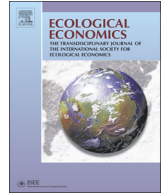




Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Ecological Economics

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/ecolecon



Governance, Land and Distribution: A Discussion on the Political Economy of Community-Based Conservation



Enrique Calfucura ¹

Departamento de Economía, Facultad de Economía y Empresa, Universidad Diego Portales, Avenida Santa Clara 797, Huechuraba, Santiago, Chile
 Department of Economics, McGill University, Montreal, Canada

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 4 August 2016
 Received in revised form 2 April 2017
 Accepted 4 May 2017
 Available online 13 September 2017

Keywords:

Community-Based Conservation
 Governance
 Equity
 Land contestation

ABSTRACT

The effectiveness of Community-Based Conservation (CBC) has been under discussion. Through the review of CBC initiatives in developing countries, we contribute to the debate by analysing how players influence different factors that determine the outcomes of CBC. We highlight several points. First, the promise of benefits has been overshadowed by constraints on the extraction of natural resources, along with the use of governmental schemes to extract partially the rents from CBC, which has left little to share inside the communities. Second, CBC design and implementation has often overlooked the asymmetries of power within the community and at the individual level, which has produced unequal access to the design, decision-making and outcomes of this activity. Third, while the elites have had a determinant role in shaping the governance of CBC, external agents' promotion of CBC has tended to reproduce the existent negotiating power at the community, local and national levels. Fourth, land contestation plays a key role in the dynamics of relationship and conflict between the governments, corporate interests and the communities. Finally, CBC adaptation to new scenarios depends critically on the process of community empowerment and the building of networks with external agents.

© 2017 Elsevier B.V. All rights reserved.

Contents

1. Introduction	18
2. Biodiversity Conservation Policies and Communities	19
3. The Impact of the Size of the Benefits Associated to CBC	21
4. The Distribution of CBC's Benefits and Costs	21
5. The Role of the Elites	22
6. Biodiversity Conservation and Land Contestation	23
7. Community Development and Adaptation	24
8. Conclusions	24
Funding	25
Acknowledgements	25
References	25

1. Introduction

Biodiversity has been declining rapidly in developing countries during the last half century (CDB, 2010; MEA, 2005). In response to this environmental challenge, multilateral, national, regional and local authorities have supported the implementation of community-based conservation (CBC) initiatives aimed at protecting the natural flora and wildlife around the world, while promoting local development

(Mansuri and Rao, 2004; Gómez-Baggethun and Muradian, 2015). The purpose of CBC is to link biodiversity conservation and local benefits in rural communities through the implementation of a variety of arrangements— whose mix of formal and informal institutions define who controls the resources, how resources are managed, how conflicts are solved and how benefits and costs are shared (Berkes, 2007). Main strategies behind CBC have been: (i) integrating conservation and livelihood goals, (ii) providing economic and development benefits in return for conservation, and (iii) providing communities control over their natural resources (Nilsson et al., 2016). To accomplish that, different schemes have emerged, such as Community-Based Natural Resource

E-mail address: enrique.calfucura@udp.cl.

¹ Avenida Santa Clara 797, Huechuraba, Santiago, Chile.

Management (CBNRM), Integrated Conservation and Development Programs (ICDP), Co-Management, Devolution of Natural Resource Management, and Payments for Environmental Services, among others.

Contemporaneously, economic globalization in developing countries has increased conflicts over the control of natural resources, as the demand for commodities has led to land acquisition and exploitation that has restricted local access to land and resources (Bohm et al., 2012; Fairhead et al., 2012; Jones, 2006; Margulis et al., 2013). In a similar way, recent control of land for climate change mitigation or biodiversity conservation purposes has affected the access, use and management of indigenous resources, also modifying the relationship between communities, local, regional and national governments (Fairhead et al., 2012; Bohm et al., 2012; Gardner, 2012). Local communities have come to face a world where their land and natural resource rights are increasingly contested (Fairhead et al., 2012; Gardner, 2012; McElwee et al., 2014). Beyond its ecological outcomes, CBC initiatives also seem to be relevant for the implementation of political institutions that influence the community's process of local empowering, cooperation and adaptation to new circumstances (Agrawal and Ribot, 1999; Coria and Calfucura, 2012).

The main purpose of this article is to discuss the effects of CBC on the main factors that determine its performance, focusing especially in its distributional and governance consequences. We use a political economy framework and link it to insights from CBC experiences in less developing countries, and highlight some issues we feel have been neglected in the related literature.² First, we propose that social capital and cooperation are critical to the functioning of CBC, but external agents- whose intervention reduce the benefits CBC can produce or constraint the participation of its community members- may undermine them. Second, CBC design and implementation has often overlooked the asymmetries of power, either at the community or at the individual level, which has produced unequal access to the design, decision-making and outcomes of this activity (Corbera et al., 2007; Muradian et al., 2010). Beyond the widely consensus on improving horizontal accountability, there is a need for better vertical accountability associated not only to CBC but also to NGOs (Bardhan, 2002; Platteau and Gaspard, 2003; Bourguignon and Platteau, 2012). Third, land rights play a key role in the dynamic of relationship and conflict between the Government and corporate interests and the communities (Taylor, 2006; Duncan, 2007; Hervey, 2012). Fourth, self-driven processes of local empowerment and development through CBC are the main vehicle for local communities to legitimate their claims and to prevent state appropriation or land-grabbing (Agrawal and Ribot, 1999; Erazo, 2010; Haller et al., 2016). Consistent with the previous point, building external networks that promote collective action and raise the costs of land grabbing to external agents improves the resilience of CBC initiatives to external shocks (Shackleton et al., 2002; Berkes, 2007).

We focus on development outcomes of CBC, since a review and discussion of the ecological performance of CBC is far more complex, and empirical evaluations of CBC do not provide a clear clue about how political economy factors impact on environmental indicators. For example, Wright et al. (2016) found that decentralization policies related to forest are more effective in stabilizing forest cover when there is plenty interaction between group users and local politicians. However, the authors pointed out that it does not necessarily imply an improvement of local's livelihoods or a fair distribution of the benefits from decentralization, as it could be perfectly possible that local community elites who are in a better position with respect to local politicians push for more governance actions in favor of its own interests.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 reviews the main biodiversity conservation policies through the lens of political economy and introduces the main factors enhancing CBC. Section 3 examines how the benefits from CBC are shaped by the interest of different players

and influence cooperation and social capital, among others. In Section 4, we study the equity issues related to CBC, both at the community level and at the individual level. Section 5 presents a comprehensive analysis on the role of the elites in CBC. Section 6 discusses how CBC seems to encourage land contestation. Section 7 studies the effect of CBC on adaptive governance, the variety of ways through which CBC can interact with the market, the political system and society- in order to build institutions to deal with internal and external shocks. Finally, Section 8 presents the paper's conclusions.

2. Biodiversity Conservation Policies and Communities

Biodiversity conservation has been a story of conflict and negotiation between local communities and external governmental and non-governmental agents (Kashwan, 2016). Historically, common lands inhabited by communities, with *de facto* rights, were incorporated into State forest or areas with different purposes. In Latin America, protected areas were implemented as result of the ideas of conservationism brought by European colonizers and the need of exercising national sovereignty in isolated regions by national States (Pauchard and Villarreal, 2002; Jepson and Whittaker, 2002). In Africa, colonizers built a monopoly in game resources under the concept of people-free landscape in order to conserve wildlife, often in the land of poorer members of communities (Taylor, 2006; Dressler et al., 2010; Shackleton et al., 2002). In Asia, governments have developed a complex balance between conservation and community and timber exploitation of State forestlands during the last three decades (Kasa, 1999; Maryudi, 2015). The enforcement of State areas was heterogeneous among developing countries, creating possibilities for different relationships between communities and the State. For example, in South Asia, the central government had limited capacity to enforce state-owned lands, providing the opportunity to local populations to create quasi-state institutions that were important to achieve socio-economic and cultural development goals through community management of natural resources (Hunter and Keulder, 2010; Lapeyre, 2007; Moreno, 2012). In other places, the execution of the "fortress approach" generated tensions with local communities by excluding them from their lands (West, 2008). While protected areas remain the most important tool of biodiversity conservation, their boundaries have proven difficult to enforce in many developing countries (Coria and Calfucura, 2012).

Moreover, globalization opened the space to other forms of land exploitation and conservation in developing countries. On one hand, timber concessions have been one of the main extractive activities that have expanded the economic frontier towards forestland, with the promise of economic growth and poverty reduction (Kasa, 1999; Gerber, 2011). Nonetheless, this process has generally resulted in a highly concentrated timber industry subjected to preferential forest policies that not only allowed short-term economic gains, but also degraded the environment and fueled land conflicts with local communities (Li, 2002; Maryudi, 2015). At the same time, many governments have favored the development of industrial plantations that have eliminated ecological goods and services provided by the forest to peasant and indigenous communities, inducing conflicts worldwide (Gerber, 2011). Although in most of developing countries there are regulations that punish and prosecute concessionaires that break the rules, their enforcement is often low (Maryudi, 2015). As a consequence of this, NGOs and governments have proposed Sustainable Forest Practices (SFPs) in an attempt to make compatible logging and biodiversity conservation in timber concessions, but so far its adoption has been slow due to difficulties of implementation and a difficult evaluation of its effectiveness (Kasa, 1999). Among these SFPs, certification and forest management plans (FMPs) have had interesting implications. FMPs can guarantee forest income without the risk of timber confiscation in some cases where land insecurity imposes productive constraints to local communities and strength land ownership claims (De Jong et al., 2006). Besides, forest certification provides support for not only forest property claims,

² Some authors have pointed out the need of a "cross-scalar" political economy research, and therefore, a study on how CBC is influenced in different ways by the action of the State, civil society and the market (Ojha et al., 2016).

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/5048589>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/5048589>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)