consultants contend that the logging concessions directly adjacent to the Park pose a major threat to its protection, and could instead be converted into conservation concessions. According to a CI consultant economist, there is a good possibility that logging companies will not bid on these concessions due to their remote location and difficulty of transporting lumber to markets, affording opportunities for conservation organizations to present counter-bids for concessions. The Peruvian government established the first conservation concession in the country in July 2001, in the Madre de Dios Department. The concession is financed by Conservation International and managed by an international environmental organization (Asociacion por la Conservacion de la Amazonia—ACA). In the case of the PNCAZ, the conservation concessions would probably be managed by the Park Management Team.

The possibility also exists that some of the concessions (two or three or potentially seven have been contemplated) would be directly managed and controlled by Shipibo Indian communities (with technical support from the Park Management Team), who live adjacent to the Park on the Eastern Side. These Shipibo communities currently control only relatively small parcels of territory, designated as a “native community” under Peruvian Law. The Native Community designation has not provided adequate protection to indigenous communities threatened by logging and mining incursions. Additionally, the initial inscriptions of the limits of native communities were based on

haphazard boundary demarcation and without adequate coordination with the land-titling agency (PETT). Several major efforts are now underway to use more precise GIS mapping to demarcate community boundaries and register them in the national cadastral system. Even this effort however will not provide adequate protection because the native community lands are so small. A new option that has emerged for native communities is the “*reserva communal*”, which is a larger territory designed to protect biological diversity through management by indigenous people. The advantage of the conservation concession over the *reserva communal* may be that the concession will have a secure funding source from the international organization whereas *reserva comunales* will have to continue to depend on government revenues or community generated revenues. The direct alliance of international organizations with indigenous communities in the management and protection of their lands, in effect by-passing government authority represents a different form of property relations than any that currently exists in Peru.

In summary, the PNCAZ case demonstrates that new alliances and land and resource management arrangements are shattering such dichotomies as public/private and even local/global. Local communities could potentially stand to benefit by obtaining more stable or secure access to land and resources, an increased voice in the zonification and use of national protected areas, and increased and more long-term technical support for livelihood strategies. Yet, there continue to be contradictions and tensions in these new schemes that become clear as we ascend from the top of the trees to the mid-level altitude from which we can get a somewhat broader perspective.

PART III: BETWEEN THE CLOUDS AND THE TREES: AMBIGUITIES AND TENSIONS GENERATED BY NEW FORMS OF PROTECTED AREA MANAGEMENT

Similar to the processes in PNCAZ, other cases of new arrangements and alliances in other Latin American countries also demonstrate the new possibilities for promoting social equity and local participation in protected area management. For example, the extractive reserve model, pioneered in Brazil with the organizations of rubber tappers (c.f. Cardoso 2002, Allegretti 1995, Schwartzman and Cowell 1992, and Schwartzman et. al., 2000) has provided an interesting model for how local management of natural resources, fortified with alliances with international organizations, and governed by state property regimes can work to secure livelihood strategies for the rural poor (Cardoso, 2002 provides a nice history of the role of external agents in the creation and maintenance of extractive reserves).

Another interesting alternative for indigenous people is emerging in Ecuador, where leaders of the Cofan Indigenous Community are proposing a form of “shared” management of protected natural areas that are also sites of ancestral claims by indigenous people. The proposed “SNAPAC”—*Sistema Nacional de Areas Protegidas Compartidas* would establish joint responsibility for the area between the indigenous residents and the government. Indigenous people would be responsible for monitoring resource use and conservation efforts while the government would continue to enforce legislation and regulations. In this instance, co-management would not directly involve

international organizations, but would most likely continue to entail international financing.

A third example concerns the Kayapo Indians of Brazil, who have a long history of allying with international environmental organizations to publicize and organize against encroachment and development efforts on their lands. In this instance, a major Kayapo community has allied with Conservation International to operate a scientific research station in their reserve – in effect establishing a direct link between an indigenous group and an international organization in the management of common pool resources (Zimmerman et. al., 2001).

In all of these cases, as well as others, the direct linkage between local groups and international organizations seems to be critical in promoting changes in land and resource management. This has interesting implications for local people, international and local private entities, and national governments. Tensions between and internal to these three “actors” (or fields of actors, if you will), create ambiguities in the process which belie the apparent benefits to local communities and to the cause of environmental protection.

The role and legitimacy of the national government is perhaps the entity most clearly affected by these occurrences. While in some instances, the national government continues to be heavily involved, on the whole, it appears that these new arrangements are in effect bypassing the State as the principal authority and decision-maker on matters of public land. The broader context of neo-liberal and economic restructuring which has led to a broad pressure to privatize state-held assets has also shaped financing, management, and administration of protected areas. While such arrangements as conservation concessions or private endowments for Parks provide revenue streams for government environmental and natural resource agencies, they also weaken the ability of the state to exert control over sovereign territory. Competing interests within the State bureaucracy (such as Ministries of Mining or Energy) are not always in agreement with these arrangements and contest the authority of the private entities.

For example, in the case of Peru’s PNCAZ, the Ministry of Energy together with PetroPeru (previously the State owned oil company, now semi-privatized), are contending that they have the right to negotiate a lease for oil and natural gas exploration with the trans-national energy corporation, Occidental Petroleum, Inc. within the Park boundaries. Indeed they had granted Occidental Petroleum rights to explore in 2000, prior to the designation of the Park (but when it was a reserved zone). Although Peruvian environmental organizations contend that the lease rights are on weak legal grounds, the Ministry and PetroPeru have lobbied the Administration to let Occidental continue to explore within the Park. They have threatened the protected area agency (INRENA) that if it contravenes, they will work against any further designation of protected areas in the region, and INRENA is unwilling to press the issue. The current administration has made it clear that it supports oil exploration. The Park Management Team is debating strategies—whether it would be best to openly militate against Occidental, thereby confronting INRENA, on whom they depend for the private parks administration contracts, or to join INRENA in some behind-the-scenes negotiating with the oil

company to establish parameters and conditions that would allow exploration for the first time ever within a National Park, which while it could result in some mitigation measures, opens the Park Management Team to criticism from other environmental organizations for “selling out” the park.

Local residents in the buffer zone, who have heard about the rumors of oil exploration, are mixed in opinion, some seeing a lucrative source of employment while others worry about loss of resources. The incursion of Occidental into the Park also has implications for the efforts to work with the local communities in the development of the management plan because it will highlight the extant unequal power relations. Of necessity the use of resources for hunting, fishing or logging will be strictly limited within the park boundaries (they are considered “illegal”), yet a large company will be in effect allowed to conduct “illegal” activities within the park. Local residents, astute observers with long experience with the exercise of power by the government and externally based entities, will undoubtedly view the Park Management Team as possibly complicit in yet another unfair and unjust social arrangement.

Thus, the internal dynamics of government decision-makers and the resistance by some within the administration to accede to the new public-private/global-local relationships emerging for protected areas highlights the need to investigate further the nature of social, political and economic arrangements. The State, while weak on some fronts, remains a strong actor in other ways.

In turn, as environmental organizations, whether locally based or international, push for an expanded role in management of protected areas they find themselves in entanglements at the national and local level that are placing them on unfamiliar terrain. In the case of the Field Museum, the ecologists, anthropologists, museum lawyers and administration staff find themselves sitting across the table from Directors of International Development Agencies, Oil Companies, local federations of municipal governments and in community meetings on a scale never before even contemplated by such a traditional institution. Emotional as well as financial commitments to the protected area and to the work of conservation seem to pull against the antique notions of the “role of the museum” and are pushing the envelope of the very definition of the institution. Conservation organizations find themselves pushing development programs or entering into the selling of green-friendly consumer products, creating brand identities, (even brands for protected areas—such as “corridors”, and “conservation concessions” which become associated with specific organizations) for the marketing of the environment.

Local residents adjacent to protected areas are attempting to negotiate for themselves with local and international organizations and with the state to obtain or hold on to land and resources. While leveraging the alliance with international environment organizations may work to increase their power in some ways, it can also backfire if the national government or other powerful private interests intercede to protect their interests and de-stabilize regional arrangements. Ultimately, it is still an open question as to how much power environmental and social justice advocates have against the prevailing

economic order. Local residents are being asked to join a cause (environmental conservation), but whether they will come out the better for doing so remains uncertain.

While the case of PNCAZ is a unique one, and warrants McCay and Jentoft's caution for not over-generalizing (1998: 29), there are some general implications for policy and for anthropologists that seem appropriate. First, it seems as if the blurring of private-public lines for management or even ownership of protected areas can potentially provide benefits for not only stabilizing fragile ecosystems but also for promoting just access to resources to the people who live in them. If conservation concessions, extractive reserves, private funds for Park Management, co-managed reserves, and so on open opportunities for new models of property relations that are alternatives to intensive land-exploitative, environmentally degrading arrangements, then the question of how "private" they are should not matter so much. If local people benefit by gaining more stable livelihoods through such arrangements then it probably doesn't matter either if they own "title" to the land per se. Yet, it must be recognized that these new arrangements are as yet unstable and highly vulnerable to competing interests that militate against both environmental protection and local social justice. Advocates within environmental organizations of these new approaches need to explore strategies that will strengthen their hand. Schwartzman (2000) suggests that stronger, more explicit alliances with local people and social movements (such as those of the rubber tappers' unions, indigenous land rights) and the embedding of environmental protection in the wider cause of social justice and equity promotion may be the best strategy. The case material from PNCAZ seems to validate this approach.

Second, anthropologists should heed Hann's call for a more explicit effort to understand how the new "fusions" are shaping "our common futures" (Hann, 1998: 47). Anthropologists do fly at the mid-altitude between the clouds and the trees. They are situated in an opportune spot to not only observe but engage in the debates shaping policy discourses surrounding these highly critical issues. Without anthropologists' insights into the workings of social dynamics at their multiple levels, I fear that the cause of environmental protection will remain vulnerable to being subsumed by the inexorable power of the globalized capitalist economy. It is a worrisome path to take to engage in policy debates and in direct action, but the alternative- to not use the knowledge we create- could be far more worrisome. We owe it to ourselves to take the risk.

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