

A Study of the Political Economics of Worldwide Tree Plantation Growth

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ABSTRACT: *By conducting a thorough assessment of the present state of information on the development of forest industry tree plantations across the world, this article examines the political economics of TPs in the global forest industry. This paper examines the worldwide growth of several kinds of tree plantings in recent years. Field research and interview observations about the causal processes, central features, and likely futures of contemporary tree plantation expansion are supplemented by a literature review that compiles accounts from recent academic publications and by NGOs, as well as field research and interview observations about the causal processes, central features, and likely futures of contemporary tree plantation expansion. I'll look at the political and geographical factors that explain the differences and similarities in growth style and speed, as well as the practical and empirical implications of these results for peasant studies. The research on the environmental and developmental effects of expanding tree plantations is also reviewed.*

KEYWORDS: *FAO, Forest, Industry, Plantations, Tree.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) data on TPs, existing academic literature, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) publications, movement material, official documents, interviews and discussions with specialists, foresters, company directors, officials, and activists aware of recent changes, field research observations from plantation areas, and extensive interviews and discussions with specialists, foresters, company directors, officials, and activists aware of recent changes I reviewed hundreds of papers, the most of which were published in the last decade, and will provide a bibliography of important literature[1].

In-depth ethnographic field study, participant observation in pulp investment and other TP areas in South America and Finland between 2004 and 2011, in India between 2010 and 2013, and visits to businesses' offices in Finland and Brazil provided the main data[2]. We conducted 200 semi-structured interviews with important business, government, and civil society players. In addition, participant observation was conducted in affected regions, social movements, NGOs, businesses, and government organizations. The goal is to show where we are currently in terms of knowledge, provide important explanations for causes and effects using a particular political economy framework, synthesize findings, and highlight areas that need more investigation. The majority of recent large-scale land transactions research has been on food production[3].

However, non-edible sectors such as forestry account for a significant portion of land usage, access, and control. The percentage of new non-food land access, such as for mining, forestry, energy, and conservation, has been considerable. Fast-growing forestry plantations (such as eucalyptus) and conservation are two of the most significant non-food industries in Latin America in terms of land usage[4]. The literature on large-scale land transactions has begun to address these

issues. A collection of articles on environmental evictions, most of which deal with instances when conservation projects have forced people to relocate. Despite being an important component of the new developing 'bio'– or 'green'– economy, tree plantations have received less attention in this literature. 1 By conducting a thorough worldwide study on the growth of TPs, I will close this information gap.

The examination of increasing non-food resource exploitation may be crucial in the scholarly and political discussion over recent fast agricultural transformation, which has been exacerbated by large-scale land transactions. Narratives may be distorting what is really occurring and why because non-edible crops have been left out of the study of land grabs. An overt focus on food (security) as a driver overlooks more general phenomena explaining large-scale land deals, such as the newly emerged 'flex crop complex,' the continued importance of livestock, the sharp increase in natural resource demands by newly emerged centers of capital, and responses to policies related to climate change mitigation strategies[5].

The concept of flex crops (crops with multiple uses – food, feed, fuel, and industrial material – that can be easily and flexibly interchanged), coined by, is an important analytical framework in examining crops and commodities associated with land grabbing today, including tree plantation expansion. Traditional industrial purposes (pulp, timber) are increasingly overlapping with energy (e.g. woodchip- and pulp-based diesel) sector, conservation and climate change mitigation initiatives (e.g. REDD+, Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation "plus" conservation, the sustainable management of forests) and conservation and climate change mitigation initiatives (e.g. REDD+, Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation "plus" conservation[6].

Sector-specific politics should be examined in depth to understand the quality and scope of land grabbing in its whole and sub-parts. A close examination of the forest sector allows for (further) comparisons with other industries, as well as the investigation of industry-specific growth rationale and effects[7]. It would be difficult to do the kind of study that will be done here in one article if oil palm plantations were included, for example, since their political economics and ecology are very different from those of forest sector plantations. The International Standard classifies oil palm and rubber plantations as agricultural rather than forestry[8].

This article seeks to offer a fresh perspective on the role of political and geographical causalities in capitalist growth, in addition to being a review. Polanyi's notion of commodification of land and labor as the primary driver in the development of capitalism is combined with a Bourdiean spatial analysis in this study on the commodification of nature, human beings, and market transactions (into land, labor, and money, respectively) as an underlying political economy framework to explore how different capitalist systems are being established[9]. This enables researchers to better grasp the causal processes that underpin changes in social, symbolic, and geographical space. These ideas are used to explain the causes, diversity (various types and rates of growth), and effects of TPs in a variety of contexts. Aside from these TP types, there is also the option of no-TP land usage, which may or may not include TP resistance[10].

2. DISCUSSION

People who resist expansion pressure do not choose a strategy of (loose or tight) incorporation into the TP business (e.g., by outgrower farming) or conflict avoidance (e.g., by silently fleeing from the site of convulsion), but fight (violently or non-violently, visibly or silently) to defend their autonomy, to retain or increase their control. Resistance and power relations are conceptualized in this way. To understand social phenomena, one must take into account the agents, the division of social fields, and the interests and interactions that these agents and fields have, whether they are in conflict, rivalry, or cooperation. The efficacy of TP land buyers, renters, leasers, and outright stealers, for example, is determined by the strength or lack thereof of other ways to organizing social space.

Tools for analyzing how the structure and placement of agents, as well as changes in society, always occur as relational shifts and transformations in social, symbolic, and physical environments. Based on the theoretical assertion that every change in physical space must be accompanied by equal and corresponding changes in the social and symbolic spaces of the region in issue. When a plantation is created, for example, the geographical change must, sooner or later, coincide with changes in social and symbolic spaces.

Otherwise, the plantation business would cease to exist. If pro-planting activists' social capital is dwindling, their ability to develop plantations is dwindling as well. Similarly, if their symbolic power is diminished, i.e., their honor, their classification as agents of rightful, merit-based, or natural development is questioned, shattered, and exposed as a fabrication based on the control of greater amounts of social, economic, and/or cultural capital than those from whom space is taken, then their power to expand plantations becomes a fabrication based on the control of greater amounts of social, economic, and/or cultural capital than those from whom space is taken. 8 Plantations do not grow if the total amount of capital of those opposing TPs is increased via tactics that alter the division of areas.

The application of Bourdieu's ideas to Polanyian and neo-Marxist class analysis allows for a closer look at the function of symbolic capital and power in the landscape changes and commodification processes that give rise to capitalism. I'll demonstrate how extractive investments affect not only the territorial but also the local social space by causing landlessness in many instances, excluding alternative uses in the majority of cases, and creating a pro-exploitation investment policy in the symbolic space. I use McMichael's approach to compare numerous instances of TPs as results of a constantly developing process throughout time (e.g., the development of TPs in the nineteenth century, the recent rise of outgrowing and STPs, and the production of evermore intense ITPs via genetic manipulation).

I also employ the singular form of incorporated comparison, which examines the multiple territories across space that have experienced singular world historic conjunctures in different ways (such as the post-World War II green revolution paradigm, the post-1990 neoliberal new world order, and the late emergence of the new 'green economy'). I'll show how these worldwide pro-ITP agendas have grown when confronted with various political agencies via historical analysis. Changes in where TPs are situated and what they have been thought to be during the last several decades are first addressed. The roles of multilateral organizations, governments, businesses, and civil society are then examined as part of an examination of the political causalities discovered to explain the growth. Following that, I'll dive further into the impact of various spatial

alterations in determining how the expansion occurs. The fate of individuals who are not required for the TP expansion is addressed. Finally, a part examines the probable future trajectory of this expanding capitalist process by looking at the most recent commoditization developments.

One of the largest databases, but also one of the most troublesome in many aspects. 'Consistent definitions and accurate data have proved difficult in assessing plantation forests or planted forest resources in both industrialized and developing nations,' according to the FAO. However, the FAO data is valuable if utilized for the reasons for which it was designed and supplemented by other data sources (e.g., papers from CIFOR, the Center for International Forestry Research). When utilizing FAO data, bear in aware that it contains geographically regular patterns of data discrepancy and reporting, which are also political. FAO has been and continues to be a major advocate for the growth of TP, especially ITP.

Official data on world forests show how plantations are growing in size while primary forests and other naturally regenerated forests are shrinking or remaining the same size. According to Canada's forest resource assessment, the country's forest area remained unchanged from 1990 to 2010 while the area covered by planted forests grew by 560.5 percent to approximately 9 million hectares. The claimed no-change in forest area in Canada is also a reason to be concerned about the quality and scope of TP data management. To produce more reliable statistics, FAO, governments, and others must do much more fieldwork observation, as well as trimming, definition, and systematization of data. Diverse landscapes have been transformed into monocultures of a single tree species.

According to a research conducted in New Zealand, since forestry is a more intense and high-demand land use than grazing, tree plantings drive pasture and agriculture to the periphery. This dynamic, according to the examined articles, occurs in many different settings, including Latin America, although there are some significant differences in the types of land use that are replaced or driven to the periphery. What is apparent is that the growth occurs in the context of (usually rural) cultural and human ecological mosaics, rather than in a vacuum. The transformation of food-producing family farms into corporate ITPs in Australia between 1997 and 2009 (from 1.2 to 2 million hectares) indicates a significant shift in rural landscape character and economic activity.

Land use changes are similar in ITP growth frontiers all over the world. Meanwhile, Thailand, Vietnam, and Finland, all members of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA), have banned the development of heavily corporate forestry. Instead, some of these nations have established STPs or public ITPs, or they have depended on natural or semi-natural forest growth. Many nations, including Brazil, Uruguay, Chile, Indonesia, and Mozambique, have relied heavily on ITPs. Investment finance arrangements differ from country to country. In Brazil, for example, the national development bank BNDES, The Brazilian Development Bank, and pension funds finance ITPs and pulp projects in significant part. It's worth noting that pension and mutual funds, as well as Church funds see, for example, the Swedish Church's participation in the Mozambique ITP venture, are all becoming major forestry investors.

Rising economies like the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) and Indonesia are likely to play an even bigger role in the future than they do today. This will have an impact on politics, since the lack of foreign participation (e.g., the World Bank, which has historically invested heavily in TP) allows for alternative investment standards. In the meanwhile, business

investment is on the rise. Portfolio funds seeking diversity are also flocking to the global South to invest in forests. The first wave of growth, from the 1970s to the 1980s, was the most violent and socio-environmentally damaging, according to the literature.

During this period, dictatorships such as those in Indonesia, Brazil, and Chile firmly established the corporate ITP model in their own countries. Expansion is still carried out via violence, which is essential for enclosing territories, ITPs. As a result, the outcome of industrial relocations and future growth site selection is influenced by governmental backing and public opposition. Following worldwide condemnation of environmental devastation by strong NGOs in the 1990s, Finnish paper firms began to avoid Indonesia. Instead, they turned their attention to South America. Uruguay offered a less conflictual environment than several Brazilian states, which were more productive but more opposition oriented.

The ambiguity regarding long-term corporate access to land is a significant worry for ITP promoters when confronted with opposition capable of contesting land ownership. In my interviews for this research, CEOs placed a higher value on opposition than did movement leaders. Plantation companies prefer to grow in political settings with better land access security and less dense rural communities, such as Australia and Uruguay, when opposition is too strong. In his analysis of ITPs as pollution havens, points out that the primary motivation for choosing political systems where corporate land tenure is firmly safeguarded is not just land control. More importantly, increased tenure security increases the probability of environmental harm, which is a need for creating ITPs.

Low population density is often assumed to reduce the likelihood and strength of affected communities' resistance to water usage and pollution problems. However, evidence from a comparative analysis of growth in Brazil indicates that ITP expansion has been fast and enormous, even in relatively high rural density settings, given the ease with which large land masses have been seized. In this sense, the political procedures that have made land acquisition cheap and simple remain important determinants of where growth occurs. Natural factors only play a role in this if a parcel of land is deemed appropriate for TP growth by a social agent.

Low land costs, supporting governmental policies, and incentives remain the most important factors in plantation placement, especially in areas where opposition is weakly organized. This is because TP growth has been mostly pushed by corporate-government elites, whose development strategy is built on dispossession accumulation. If resistance to the development is not mounted, the commoditization drive will eventually result in the replacement of a mosaic of rural economic-cultural relations with a capitalist class relation, whose visible signs are a stand of trees stretching to the horizon and accompanying discourses glorifying the investment, as I will discuss next.

3. CONCLUSION

A review of FAO, CIFOR, and other data shows that the greatest difficulty and most pressing research job is to more precisely define what constitutes tree plantations and forests, as well as to create more reliable databases. According to the available statistics, worldwide 'planted forests' increased by 48 percent between 1990 and 2010 (to 264 million hectares), growing at a pace of nearly 5 million ha per year. This number is increasing, resulting in the enormous conversion of

varied landscapes into homogenous single-species TPs. Governments have overwhelmingly backed the process, but opposition has stymied growth in a few of political systems. Profit and power divides that have emerged from TP growth were examined on a global and local level. China has achieved a mixed but significant worldwide position as the world's biggest paper manufacturer while simultaneously expanding its own ITP. Other South American nations have continued to export pulp as a commodity, while the North has maintained its position. Key businesses, elites, and pension fund managers have expanded their influence and rights in the deployment of labor and means of production in potential TP areas as they have become more integrated.

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