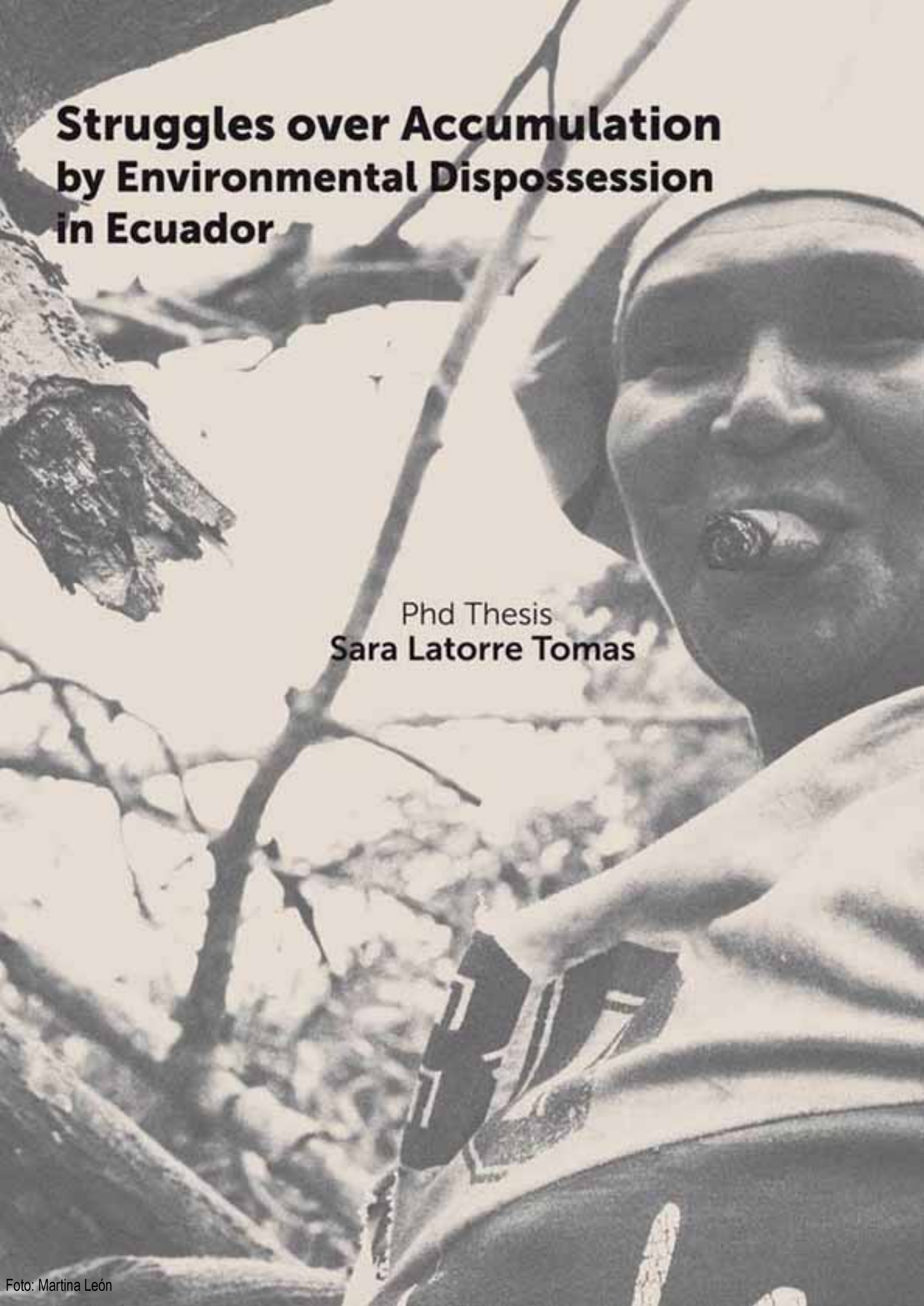
Struggles over Accumulation by Environmental Dispossession in Ecuador



Phd Thesis

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Foto: Martina León

Struggles over Accumulation by Environmental Dispossession in Ecuador.

PhD. Thesis

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Bajo cualquier circunstancia, debe uno ponerse del lado de los oprimidos, incluso cuando van errados, pero sin perder de vista que están amasados con el mismo barro de sus opresores

E. M. CIORAN

Struggles over Accumulation by Environmental Dispossession in the Global South: The Case of Ecuador.

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Abstract

This dissertation constitutes both a macro and a micro analysis of resistance struggles against environmental dispossession in Ecuador during the globalization period. This is a topic of current relevance due to the massive increase of accumulation by appropriation of nature on a world-scale, and especially in the global South, occurring during this phase of global capitalism. The macro perspective is intended to depict a broad picture of the nature and dynamics of the intertwined processes of accumulation by dispossession and the resulting contested collective actions against it. This approach to the topic apprehends the underlying common structural processes across these diverse place-based yet transnationalized cases of conflicts on resource extraction, infrastructures and waste disposal (64 in total). In turn, the micro perspective aims to analyze in depth one particular type of dispossession and resistance process. In particular, it focuses on the political strategy implemented by the mangrove gatherers' movement to struggle against the expansion of the shrimp-farming industry in Ecuador. Precisely, it pays attention to a particular element of this social movement: the articulation of a political subject, its politics of representation and its evolution over time. In 2007, this social movement defined itself as "Ancestral Peoples of the Mangrove Ecosystem-PAEM (its Spanish acronym)" and, consequently, began to frame its environmental justice demands on a novel ethnic-based discourse.

From a theoretical point of view, this work combines a Political Ecology and Socio-Metabolic approach with concepts taken from Political Economy, Social Movement Theory, and Ethno-racial Identity Politics literature. In turn, from a methodological point of view, it adopts a qualitative perspective based on anthropological-based field research. My objective is to enter into a dialogue between the particular and the general. In other words, to grasp the richness and relevance of this particular political subject without renouncing to study the global processes that have shaped it, as well as other similar cases occurring in the same country and beyond. In this sense, this thesis makes a significant theoretical contribution to the Ethno-racial Identity Politics literature, particularly to the field of indigeneity with special reference to Latin America but also to studies on Environmental Conflicts and Environmental Justice worldwide.

Key Words: environmental conflict, accumulation by dispossession, indigeneity, political ecology, identity politics, social movements, mangrove ecosystem, shrimp-farming industry, Ecuador.

Resumen

Esta disertación doctoral consiste en un análisis macro y micro sobre acciones de resistencia frente a procesos de desposesión ambiental en Ecuador durante el periodo de globalización. Este es un tópico de gran relevancia debido a la gran expansión de procesos de acumulación por apropiación de la naturaleza que se están dando a escala global y especialmente en el Sur global durante la actual fase global del capitalismo. La perspectiva macro busca proveer una visión general sobre la naturaleza y dinámica de los interrelacionados procesos de acumulación por desposesión y resistencia frente a éstos. Esta aproximación al tema de estudio permite estudiar los subyacentes procesos estructurales existentes en una diversidad de casos analizados sobre extracción de recursos, infraestructuras y disposición de residuos (64 en total). A su vez, la perspectiva micro busca profundizar en una tipología específica de estos procesos de desposesión y resistencia. Concretamente, se centra en la estrategia política implementada por el movimiento de recolectores del manglar en su lucha contra la expansión de la industria camaronera en el Ecuador. Específicamente pone su atención en el proceso de articulación de este sujeto político, su estrategia de representación y su evolución en el tiempo. En el año 2007, este movimiento social se auto-representó como "Pueblos Ancestrales del Ecosistema Manglar", y de este modo, empezaron a enmarcar sus demandas por justicia ambiental en un novedoso discurso étnico.

Teoréticamente, este trabajo combina cuestiones vinculadas a los campos de la Ecología Política y Metabolismo Social con conceptos provenientes de la Economía Política, Teoría de Movimientos Sociales, y la literatura sobre Política de la Identidad etno-racial. A su vez, a nivel metodológico, adopta una perspectiva cualitativa basada en trabajo de campo antropológico.

Mi objetivo es entrar en diálogo entre lo particular y general. Es decir, aprehender la riqueza y relevancia de este sujeto político sin renunciar a estudiar los procesos globales que lo modelan así como otros casos similares en el Ecuador y más a allá de éste. En este sentido, esta tesis realiza sus principales contribuciones teóricas a la literatura sobre política identitaria etno-racial, y particularmente aquella referida al campo de la indigeneidad con especial referencia a América Latina, y al estudio de Conflictos Ambientales y Justicia Ambiental en el mundo entero.

Palabras claves: Conflicto socio-ambiental, acumulación por desposesión, ecología política, indigeneidad, política de identidad, movimientos sociales, ecosistema manglar, industria del camarón, Ecuador.

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Preface

This PhD thesis forms part of my ongoing process of action research in Ecuador. As an undergraduate in Environmental Sciences at the UAB, I arrived to Ecuador in 2004 in order to carry out my final project. Under the supervision of Joan Martinez Alier, I spent one year studying an ecological distributive conflict in the center of the Ecuadorian Amazon. Specifically, my research focused on the application of the mechanism of prior consultation (based on the 169 ILO Convention) in two oil blocks encroaching on Kichwa indigenous' territory in the Amazon (Latorre 2005). This project was a collaborative effort with a group of local youth who opposed the process as they considered it was conceptualized and conducted in opposition to the spirit of the 169 ILO Convention. In this sense, I agreed to jointly perform a critical study about the case. It took me many months to become familiar with the cultural and political complexity of the country and this part of the Amazon region. I was fascinated with the reality of Ecuadorian indigenous inhabitants and their process of organization and struggle. The more I read about indigeneity, culture, and politics, the more I struggled with my essentialist conceptions about these issues. This experience fostered further my interest in the interrelated domains of environment, culture, power and politics. It also reaffirmed my willingness to remain in Ecuador to understand and deepen my knowledge about Ecuadorian social life. Then, I carried on with my studies at the Latin American Social Sciences University-FLACSO (its Spanish acronym). There, I obtained in 2009 a MSc degree with specialization in Environmental Studies. This master course provided me with a wide panorama of both the main social sciences and Ecuador. Furthermore, I did my master thesis about a project of payments for environmental services by the German aid cooperation GTZ (now GIZ) to Chachi indigenous inhabitants in the northern coastal province of Esmeraldas. I was particularly interested in studying the impacts of this economic initiative on the way of thinking and organizing of communities with sharp cultural differences in comparison to the Western ones. The main research objective was related to the challenge that indigenous peoples face to develop alternative place-based models of development which integrate them into the market and at the same time be able to be environmentally and culturally sustainable. This new research enabled me to be aware of the harsh situation in which northern border inhabitants live. Poverty, high rates of deforestation, the Colombian conflict, and the expansion of oil palm monocultures interlinked to shape local livelihood and struggles to overcome this situation. The results, until now, have been very limited for subaltern groups who remain enmeshed in a complex network of exploitative

and unequal power relations. Among the most important insights developed within this experience, was the demystification of the action research and the acknowledgment of the power relations and structural differences between me (western academic researcher) and subaltern groups. In this case, I particularly struggled with the fact that my interlocutors were not interested in actively participating in my study and only accepted my presence there as I was a source of economic potential. Against my desire, I was treated in the same way that timber merchants and other powerful actors such as international NGOs for development. This hard experience fostered in me a reflection on the potentialities and shortcomings of action research improving the design of future research projects. My FLACSO master thesis was published as a book (Latorre 2011) and it is not part of the present doctoral thesis.

My next research was a study about Ecuadorian environmental popular movements with special focus on the anti-mining and irrigating water actors. As a part of a broad research project coordinated by FLACSO and the Institute of Ecuadorian Studies-IEE (its Spanish acronym), this investigation aimed to study whether or not the recent left turn of the Ecuadorian government was enhancing the popular organizational networks (Latorre 2009; Latorre 2012). The arrival of Rafael Correa to the presidency awakened great expectation among the popular social movements who tirelessly struggled against neoliberal dispossession. However, after the constituent assembly period (2007-2008), Correa's government publicly opposed and confronted social movements, particularly the indigenous and environmental movements. This new political context was dominated by the active role of the Ecuadorian government to foster agribusiness activities and to expand the mineral and fossil fuels extractive frontiers. My research revealed new political identities and organizations emerging from these commodity frontiers. Unlike the neoliberal period (1982-2006), this time the Ecuadorian indigenous movement had lost part of its political strength and hegemony within the field of the Ecuadorian social movements. In the 1990s, this actor became the most important social movement which also served as an umbrella to advance popular demands. In this regard, in Ecuador, since the 1990s, what is known as the "Environmentalism of the poor" has been led by the indigenous movement (and to a lesser extent the Afro-Ecuadorian movement) and their cultural identity politics strategy. However, during the constituent assembly period (2007-2008), a set of diverse political actors emerged outside the indigenous organizational structure. A national-wide but disarticulated anti-mining movement and the social movement for the defense of mangrove ecosystems became key actors. The latter

transcended its particular demands (the fight for the rights of mangrove gatherers) and led the formation of a national-wide platform called Environmental National Assembly-ANA (for its Spanish acronym) which was made of popular environmental organizations. It was particularly active during this political moment where it presented a Constitutional proposal. Generally speaking, both movements actively lobbied the Constituent Assembly in 2007 and 2008, and raised the first voices against President Correa's extractivist politics.

I became captivated with the mangrove gatherers movement and politics. Particularly, I was interested in its politics of representation and identity as it was a novel case deploying the term of "indigeneity". It was a new political subject whose identity politics was *sui generis* within a context dominated by indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian identity politics. As such, I presented my desire to embrace a collaborative research as a part of my PhD with the Coordinating National Committee for the Defense of Mangrove Ecosystem-C-CONDEM (its Spanish acronym), the umbrella organization of this social movement. Fortunately, they kindly agreed and that is how this PhD dissertation came into existence. It has been a lifetime experience of collaborative research, despite the critical situation that mangrove gatherers face daily and its worsening during these last years. In this sense, my aim with this PhD dissertation is to translate into an academic format the voice and struggle of this social movement. Four chapters of this thesis are based on this research.

Finally, I would like to note that at the same time that I undertook this PhD dissertation, I carried out with PhD candidate Mariana Walter and under the supervision of Giuseppe Munda of UAB another research project in Ecuador, with help from Carlos Larrea of Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar (UASB), Quito. Specifically, we applied the Social Multicriteria Evualuation technique to evaluate two different territorial options in Íntag (in the province of Imbabura). Since the early 1990s, different Ecuadorian governments have promoted the exploitation of open cast copper mining in this territory. As a reaction to this threat, local people have been resisting and proposing development alternatives (mainly tourism, local hydro-electricity and agro-forestry). In relation to this research we have produced a book with the (provisional) title: *Íntag, un territorio en disputa. Una evaluación social multi-criterio de la minería o el turismo en Íntag.* We are also in the

process of writing at least one peer-review article about this work that shall be part of Mariana Walter's doctoral thesis on mining conflicts in Latin America.

At the same time, and as a contribution to the EJOLT and ENGOV projects at ICTA UAB, during 2012 and 2013 I completed the inventory of 64 cases of environmental conflicts in Ecuador between 1980 and 2013, analysing their main characteristics, and including among them some shrimp aquaculture conflicts at different scales and with different protagonists. This is now Chapter 2 of this doctoral thesis, written with collaboration from Kate Farrell and Joan Martinez Alier.

Furthermore, with some overlap, during the last months I have been conducting in conjunction with the Instituto de Estudios Ecuatorianos (IEE) a research project focusing on ongoing rural conflicts in Ecuador. This project was partially financed by the FAS-UAB and aimed to examine in detail 30 conflicts paying attention to the role played by the Ecuadorian state. The results will be published in October or November 2013 in a book in Spanish. Needless to say, that all this intellectual production has been presented at different international conferences.

CHAPTER I

1. Introduction

This dissertation constitutes both a macro and a micro analysis of resistance struggles against environmental dispossession in Ecuador during the globalization period. The macro perspective is intended to depict a broad picture of the nature and dynamics of the intertwined processes of accumulation by dispossession and the resulting contested collective actions against it. This approach to the topic allows apprehending the underlying common structural processes across these diverse place-based yet transnationalized conflict cases (Escobar 2008). In turn, the micro perspective aims to analyze in depth one particular type of dispossession and resistance process. In particular, it focuses on the political strategy implemented by the mangrove gatherers' movement to struggle against the expansion of the shrimp-farming industry in Ecuador. More precisely, it pays attention to a particular element of this social movement: the articulation of a political subject, its politics of representation and its evolution over time. In 2007, this social movement defined itself as "Ancestral Peoples of the Mangrove Ecosystem-PAEM (its Spanish acronym)" and, consequently, began to frame its environmental justice demands in a novel ethnic-based discourse.

My objective, in combining both perspectives, is to enter into a dialogue between the particular and the general. In other words, to grasp the richness and relevance of this particular political subject without renouncing to study the global processes that have shaped it, as well as other similar cases occurring in Ecuador and beyond.

This work touches upon different academic traditions and literatures, but has the field of Political Ecology (PE) ğ an interdisciplinary approach drawing upon many disciplines and bodies of theory ğ as an umbrella framework under which the whole study is articulated. Generally speaking, PE addresses human-environment interactions from a multi-scalar perspective and with an emphasis on power and politics (Bryant 98; Peet and Watts 2004; Robbins 2003; Rocheleau 2007). One of its central topics is the study of socio-ecological conflicts and social movements resulting from the interrelated processes of ecological degradation and marginalization. It places these local conflicts in the context of structural processes that both set the stage for certain environmental conflicts and shape their outcomes. In this sense, it calls attention to the contextual factors that define the opportunity structure of human agency and its associated collective actions. This

structuralist branch of analysis of the social movements is complemented by another post-structuralist line that focuses on the cultural politics and identity construction processes enacted by those social movements (Alvarez et al. 1998; Escobar 2008; Paulson and Gezon 2005). The second branch underlines the key role of these social actors in contesting hegemonic discourses and meanings, as well as in envisioning more equitable and sustainable development alternatives. Besides, it studies the process of collective belonging that connects disparate groups under a common body, the social movement. In this regard, this thematic literature, especially in Latin America, stresses the articulation and relevance of new ethnic collective actors emerging from and resisting environmental dispossession and marginalization processes.

1.1. Research Questions

Guided and informed by these PE's presuppositions and concerns, this thesis addresses the following questions.

Regarding the macro-perspective approach:

a) What are the modalities in which environmental dispossession is occurring under global capitalism and the manifold ways in which it is resisted in Ecuador, as an example of a peripheral country in the global capitalist economy?

b) What are the driving forces and who are the "offenders" in these environmental dispossession processes in Ecuador?

c) Who are the groups more adversely affected by this environmental dispossession and who are the ones contesting the integration of the country's economy in the global capitalism system?

d) Are there regular patterns and differences in these processes (environmental dispossession and resistance) between the neoliberal and post-neoliberal economic phases in Ecuador?

With respect to the micro perspective approach, the questions are:

e) What are the main features of the agri-food system in the global capitalism phase?

f) What is the nature of the shrimp-farming commodity chain as one of the main components of this global agri-food system?

g) What was the historical context of structural forces that set the stage for the emergence of the novel ethnic political subject "Ancestral Peoples of the Mangrove Ecosystem-PAEM"?

h) What were the mediations and mediators through which PAEM was articulated?

i) What are PAEM's specificities as an ethnic political subject? How must PAEM be understood both theoretically and politically?

j) How is PAEM publicly self-represented and to what extent does its regime of representation differ from those of the indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian ethnic social movements?

k) Whom does the political category PAEM aim to empower?

l) What has been the Ecuadorian governmental response to PAEM's demands?

m) How has the Ecuadorian mangrove defense movement reacted to Ecuadorian governmental politics and policies?

In order to answer these research questions I have relied upon a series of bodies of theory and literature. Political Economy and, more specifically, the historical-geographical materialism approach provide the theoretical backbone for the explanation and understanding of the structural processes or, in other words, the macro-politics of environmental dispossession and resistance in Ecuador. In this regard, Harvey's work (2000, 2003 and 2005) has been very useful to understand the inner logic of the capitalist system as a whole, while tackling its geographical dimension. Harvey's concepts of "spatio-temporal fix" and "accumulation by dispossession" are key analytic categories that articulate this dissertation. According to this author, the capitalist system is a crises-ridden system that needs to be continuously reconfigured on a geographical level (both in an expansive and intensive way) as a partial solution to its inner over-accumulation crisis. This process enables the system (at least momentarily) to maintain its internal need of accumulation of profits and capital. The geographical process of reorganization is achieved by "spatio-temporal fixes"" ğ or processes of production of uneven temporal and geographical development ğ in which dispossession (instead of net generation of

capital) is a necessary condition for capital accumulation (accumulation by dispossession). These uneven conditions tend to cause disruptions in ways of life and social relations, which, in turn, may trigger resistance actions and political organization processes which Harvey has not studied in depth in Southern countries. These processes of dispossession are not exclusively developed in the periphery of the capitalist system, but they manifest more intensively in those areas.

In the 1970s, the capitalist system underwent a world over-accumulation crisis that led it to a new phase of "spatio-temporal fixes". These fixes reconfigured the inner dynamics of the system. The new phase is what has commonly been referred to as "globalization" or the "global capitalist system" in which novel transnational processes and structures have taken shape (Harvey 2005; McMichael 2004; Robinson 2008).

Harvey's work is complemented by that of Robinson (2008) and McMichael (2004, 2005). Robinson goes deeper in depicting the nature of the new capitalist phase through its theory of global capitalism, but he also focuses on the role of Latin America as a coherent region in its process of restructuration according to this global stage of the capitalist system.

Robinson (2008) considers four key aspects linked to this global capitalism stage: a) a new relationship between capital and labor, characterized by the deregulation and liberalization of labor; b) a new round of extensive (new areas dominated by capitalist market relations) and intensive (new commodified spheres of the social realm) capital expansion; c) the creation of a global legal and regulatory structure to facilitate the emerging globalized circuits of accumulation; d) the imposition of the neoliberal model on countries throughout Latin America and elsewhere, involving structural adjustment programs that create the conditions for the operations of capital within and across borders and the harmonization of accumulation conditions worldwide.

This new configuration of the overall capitalist system produces transformative effects in every country and region of the world. Robinson has adopted Harvey's concept of "region" (2003) ğ a relatively stable historical-geographic configuration that achieves a certain degree of at least temporary structural coherence in relation to production, distribution, exchange and consumption ğ to study Latin America. Despite the evidence that there is no single, homogenous Latin America, there is a clear region-wide pattern of change in its transition to global capitalism. Indeed, the most important common patterns

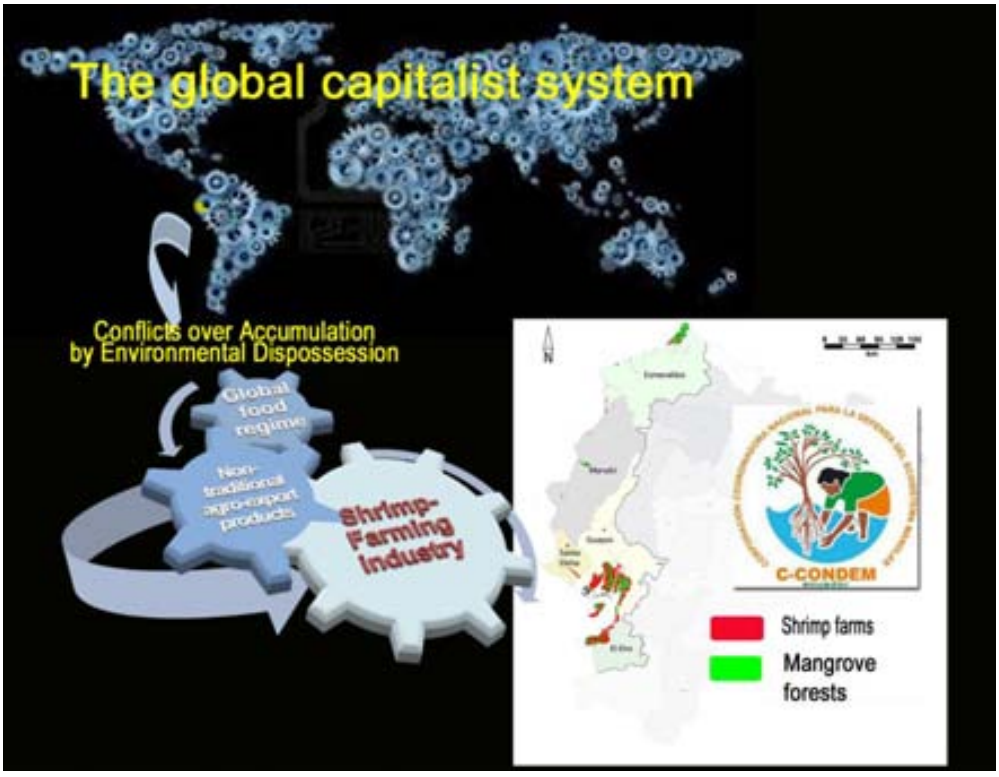
across this region have been the spread of non-traditional exports as the leading axes of capital accumulation, the rise of transnational capitalist forms among the region's dominant groups, and the debt crisis. Complementing these structural processes, there have been others of a short-term nature, such as the electoral victories of progressive political parties and the rise of indigenous social movements, which have altogether affected the particular historical structures of Latin American countries during this period. In this sense, it is worth emphasizing that the study of a single country or region is not a disconnected object of investigation; on the contrary, countries and regions represent partial and specific configurations of the ways in which the larger capitalist system is constituted and working.

McMichael's work focuses more specifically on the process of restructuration of the agri-food subsystem during this new global capitalism phase. He undertakes a world-historical and world-systemic analysis of agri-food systems to understand how agrarian structures and state agricultural policies have developed over time in both the global South and the global North. By using the concept of "food regime", he describes those configurations of the food production system that reach stability over time and become hegemonic at least for a while. McMichael states that, during this globalization period, a "global corporate food regime", characterized by the global decentralization and fragmentation of the process of production and dominated by few transnational corporations, is preponderant. This means that the different processes within the agri-food system ğ production, packing, processing, technology supply, retailing and consumption ğ are geographically dispersed around the globe through a networked and transnationalized rather than just international structure. Besides, the agri-food sector has become one of the fastest growing industries in relation to capital accumulation, since countries in the global South have promoted export-led development projects that seek a linkage to global production chains driven by transnational capital. The result has been a profound transformation of the global South's agricultural systems, land tenure, rural life and class structure.

The Ecuadorian shrimp-farming commodity chain, based on modern aquaculture, constitutes a clear example of this pattern. Its development entailed, among other negative consequences, the transformation of vast mangrove ecosystem areas into shrimp ponds along the Ecuadorian fringe coast. These state-owned areas were traditionally used as commons by gatherers and artisanal fishermen who had relied on the mangroves' natural resources for their livelihood. Following the process of dispossession by the shrimp-

farming industry, there was a massive ecological degradation and a disruption of the mangrove gatherers' way of life. This situation triggered an organizational movement among the mangrove gatherers, who formed a national-wide organization called the "Coordinating National Committee for the Defense of the Mangrove Ecosystem-C-CONDEM (its Spanish acronym)". Since its constitution in 1998, this organization has been trying to advance the mangrove gatherers' struggle and has worked to create alternative economic activities for this social group, given that a mangrove-based livelihood is not viable any more. In 2007, a few months after Rafael Correa's electoral victory, C-CONDEM implemented an ethnic-based political strategy that led to its positioning as "Ancestral Peoples of the Mangrove Ecosystem-PAEM (for its Spanish acronym)". The members of this new political subject claimed their collective right to the mangrove areas (including those already transformed into illegal shrimp farms), which were conceptualized as their territory. The objective was to secure their property rights over the mangrove areas in order to better confront the shrimp farmers, many of whom had been operating through illegal concessions.

Figure 1: Representation of Theoretical Approach



Elaborated by the author

This case constitutes a new form of politics and identity emerging at the site commodities production. It also represents a novel deployment of the term indigeneity, which challenges the very foundational premises of the term in Latin America, and splitting the term from its racial connotations. In this regard, this thesis relies on and contributes to the ethno-racial identity politics literature that particularly referred to the field of indigeneity with special reference to Latin America. Additionally, it engages with the Marxist critique of cultural identity politics as this novel case, by detaching race from ethnic membership, has enabled the social movement to unify its racially diverse social-class base. This constitutes an exemption to the Marxist statement that identity politics downplays class alliances by reinforcing ethnic boundaries.

The decade of 1990s was, for the vast majority of Latin America, and especially for Ecuador, the climax for the enactment of grassroots movements for a new political strategy based on cultural-identity politics. Previous to this shift, Latin American states were conceptualized as mono-cultural in which the racialized category of *mestizo* was the only one officially recognized (Wade 2010; Hoffman-French 2004). Hence, the rest of "ethno-racial" groups (indigenous people and blacks) were marked as *other* and located in the liminal spaces of the nation (Wade 2010). Elsewhere around this continent, these collectivities were the most marginalized, exploited, dispossessed, and frequently, displaced from their environments and natural resources.

Through this cultural identity politics many indigenous and ğ to a lesser extent Afro-descendant grassroots movements- appropriated and re-signified the colonial social categories of "Indian" and "Black" and produced a discourse that linked Indian (and Black) identity with cultural difference, rights to territory, autonomy and peoplehood. These demands were recognized during the 1990s in most of the Latin American and Caribbean countries which enshrined their pluri-ethnic, pluri-cultural character and granted collective rights based on their condition as "ethnic groups". This national recognition was the mirroring of the international recognition of collective rights found in international conventions ğ e.g. ILO 169 - drafted by international organizations such as the United Nations and the International Labor Organization. Cases such as the Zapatistas in Mexico, the Mapuche in Chile, the Uwa and *Proceso de Comunidades Negras* in Colombia are good examples of this phenomenon (Restrepo 2002; Wade 2010).

In this sense, ethnic identity became a powerful tool both to build social movements and to advance collective land rights' demands.

It is worth mentioning that in Latin America dominant conceptions of the term “ethnicity” are directly associated and treated equally to the term "indigeneity" (Restrepo 2007; Wade 2010). Thus, these hegemonic conceptions consider, as the “authentic” bearers of cultural difference, those recognized as “indigenous peoples” which in turn are normally conceptualized as rural, localized, time-frozen and mono-racial collectivities (Hamilton and Placas 2010). However, contemporary global phenomena such as transnational migration, urbanization and ethno-racial social movements have created experiences that continue to challenge these narrow constructions of ethnicity (and indigeneity) that depend on geographic or cultural-racial fixity (see Bauer 2010; Hoffman-French 2004; Jackson and Warren 2005; Wade 2010). C-CONDEM's ecosystem-based indigeneity constitutes one of these new indigeneity deployments with political goals.

1.2. Methodology

The research design adopted is consistent with the two levels of analysis considered in this dissertation. As such, for the macro-level perspective, it has been used a multiple-case study strategy. The most relevant 64 socio-environmental conflicts in the period 1980-2012 have been selected with the aim of providing general patterns of both processes of environmental dispossession and resistance resulting from the comparison across these cases. The large number of cases has sought to make the analytical generalization drawn from this analysis more robust (Yin 2003). In order to facilitate the cross-case comparison, a set of variables covering different dimensions of these conflicts- location, date of start and end, commodified activity, commodity, drivers, “offenders”, cause of resistance, defenders, strategies, outcomes, and role of the state- were established and filled using an excel database (see appendixes I, II, and III). The sources of evidence were secondary data; academic material such as MSc. dissertations and published articles were combined with activist knowledge (Escobar 2008) such as press releases, public declarations, and articles of newspapers. However, primary data coming from my previous academic works were used in some of the cases. The existence of extensive written material as well as socio-environmental content and relevance in public debate in Ecuador and worldwide, were the principal criteria for selecting the cases. The excel matrix enabled me to cross different variables in search of responses to the research

questions. Despite being the second chapter of this dissertation, chronologically, it was the last one addressed (November 2012-March 2013). I had already done the systematization of most the cases selected (November 2011-May 2012) as a part of my contribution to filling in Database Forms for the European EJOLT project (www.ejolt.com). Furthermore, during the period March-June 2013 I conducted another round of fieldwork which aimed at collecting data from 30 of the 64 conflicts considered.

In turn, the micro-level perspective constitutes a single case study strategy. It represents a unique case in relation to identity politics and indigeneity literature that is worth documenting and analyzing it. However, it is also an exemplary case of the same broader phenomenon addressed in the macro level approach but studied more intensively; that is, collective resistance actions to environmental dispossession processes in the global South. In this sense, this research strategy can be considered as a multi-level research design whose different levels enable us to grasp both the within- and cross- differences of the same phenomenon.

For that part of the dissertation, the sources of evidence were a combination of the qualitative techniques of document collection, participant observation and interviews. The fieldwork was principally carried out in three phases in order to gather information at different points in time as one of the objectives was to analyze the social movement over time (before and after its self-positioning as "Ancestral Peoples of Mangrove Ecosystem"). However, I had already had a previous meeting with some of the members of the executive board of C-CONDEM to discuss and evaluate their interest in my research proposal. I considered their approval a fundamental pre-requisite to further develop this research project. Due to my previous research work, we already knew each other and this contributed to their openness and desire that I keep forward with my research interests. The first two rounds of fieldwork were conducted during February 2009 and the period May-October 2010, respectively. I centered my attention in understanding the internal structure of the social movement, its process of articulation and self-positioning as PAEM. For that purpose, I put the focus on C-CONDEM's executive board members who were also a majority of their intellectual members. I conducted both several semi-structured (7) and group interviews (4) with them. The latter aimed to engage with key C-CONDEM's intellectual members in a joint reflection process regarding PAEM's political strategy. They provided me detailed and accurate responses about different aspects such as: their political trajectory, their previous political work as

foundational members of a local grassroots organization in the mangrove costal area of Muisne (South of Esmeraldas), C-CONDEM's political stance and formation, and their motivations to adopt an ethnic discourse and strategy. These interviews were carried out in Quito, the capital of Ecuador, where C-CONDEM has its central office. Complementarily, I got access to C-CONDEM's internal archives and I conducted participant observation in several meetings (5 in total) that the C-CONDEM's executive board had with some of its grassroots bases. These meetings provided me the opportunity to visit the Ecuadorian mangrove region and to personally meet the main leaders of C-CONDEM's bases. Through these initial contacts with C-CONDEM's grassroots leaders I subsequently got entrance to the mangrove areas and their inhabitants. As C-CONDEM has grassroots bases along the entire Ecuadorian coast, I decided in joint agreement with C-CONDEM's grassroots leaders to limit my field research to the South of the province of Esmeraldas and the province of El Oro. Later, during my last phase of Esmeraldas fieldwork (October 2011-January 2012), I conducted field visits to the north province as well as to the provinces of Manabí and Guayas. However, I also did a brief visit to the El Oro province to make some updates. In all the fieldwork phases, for each locality I collected documentation on: the current and past situation of both the ecological and social dimensions of the mangroves, the development of the shrimp-farming industry, the socio-organizational processes, and C-CONDEM's grassroots bases. Furthermore, I interviewed most of the leaders of C-CONDEM's second-level organizations that participated in the event where the social movement self-positioned as PAEM[1]. I decided to focus my research on PAEM political category in this level of analysis (leaders of the main C-CONDEM's second-level organizations) as I realized that this political strategy had not been widely disseminated down to C-CONDEM's first-level organizations. However, there were leaders belonging to first-level organizations that participated in this PAEM event and thus were also interviewed. An overall of 7 semi-structured interviews including first- and second-level leaders were conducted to specifically address their understandings of the PAEM category (see appendix IV for the list of topics and interview guide utilized). I decided to devote more time collecting data in the southern provinces (El Oro and Guayas) as there was very little information about mangrove gatherers' resistance actions and their process of articulation to C-CONDEM. Besides, C-

[1] I consider C-CONDEM's grassroots (or first) level that encompassing the most basic level of mangrove gatherers' organization. That normally encompasses organizations comprised of several mangrove gatherers. C-CONDEM's second-level makes reference to a broader organization comprised of the integration of several first-level organizations.

CONDEM's bases in these provinces were those who had manifested sharper political differences with C-CONDEM's executive board in relation to the political stance of the social movement and its position in relation to the Ecuadorian government after the political context of opportunities changed as of 2009 onwards (this issue is addressed in chapter VI). As such, I lived for three months in the house of a leader of one of the C-CONDEM's grassroots organizations in El Oro. I personally participated in his daily life and socio-political activities. However, I tried to maintain some degree of objectivity and detachment in my role of participant-as-observer. During my time with him, we had many informal conversations and semi-structured interviews. This relationship was critical in connecting me with key informants in this region. In this regard, I was permitted access to most of the presidents of mangrove gatherers' first-level organizations in the area known as the southern part of the Archipelago of Jambelí.

My close relation to C-CONDEM's members was not an obstacle to interview the main local shrimp farming organizations as well as their national representatives. I also conducted interviews with government personnel working in different geographical areas and belonging to the different ministries related to my study case. In all the fieldwork trips I made direct observations about issues such as the mangrove gatherers' social composition, identity belongings on a daily basis, ethnic-race diversity and gender division. I conducted a total of 92 interviews, most of them recorded with the prior consent of my informants.

In the data analysis phase, I applied an iterative approach (Tracy 2013). I went back and forth between data readings and theory in order to develop meaningful insights. The process of writing the dissertation in an article-based format reinforced this iterative process. I used the computer-aided data analysis software NVIVO to organize and process the data. I followed an explanation-building strategy to address the research questions regarding the processes of articulation and disarticulation of the political subject PAEM. I also made a chronological and spatial reconstruction of the development of the shrimp-farming industry and of the resistance actions against it. It enabled me to see the interrelation between both processes. Finally, I used a description-building strategy to examine the different understandings of the political category PAEM by C-CONDEM's second-level grassroots leaders. I also followed this strategy to compare PAEM's political

representation with that of the indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian social movements. In this latter case, I mainly relied on the written material published by C-CONDEM.

This dissertation is structured in seven chapters. They are peer-reviewed articles (except for chapter III) that have already been published or are in the process of being so. Some of them have my own single authorship and others are co-authored with Katharine N. Farrell and Joan Martínez Alier[2]

Chapter II provides an inventory and analysis of the Ecuadorian conflicts related with processes of accumulation by environmental dispossession during the global capitalism phase. It focuses on the modalities of both the dispossession and the resistance processes, paying attention to their drivers, protesters, causes, strategies and outcomes. It compares the neo-liberal and the post-neoliberal phases.

Chapter III aims to connect the macro-perspective approach to the Ecuadorian struggles against environmental dispossession and the micro-perspective approach to the specific case of the shrimp-farming industry and the resulting process of resistance against it. It adopts a Political Economy perspective to describe the patterns emerging in the value chain of the shrimp-farming industry, with a special focus on the Ecuadorian case.

Chapters IV, V, and VI all refer to the micro-perspective approach, i.e. they are centered on C-CONDEM's ethnic-based identity politics from different angles.

Chapter IV analyses the process of articulation of the political subject "Ancestral Peoples of the Mangrove Ecosystem-PAEM" and its politics of representation. It also compares PAEM's representation with that of the Ecuadorian indigenous and Afro-descendant social movements.

Chapter V examines both the historical context of the structural forces that set the stage for C-CONDEM's identity politics and the understanding of this political category by

[2] Article 1 (chapter II) is co-authored with Katharine Farrell and Joan Martínez Alier, and soon will be submitted to the *Global Environmental Change*; Articles 2 and 3 (chapters IV and V) are single-authored by me and have been published or accepted to be published by, respectively, the *Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology* and the *Journal of Agrarian Change*. Article 3 is also based on a working paper (No. 23) written by me during my stay in Berlin at the Freie Universität (Latein Amerika Institut) as part of a short-term scholarship from the DesiguALdades.net research program. Article 4 (chapter VI) is written with Katharine Farrell and will soon be published by the *Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Ethnic Studies*. Some chapters have been modified from the original articles to avoid overlaps between them.

various leaders within the movement. The objective is to understand whom this political category aims to empower.

Chapter VI investigates the evolution of C-CONDEM's identity politics during Rafael Correa's second mandate after 2009.

Finally, chapter VII is the short concluding section in which the main findings and contributions that this work makes to the fields of Political Ecology, Ethno-racial Identity Politics and Social Movements theory are synthesized.

CHAPTER II

The Commoditization of Nature and Socio-Environmental Resistance in Ecuador: an Inventory of Conflicts, 1980-2013[3]

Abstract

This paper aims to link together studies of social metabolism, the commoditization of nature and resistance actions in Ecuador during the most recent phase of global capitalism. Ecuador is one of the few rich-resource periphery countries in the world that has moved, during this capitalist phase, from a neoliberalism to post-neoliberalism model. By analyzing 64 social conflicts during the period 1980-2012, we aim to identify regular patterns across time, space, type of environmental dispossession and forms of resistance in order to deepen understanding of the links between dispossession and resistance. The results suggest that the category neoliberalism is losing explanatory power in the study of contemporary economic and environmental exploitation and that world economic growth and the natural resource demands of increasing social metabolism are the main drivers for what can be understood as a post-neoliberalism form of compensatory extractivism that addresses some of the symptoms of dispossession but which is not reducing the levels of social unrest.

Key words

Globalization; social metabolism; commoditization of nature; environmental dispossession; socio-environmental conflicts; Ecuador.

2.1. Introduction

Many scholars agree that the decade of 1970 marked a turning point in the history of world capitalism (Harvey 2005; McMichael 2004; Robinson 2008; Smith 2010). They argue that, since its inception in Europe, this socio-political and economic system has gone through various phases of capital accumulation. Each one being the direct result of

[3] We wish to express our sincere gratitude to Pep Serra Díaz for helping us with the GIS. The first author acknowledges support from the European ENGOV FP7 Project (266710) and from the Spanish MICINN Project (CSO2010-21979).

overcoming, at least temporarily, diverse crises that the capitalist system experiences, as a consequence of its internal contradictions. In 1970s the capitalist system scaled up to the global sphere, in order, according to Harvey (2005), Robinson (2008) and others, to overcome a crisis of stagnation and declining profit-making opportunities. In this phase a transnational, global arena of activity complemented more than ever the national spaces, which had typified previous stages.[4] A new global economy took shape, in which production processes became globally distributed and integrated. During this period, the circuits of capital accumulation reached a new qualitative global scale characterized by the rise of truly transnational capital and new globally integrated production and financial system (global capitalism). Trade in raw materials reached levels never seen before after the opening-up of new markets and new regions for the supply of raw materials and capital investment. With this opening-up economic growth pathways were once again established, now globally; capitalist production relations deepened, both in their intensity and in their extensive coverage (Robinson 2008), and with unequally distributed geographical and social patterns of impact and advantage (Harvey 2005; Smith 2010) typified by increasing polarization between intense nodes of accumulation of profits and capital, or "core areas" and distributed supplier zones (with labor and natural resources), or "periphery areas". For instance, in Latin America as a whole, Domestic Extraction of Materials increased fourfold in tons between 1970 and 2008, and the Physical Trade Deficit (exports minus imports, in tons) increased at a similar rate. Ecuador exemplifies this pattern. (Vallejo 2010; West and Schandl 2013).

This phase of global economic growth has been accompanied by growing attention to the bio-physical dimensions of economic processes and the injustices of inequality. In contrast to optimistic hopes that technological improvements could lead to a decoupling of materials use and economic growth (dematerialization), in absolute terms, the trend has been the opposite (Steinberger et al. 2010; Krausmann et al. 2009). While economic world-systems have existed at least since the 16th century, the scale and coverage of today's global capitalism, both geographically and in terms of the amount of mobilized materials and energy, is unprecedented (Dittrich et al. 2012; Moran et al. 2009; Vallejo 2010). Together with population growth and growth of the domestic economies, the international trade in raw materials places huge pressure on periphery areas to initiate

[4] Robinson identifies the following capitalism's phases: the Mercantile phase (1492-1700,); the Competitive-Industrial phase (1789-1800); the Corporate phase (1870-1970) and the Globalization phase (1970-ongoing).

extraction, leaving these supplier regions with the negative ecological impacts (externalities) of this trade (ecologically unequal exchange). Despite huge exports (in tons), some Latin American countries now have negative current account balances and they perhaps will resort to credits from importing countries (such as China) so that in future further need for exports will arise in order to pay the external debt, in a pattern reminiscent of the 1990s. Global society is increasingly stratified less *along* national and more *across* transnational social and class lines[5] (Robinson 2008), while indicators of social polarization show a rising trend in the level of inequality, both globally and within regions (Gasparini et al. 2011; McMichael 2004). In this latest phase of capitalism, the process of capital accumulation through appropriation of assets (instead of net generation) is being carried out more intensively than in previous phases, which Harvey calls "accumulation by dispossession" (AbyD)[6]:

> I mean the continuation and proliferation of accumulation that Marx had treated of as "primitive" or "original" during the rise of capitalism. These include the commoditization and privatization of land and the forceful expulsion of peasant populations; conversion of various forms of property rights (common, collective, state) into exclusive private property rights; suppression of rights to the commons; commoditization of labor and the suppression of alternative forms of production and consumption; colonial, neo-colonial and imperial processes of appropriation of assets (including natural resources); monetarization of exchange and taxation, the slave trade, usury, the national debt, and the most devastating of all, the use of the credit system as radical means of primitive accumulation (Harvey 2005, 32)

While these processes are worldwide, they have a special weight and intensity in rich-resources/low-GDP/low-labor income countries. Here we focus on one of these periphery countries, Ecuador, considering both the ways in which AbyD is manifested there, through different types of exploitation and commodification and documenting also the forms of resistance this has triggered.

It is worth to note that Harvey's work principally focuses on the enclosure of new (social and ecological) commons[7]. However, we reduce our scope of study to the realm of ecological commons, but also expand Harvey's understanding of the concept by

[5] In this new phase the concepts of core/periphery are less geographically bounded than previously as new financial circuits allow wealth to be move around the world instantaneously through cyber space.

[6] Since Marx's original definition, many authors have defined and re-defined primitive accumulation. In this sense, the definition given by Harvey, in line with De Angelis (2001) and Rosa Luxemburg's interpretation of Marx's primitive accumulation, underlines the process of primitive accumulation as being an ongoing process with varying time frames rather than a first moment in the history of capitalism.

[7] Examples of social commons considered by Harvey are the rights and entitlements guaranteed by post-second war welfare state in advanced capitalist countries. By the same token, he gives as examples of natural commons the enclosures of land, water, and genetic material.

considering the process of environmental cost shifting on the part of capitalist forms of production as another mechanism through which the dispossession is brought about. In our interpretation the assets appropriated are not necessarily introduced in the capitalist process of production as inputs, instead they may be degraded (quality-based dispossession) to facilitate the process of capital accumulation. Therefore, we consider two processes of AbyD: accumulation by capitalization and accumulation by contamination. This will be further explained below.

By systematically examining 64 socio-environmental conflicts from 1980-2012 we aim to help advance understanding of the nature and dynamics of both the commoditization of nature and the related resistance processes: in Ecuador and throughout the global South. While there are numerous studies dealing simultaneously with these two issues, they are usually single-case-based or thematic (Bebbington et al. 2007; Gerber 2011; Perrault 2006; Veuthey and Gerber 2012). On the contrary, there are still very few published papers that examine and sum up many cases for a whole country or large region in a systematic way. Our aim here is to show empirical work focused on the identification of regular patterns in the relationship between environmental dispossession and resistance across time, space, type of exploitation and forms of action by firms, governments and social movements of resistance.

Ecuador is one of the few -resource-rich periphery countries that has made a transition from the neo- to a post-neoliberal model of development - during this latest phase of capitalist expansion[8]. Generally speaking, scholars agree with the fact that Ecuador without abandoning the path of global integration as a supplier of primary commodities, has, since 2007, aimed to re-establish the role of the state in distributing wealth and to consolidate a national social contract (Ospina 2009; Escobar 2010; Gudynas 2010; Schuldt and Acosta 2009). In this regard, this study will also allow a better understanding of the connection between social metabolism, commodification of nature, dispossession and resistance during this current post-neoliberal capitalist phase in Ecuador.

[8] While there is a general consensus about Ecuador's political economy abandonment of neoliberalism, there also exists an ongoing debate regarding the nature of this new post-neoliberal phase (see Escobar 2010; Gudynas 2010; Ospina 2009; Radcliffe 2012; Schuldt and Acosta 2009; Svampa 2013 for further discussion on this topic). Since 2007, with the Correa government, Ecuador refused to have a trade treaty with the USA, broke relations with the World Bank and IMF, increased considerably the share of state expenditure in GDP, decreased income inequality, re-joined OPEC, and expelled one US ambassadress (because of comments that were wiki-leaked).

We begin with a brief description of the recent transformation of Ecuador's political economy, in order to contextualize the study, followed by an overview of the methodology and methods employed. We then present a comparative analysis of the 64 cases studied, and identify continuities and differences across time, space, commodified activity and prevailing political economic regime. In our conclusions we present a brief recap of the results and summarize our general findings: that strategies of resistance show a consistent basic structure in terms of demand, comprised of (i) strict opposition, supported demands for the right to participate in decision making, (ii) sometimes accompanied by demands for restoration and (iii) demands for improved social and environmental standards and working and living conditions; that these are differentiated to some degree across the different commodified activities; and that outcomes appear, instead, to follow a pattern of change that more closely tracks changes in the prevailing political economic regime.

2.2. The Ecuadorian Political Economy within the Global Capitalism Phase.

Following Harvey (2005), we begin from the premise that world capitalism was experiencing, in the 1970s, a crisis brought about by the exploitative successes and geographical constraints of what has been called "new deal capitalism or social capitalism" (1947-1970s) (Harvey 2005; McMichael 2004; Robinson 2008). Following World War II the social structure of accumulation in advanced capitalist countries was mainly based on state-regulated markets, Keynesian public spending and social entitlement and welfare. Capitalism was both fueled and constrained by this nation-state system, which included major concessions granted to the local working class. Under these conditions, a global spatial displacement ğ globalization ğ became a viable strategy in the search for new modes of accumulation. At this particular moment in history the neoliberal ideology of global cosmopolitan citizenship and a universal western-style democracy matched up perfectly with capital's needs. This made possible the combined pursuit of two basic objectives that would serve to "[break] down all national barriers to the free operation of capital within borders in the search for new productive outlets for excess accumulated capital" (Robinson 2008,18): a) worldwide market liberalization and the construction of a new legal and regulatory superstructure for the global economy, achieved through the General Agreement on Tariff and Trade, the subsequent establishment of the World Trade Organization, and the conformation of regional integration processes such as the European Union or North America Free Trade

Agreement, and b) internal restructuring and global integration of national economies (Harvey 2005; McMichael 2004).

As a political project, globalization was reified in the 1980s, in the national and international objectives and programs of the Reagan (United States of America (USA): 1981-1989) and Thatcher (United Kingdom (UK): 1979-1990) governments. In this period international financial institutions (IFIs) played a key role, as they took advantage of the debt crisis in formerly 'Third World' countries, including Ecuador, to impose upon them globalization friendly economic restructuring (Pastor 1989). Until that moment Ecuador had embraced a national modernization strategy of development (1954-1982), which had as its fundamental pillars: import substitution through the promotion of industrialization, modernization of the agriculture sector and state lead regulation of associated disruptive effects. However, this strategy had very limited results and Ecuador continued to rely on commodity export (mainly banana's from 1954-1965 and subsequently also oil from 1964 to present).

The Ecuadorian Neoliberal Phase

During the first oil bonanza (1972-1982), foreign debt grew significantly, until 1982, when Ecuador could no longer finance its payments. As a result, Ecuador negotiated a rescheduling of its debt, subject to IFIs direction and economic adjustment plans. These programs prioritized fiscal solvency and inflation control, which was to be achieved through market liberalization, privatization and integration and specialization within the world economy (McMichael 2004; Robinson 2008). At this time, Ecuador shifted its development strategy from state-led development to state-promoted linkage to global production chains, driven by transnational capital (Robinson 2008). New export products were introduced, such as cut flowers, fruit juice and preserves, shrimp, garments, which were served as leading axes for capital accumulation. According to Sawer, between 1989 and 2001 these non-traditional exports grew from 11 to 40 percent of total exports in money terms (Sawers 2005). The influx of transnational agribusiness, along with the transnationalization of domestic agribusiness, in these commodity areas has been accompanied by financing and guidance, often imposed through conditionality terms, from IFIs and other aid agencies and organs (Acosta 2006; Robinson 2008). Their competitive edge in the global market is comprised of cheap labor and the externalization of the ecological damage associated with their production (Falconí and Larrea 2003; Vallejo 2010).

From 1982 to 2006, Ecuador followed a neoliberal agenda, in the midst of strong social unrest and mobilization and political volatility. Ten presidents came to power during these years. Three of them were overthrown by mobilizations led by the indigenous movement[9]. While neoliberalism re-activated economic growth, it was accompanied by increased poverty and inequality (Larrea 2004), which eventually led, during the 1998-1999 Ecuadorian financial crises, to massive emigration and the dollarization of the economy. Throughout this period, those most deeply affected by the socio-economic burden of economic adjustment (rural peasants, indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorians and the urban poor) tended also to be those who suffered the ecological consequences of this economic model. In Ecuador, the neoliberal project and associated financial crisis unleashed counter-hegemonic social and political forces that discredited neoliberalism among the general public, bringing about a new period of popular struggle and social change.

The Ecuadorian Post-Neoliberal Phase

The government of Rafael Correa, Alianza País (AP), took office in 2007, advancing an explicit anti-neoliberal discourse that incorporated the main social movements' political demands (Ospina 2009). It rejected the free-trade pact with the US, removed the US military base at Manta, reassessed and partially defaulted Ecuador's foreign debt without asking for help from the IMF, and called a constituent assembly to establish new constitutional principles. This period was seen by social groups as a unique political opportunity, not only to halt neoliberal modernization but to advance radical alternatives like "leaving oil in the soil" in the ITT fields of the Yasuní National Park (Becker 2010; Radcliffe 2012). Among the members of the constituent assembly were many actors with a long history of working with and supporting the social movements. Alberto Acosta (later president of the constituent assembly) was the best known. Other key figures included Lucy Ruíz and José Serrano.

Ecuadorian civil society elaborated and positioned their demands within the constituent assembly, where there was, to a great extent, the political will and an openness to channel these demands[10]. In 2008 the resulting constitution was approved through referendum,

[9] The three president removed from power were Abdalá Bucaram (1997), Jamil Mahuad (2000) and Lucio Gutiérrez (2005).

[10] It is worth mentioning that with the substitution of Alberto Acosta by Fernando Cordero as the president of the constituent assembly (June 28, 2008), the spaces of deliberation and participation were significantly reduced. It was one of the first signs of what was to come in subsequent years, as the government strengthened its power, while at the same time reducing the space for political participation for the organized civil society (Ospina 2009).

marking a break with the developmentalist visions of the previous six decades. Among the most prominent features were: recognition of rights of Nature, the re-conceptualizing of development as Sumak Kawsay (collective wellbeing), the recognition of the pluri-national and intercultural nature of the Ecuadorian state, placing social function above private interest in the management of environment and natural resources, and the recognition and pursuit of a moral economy as one of the centerpiece of the Ecuadorian model of development (Government of Ecuador 2008c).

With the national elections of April 2009, the political structure of the state was re-shaped; Parliament was dominated by the political force of Alianza País and the power of the executive was reinforced. However, at the same time many of the most progressive members of Alianza País abandoned the party. The political project advanced by this new Ecuadorian government, which remains in power still to today, can be described as developmentalist or neo-extractivist and national-statist (Escobar 2010; Gudynas 2010; Ospina 2009; Svampa 2013): developmentalist in that it has continued the tradition of subordinating environmental considerations to economic growth; national-statist in that the government has recuperated its prominence in the sphere of planning, economic investment and redistribution and has once again prioritized support for national economic sectors, mainly associated with agribusiness.

The government's future objective is to move from a primary-export model, based on extractive activities, to one centered on tourism and biotechnology (SENPLADES 2009). As part of this initiative, the government is currently promoting a change in the electricity matrix, through the development of hydropower (Castro 2011). However, it is also promoting new concessions for oil exploration and exploitation, and is starting to make way for large scale open cast mining of copper and gold, which would be totally new, in the history of Ecuador. Although the government has not completely rejected engagement with global capitalism and prevailing property relations, it has secured a greater share of the revenues for the country, through renegotiation of contracts with diverse transnational oil and telecommunication companies (Escribano 2013). However, state building has also involved the establishment of an institutional framework that eschews the direct participation of any particular social group such as indigenous peoples and women and has limited the presence and influence of particular interest groups, such as professional associations, trade union and entrepreneurial sectors, in decision making (Ospina 2009). This has been accompanied by opposition to the politics of mobilization traditionally

employed by the main Ecuadorian social movements and organizations, the "criminalization" of protest and a strengthening of the executive body which increasingly relies on a politics of decrees (Amnesty International 2012; Ortíz Crespo 2011). The government has created new citizen participation mechanisms that are merely consultative and which privilege technocrats and scientific knowledge as the key pillars for policy-making (Ospina 2009; Escobar 2010), while the national budget and national policy-making been centralized. It is to be expected that these trends will be reinforced following Correa's resounding electoral victory in February of 2013, with a new presidential mandate until 2017.

Correa's mandate has coincided with a sharp expansion of Ecuadorian and Latin American exports to China (particularly raw materials), imports from China and Chinese investments in the region, which in Ecuador concentrate mainly in the energy, mining and infrastructural sectors (Ellis 2009; Escribano 2013). As this Chinese-led demand for raw materials is occurring in an historical moment, during which raw materials prices have remained persistently high, since 2000 onwards, the economic (although not the ecological) terms of trade favor the Ecuadorian economy as never before in recent history at least until 2013 (Muradian et al. 2012). In Ecuador, as elsewhere in Latin American, there has been growing debate about a post-extractive future. However, this is now fading in Ecuador, following the February 2013 elections, where Alberto Acosta, a key advocate, received only 3 per cent of the vote.

2.3. Methodology

In order to serve our research aim ğ to identify regular patterns in the relationship between environmental dispossession and resistance across time, space, type of exploitation, and forms of action by firms, governments and social movements of resistance ğ we have compiled an inventory of 64 cases of resistance to accumulation by environmental dispossession in Ecuador, encompassing a wide range of activities that took place during the period 1980-2012[11]. We depart from the 1980s as there exist a general consensus among scholars that this decade represents the beginning of the globalization project in

[11] We have explicitly added the adjective of "environmental" to Harvey's concept of "Accumulation by Dispossession" to make more explicitly that our study is centered on processes of primitive dispossession in the realm of nature.

most Latin America countries principally due to the management of the foreign debt by international financial institutions (McMichael 2004; Robinson 2008; Acosta 2006).

In line with De Angelis (2001), Harvey (2005), Glossman (2006), and Kelly (2011) the way we understand the concept of AbyD is as an ongoing process by which the capitalist appropriation of value (accumulation) from a commons is carried out through extra-economic means. Moreover, the process of accumulation may be distanced, in time or space, from the act of dispossession. By commons we consider natural resources and services, social structures, bodies, or knowledge. We consider not only the state interventionist practices to advance capitalist interests such privatizations and other mechanisms described by Harvey (2005), but also the shift carried out by capitalists of their environmental production costs (i.e. by polluting means) toward natural commons and the bodies of workers, their families and neighbors. In doing so, capitalists are able to reduce input costs and advance their profits at expense of commons' qualitative dispossession. Therefore, we have included cases over environmental working conditions as well as over environmental living conditions involving capitalist forms of production and resource extraction. We have also considered cases of large-scale infrastructure which are directly related to further capital accumulation. Additionally, cases involving the appropriation of natural assets for extractive capitalist production but also to dispose of waste (including carbon dioxide) have also been contemplated.

Our selection of cases is based on the many years (by two of the co-authors) of engagement with environmentalists in Ecuador (both academics and practitioners), including published sources and field work. We have shown our list to such experts in Ecuador, to check whether we were missing some important conflicts. Of course, the total number of environmental conflicts in that period is unknown, and much higher than 64 cases. The main criteria to geographically delimit de cases has been the scope of the projects and the degree of articulation of the protesters. As such, in the cases in which the project (or legal decrees) encompasses a large area and the geographically separated protesters have engaged in resistance actions in a coordinated way, we have considered them single cases (cases 13, 14, 34, 47, 48, 50, 53). On the contrary, the cases in which the protesters, despite being situated in different places but fighting against the same project have not established alliances among them, have been treated as separated cases and we have focused exclusively in a particular area (cases 37 and 46). Cases, in which the interest to exploit certain natural resources has extended over time due to resistance actions, have been considered single cases when the nature of project has not been altered

to much extent regardless of changes in the "offenders", i.e. the companies carrying out the projects (cases 39 and 43). In contrast, if the project has changed its scope or main characteristics over time, the cases have been considered as independent cases (cases 2, 9, 24, 25). We have also considered single cases the situation in which protesters have been mobilizing against a set of related projects in the same area (17, 27, and 49). Finally, we have regarded as single cases the situations in which multiple "offenders" but all of them are related to the same economic activity at the same time that the protesters aim to confront them advancing a concrete proposal such as the delimitation of a certain area as a protected area or the enactment of a specific legal norm (5, 6, 11, 12, 36, 40). In the remainder of the cases, the delimitation has been easier as they are geographically- and/or time-bound conflicts.

Ethnographic methods consisting mainly in participant observation and open-ended and often informal interviews with key informants were carried out. The first author compiled in 2012-13 the inventory of 64 conflicts cases through a combination of literature review (academic and non-academic, including activist knowledge) and primary data collected over various field trips to Ecuador between 2004 and 2013. The cases and references are listed in the Appendixes (I, II, III).

Each conflict has been named using key words that are intuitively logical within Ecuadorian public discourse, and extended summaries of most cases are stored and will be soon available through the environmental conflicts database of the European research project EJOLT (www.ejolt.org). These case descriptions are designed to provide analytical generalizations based on some statistical work. We have included well-documented cases in order to ensure good description, while aiming to cover the whole of the Ecuadorian territory and the main commodities at issue during the study period. Conflicts with an explicit environmental content (whether the working or living environment) have been prioritized, which means that disputes over land reform are underrepresented here. Besides, as many conflicts intertwine both land/labor and environmental demands some cases have a mixed profile. The relative predominance of non-renewable resource extraction cases (oil and mining activities) reflects the trends in social metabolism, the strategic role they play in the Ecuadorian economy and the potential negative socio-environmental impacts that they entail. But there are also numerous biomass conflicts.

Our inventory (see Appendixes I, II, and III) takes into consideration the following variables: locality, date when the conflict begins and finishes, commodity, drivers of the

conflict, offenders and protesters, demands and strategies of protesters and cause of their mobilization, the outcomes of the conflict and the role of the state.

While the state often acts as a heterogeneous body, we focus on the role of the central state, in order to study how changes in its basic relation to extraction and commoditization of the environment, according to its political economy, are related to resistance. In some cases, the variable "role of state" includes more than one option, which reflects changes in government. The outcomes are assessed according to the demands raised in each case by the protesters. For ongoing cases, outcomes refer to the results obtained at the time of writing.

2.4. Discussion

New Forms of Valuing and Commodifying Nature.

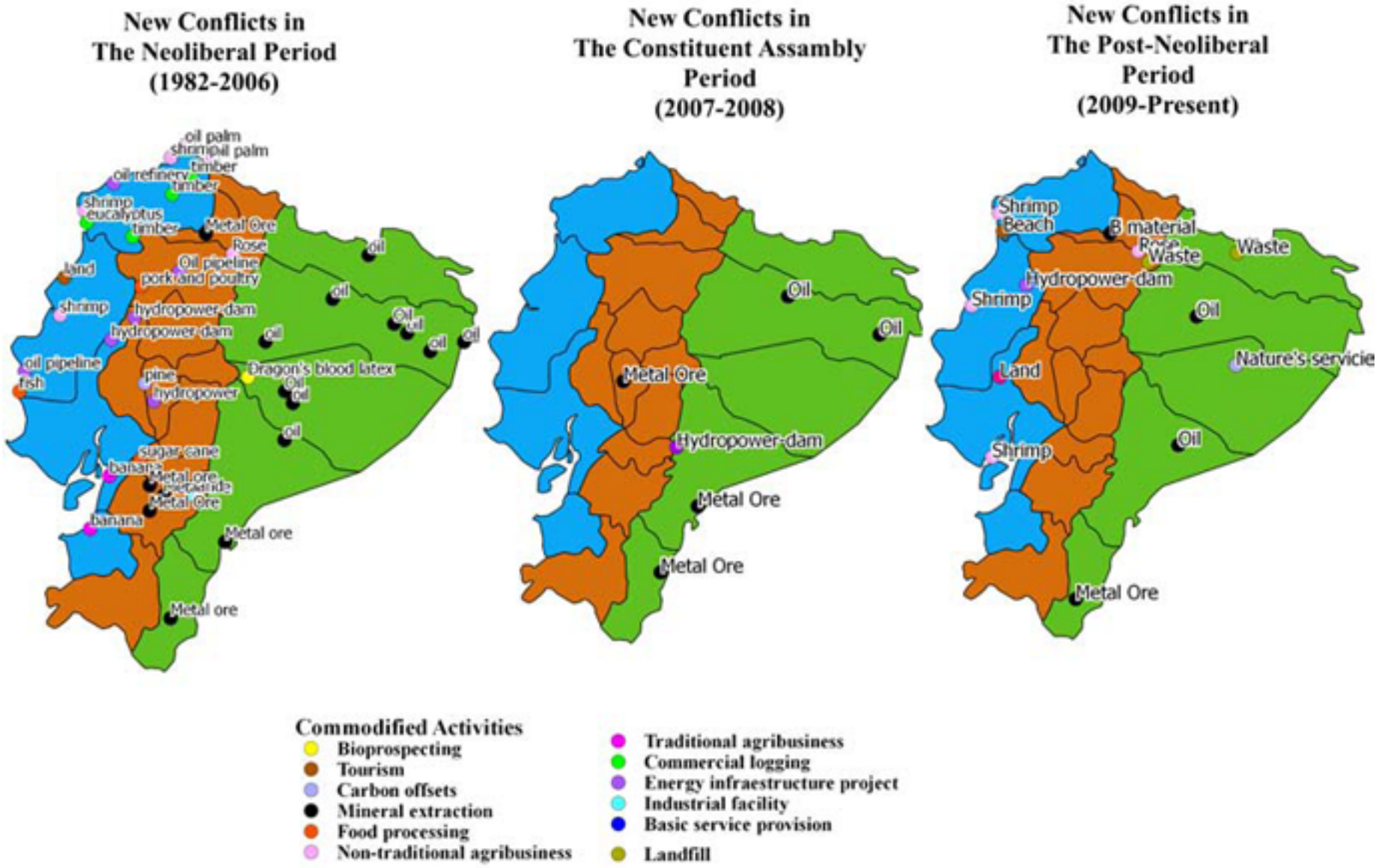
The cases analyzed show the long-standing and ongoing character of Ecuador's role as a provider of natural resource-based commodities within the globalization phase of capitalism discussed above. Certainly, most of the increased energy and material flows of the economy respond to internal demands from a growing population with an increased GDP per capita (at least in some periods). One main driver of economic growth is the export sector, with large socio-environmental costs. We find that two interrelated forms of valuing nature/ecosystems have emerged: on one hand, as discussed by Escobar (1993) we observe a "modern" form, characterized by the valuation of nature as a source of resources used to obtain economic growth. This is the most common form. On the other hand, we find there also a "postmodern" form, in which nature itself is valued as a commodity (conflicts 7, 37, 50, 51, 63). Here the aim is to protect and conserve (conservation agenda). This second form can be understood to be related to the first one, in that damage caused by economic growth and unsustainable exploitative resource uses has created the logical basis for nature conservation policies and activities such as tree plantations to absorb carbon dioxide. For this reason, the second form of the nature commoditization is sometimes referred to as "the economy of repair" (Fairhead et al. 2012), which is based on the premise that an unsustainable use somewhere can be repaired/compensated by sustainable practices elsewhere. Based on this logic, new forms of commodification, and with them new avenues for capital accumulation, are created, which are defined as environmentally-sound, such as, for example, the carbon and ecosystem services markets, the business of biodiversity conservation and trading in

traditional knowledge, where genetic materials and related knowledge, which has been historically generated by indigenous peoples, is commodified, privatized and used to make profits in sectors such as tourism and pharmaceuticals manufacture as new examples of "biopiracy".

The Geography and Timeline of Commodification in Ecuador

Figure 2 illustrates the geographically diversity of Ecuador's commodity frontiers and how they have developed over time. Conflicts are color coded by category, with specific details of the commodity in question included in the point labels. Ecuador's mainland has three main regions - Coast (blue ğ to the west), Highlands (brown - middle), and Amazon (green ğ to the east) - which have radically distinct topographies and ecologies and have historically had differentiated socio-economic and political configurations. In reviewing patterns observed across the 64 cases, we begin by following this regional differentiation, as it is a strong indicator of commodified activity.

Figure 2: Conflicts over Accumulation by Dispossession



In the Amazon region, oil extraction started in the mid-60s in the Northern provinces (Sucumbíos and Orellana), later expanding to include the south in subsequent decades. Extraction in areas traditionally inhabited by indigenous peoples, some of which were also designated for some kind of protected status, was actively promoted by the Ecuadorian state (Valdivia 2005). Many of the conflicts that began in the neoliberal period (conflicts 2, 33, 38, 39, 55,) reflect resistance to the advance of this commodity frontier (Moore 2000). The result of these resistances were unequally distributed, with exploitation proceeding straightforwardly in the provinces of Sucumbíos, Orellana and some parts of Pastaza, even inside protected areas, whereas temporary stops were achieved in other parts of Pastaza and in the Southern provinces of Morona Santiago and Zamora Chinchipe. From the 1990s onward, following the Texaco case (conflict 48, which is now the Chevron-Texaco case still going strong at local and global scales), and with increasing consistency in the next decade, many conflicts have arisen due to the environmental liabilities associated with oil exploitation, mainly in the provinces of Sucumbíos and Orellana. In these cases (conflicts 19, 20, 21, 48) the main cause of mobilization has been pollution and associated health problems and the undermining of livelihoods. These later conflicts in the north, where extraction is winding down, can be understood as a response to the accumulation of what Martinez-Alier (2002a) had called "The Ecological Debt" manifested here in ecological damage left behind with the declining productivity at the oil extraction frontier.

Finally, also starting during the neo-liberal period, we consider a case of bioprospecting (conflict 7), in the province of Pastaza, where local indigenous communities have claimed that it is impossible to commodify and privatize biodiversity and their indigenous knowledge regarding the plants of the rainforest.

In the post-neoliberal period, the pattern of conflicts in the Amazon region has not changed much and it would seem that the trend here is being driven by world economic factors outside of Ecuador. In spite of radical changes in government, the Ecuadorian state has continued to push expansion of oil extraction in the South in areas where there was already resistance in the 1990s (conflict 33, 39, 55), which has been reignited (conflict 34). Similarly, conflicts 2 and 9 in the province of Napo, record opposition starting in the neo-liberal period, among kichwa indigenous communities, alleging that results from a government consultation concerning bids for two oil blocks were manipulated. Plans for these fields were cancelled in 2005, following the overthrown of then president Lucio Gutiérrez (2005), but were re-

started again in 2008, reigniting the conflict, this time because the area was granted by executive decree of the Correa government to a Canadian oil company without any prior consultation. Southern Amazonian provinces are also the site of the large-scale metal ore mining activities (conflicts 42, 44, 45). While resistance to the opening up of this mining frontier started in the neoliberal period (conflict 22), during the post-neoliberal phase the Ecuadorian government has been actively promoting this activity, with the aim that it should become a leading economic sector (conflicts 23, 41, 42, 44, 45). Here we also have examples of cross-sectoral conflicts, where extractive activities (oil and mining ones) in the southern Amazon region coincide geographically with government-led conservation initiatives related to payments for ecosystem services (conflict 50). In addition to mineral reserves, this area also includes a huge amount of well conserved rainforest, located mainly in legally recognized indigenous territories.

Exploitation of remaining oil fields in the Northern provinces has also continued in the post-neoliberal period, in socially and environmentally fragile ecosystems that are part of the territory of indigenous peoples living in voluntarily isolation, arousing new resistance (conflict 28 and 61). This trend has become the dominant one after the Correa's announcement of the end of the Yasuní-ITT initiative in 2013. This initiative, born in activist circles (Acción Ecológica and other NGOs) before its official adoption by Minister of Energy and Mines Alberto Acosta and (more reluctantly) by President Correa in June 2007, consisted in keeping the oil from the Inshpingo-Tambococha-Tiputini (Yasuní protected area) fields in the ground indefinitely in exchange for an international contribution of at least 50% of the revenues the state would receive from extracting this oil[12]. From the beginning, Correa's commitment to this project was ambiguous as well, as he was incapable of maintaining a coherent position regarding oil activities in the Yasuní.

Other new collective actions in this region, as mentioned above, reflect demands for better infrastructure, basic services and environmental restoration after four decades of oil exploitation and ecological damage (conflict 36), including actions related to the ecological impacts of the landfills in an area, where oil wastes (among others) have been deposited (conflict 60).

[12] See Espinosa 2012; Martin 2010; Rival 2010, and http://www.amazoniaporlavida.org for further detail in this project. A large amount of literature exist on this conflict that might further increase considerably depending on whether a public consultation (referendum) is held in 2014 at national level.

The Highlands, which form part of the Andes Mountain Range, have a more diverse range of commodity frontiers. Since the neoliberal period there have been several attempts to initiate large-scale metal mining projects in the region's southern provinces. Mineral deposits in the region are located mainly in headwaters or in highly populated areas with domestic agriculture. In most of these cases, during the 1980-90s exploration activities were carried out by several transnational companies, despite the local opposition (conflicts 3, 25). These projects remained on standby for several years, until the post-neoliberal period, when the government began explicitly promoting this activity (conflicts 8, 24, 26, 41). There is also a long-standing and well-known copper mining deposit in the northern province of Imbabura that still remains non-exploited despite several attempts (conflict 43) as well as increasing resistance to building materials mining, which has arisen in response to its polluting effects, after decades of exploitation (conflicts 58, 59).

The Ecuadorian Highland region (the Sierra) has traditionally been an area of domestic-based agriculture and livestock production, characterized by high inequality in the distribution of the means of production (Ruiz 2010), where a few large-scale, commercial farmlands (haciendas) coexist with a huge number of indigenous-peasant farmers with very small holdings and lack of access to credit and technology. Large-scale farmlands associations have tended, in recent years, to move toward agribusiness in sectors, such as livestock production (mainly poultry and pork), which has led to intensification, including large-scale feedlot facilities with high environmental impacts. These polluting effects are the main reason behind local resistance to the rise in agribusiness (conflict 49). However, reduced farming activity has also impacted the region, with peasants forced to diversify their livelihood strategies, including both temporary and permanent migration to urban areas (Ruiz 2010). Within this context, in the province of Pichincha, non-traditional agro-export activities, such as rose production, have emerged and grown since the 1990s (Korovkin 2005). This activity often involves the use of highly polluting chemicals in the work place affecting women particularly, which eventually become environmental effluents and, for rose production, requires huge amounts of water, creating conflicts with the food production sector (conflicts 5, 6). Also related to this are conflicts over the high toxicity and polluting effects of waste (conflict 62), where, in a similar vein to oil wastes in the Amazon provinces, waste goes directly to landfill without treatment. Another non-traditional export commodity or service in this region is the proliferation of plantations (mainly of non-native tree species)

intended to serve as carbon emission offsets for industrialized countries (Farley 2010). While these have been planted on both individual and communally-owned private land, conflicts have arisen mainly around plantations on communally-owned land, where expectations regarding employment and revenues have not been met (conflict 37).

As explained above, Ecuador has historically had limited industrialization. Nevertheless, some industry related conflicts arose during the late 80s and early the 90s in the southern Highlands provinces of Cañar and Azuay (conflicts 10, 35). Here the main causes of mobilization were, respectively, polluting practices associated with industrial food processing (sugar cane) and demands for land traditionally used by the small-scale agriculture sector. The region has also seen conflicts related to energy infrastructure projects, over the transportation of oil from the point of extraction (Amazonia) to processing areas on the north Coast (conflict 46) and large-scale hydropower/dam facilities (conflict 56). The conflicts reflect, respectively, concerns about the risks of leakages and pollution from oil transportation in a high biodiversity area where ecotourism was the main source of revenues, and a perceived loss of prevailing agriculture-based livelihood. Both cases mirror Ecuadorian government strategies, first of oil export dependence and more recently, pursuit of energy diversification.

The third region in Figure 2, Ecuador's coast, has traditionally been the main export-oriented region of the country and many traditional and non-traditional commodity frontiers are to be found here. The shrimp-farming frontier, situated where mangroves prevailed, experienced its main boom during the 1980-90s, when Ecuador became the largest shrimp producing country in the western hemisphere (Veuthey and Gerber 2012). The industry developed quickly and without regulation, spreading toward common mangrove areas where mangrove gatherers had historically secured their livelihood. During this period, conflicts arose in response to depletion of mangroves (conflicts 11, 12, 40). This industry suffered a severe outbreak disease at the end of the 1990s which led to a near collapse and many shrimp farms remained unproductive for several years. Around 2007 national shrimp production recovered previous levels and the movement for the defense of mangroves mobilized to reclaim illegal shrimp-farming areas as indigenous (afro-Ecuadorian) territories (Latorre 2013). From 2009 onwards shrimp farmers have received active support from the Correa government, with measures intended to regularize their legal status. The government's move to grant land title to shrimp farmers, and the continuing reactivation of many abandoned ponds has been highly

contested by the mangrove gatherers (conflicts 52, 53, 54). Also related to seafood commodities, there has been conflicts over the extraction and processing of fish, mainly for the production of fishmeal and fish oil (conflict 1), which has been conducted without the use of adequate environmental protections. Along this same coast line are areas where tourism plays an important economic role. The major tourism infrastructure is located in the provinces of Manabí and Santa Elena, while the sector is also important, although less developed in the province Esmeraldas. In these areas there have been attempts to privatize common areas, such as beaches (conflict 51) and customary peasant lands (conflict 63) and conflicts related to unclear property titles areas (conflict 64).

The southern inland coastal provinces are the main locale of the traditional agro-export banana sector, which is a highly polluting activity with exploitative and hazardous labor conditions (Henriques et al. 1997). There have been many conflicts here, due to the health problems and working conditions suffered by banana plantation laborers (conflicts 27, 57) including DBCP cases where damaged workers have asked for justice in the United States under ATCA legislation. Two other important inland commodity frontiers, concentrated mainly in the north are timber and oil palm production. Here the province Esmeraldas has one of the most important remaining primary tropical rain forests in the country, most of which are under indigenous communal land tenure. Nonetheless, since the 1970s the logging industry has spread across the area. In response to the associated deforestation, during the 1990s new forest management approaches were developed and implemented through international and national initiatives (Rival 2003). These reforms were generally initiatives modeled on voluntary private firms' self-regulation or on “regulation through funding” with aid designed to encourage technical and institutional change. Initiatives consisted basically in the creation of plantations and reforestation areas, through the subsidized purchase of deforested private land. They were highly contested due to their bias in favor of private corporate groups over the impoverished indigenous and afro-Ecuadorian population, which directly suffered from the deforestation (conflict 29). Private sector actors also implemented other extractive strategies, such as harvest agreements with diverse Chachi indigenous communities, to secure long-term wood supplies. One of these communities, which refused to participate in what it considered a very asymmetrical partnership suffered continuous harassment from the company involved (conflict 30). Forestry's huge power and influence over the state is also reflected in conflict 32, in which a timber firm was granted a concession

in a forbidden logging area belonging to the State National Forest Heritage. This forest plot was also in the customary possession of peasant inhabitants who rejected being displaced and denounced the situation, despite experiencing a persecution campaign started by the logging company. Commercial logging of eucalyptus plantations, for the production of paper, has also led to conflicts in this province (conflict 31). This economic activity was initiated at the start of this century, with a major project of 10.500 ha, but has not expanded since then, in large part due to a ban (2005) issued by the municipality of Muisne on new eucalyptus plantations, due to high water demand, contamination and threats made to peasants who refused to sell their properties (Gerber and Veuthey 2010).

The beginning of the oil palm industry in Ecuador dates back to the late 1950s. However, in the 1990s oil palm monocultures expanded significantly in the Northern provinces, with large-scale cultivations critically damaging the local environment (Hazlewood 2010). The impacts and motivations for resistance (conflicts 16, 17) are similar to those seen with banana plantations, in response to negative health impact on workers and community members, who are exposed to agrotoxins in the workplace and water supplies. As in the Highland Sierra, labor conditions in the oil palm plantations are very hard and workers have great difficulties to organize and exercise their rights, here amidst a context of violence and cheap labor.

Large-scale energy infrastructure projects have also led to conflict in this region, such as the well-known case, in the late 1980s, of the Daule Peripa dam, one of the main components of a multi-purpose project (conflict 14). This was one of the largest and most complicated infrastructure projects built in Ecuador in the last forty years and has caused huge environmental and social impacts both up- and downstream. The reservoir flooded one of the country’s most fertile areas, which used to be almost entirely devoted to agricultural production for local markets. Many communities were displaced and others were isolated, along the fringes of the reservoir, where they still live today, abandoned, and in conditions of extreme poverty. More recently, there has been new resistance to several contested projects in this region (conflicts 13, 15), which are linked to the Correa's government hydropower dam promotion. It is true, however, that some large hydroelectric project in the zone between the Sierra and the Amazon, have been accepted without conflict.

Other contested energy infrastructure facilities, this time related to the oil production, are an oil pipeline to be constructed through the Machalilla National Park (MNP) and territory of several *comuna* inhabitants (conflict 4) and the oil refinery in the province of Esmeraldas (conflict 18). The pipeline was opposed by the Agua Blanca *comuna* as it was placed across diverse pre-columbine archeological remains key for Agua Blanca's tourism. Resistance to the refinery was due to long-standing polluting practices that had been causing severe ecological and social damage since the start of its operations.

Finally, apart from these commodity frontiers, conflict in this region has also arisen in response to direct privatization. In the city of Guayaquil (province of Guayas) privatization of water and sanitary services was carried out in 1999 (conflict 47). This case mirrors the politics of privatizations of public services during the 1990s in many Latin American countries, as part of the neoliberalization process, where it was argued that the only way to prevent negligent waste of water and secure investments was if it was sufficiently valued (Perrault 2006). In Guayaquil, during the first five years after privatization, as the water company decided not to provide sewerage services to one marginal sector of the city, an outbreak of hepatitis A occurred. Besides, the sewerage system in yet another marginal sector collapsed two years after installation. All these events triggered a collective action and mobilization process.

The Nature of the Driving Forces and Offenders across Commodified Activity and Time.

Due to the export-led character of the Ecuadorian extractive economy, with the possible exception hydropower, international demand for Ecuadorian commodities can be understood as the main driver of expansion.[13] In mineral extraction, oil and minerals demand from both old and newly industrialized countries is the key factor. The Ecuadorian activities of these sectors are dominated by transnational corporations (TNCs) whose headquarters are mainly in Europe and the North-America. However, there are also trans-Latin corporations (TLCs) based in Chile, Brazil and Argentina (conflicts 39, 43) and an increasing presence, in the post-neoliberal period, of Chinese corporations (conflicts 44, 45). Alongside these TNCs, TLCs and Chinese corporations, the Ecuadorian state also directly exploits oil reserves

[13] Hydroelectricity is to be to some extent related to the new mining sector, so the international demand can be considered indirectly an important driver for this activity as in Chile or South Africa.

through state companies which have been the offender in some cases (conflicts 19, 21, 28, 36, 38, and 48).

Globalized supply and demand for agri-food and other biomass products, reflecting changing diets and consumption patterns, has been a major driver of expansion in these conflict areas. It is important to note that food trade is one of the fastest-growing industries in the world due to its profitability (McMichael 2009b). The trend to concentrate profits in the marketing and retailing stages of food-commodity production, with subcontracting and outsourcing as basic organizational features (Robinson 2008) inevitably has impacts for primary suppliers like Ecuador. Complex networks of vertical and horizontal integration interconnect TNCs with other economic agents, including national firms and small-scale farmers, facilitating the extraction of materials and added value, here in the form of food and plant materials. In the cases related to the commodities bananas, seafood, pork and poultry, roses and oil palm vertical integration of production, processing, and marketing is common and combinations of national and transnational capital investment make it difficult to establish the formal nationality and legal accountability of the consortiums.

With respect to oil palm plantations and carbon offsets markets, a key driver of expansion is the complex global energy and environment crisis and associated climate change policies and agreements. Oil palm is part of what are known as "flex crops," that have multiple uses, such as food, animal feed and agrofuels. As such, it is promoted as a low-financial risk climatic change mitigation strategy, considered to be a sustainable, carbon neutral renewable fuel but also marketable as food or animal feed, in the event that agrofuel markets are slow. The various initiatives of payments for carbon sequestration and/or ecosystem services protection are also driven, in large part, by this global demand for energy that is considered to have little or no environmental impact.

Logging activities, on balance, show a pattern very similar to agribusiness, with vertically integrated national corporate enterprises dominating the timber sector, which responds to both national and international demand. In the case of the eucalyptus-based plantations for paper production (conflict 31) the offender was a transnational consortium.
For the infrastructure initiatives, among those related to oil production, the state, in partnership with TNCs and TLCs are main offenders, whereas for hydro-energy projects, since the post-neoliberal period there has been an active role played by the Ecuadorian state,

with financial capital from the private sector of countries such as Brazil and China. This is a new trend, contrasting with the neoliberal period, during which IFIs served as main sources of finance. In that period, IFIs and other international and inter-governmental organizations also played an important role in financing and providing technical assistance (often with the imposition of conditions) for the promotion mainly of non-traditional agricultural commodities, large-scale energy infrastructure and the privatization of basic services, as in the case of water privatization (conflict 47), which involved a U.S transnational corporation. In the landfill cases, the direct offender is the Ecuadorian state or the municipalities, which are in charge of managing waste disposal. A huge amount of this waste, particularly the hazardous components, is derived from export-oriented activities such as rose and oil production, as will also be the case with mine tailings. As such, international demand for mineral and biomass commodities is also a driver here.

The Dynamics of Resistance

This section uses the typology of commodified activities presented in Figure 1 as a reference point for discussing the nature of the resistance to AbyD. Tables 1 and 2 synthesize and present a sample of the resistance variables taken into consideration. The full inventory is included in the three appendices and further case study details can be checked for some cases at the inventories to be made available at www.ejolt.org. Starting with the category of mineral extraction, the principal protesters in oil conflicts are indigenous and settler inhabitants of impacted areas. In the 1990s the indigenous movement (led mainly by the CONAIE[14]) embraced the organizing principles of identity and territory and became a powerful nationwide actor. As such, all the oil conflicts involving indigenous peoples have been channeled through the multi-level indigenous movement's organizations[15]. In the cases involving settler populations, the Amazon Defense Coalition tends to be the main umbrella organization through which demands are channeled. This organization has played a key role, positioning in the public sphere the harsh and polluting situation in which northern Amazon

[14] Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador.

[15] The organizing structure of the Ecuadorian indigenous movement is: The CONAIE as the national-level organization made up of three regional-level organizations (CONFENIAE (for the Amazon region), Confederation of Kichwa Peoples of Ecuador-ECUARUNARI (for the Highland region), and Confederation of Coast Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador-CONAICE (for the Coast region). Each regional-level organization is the umbrella of a wide set of second-level organizations which in turn act as the umbrella for a large number of first-level organizations.

citizen lives. It also leads the many legal processes initiated against oil companies for ecological and health damages. In all the oil production cases the role of advocacy groups, including national and international NGOs, in networking and financing protesters' actions, has been fundamental. The NGOs tend to specialize in denouncing/generating public awareness of destruction of the Amazon or in the defense of human rights. The two main demands among all these cases are no exploitation of the oil fields (in indigenous territories or protected areas) and restoration of the polluted environment. In cases where resistance is from the indigenous population, these tend to be intertwined with demands for recognition of (before the 1998 Constitution) and compliance with (from 1998 onwards) law concerning indigenous rights. Since 1998 indigenous peoples' demands have emphasized compliance with and the meaning of their collective rights under the Constitution, mainly their right to prior consultation. This latter demand is sometimes accompanied by claims for economic and development support, reflecting the impoverishment and lack of basic services infrastructure in the north of the Amazon.

In relation to the strategies implemented, some generalizations can be made: on the one hand, oil conflicts tend to deploy direct action (mainly strikes, roadblocks, marches, peaceful occupations of governmental/company offices or facilities) alongside public campaigns, which consist mainly of press releases, complaint letters to the Ecuadorian government, radio communications and e-signature request. In some cases (conflicts 28, 33, 34, 38, 39, 48, 55), these campaigns have reached international scope, with company boycotts and the mobilization of shareholder activism. Indeed, during the 1990s the national public campaigns with transnational alliances, led by activist NGOs became a predominant strategy for resistance. The "Amazon for life" campaign led by CORDAVI[16] may be the most well-known. This campaign was reactivated and led by the activist NGO Acción Ecológica in 2007 under the slogan “Yasuní depends on you” as the social civil counter-part of the previously mentioned Yasuní-ITT initiative (case 61). Use of legal channels has also been deployed as a strategy of resistance. In some cases lawsuits have been filed with the Ecuadorian judicial body (conflicts 2, 19, 20, 21, 48), while others have opted for appeal US courts under ATCA or to intergovernmental institutions, such as the Inter-American

[16] The Corporation for the Defense of Life ğ see also Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide (E-LAW).

Commission, the International Court of Justice and the International Labour Organization (ILO) (conflicts 9, 28, 33, 38, 39, 48).

Finally, outcomes and the role of the central state are more heterogeneous. Cases concerning ecological restoration (conflicts 19, 20, 21, 48) tend to have a positive end, with the four cases considered all resulting in court decisions in favor of the plaintiffs. However, resistance to the expansion of the oil frontier, has, in the majority of the cases, not interrupted the projects. Only in two cases was the stand-by of the oil activity achieved, and in both cases this came at the expense of militarization, with the declaration of these areas as force majeure concerns of the government (conflicts 33, 39). Such coercive policies have become more predominant in the post-neoliberal period, with the Ecuadorian government regularly filing judicial charges of terrorism against protesting populations (conflicts 34, 36, 39). Moreover, with the end of the Yasuní-ITT initiative (and the beginning of oil drilling in this last area of the Yasuní National Park, next to Peru's border, announced by president Correa on 15th August 2013), one can foresee a strengthening of the Ecuadorian state's extractivist policies. The political context is likely to be even more adverse for protesters though at the time of writing there are plans to call for a referendum to reverse Correa's decision.

Type of commodified activity		Table 1:The Nature of Resistance Collective Action (I)								
		Demands				Mode of action				
		Rejection		Negotiation		Legal		Political		Technical
		Prevention	Restoration	Socio-economic	Environmental	International	National	International	National/local	
Conservation										
Bioprospecting		7						7	7	
C-Offsets		37, 50							37, 50	
Tourism		51, 63					51, 63			
Mineral extraction										
Oil		2, 9, 28, 33, 34, 38, 39, 55, 61	19, 20, 21, 48	36, 48, 55	36, 55	28, 33, 39, 38, 9, 48	2, 19, 20, 21, 48	21, 33,34, 38, 39, 48, 55, 61	2, 9, 21, 33, 34, 36, 38, 39, 48, 55, 61	38, 61
Metal ore		3, 8, 22, 24, 25, 26, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45,					3, 44	43	3,8, 22, 24, 25, 26, 41, 43,44, 45,	42, 43,
Building material			58		59		58, 59		58, 59	
Agro-food/forestry										
Food processing				1	1, 10, 49	49	10		1, 8, 10, 49	49
Non-Traditional		11, 12, 52, 54	40, 53	16	5, 6, 16, 17		6, 12, 16, 17, 40, 52, 53, 54, 64	11, 40	5, 6, 11, 12, 16, 52, 40, 53, 54	17
Traditional		64		27, 57		27	64		27, 57	
Logging		29, 30, 31, 32				32	31	29	30, 31	
Infrastructure										
Energy infrastructure	Oil	46			4, 18		18, 46	46	4, 18, 46	
	Dam	13, 15, 23, 56	14			13,14, 56	15, 56	13	13, 14, 15, 23, 56	
Basic services				47		47			47	47
Industrial		35					35		35	
Landfill			60		62		60, 62		60, 62	60, 62

In metal mining conflicts the principal protesters are again directly affected indigenous and peasant populations. However, in some cases urban populations have showed solidarity and support. The directly affected population is resisting through a wide range of organizations with weak ties among them and has not converged in a nationwide coalition. Among the indigenous population, as with the oil cases, indigenous organizations are the principal structures for resistance (conflicts 22, 26, 44, 45). Additionally, in the Highlands, irrigation water organizations are also very active. Among the *mestizo* peasant population organizational structures are more diverse. Over the years a set of coalitions and committees has emerged, many of which have had difficulties to set up and to remain over time. Those that have persisted have become very active at the local level, often with women achieving an important role as leaders and spokespersons (such as The National Coordinating for the Defense of Life, Nature and National Sovereignty and the Women's Pachamama Defense Front). In all these cases protesters have had the active support of many national activist NGOs. During the 1980-90s the NGOs played a leading role as the main protesters against the first mining cases documented here (conflicts 3, 25).

There is also homogeneity among the demands in the mining cases, with demands for recognition and rights to decision-making appear consistently at the local level, including conflict 25, where protesters went a step further, with a local referendum as it has happened before in other Latin American countries. Such claims are also present in the identity politics language of the indigenous population (conflicts 22, 44, 45).

The main strategy of resistance in all these cases, as with the oil production cases, is a combination of direct measures and public campaigns, including marches and strikes. However, unlike the oil cases, very few mining cases have yet scaled-up to the international sphere becoming "glocal" conflicts, and the legal actions have not played an important role. One exception was during the constituent assembly period (2007-2008), when the majority of organizations lobbied for the legal prohibition of mining activities in protected areas and headwaters. This was achieved with Constituent Mandate number 6, of the constituent assembly, but was not completely enforced. In 2009, with the Mining Law, the prohibition was cancelled.

So far outcomes in the mineral mining sector have not favored the protesters. Not a single project in our inventory has been definitively cancelled (although some foreign companies

have left, such as the Canadian company Kimross), and the government has implemented a strong politics of repression and the criminalization of protest (conflicts 8, 24, 26, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45).

The two building materials mining cases in our inventory, present a different resistance dynamic. Here the demand for the product is internal. In both Ecuadorian cases (so far) peasant protesters demanded environmental restoration. However, whereas, in one case (conflict 58) they demanded the closure of the company, in the other case (conflict 59) protesters demanded technological improvements by appealing to legal standards. Both involved direct actions, such as facility occupations, which came after several un-resolved administrative complaints against the companies' harmful environmental practices. The first case ended with police intervention and the protesters' demands were discarded, while in the second, the state mediated the conflict and an agreement was reached, introducing improved environmental practices.

Resistance to infrastructure projects in energy-related cases is based principally on the peasant population. There is no formal social movement supporting these peasant struggles, as there is not a strong peasant social movement at the Coast. Instead NGOs have played a decisive role. In the dam (hydropower) conflicts, they are key protagonist, providing legal advice and mounting public campaigns. In all the new dam projects, protesters opposed construction completely, with their principal strategy of resistance again being direct action supported by legal procedures. Some have filed lawsuits in the Ecuadorian judicial system (conflicts 15, 56) and others in the Latin-American Court of Water and the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights (conflicts 13 and 56 respectively). This second route has been also used by the protesters demanding environmental restoration for damages caused by a dam already built (conflict 14). The outcomes here are also not promising for the protesters so far. One exception is conflict 13, in which the government accepted to negotiate with locals on the final project design. In all the other cases the projects have proceded without public participation and in some cases with the backing of the military force (conflicts 15, 56).

The dynamics of resistance to oil infrastructure are more diverse. In the case concerning the oil refinery in Esmeraldas (conflict 18) the protagonists are afro-Ecuadorian urban inhabitants and the strategies of resistance, direct and legal action and public campaigns, are

similar to other restoration conflicts. Resistance to pipelines is diverse, both in protesters' demands and in strategies. Whereas, in conflict 4 protestors opted for negotiations to reduce the environmental and social impacts, protesters in conflict 46 engaged in direct opposition, while at the same time internationalizing the case. In both cases the projects continued uninterrupted, but in the former of the two protestors managed to save eight archeological sites that they considered of extreme importance for their tourism activities. In the oil refinery case (conflict 18), the protesters filed a lawsuit demanding environmental restoration and economic compensation for cumulative effects of daily contamination and explosions associated with this state-owned facility. While they won the case, the state has so far been reluctant to restore the zone and improve the technological standard of the refinery.

As with other resistance to polluting activities, urban protesters in the landfill cases demanded either environmental restoration or compliance with legislation regarding environmental studies and permits (conflicts 60, 62). In both cases direct action was combined with legal measures and protestors employed epidemiological research, led by an activist NGO, in order to sustain their legal claims. While both conflicts are still ongoing, so far resistance has resulted, in one case, in failed negotiations with the local authorities, regarding demands for impact assessment (conflict 62) and in the other in a court decision in favor of the protestors (conflict 60). In this latter case, the mandated restoration work has been deficient. Protesters have remobilized and have, this time, been repressed by the state.

The agri-food cases are very heterogeneous with respect to protesters but quite consistent as regards demands and strategies. Whereas indigenous and afro-Ecuadorian populations are the main protagonist in the oil palm and rose cases, and also in defence of mangroves, *mestizo* settler populations are central in the banana, fishmeal and livestock cases. However, a common feature among all these protestors is that they live in rural semi-urban areas impacted by the globalization of agriculture and horticulture. The most common demands are improved working conditions and environmental conditions that are in accordance with current laws or reflect better distribution of natural resources (conflicts 1, 5, 6, 10, 16, 17, 27, 49, 57). Trade union organizations are becoming important supporters of resistance in these cases (conflicts 16, 27, 57) showing the presence of working-class environmentalism. While most strategies in this commodity area have involved the Ecuadorian legal system, e case of conflict 49 presents the novel strategy of using the independent World Bank

associated arbitration mechanism, the Office of the Compliance Advisor/Ombudsman (CAO) to push for negotiations with the government[17]. This mechanism was also employed in the case about water privatization services (conflict 47) mentioned above, where protestors managed to resolve many of their complaints and improve accountability and service for water users across the city.[18] However, whereas protestors in conflict 47 were able to reach a collaborative agreement with the private company, which was US based, protestors in conflict 49, who were confronting an Ecuadorian company, were not.

Another innovative strategy was implemented by mangrove peoples in their resistance to shrimp-farming expansion. During the 1990s they had tried to protect the remaining mangroves by claiming protection for the ecological values. However, since 2007 they have adopted the language of indigeneity and territory in their protests, positioning themselves as "Ancestral Peoples of Mangroves Ecosystem" and claiming recognition of the mangroves (including those formerly converted into illegal shrimp farms) as their territory.

[17] CAO is an independent recourse and accountability mechanism for the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and The Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) investment projects. CAO conducts an assessment without legal force which is reported to the President of the World Bank Group. Its main goal is to facilitate a dialogue between parties, in order to identify convergences and agreements.

[18] It is worth clarifying that despite the 2008 Constitution prohibited the privatization of water, there have not been subsequent regulations to develop this principle. The result is that the company still operates in Guayaquil.

Type of Commodified Activity		Table 2: The Nature of Resistance Collective Action (II)						
		Role of the State			Outcome (*= repression)			
		Supporting the Offender	Supporting the Protester	Intermediator	Success	No-success	Negotiated	Ongoing
Conservation								
Bioprospecting		7			7			
C-Offsets		37, 50						37, 50
Tourism		51, 63			51			63
Mineral Extraction								
Oil		2, 9, 19, 20, 21, 28, 33, 34, 36, 38, 39, 48, 55, 61	61		20, 21, 33, 48	2, 36*, 38, 55, 61		9, 19, 28, 34*, 39*
Metal ore		3, 8, 22, 24, 25, 26, 41, 42, 43,44, 45,			3, 22, 25			8*, 24*, 26*,41*, 42*, 43*, 44*, 45*,
Building material		58		59		58	59	
Agri-food/forestry								
Food processing		1, 10, 49			1, 10			49
Non-Traditional		5, 6, 11, 12, 16, 17, 40, 52,53, 54			6, 11, 12, 40	16, 40, 53,		5, 17, 52*, 54*
Traditional		27, 57, 64				57*		27, 64
Logging		29, 30, 31, 32			29, 30,31 32			
Infrastructure								
Energy infrastructure	Oil	4, 18, 46				46	4	18
	Dam	13, 14, 15, 23, 56		23		23,	13	14, 15*,56*
Basic services		47					47	
Industrial		35			35			
Landfill		60, 62						60*, 62

At present these mangrove gatherers are demanding from the state (so far without success) the conversion of official protected mangrove areas into either communal protected areas or ethnic territories.
Better results have been obtained in protests concerning the working standards (wages and environmental) in the agri-food cases (conflicts 1, 5, 10, 16, 49). In the post-neoliberal period, all workers now must be affiliated with the social security system and have the legal right to unionize. However, it remains to be seen how these rights will be enforced, amidst a context of violence and cheap surplus labor.

In the cases of commercial logging the principal protesters are indigenous/*mestizo* forest dwellers working with NGOs. In all these cases NGOs have been fundamental, either in leading the struggle or in providing legal support (conflicts 29, 30, 31, and 32). The principal demands have been the elimination of pro-corporate conservation policies and protection of forest inhabitants' rights in the face of illegalities committed by logging companies. The outcomes in all the cases have been positive for the protesters. However, the situation in which they are immersed is still very adverse. While conservation policies are now more sensitive to the needs of communities relying on the forests for their subsistence, this population still has a strong dependence on logging and state legislation designed to curtail the illegal logging practices has not been enforced.

Finally, regarding the conservation-related conflicts, the principal protesters are indigenous and *mestizo* rural populations. Here demands are consistent across cases, with all the protagonists opposing the proposed projects, but strategies of resistance differ. Whereas resistance to conservation for tourism has involved legal action, combined with media communication, opposition to carbon offsets projects has involved mainly public information campaigns. In these latter conflicts sometimes communities have appealed for help from NGO in interpreting contracts signed for with Dutch foundation representing electrical companies (FACE) and planting pines, or activist NGOs and national-level indigenous organizations are on their steam leading the opposition, which mainly consists of public oppositional statements accompanied by documented evidence, based on activist knowledge. The offset project conflicts are currently still ongoing, without resolution, while some tourism cases have been resolved with positive decisions for the protesters and others are still without a final outcome. Opposition to bioprospecting or “biopiracy”, in contrast, has been mobilized both at local and international levels, with international shareholders

constituting one import target for exercising political pressure. The dragon's blood tree case (conflict 7) ended when the project closed down, because the company did not have success taking patents on the medical products it derived from the tree's sap, so it is difficult to know what would have happened regarding royalties and compensations to the Kichwa communities. However, this issue is again coming to the fore, as the Correa government is determined to promote biotechnology activities.

2.5. Conclusions

Our aim in this article has been to deepen understanding of the links between economic growth and the globalization of capitalism in the late 20th century, the associated increase in social metabolism (in terms of flows of energy and materials, including water and wastes) and the dynamics of economic, cultural and ecological distributive conflicts in Ecuador. We have used Harvey (2005), and also literature on political ecology to help structure our review of 64 concrete Ecuadorian conflict cases that illustrate the ways in which global capitalism, through commodification, extraction and waste production, and resistance to this Accumulation by Dispossession, are manifested in a major resource-rich periphery of the global economic system, where movements of environmental justice are growing in a post-neoliberal context. In the conflicts analysed, diverse "valuation languages" are manifested. Livelihood needs is perhaps the main one, but also indigenous (and afro-Ecuadorian) territorial rights, cultural values including archeological values, environmental and ecological values. Such non-monetary value are sometimes put on the table together with demands for monetary compensation.

This inventory shows how Ecuador has, over the past 30 years, rearticulated its position as a commodity exporter and effectively integrated itself into the global economy through intensification and diversification of its commodity exports. In this new stage of world capitalism Ecuador has been a supplier of both raw materials ("bulk commodities") and also "preciosities" or luxury goods (so far shrimp, perhaps in the near future gold). It has also established itself as an outsourcing "exporter" of cheap labor and of sites where hazardous and resource-intensive production activities are tolerated and has a new commodity export niche characterized by the establishment of market-led conservation activities. We find that both national and transnational capital accumulation is being achieved through exploitation of Ecuador's competitive advantages in terms of cheap labor (and cheap reproduction costs

of such labor) and also natural resources, that is to say, by externalizing both the social and the environmental costs of primary production, via "competitive" integration with global markets.

At the local level this strategy of market integration exhibits a clear pattern of impacts, dominated, on the one hand, by the privatization of commons, deterioration of the local environment and displacement or reduced local resident access to land and other natural resources. On the other, it has led to increasingly precarious labor conditions, including exposure to contamination in the workplaces, and to the polarization of incomes. Following Harvey (2005), we have referred to this pattern in Ecuador, as "accumulation by environmental dispossession," where the accumulation of wealth is based mainly on natural resource exploitation and concentrated in a ´globalized capitalist class comprised of national and transnational elites, and dispossession of land and resources has tended to fall on already disadvantaged social groups. The inventory also suggests a blurring of the traditional North-South geographical divide between exploitation and exploited, during the post-neoliberal period, in the form of a growing Ecuadorian capitalist-class and with the substantial rise of Chinese investment. These shifts suggest that the category “neoliberalism” is losing explanatory power and that economic and environmental exploitation is being increasingly driven by “state capitalism” such as is found in China and increasingly, also in Ecuador.

Our inventory also shows that income-poor rural and racially discriminated populations are the principal groups suffering from and resisting environmental dispossession. Their motivations for resistance include, direct reliance on natural resources for their subsistence ğ what Martinez-Alier (2002b) has call the environmentalism of the poor ğindigenous right and environmental justice. Their positioning in Ecuadorian and international politics is based on three basic demands that are distributed across commodity types but reasonably consistent over time. First, in relation to large-scale infrastructure projects and the expansion of existing extraction (mineral and forestry sectors) and non-traditional export sectors, protestors have tended to adopt a strict oppositional stance and have demanded the right to participate in decision-making concerning activities that affect them directly. Second, where existing extractive frontiers have become old and resources spent, protestors have also demanded environmental restoration. And thirdly, in their resistance to environmental dispossession at the hands of the new corporate biomass sector, protestors have demanded improvement in both ecological and social standards and also the prioritization of the social

functions of environment and resources over the private interest of capital. This last demand is also advanced by protestors resisting the commodification and privatization of communal assets, such as basic water and sewage services, communal areas and traditional knowledge. All three types of demands are framed predominantly in rights-based language that suggests convergence with the dynamics of resistance around the general position of environmental and social justice: e.g. rights to indigenous territories, to food sovereignty, to land, to a healthy working and living environment, and rights of nature This indicate a common ground to further alliance-building among environmental, agrarian and labor justice movements. Both national and international NGOs have consistently been key actors supporting the networking of protestors within Ecuador and sometimes in transnationalizing these struggles. Their participation has also been fundamental for sustaining the politics of legal actions and public campaigns, in which the protesters most often engage, reinforcing the environmental justice tone of resistance.

Finally, while the outcomes of these struggles are very heterogeneous, there appear to be some trends that reflect the progression of the political economy of the Ecuadorian state, over time. At one extreme, resistance to the expansion of extractive frontiers has had very few successful results and this is not changing under president Correa's post-neoliberal extractivist dispensation. Meanwhile, environmental restoration struggles have mainly succeeded, particularly over the last ten years. However, despite the favourable court decisions in the Chevron Texaco case, no money has been so far available for restoration. Struggles for better social and environmental standards in production have seen more mixed results. In these cases, which saw poor results during the neo-liberal period, companies have been forced to comply with the Ecuadorian legislation throughout the post-neoliberal period. However, standards have still tended to be very low, with the state responding to pressures to keep down production cost in order to attract foreign capital investment. In addition, under the mandate of Correa's government there has been a reduction in spaces for dialogue and participation, with increasing limitations placed on organized civil society and direct confrontations between the state and protestors strictly opposed to extractive activities. Instead of supporting participation, the government has tried to reduce the incentive for conflicts by devoting economic resources to compensate for losses resulting from extraction and has implemented a set of social policies, financed to a large extent by oil exports that aim to reverse the vulnerable situations of low-income populations created during the

neoliberal period. While these policies address, to some degree, the symptoms of Ecuador's history of facilitating accumulation by dispossession, our inventory of recent and ongoing conflicts suggests that the underlying cause, the commodification of and global trade in Ecuador's natural resources, not only remains intact but is now becoming a project of the Ecuadorian state. This post-neoliberal Ecuadorian state politics reflects what Svampa (2013) calls "the new commodities consensus" (after the Washington Consensus) among both neo-liberal and post-neoliberal Latin American countries.

ONE MICRO-POLITICAL CASE OF ACCUMULATION BY ENVIRONMENTAL DISPOSSESSION: SHRIMP VS MANGROVES.

A) The Global Food System: The Blue Revolution and the Luxury Shrimp Farmed Commodity.

CHAPTER III

The "Pink Gold-Rush": the Political Economy of the Shrimp-Aquaculture.

This chapter focuses on how changes related to the last processes of restructuring of the capitalist system (the globalization phase) have affected the internal organization of agro-food systems. This objective is addressed through the employment of the food regime framework (Friedmann and McMichael 1989) which is very applicable in understanding how particular relations of food production and consumption are central to the functioning and reproduction of global capitalism. After having delineated the main features of the current global food system (at level of the world economy), I move on to examine in much more detail one of these new features: the development of the shrimp-farming sector- a high-value food commodity- with special emphasis on the Latin American and Caribbean region.

3.1. The Corporate Food Regime and the Globalization of Sea-food Systems

Since its inception in the late 1980s, food regime theory has experienced an intense development in respect of both the very meaning of the concept and its analytical reach. Complementarily, there has been an unresolved debate about whether and/or to what extent a new food regime (a third one) is currently in place.

The concept of a "food regime" (FR) was first introduced by Friedmann (1987) and subsequently elaborated by Friedmann and McMichael (1989). These authors, based on French regulation theory and world system perspective, defined a food regime as a rule-governed (stable) structure of production and consumption of food on a world scale. It

encompasses a specific set of (often implicit) relationships, norms, institutions, and rules around which the expectations of all relevant actors converge. As such, to emerge as a food regime, its inherent contradictions require to be "stabilized" by ideological and institutional means. These relative stable periods in the agri-food system are followed by transitional periods in which confrontation and experimentation dominate. That is, the food regime's inner contradictions are no longer stabilized and are the locus of challenge on the part of different actors. Here, the role of social movements is very salient.

Following this definition, Friedmann and McMichael have identified two FRs which are named respectively the "colonial-diasporic food regime" (1870-1914) and the "mercantile-industrial food regime" (1950-1970). Lately, both authors have focused their attention on these periods of transition, especially the transition between the second food regime and the putative third food regime. As stated above, there is disagreement among FR analysts about the existence or not of a third FR. Even among those who support its emergence, there are differences about how to name and characterize it (see McMichael 2009b for an outline of this discussion). This debate has led to a conceptual evolution of the FR concept and to the introduction of new analytical dimensions to this framework such as a nutritional and ecological perspective (Campbell 2009; Nixón 2009). In this regard, McMichael proposes to understand FR not as a "structural formation in itself so much as an attribute or an optic on one or more historical conjunctures" (McMichael 2009b, 148). That is an analytical method to pose specific questions about the structuring processes in the global politico-economy and/or in the global food relations at any particular moment. In this sense, he calls the specific (but unstable) configurations of the agri-food system since 1980s onwards as "corporate food regime (CFR)".

Hereafter, I adopt McMichael's new understanding of FR, and therefore I use his concept of CFR but at the same time I expand its characterization by including additional features underlined by other scholars regarding the globalization of agri-food systems. In order better to grasp the dynamic of changes in this particular period (1980 onwards), a short outline of the second food regime is first presented.

***The Mercantile-Industrial Food Regime (1947-1973*):**

It developed under the leadership of the US and was underpinned by the Bretton Woods monetary system. Ideologically framed as a discourse of "national industrial development" and "food aid", it consisted in the modernization of national farm sectors through mercantilist trade practices (protection of internal markets with tariffs, subsidizes for farm production, and so on) as a complementary base of the process of industrialization enhanced by the US in selective Third World countries[19]. US surplus production (mainly wheat) was resolved by shipping it as food aid to Third World countries[20]. Receiving governments accepted these subsidized wheat (and other grain) imports from the US as they needed to depress labour wages in order to foster their related process of industrialization and proletarianization (urban bias). Apart from resolving overproduction, with this process, the US aimed to secure loyalty against communism at the same time as it spread the American farming (intensive production systems) and dietary models (dominated by animal protein and dairy foodstuffs). As such, the US as well as other international development agencies encouraged agribusiness expansion in the Third World, developing livestock industries supplied with American grains, and this was followed by the introduction of Green Revolution technologies[21] to expand staple food supplies and depoliticize the countryside. The main results were: the growing dependence of Third World countries on basic food and technological-based agricultural imports and the undermining of their farm sectors (specially their peasants' production systems) accompanied by social polarization [22]; agriculture and food became reorganized into industries with their own technical systems and which were the source of large profits; the growth of large industrial firms in the US- especially those

[19] I explicitly use the term "Third World countries" as it was during this period of time when the US firstly invented this term associated with the idea of poverty and development (Escobar 1994).
[20] The US also encouraged the adoption of its agricultural model in Europe through the Marshall Plan. As a consequence this continent became self-sufficient and subsequently a major export region (McMichael 2004).
[21] Green Revolution technologies are a specific package of inputs made up of hybrid and other high-yielding plant varieties, mechanization, agrochemicals including fertilizers and pesticides, and irrigation. This package was firstly developed in the US during the 1930s and known as modern agriculture and subsequently was exported to Third World countries as the "Green Revolution" (Otero 2008).
[22] The industrialization of agriculture through Green Revolution technologies deepened the already existing rural inequalities which date back to the colonization period. Wealthier households were more likely to adopt this capital-intensive technological package, which in turn, resulted in higher yields and increasing economic benefit. Therefore, it favored their competitive advantage over other poorer neighbors. Associated with this trend there were rising land values which altogether made that poor farmers had to sell their holdings as they were no longer economically viable. As such, the process of concentration of the best land deepened along with the reduction of farm hand employment for poor or landless peasants and/or degraded working conditions as farm workers were exposed to toxic chemicals. Facing this situation, many governments promoted processes of colonization for these small farmers who moved to less suitable agricultural areas.

related to the agrochemical, machinery and livestock feed sectors- which elaborated and deepened global flows of agri-food commodities[23]; the adoption by Third World countries of the dietary patterns of temperate countries, which tend to be much more unhealthy in that they are clearly associated with increased incidence of heart disease and various cancers (Ottero 2008); and ecological problems associated with the modern agriculture package such as soil erosion, land and water contamination or decreased genetic diversity.

The Bretton Woods system, characterized by a fixed rate of conversion between the dollar and the gold, complemented these bilateral aid programs. Once they US eliminated this $-gold standard (1973), the inherent tensions of this regime became visible and a process of restructuring of the agro-food system took place.

According to Friedmann (2005) the principal tensions which emerged were as follows. Third World countries were caught in a squeeze between import needs for staple foods and decreasing prices for the colonial exports they still depended on from the earlier food regime. There was corporate reorganization of commodity chains, accelerating the declining number and political resources of farmers and farmers' lobbies. Within this context, transnational corporations (TNCs) found themselves constrained by the mercantile trading rules and domestic subsidizes of the regime and therefore supported moves to liberalize trade. The US suspended its food aid program in 1973 as a consequence of its shortage in grain stocks caused by the huge amount of grain exported in the previous years to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). As a consequence, international grain market prices rose, leading to a world food crisis in 1974. The disappearance of US surplus stocks along with the surge in world grain prices caused food insecurity in food import-dependent countries the governments of which found themselves forced to borrow from private banks. This world food crisis was framed as a problem of "hunger" instead of a problem of "the market", and the language of "food security" emerged from this moment and was subsequently adopted by multilateral international organizations. Finally, second-rank exporters led by Argentina, Canada, and Australia formed the "CairnsGroup" to press for an end to mercantile practices with the aim of achieving a fair share of world exports. US and Europe, pressed by their agribusiness firms, agreed to include agriculture within trade agreements in the General

[23] This process caused a process of marginalization of US small farmers who became fewer in number and increasingly dependent on corporate controlled supply chains.

Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) negotiations that began in 1986 (Uruguayan Round 1986-1994) and brought about the formation of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995[24]. It was the first time in history that an international organization regulated trade with enforcement powers (Busch and Bain 2004). With its creation, GATT together with other multilateral agreements was subsumed into this new organization.

The Corporate Food Regime (1990-onwards)

In 1995 was signed an Agreement on Agriculture (AoA) within the recently formed WTO. It established that all members are obligated to allow imports of food up to at least 5% of the volume of domestic consumption. With this agreement, states renounced to their right to food self-sufficiency as a national strategy. As such, food security was redefined and institutionalized as a goal to be achieved through global market integration (McMichael 2005). This fact mirrored the broader trend pursued by WTO and other international financial institutions -WB and IMF- which aimed to create a global economy through the processes of state economic and financial liberalization and privatization. In this regard, the main role of the WTO was the removal of national restrictions (labor, health, environmental laws) on trade and investment that might interfere with corporate competitiveness in the global marketplace (Friedmann 2005). Therefore, the WTO established a set of trade rules that privileged corporate power in the organization of the world food economy. It also contributed to the rise in global trade in food and agricultural products, which, in turn, exacerbated distanced and socially disembedded food relations. Over time agri-food systems have become longer and more complex chains, but the degree to which various commodities are globalized is highly variable (Friedland 2004). Furthermore, the extent of the economic concentration of segments of agri-food chains is also uneven. However, corporate oligopolization tends to occur in the most profitable segments of the supply chain which

[24] Neither the Bretton Woods system nor the GATT included the agriculture sector within their coverage. The GATT, established in 1947, had minimal real relevance for agricultural trade. Several agriculture-related 'add-on' agreements existed during the GATT period (1947ğ1994), but these were limited in thematic scope and signatory coverage, had fixed duration, and no real powers of enforcement. The Uruguay Round negotiations concluded with a final body of agreements ratified by 124 countries in 1994 (Pritchard 2009).

normally are the input supply, processing and distributing sectors (Belo Moreira 2011; Ottero 2008).

It is worth noting that although the WTO was leading this process of global food market integration, other trade agreements played an important role for instance, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Additionally, the management of the Third World countries' foreign debt by international financial institutions brought about the acceleration of this process as they made the rescheduling of their debt payments conditional on (economic and financial) market deregulation and privatization and an export-led economy (McMichael 2005).

Despite the WTO's free trade discourse, in practice, its agreements did not end with Northern powers' mercantilist practices. Therefore, whereas Southern states were obligated to reduce agricultural protections, Northern countries continued managing their overproduction via farm subsidies (Busch and Bain 2004; Pritchard 2009; McMichael 2004). A new international agriculture division emerged in which Northern countries expanded sales of cheap staple grains to the global South in exchange for high-value food commodities such as off-season fresh fruits and vegetables and seafood products[25]. The rise of these non-traditional export commodities in the global South is known as Second Green (and Blue) Revolution (DeWalt 1985). That is, the extension of the Green Revolution technological paradigm from basic grains to luxury foods and agro-industrial inputs, but this time fostered by private initiative (mainly agribusiness) and destined for global affluent markets. In this sense, these corporate-driven food supply chains bring together increasingly a (minority) global consumer class, deepening inequalities between rich and poor eaters regardless of nationality. Friedmann (2005) describes two complementary modalities of corporate-driven agri-food supply chains destined for different classes of consumers. On the one hand, there is a high quality produce supply chain dominated by organic, fresh and relatively unprocessed edible foodstuffs for transnational classes of rich consumers. On the other hand, there is a cheap-popular supply chain characterized by standard food products containing high rates of chemicals, toxins, fats, salts, and so on, for transnational classes of poor. These consumer patterns explain why obesity not only affects wealthy population (Otero 2012).

[25] The emergence of these non-traditional agro-export commodities did not substitute for those considered traditional since the colonial period. On the contrary, they were complementary. They principally competed with staple food commodities destined for national markets (McMichael 2004).

They also reflects an increasing concern among certain consumers about issues of quality, safety, health, biological and cultural diversity, animal welfare, environmental pollution, energy use, labor conditions, and so on. In this sense, there is an increasing tendency among wealthy consumers to base their preference on quality rather than price (Busch and Bain 2004).

As Burch and Lawrence (2005) contend, over time there has been increasing consumer demand (mainly in advanced industrialized countries) for a range of new products -chilled ready meals, snack foods, home meal replacement, ethnic cuisines, organic and convenience food- all of which rely on continuing innovation and flexibility in production which among others things, have placed the retail sector in an advantageous economic position over the traditional brand manufacturers (the supermarket revolution). This is in sharp contrast with the previous "productivist" food regime in which mass, durable and standardized products dominated. Furthermore, it was the manufactured sector which exercised control over the overall supply chain, it being the role of retail sector merely to market the products made available by the manufacturers. Nowadays, power in supply chains has shifted from the food manufacturers to the supermarkets and the retail sector, creating a significant impact on farmers, processors and consumers.

The two main explanatory factors accounting for this shift are: on the one hand, the emergence of a monopsony in food distribution, i.e. the situation in which a relatively large number of food processors are forced to sell their products to a limited number of globally-focused retailers which exercise enormous purchasing power in an increasingly concentrated market (Burch and Lawrence 2005); and on the other hand, the increasing predominance of supermarket "own brand" products, which in recent years have come to compete with the branded products of the established food manufacturing companies. Furthermore, supermarkets, through their own brands, have been better able to meet the new consumer patterns mentioned above. As a result, there has emerged a new type of food processing company characterized by being flexible, adaptable, and innovative, and which only markets its products under supermarket own brands. Complementarily, global sourcing undertaken both by the retail sector and process-driven TNCs has become a predominant practice. It has meant the rise of contract farming in which capital-intensive producers in the global South are subsumed to the power of these powerful actors (Otero 2008). In this regard, the retail

sector has become the dominant actor exercising power both upstream and downstream of the supply chain. Power expressed, for instance, by its capacity to force producers to comply with volume, time and quality standards requirements as well as to press down prices paid to them (Belo Moreira 2011). With regard to the consumer's interests, there exists the risk that retailers may put profit above environmental and health concerns among others. However, retailers are very vulnerable to consumer perceptions as they are the last link to consumers. For that reason, they have played a leading role in the emergence of a new privately driven global regulatory framework governing standards and quality of foodstuffs. More and more retailers have begun to promulgate their own private regulations, both individually and as a group[26] (Busch and Bain 2004). Complementing this trend, there has emerged the process of third party certification, i.e. an independent system for the auditing of suppliers[27]. The same authors, however, recount how other actors such as the WTO and NGOs have also been key in explaining this shift: within the WTO, a series of agreements[28] aimed at reducing to a large extent states' capacity to use nontariff trade barriers (including quality control) have been established. They have tried to harmonize standards making them transparent, consistent, and enforceable. At the same time, they have made direct reference to existing voluntary standards with the result of marking these voluntary rules *de facto* mandatory (Busch and Bain 2004). Among the latter there exist many contradictions and inconsistencies that have awaken considerable concern among the consuming public. As a result, the private sector, mainly NGOs, has begun to develop its own, often stricter and better integrated, set of standards[29]. Associated with this private regulation, however, significant issues have emerged with respect to accountability, transparency and democratic input among others.

Along with these politically driven and consumer-driven factors, technological innovation has underpinned the current process of agri-food restructuring. For example, improvements

26 Examples of group retailers which have developed their own regulatory schemes are Eurep (an association of European supermarkets), CIES (an international association of supermarkets), and the Comité de Liaison Europe-Afrique Caraïbes Pacifique (a quasi-governmental initiative of European Union exporters, importers and other stakeholders) (Busch and Bain 2004).

[27] There are two global accrediting bodies- the International Accreditation Forum, Inc. and the International Auditor and Training Certification Association- which accredit national programs. In turn, these national programs accredit individual certifying firms that actually conduct the audits (Busch and Bain 2004).

[28] Such as The Sanitary and Phytosanitary Agreement, The Technical Barriers to Trade, The Agreement on Trade-related Intellectual Property, The Dispute Settlement Process.

[29] Examples of NGOs engaged in this process of certification are the Rainforest Alliance and the World Wildlife Foundation.

in transportation and information technologies have enabled the reduction of costs, the promotion of trade and the improvement of logistical efficiency in global agri-food systems. Corporations involved in intermediation, either financial or commercial, have taken better advantage of these technological advances. This, in turn, has granted them a decisive competitive advantage, reinforcing their power and contributing to the consolidation of oligopolies (Belo Moreira 2011).

Other scientific-technological innovation drastically influencing the current agro-food system is the field of biotechnology[30], which nowadays has been absorbed by a small number of TNCs linked to the agrochemical and pharmaceutical industries[31] (Otero 2012). Therefore, these industries, by developing biotechnology outputs such as the transgenic crops, have gone further with the modern agricultural paradigm mentioned above[32] (Otero 2008). This comprises a technological package of inputs made of agrochemicals, fertilizers, heavy machinery, monocropping, and so on. As such, this paradigm has become to dominate capitalist agriculture throughout the world. In this regard, as McMichael describes (2012) transgenic crops (both agro-fuels and agri-food) are being promoted by hegemonic actors as the most suitable solution to the co-current food and energy crisis. As a result, a new fuel/feed/food complex of crops is taking importance. This fact also means a deepening of the conversion and abstraction of food into a mere commodity (McMichael 2010).

The prominence of the financial markets and capital within the latest phase of capitalism has also affected the agri-food system. As Burch and Lawrence (2009, 2013) state the financial

[30] The term biotechnology in a broad sense encompasses any technological process applied to the biological world. However, the narrower sense to which I refer here means more recent research techniques including plant cell and protoplast culture, plant regeneration, somatic hybridization, embryo transfer and recombinant DNA methods (Otero 2008)

[31] With a high potential to influence agro-food systems in the near future is nanotechnology. That is the manipulation of matter on an atomic and molecular scale (Belo Moreira 2011).

[32] This author considers modern agriculture technology as a technological paradigm in the sense that the range of solutions to problems emerging in agricultural productions tends to be solved within a narrow variety of options shaped by the paradigm. Such a technological paradigm not only selects solutions but also has exclusionary effects on alternative solutions that do not pertain to the paradigm (Otero 2008).

sector has become a major source of influence and control over the activities of the global food system[33]. According to these authors, today

"Financial institutions have become involved at all points of the agri-food system and are increasingly investing in activities in which they have never before been involved- including farmland, input supplies, storage and logistics, inspection and certification, food production and processing commodity trading, retailing and food services, and much more" (Burch and Lawrence 2009, 271).

This trend is what they call a as process of "financialization". These speculative investments have the capacity to influence commodity markets through techniques of short selling and market manipulation. The rise of staple food prices in 2007/2008 was, in part, due to the speculative practices (McMichael 2009a). This financialization trend has contributed to the emergence of the opposite tendency. That is, other actors in the agri-food supply chain such as the production and retail sectors are acting like the financial capital ("financialization in inverse") (Burch and Lawrence 2009). Examples of this process are the cases of supermarkets engaging in banking activities or the food manufacturing sector generating rental income from the licensing of brand names. It is the retail sector which is best positioned to exploit financialization practices for its own benefit (Burch and Lawrence 2009). Today, common financial activities among supermarkets are the leveraging of their extensive property holdings, the establishment of banks and insurance companies, and delaying payments to their suppliers to get substantial profits from the interest.

The year 2008 can be considered a turning point within the corporate food regime as the so-called triple crisis of finance, food, and energy along with the breakdown of the WTO Doha Round made clearer the social and ecological contradictions of this food regime. Generally speaking, it has broadened in scope the socio-ecological externalities already existing in the previous food regime. At the ecological level, the lengthening of agro-food systems plus the expansion of petro-intensive agri-food production systems (in intensity and geographic extension) has resulted in a growing dependence on fossil fuel. Thus, it is contributing to anthropocentric climate change. Other environmental costs associated with the intensive use of agrochemicals and other modern agriculture practices are pollution and health problems,

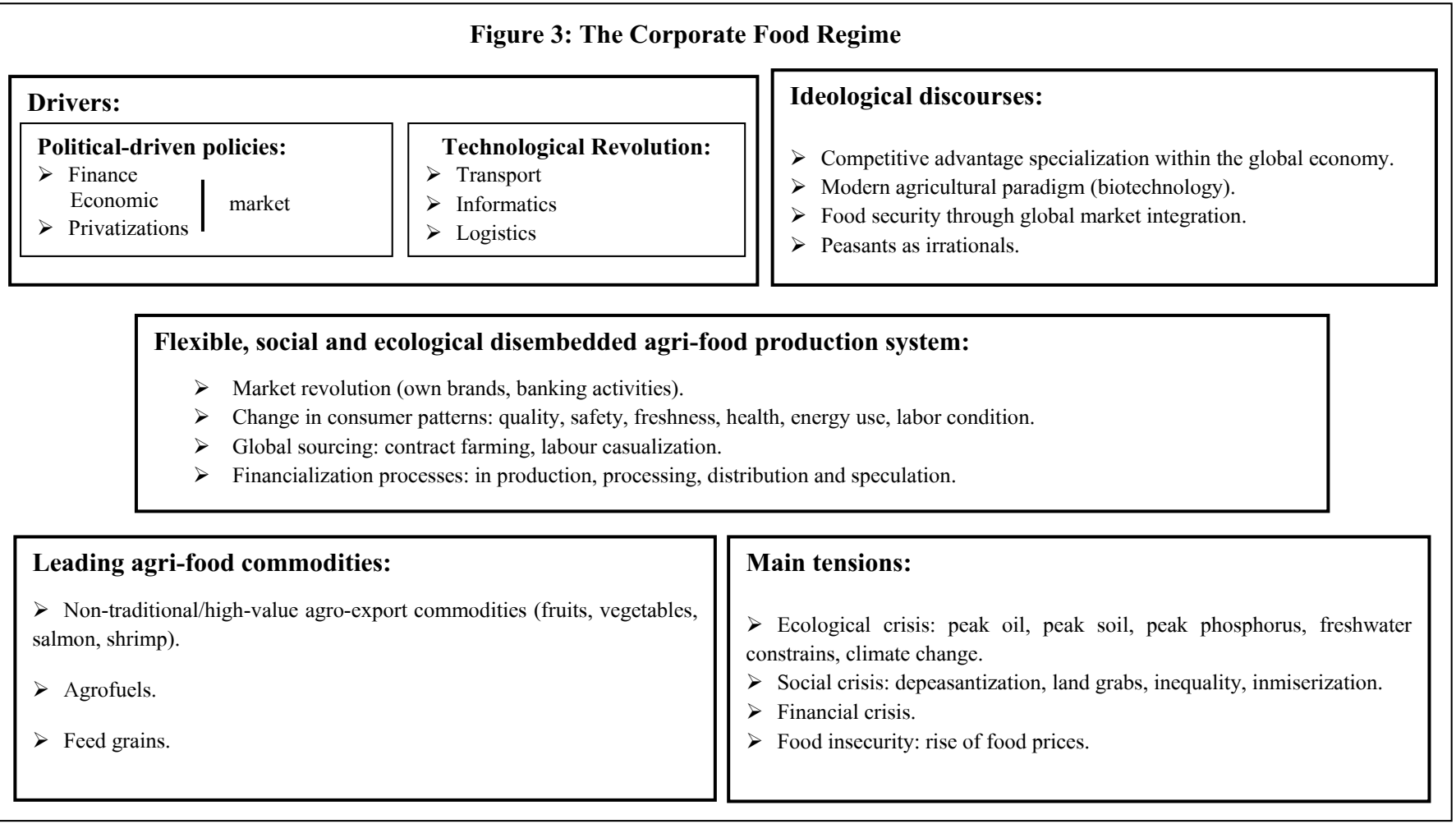
[33] Examples of financial capital influencing the agri-food system are: banks, finance houses, insurance companies, sovereign wealth funds, private equity consortia, hedge funds, superannuation funds.

soil degradation and erosion, and loss of agricultural biodiversity. In social terms, the current corporate logic of agri-food systems, which seek exchange-value rather than use-value has proved to be useless in meeting worldwide human food needs. As such, despite the fact that food production has increased at a higher rate than population growth, the numbers of hungry and undernourished have also expanded (Otero 2008). Another expression of this striking trend is the fact that while many Southern countries may be producing a greater share of their exports in grains, fruits and vegetables, their ability to feed their own population has decreased. Over the time, their food import dependence has gained weight, leaving them in a critical position after the end of cheap food market prices (2008 onwards). Additionally, the long-standing process of peasant expulsion from agriculture associated with modern agriculture production system has deepened with the extension of this production system to other crops (mainly non-traditional commodities and agrofuels) which, in turn, are increasing in absolute terms. Even more critical is the fact that following the financial crisis, the agricultural sector has become a key target for speculative investment. As such, land and water have been back on the investment agenda. At the same time, there is a reinforcement of the productivist modern agriculture narrative as a way to try to ameliorate the decrease in food output caused by the rise of the agrofuel production (McMichael 2012). In this regard, following Harvey (2003) these processes of capital accumulation are taking place increasingly by (peasant) dispossession. The dramatic consequences of this peasant proletarianization process are being exacerbated by the inability of global Southern urban cities to absorb these displaced rural masses (Li 2010). This population is rendered surplus labor, which in turn, contributes to a worsening of the exploitative conditions of laborers both in the agriculture and manufacturing sectors. The overall result has been social and regional polarization. However, peasants and more generally the rural poor have not remained politically passive in the face of these devastating effects. On the contrary, they have engaged in struggles against dispossession that sometime have led to the formation of social movements acting at local, nation and/or international levels. Moreover, these struggles may endure through the cultivation of reflexive subjects with the capacity to link their struggle with questions of development, citizenship, human rights, culture, and/or co-production of sustainable living patters. The case study presented here is an illustrating

example of these resistance struggles against dispossession in which the defense of access to natural resources is intertwined with cultural and environmental concerns.

The figure 3 presents a synthesis of the main characteristics of the current agri-food production system. Hereafter, I focus on the political economy associated with the rise of intensive aquaculture and more specifically in the cultivated crustacean commodity chain.

Figure 3: The Corporate Food Regime



3.2. Cultivating the Blue Revolution: the Geographic Distribution of the Shrimp-farming Production-Consumption System

Subsistence-based extensive aquaculture has been practiced by small farmers for millennia. Its origin appears to be placed in China around 2.000 B.C (Stickney 2005), but it has been largely practised throughout Asia until the present. It was in the late 19th century that advances in aquaculture began to be associated with the development of new technology based on scientific studies. However, during the first half of the 20th century commercial aquaculture was incipient and restricted to few cultivated species (trout and tilapia) mainly in North America and Europe. This trend changed in the decade of the 1960s when aquaculture began to capture the attention of entrepreneurs, university, researchers and consumers in the global North. As a result, aquaculture became a promising new industrial sector in a context in which wild capture fisheries were experiencing stagnation.

This Blue revolution coincided in time with the Second Green Revolution in which intensive production systems were applied to high-value agriculture commodities for export such as vegetables and fruits. Unlike the First Green Revolution, in these latter "revolutions" both private capital and research institutions were the principal promoters (Morales and Morales 2006). Lately, since the decades of the 1980-90s, international development agencies (IDAs) and financial institutions (IFIs) have been playing a key role in the promotion of these corporate-driven intensive production systems in highly indebted global South countries and other poor-income countries (GRAIN 1997; FAO 2011; Rivera-Ferré 2009a). As noted in the previous chapter, IFIs' management of the so-called crisis of the foreign debt served to impose Economic Adjustment Programs to indebted countries, which among other things, included the promotion of export-led non-traditional commodities such as high-value aquaculture commodities. The mainstream argument supporting these policies was that these productive activities would provide indebted countries with substantial socio-economic benefits such as increased nutrition levels, food security, income, employment, tax revenues, and most importantly, foreign exchange to repay the foreign debt. In addition, they would

convert into highly productive areas previously un-utilized and under-utilized land and water resources such as mangrove ecosystems.

In this regard, from 1988 to 1993, a third of the money committed to fisheries consisted of aid for aquaculture (Grain 1997). From 1978 to 1983, development banks provided 52% of the assistance to aquaculture expansion initiatives and aid agencies provided the other half (Nash 1987 in Ribera-Ferré 2009a). The same author provides the following numbers: during the same period 1978-1983, the share of total international aid to fisheries devoted to aquaculture development increased from 8.4% to 17.5%. Aquaculture accounted for 70% of the WB's loans portfolio for fisheries development which were largely concentrated in Asian countries. Later, from 1988 to 1995, development banks accounted for 69% of the total external funding and supported 40% of the total projects. By the end of the period, development banks were supplying roughly 92% of external funding, while bilateral and multilateral sources provided only 3 and 5 %, respectively (FAO 1997 in Ribera-Ferré 2009a).

Nowadays, aquaculture has become one of the fastest-growing animalfeed producing sectors. In the last three decades (1980-2010) global fish aquaculture production for human consumption has expanded by almost 12 times, at an average annual rate of 8.8% (FAO 2012). Cultivated fish production takes place in different environments- fresh water, brackish water, and marine waters- and includes the following groups: finfishes, crustaceans, mollusks, amphibians, aquatic reptiles and other aquatic animals such as sea cucumbers, sea urchins, sea squirts and jelly fish. Among them, freshwater fishes dominate global aquaculture production, accounting for 54.4% in 2010. They are followed by mollusks (23.6%) and crustaceans (9.6%). For the same years, global crustaceans aquaculture was divided between freshwater species and marine species, accounting for 29.4% and 70.9% of the total production, respectively[34] (FAO 2012). In this latter group, white leg shrimp

[34] In the category "marine species" there are also included those belonging to brackish waters.

(*Panaeus vannamei*) is the principal cultivated species followed by giant tiger prawn (*Panaeus monodon*)[35].

The expansion of intensive production aquaculture is also interrelated with the increase in the international fish and fishery products trade and other drivers linked to this globalization phase that were mentioned in the previous section such as trade liberalization policies, technological innovations, and changes in consumer patterns (FAO 2011). Traditionally, aquaculture fish trade has been dominated by high value species targeted at lucrative international markets[36]; however, in the last decade low value species are increasing their share of the world market. These latter species are traded in large quantities, not only nationally and within major producing areas (Asia and Latin America), but also at the international level (FAO 2012). An increasing trend in relation to high value species, which still dominate international trade, is the opening up of new markets, not only in high-income countries as traditionally was the case, but also in middle-income countries (FAO 2011). A key factor in this growth of demand for high-value fishery commodities has been the decrease in their prices resulting from the expansion of intensive industrialized systems (Rivera-Ferré 2009b; Wurmann et al. 2004). As such, behind the rise in high-value cultivated fishery consumption, there have been not only demand-driven factors (population and income growth associated with processes of urbanization and awareness of healthy diets), but also supply-driven ones. In relation to these latter factors, along with the rise in productivity and quantity, the growth of supermarkets and the retail sector in general, has been the determinant of this this increased demand (FAO 2011; Sedaca 2010). In the past two decades, this "supermarket revolution" has also arrived in many countries in the global South[37]; this, in turn, has facilitated the consumption of these high value fishery commodities among the upper and middle classes of these countries. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning

[35] There is inconsistent use of the terms “shrimp” and “prawn” within the thematic literature. In different regions of the world these terms are used for different animal groups and even within a single region usage is not consistent. Both terms originated in the United Kingdom, where "shrimp" is used for members of the family Crangonidae, while "prawn" is used for species of Palaemonidae. However, Crustacea, which do not belong to these two families, are also often termed "shrimp" and "prawn", which is where the difficulty begins. In this thesis I have adopted the term "shrimp" as the standard terminology, except when I refer to specific species.

[36] The main high value species traded are shrimp, salmon, tuna, seabass and seabream (FAO 2011).

[37] The supermarket revolution and its associated rise of consumption of high value fishery commodities has been especially important in global South countries such as China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, India, or Vietnam.

that supermarkets are leading suppliers of ready-to-eat meals and other convenience food products incorporating shrimp. Moreover, they are becoming the dominant retailers in sales of unlabeled shrimp products, which is a modality of shrimp increasingly demanded by consumers.

Shrimp continues to be the most traded fishery commodity internationally. In value terms, it accounted for about 15 % of the total value of internationally traded fishery products in 2010 (FAO 2012). In 2008, about 52 % of the world production of shrimp came from aquaculture, but the proportion of cultivated shrimp in international trade seemed to be much higher (Anderson and Li 2010). It represents a sharp increase considering that in 1982, farmed shrimp production accounted for only 15 percent of the total shrimp production (Gillett 2008).

The shrimp species currently suitable for cultivation are located mainly in tropical and semitropical regions. There is a huge disparity across the continents and geo-regions in shrimp-farming production. It mainly occurs in tropical Asian and Latin American countries[38]. In line with its dominance in world aquaculture production, currently Asia accounts for around 82% of the world shrimp-farming production. The principal Asian producers by order of importance are China, Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, India, and Bangladesh. In contrast, the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region's share is 18% (Anderson and Li 2010). Despite this small contribution to global shrimp aquaculture production, it plays a relevant role in the economies of these countries. Shrimp aquaculture was strongly promoted in this region in the 1980s and rapidly became the dominant cultivated species. However, nowadays the leading group of species is the anadromous fishes (mainly salmon/trout). In this regard, while in 2008 the production of salmon/trout accounted for 36.6 % of the volume produced in that year, crustaceans accounted for 26.7% (Wurmann 2011). These percentages also show the high degree of concentration of the cultivated species in the region, which at the same time, are export-oriented commodities. Unlike salmon/trout cultivate production, which is largely concentrated in very few countries (mainly Chile and Brazil), shrimp-farming production has a more disperse geographic distribution. For the period 2006-2008, in volume terms South America accounted for 58.2%

[38] There is also shrimp aquaculture in Africa, Europe, Middle East and North America, however, their production is very limited and is not expected to be significant in the coming years (Sadek et al. 2002).

of the total production in this regional, followed by Central America with 40.7% and the Caribbean with 1.1% (Wurmann 2011). Nevertheless, at a country level, the degree of concentration of shrimp-farming production is higher. As such, in 2002 just Ecuador, Brazil and Mexico accounted for about 72% of the total farmed production in the region. Including Colombia, Venezuela and Honduras, these six countries encompassed over 87% (Wurmann et al. 2004). Among them, Ecuador has been the leading regional producer since 1970 (Anderson and Li 2010).

On the side of consumption, three regions -US, Europe and Japan- encompass the majority of world shrimp imports (Gillett 2008). In the LAC region, the predominant form of shrimp end product is frozen shrimp (whether cooked or raw, peeled or not, whole or in tails). Canned, dried, salted and other preparations have only minor relevance. It is worth nothing that shrimp products are also consumed locally by wealthier classes. In countries such as Mexico and Brazil, national consumption is very significant when compared with the total production (Wurmann et al. 2004). In this regard, while shrimp-farming still follows in much extent the traditional South-North flow pattern, South-South flow patterns are becoming increasingly important[39].

As for other high value exported-oriented fishery commodities, the shrimp-farming value chain is a corporate-driven sector. Processors, feed- input suppliers and retailers are the most powerful actors. They are able to drive increases in prices as well as keeping down farm-gate prices for shrimp. Furthermore, in line with other export-oriented food products, a small number of large retailers control the growth of international distribution channels which in turn enable them to impose quality, safety, environmental and ethical criteria to producers and processors. In response to this retail dominance, processors are becoming more intensive, geographically concentrated, vertically integrated and linked with global supply chains (FAO 2012). This vertical integration tends to be between large shrimp producers and processors. Currently, in the LAC region two basic types of shrimp-farming producers can be identified: on the one hand, there is a dominant group of medium- and large-scale producers which are vertically integrated, export-oriented and which have highly sophisticated and mechanized systems. On the other hand, there is a minority group of small-

[39] For instance, currently China is importing shrimp, especially from Thailand, Ecuador, Vietnam and Mexico. Inland consumption is growing at 20% per year mainly head on cooked shrimp (Yun et al., 2010).

scale producers, working individually or in association. They tend to sell their crops to the former group which uses them to complete their own production and processing products (Wurmann, et al. 2004).

Historically, white leg shrimp was exclusively farmed in the LAC region while Asian shrimp producers cultivated almost exclusively the giant tiger prawn. This division allowed both regions to reach a certain "unstable equilibrium" in relation to market distribution, species and volumes. However, from 2000 Asian shrimp producers[40] started to cultivate whiteleg shrimp. This shift has brought about tremendous effects in the political economy of this commodity: a rapid rise in world shrimp supply followed by a sharp decrease in average prices, affecting export incomes all over the LAC region. This new dominance of Asian shrimp producers in this specific species, is forcing LAC producers to develop differentiated products to remain competitive (Wurmann 2011). Taking this trend into consideration, some experts project that in the medium and long term, only those which are more vertically integrated will survive in an increasingly competitive and highly vertically integrated market. In contrast, small and medium shrimp producers are likely to diminish in number (if not altogether disappear) as they will not be able to meet the export-based market requirements such as stringent quality and healthy criteria, dealing with price fluctuations, and intense competition (Wurmann et al. 2004; Wurmann 2011).

3.3. Shrimp-Farming Intensive Production Systems and their Socio-environmental Impacts

As described in the previous sections, the global shrimp-farming production-consumption system- based on intensive monoculture production systems for export- shares many commonalities with others export-led luxury food monocrops (either in the agriculture or aquaculture fields). In this section, I will briefly describe the main socio-environmental effects caused by this industry at the local level. This is important in understanding the

[40] Taiwan was the first Asian country in cultivating white leg shrimp, but rapidly was followed by countries such as China, Thailand, Indonesia and Vietnam.

reasons underlying resistance against the industry and the outcomes of these actions, as the next chapters address in the case of Ecuador.

Shrimp-farming production basically consists in the construction of ponds alongside the coastline to raise shrimp in brackish water. Changes in production and organization of the shrimp industry have been very rapid as it has grown. As the industrialization of this industry has advanced, productive systems have progressed from extensive methods with low shrimp seed densities, raised in huge earthen ponds and feed mostly with natural feed, to semi-intensive and intensive methods in which water quality and other parameters are controlled, shrimp seed comes from hatcheries and is stocked in higher densities but smaller ponds, and artificial balanced fed and antibiotics are required. The feed tends to be made up of small pelagic fish and shellfish meals and oils as shrimp is a carnivorous species. This might restrict local poor inhabitants' consumption of these traditional (cheap) sources of protein. Another concern is the possibility of residual antibiotics on the flesh. This is important because some of the antibiotics used by the industry are also used in humans, increasing the resistance of human pathogens. Therefore, while intensive methods might reduce land-use competence and fish and fishery by-catches, they result in more input-intensive and disease-prone production systems. The greater the density at which shrimps are raised, the more stress they experience, increasing the likelihood of disease outbreaks (Wurmann 2011). In this regard, shrimp aquaculture is characterized by boom-and-bust cycles, independent of improvements in sanitary measures or management techniques (Morales and Morales 2006). However, such measures can help to reduce the frequency of occurrence and/or the severity and spread of disease. Other factors contributing to the volatile nature of shrimp production are: overdevelopment of the coastal habitat, self-pollution generated by overfeeding, the practices of raised-temperature farming, overstocking, misuse of antibiotics, and lack of sanitation controls (Anderson and Fong 1997).

Other controversial aspects related to the environment are: pollution and/or eutrophication of coastal waters through pond effluents and dispersion of chemicals and nutrients, salinization of groundwater and agricultural land, and loss of biodiversity arising from a) the collection of wild gravid female shrimp and of post larvae seed and its associated by-catches, b) the introduction of exotic species that may disrupt the ecosystems and be responsible for transmitting new diseases that can affect local fauna, and c) the conversion of natural

ecosystems, particularly mangroves, for the construction of shrimp ponds. With the deforestation of mangroves, the many environmental regulatory functions and services they provide also disappear. In this regard, mangrove ecosystems act as coastal protection, they reduce erosion, they absorb pollutants and therefore contribute to water purification; and they maintain biodiversity and fishery stocks by providing nutrients and nursery space for many juvenile species. There is a positive correlation between the extent of mangrove and marine production (Lebel et al. 2002). At a social level, mangroves supply local populations with fuel, building materials, charcoal, agriculture, forage for livestock, paper, medicines, tannin, textiles, leather and food (mainly fish, shellfish and crabs). As these areas tend to be managed as commons, these environmental services and functions tend to benefit directly a large population which relies on these mangrove resources for its livelihood. Shrimp-farming production itself has low labor requirements compared to mangrove's gathering activities (Fundecol 2002); hence, this disadvantaged population is deprived of easy access to their traditional source of protein, while the generation of employment is not always equivalent or sufficient to secure the income required to buy substitute fish and fishery products.

To sum up, the destruction of this ecosystem has detrimental consequences at a local level, especially for poor-income social groups who are the most dependent on mangrove resources; mangrove dispossession brings about a worsening of existing inequalities, reinforcing marginalization and food vulnerability of poor-income/ethnic-racial local social groups. In this sense, shrimp-farming production-consumption system can be seen as an instance of ecological unequal exchange. That is, while shrimp-farming is consumed by a small globalized high-income group, the socio-ecological liabilities are borne by a large localized low-income population. Facing this situation, this disadvantaged group may engage in collective actions of resistance and the formation of social movements, as in the case of Ecuador. Traditionally, scholars have conceptualized these political actors as "livelihood movements" (Robbins 2003), expressions of an "environmentalism of the poor"

(Martínez-Alier 2002b), and/or members of an "environmental justice movement" (Schlosberg 2007).

Figure 4 summarizes the main social, health and ecological impacts associated with shrimp-farming production.

Figure 4: Social, Health, and Environmental Consequences of the Increase of Shrimp Intensive Aquaculture.

Social	Privatization of communal areas such mangrove ecosystems and related displacement of mangrove gatherers from their customary land areas.
	Increase of TNCs power throughout the commodity chain. Corporate-driven processors, input suppliers and retailers the most powerful actors within it.
	Disappearance of traditional ways of life
	Direct competition with human being for fish intended to animal feed.
	Increase of poverty, inequality and food insecurity.
	Rural migration
	Loss of traditional knowledge.
	Expulsion of small shrimp farmers from the market for not meeting stringent market standards and risks.
Health	Undernutrition.
	Increase of human bacteria resistance to the antibiotics.
Environmental	Overexploitation of fish resources to produce fishmeal
	Destruction and/or degradation of coastal ecosystems (mainly mangroves) and loss of the services and function they provide
	Pollution of the coast due to residues and nutrients accumulation
	Soil and water salinization
	Decrease of biodiversity
	Increase of by-catch due to the collection of wild gravid female shrimp to provide to hatcheries. In the past, it was also due to collection of post larvae seed farming.

B) Resisting the Ecuadorian Shrimp-farming Frontier: the Implementation of a Novel Identity Politics Strategy.

CHAPTER IV

The Politics of Identification in a Shrimp Conflict in Ecuador: The Political Subject, 'Pueblos Ancestrales del Ecosistema Manglar' (Ancestral Peoples of the Mangrove Ecosystem)[41]

Abstract

Due to the success of Ecuadorian and (Latin American) cultural identity politics from the 1990 onwards, claims to indigeneity in this region have become a powerful basis for securing collective land rights. Recent literature on ethnic-racial identities provides many fascinating examples of 'indigeneity' that challenge dominant conceptions of this category. The present case study counters the hegemonic assumption that considers ethnic identifications within a single racial category. Here, the social movement identified with the political subject 'Ancestral Peoples of the Mangrove Ecosystem' has transcended the 'racialized' divisions usually linked to ethnic identities by articulating a contested ethnic discourse based on the concepts of 'ancestrality' and 'peoplehood' in order to demand collective rights. This political subject is self-represented as 'ancestral peoples' who belong to a specific natural ecosystem while being constituted from a 'multi-racialized' group.

Keywords

C*onflict, Ecuador, Ethnicity, Politics, Race*

4.1. Introduction

Today, scholars of both race and ethnicity agree in terms of conceptualizing ethno-racial identities as shifting, de-centered, relational constructions, subject to political mobilization and entangled with other subject positions such class, gender, and sexuality. These factors emphasize the fluidity of ethno-racial meanings, as well as their contested character (socio-

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political categories). Accordingly, recent literature on ethno-racial identities focuses on the processes of identity construction and deployment, moving beyond traditional debates on definitions and legitimacy, which are based on reductionist dualisms such as authentic/false, race/ethnicity, or indigenous/non-indigenous (Anderson 2007; Hatthaway 2010; Wade 2010; Warren and Jackson 2002). In this regard, ethno-racial scholars deploy concepts such as 'articulation', 'self-positioning', or 'emergent indigeneities' in order to better grasp these complex realities (Clifford 2001; French 2004; Hatthaway 2010; Li 2010; Warren and Jackson 2002).

Contemporary global phenomena such as transnational migration, urbanization, and ethno-racial social movements have created experiences that continue to challenge narrow constructions of indigeneity that depend on geographic or cultural fixity. An important role has been played here by Ecuadorian (and Latin American) cultural identity politics. Since the 1990s indigenous movements throughout Latin America (and, to a lesser extent, afro-descendant movements) have been claiming collective rights based on their radical cultural difference from the dominant 'white-mestizo' society. These claims have been recognized within constitutional bodies across several Latin American countries, which, in turn, have re-defined the legal status of indigenous people (and afro-descendants) and the very meaning of citizenship (Jackson and Warren 2005; Lucero 2008; Yashar 2005). In these countries claims to indigeneity have thus become a powerful basis for securing collective land rights. Recent literature on ethno-racial identities provides many examples of 'indigeneity' being deployed in novels ways (see Bauer 2009; French 2004; Jackson and Warren 2005; Wade 2010). Regarding interrelations between indigeneity and race, the Honduran case stands out. Here, the afro-Honduran social movement has self-positioned and has been recognized as 'indigenous' (Afroindigeneity), challenging a dominant conception of indigeneity that is tied to the ethno-racial category of 'Indian' (Anderson 2007). The present case study goes further, challenging the hegemonic assumption that considers ethnic identifications within a single racial category. The social movement identified with the political subject 'Pueblos Ancestrales del Ecosistema Manglar' (PAEM), or 'Ancestral Peoples of the Mangrove Ecosystem ', which is presented in this article, has transcended the 'racialized' divides usually linked to ethnic identities by articulating a contested ethnic discourse based on the concepts of 'ancestrality' and 'peoplehood' in order to demand collective rights. This political subject is self-represented as 'ancestral peoples' who belong to a specific natural ecosystem while being constituted from a 'multi-racialized' group.

This article starts with a general presentation of the location in which this political subject has been shaped, focusing on cultural and environmental specificities. Then, it moves on to analyze the development of Ecuadorian shrimp farming, which has been a direct disrupting and oppressive factor in the recent history of these mangrove ecosystems. Next, the article examines the complex network of relationships around the PAEM, which includes the mediators and mediations through which this political subject has been constituted. Finally, the article concludes with a characterization of this novel political subject's particularities, and some reflections on the implications of this study for future research.

The main data collection for this article was carried out during 5 months in 2010, during which time thirty-nine interviews were conducted. During the first two months I resided in Quito where the national organization office of the mangrove peoples' movement is situated. I then moved to the southern province of Oro, where I lived in the house of one of the C-CONDEM (National Coordinating Committee for the defense of the Mangrove Ecosystem) local spokespersons; I also travelled to the province of Esmeraldas, to interview several local leaders. The work included both semi-structured and extended interviews with national and local leaders, community members, academics, NGO representatives, and ministerial employees. Additionally, I carried out two group interviews with the main national leaders and attended three internal organizational C-CONDEM meetings. References to the self-representation discourses of Ecuador are principally based on a review of printed material and archival resources.

4.2. The Ecuadorian Coast: Its Mangrove Ecosystems and Inhabitants

In contrast with the rest of the Ecuadorian coastal region, which in the contemporary period has relied on primary exported activities, the coastal strip remained relatively free of massive disturbance until the development of shrimp farming at the end of the 1960s, as outlined below. In this intertidal zone, mangroves were the dominant vegetation. 'Mangrove' refers to both trees and shrubs that have developed morphological adaptations to a tidal environment. They are widely recognized as one of the most productive coastal habitats in the tropics: they support a diversity of marine and terrestrial life through "food web interactions" (FAO 2007). They act as refuges and nurseries for many flora and fauna including fish, shellfish, and crustaceans. They are also valued for their key role as a provider of many socio-economic and environmental services, such as maintaining water quality in estuaries, protecting shorelines from storm damage and erosion, producing and exporting

organic matter from estuaries, and retaining sediments and heavy metals released into estuarine waters.

Figure 5: Coastal Provinces of Ecuador

Elaborated by the author

In Ecuador, this ecosystem has been occupied by a stable human population since the pre-Columbian period (Marcos 2005). For a long time the mangroves served only the traditional productive activities of their inhabitants because up to the late 1960s mangrove ecosystems were considered wastelands that did not contribute to increasing national economic profits (ECOBIOTEC 2009a; Snedaker et al. 1986). Ironically, this disdain, in turn, allowed for the ecosystems' conservation. The main traditional uses and practices were the cutting of trees for firewood and charcoal, the elaboration of small-diameter poles for light constructions, and domestic and medicinal use; artisanal fishing; and shellfish and crab gathering (Bodero

and Robadue 1995; Snedaker et al. 1986). However, nowadays only the latter uses are still in practice.

In general, mangroves gatherers live in conditions of social vulnerability and poverty. It is estimated that 10,029 inhabitants (0.08% of the national total) live in areas with mangroves (C-CONDEM 2007a). With little differentiation along the Ecuadorian coast these populations consistently exhibit low wages, informal labor patterns, and exploitation by economic brokers (ECOBIOTEC 2009a). They also suffer from malnutrition, low levels of education, and deficient public infrastructure and servicesĞ such as health, potable water, sewer systems, and garbage collection (C-CONDEM 2007a; Ocampo-Thomason 2005).

Conversely, the mangrove inhabitants' traditional practices show some differences across the Ecuadorian coastal provinces, which reflect social and cultural diversity. In Esmeraldas province, the population linked to mangroves is mostly considered Afro-Ecuadorian. It is believed that they are descendants of slaves who reached the Esmeraldas coast after the sinking of two ships at the beginning of the Spanish conquest. Later, at the end of the nineteenth century, rubber fever attracted groups of *liberados* (ex-slaves) from the interandean Chota Valley (province of Carchi) to Esmeraldas, as well as afro-descendants from Colombia (Estupiñán 1976)[42]. Traditionally in this province, mangrove resource exploitation activities have been divided along gender and age lines, where artisanal fishing activities are considered men's tasks, and cockle and other mollusk gathering is related to women's labor. However, more recently, with the increased scarcity of wild fisheries, this division of labor is being blurred (Mera 1999; Ocampo-Thomason 2005; Torres and Yépez 1999).

In the central-southern provinces, mangrove populations consist of *mestizo* and indigenous people. The latter group is a minority and is limited to a few isolated places, principally islands. This can be explained by the economic history of the coast, which was characterized by harsh conditions of exploitation during the colonial period, and by a thorough process of modernization during the republican era. Until recently it was believed that the indigenous people of the mangroves were wiped out in the eighteenth century, as a consequence of colonial transformations. However, during the last decades of the twentieth century, a

[42] The 'rubber fever' refers to the large demand of the natural rubber latex that occurred between the second half of the XIX century and the Second World War. Due to the emergence of the automobile industry and other industrial sectors in Europe, rubber became a valuable and internationally traded commodity which was extracted from rubber trees until the advent of synthetic rubber.

process of re-ethnicization among indigenous descendants began. This resulted in the recognition by the state of a novel ethnic group in the central-southern province mangrove area: the Pueblo Montubio (Constitution 2008).[43] In this region, in contrast to Esmeraldas, artisanal fishing and shellfish and crab gathering are considered male tasks. This was observed during the data collection process and mentioned frequently by my interviewees.

4.3. The Development of the Shrimp-farming Industry in Ecuador

The modern shrimp farming industry has its origins in the late 1960s. Concentrated largely in tropical developing countries, principally in Asia and Latin America, it was seen as an alternative to over-exploited wild marine stocks (FAO 2008; Martínez-Alier 2001). It has been promoted by aid agencies, international financial institutions, and governments as a means by which to increase economic growth, reduce poverty, and improve food security (EJF 2003, 2004; FAO 2008; Rivera-Ferre 2009a).

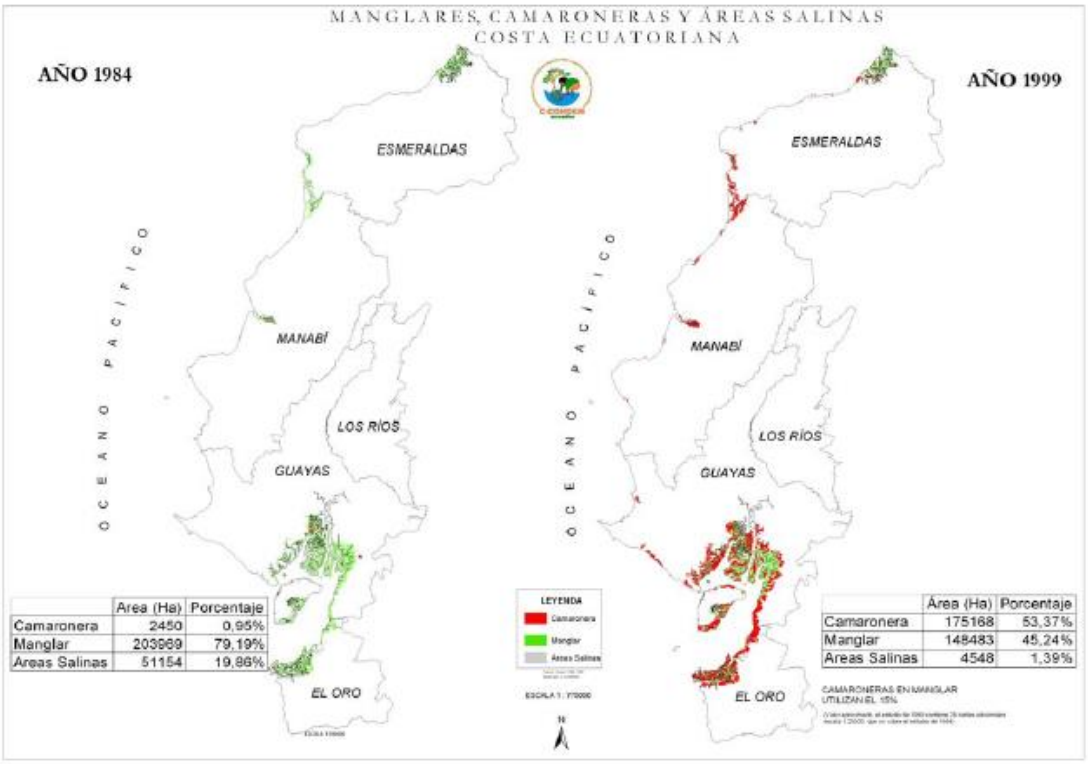
Ecuador is one of the first and top leading Western shrimp-producing countries. The origin of Ecuadorian shrimp aquaculture can be traced back to the limited industrialization process of the mid-1960s (Larrea 2006). Specifically this industry was stimulated through land concessions, tax breaks, easy loans, and technical assistance (EJF 2004). Therefore, in the following decades, the new sector rapidly developed until it reached an average 3.5 percent contribution to the GDP during the 1990s (Marriot 2003). Today, around the 90 percent of Ecuadorian shrimp production comes from the aquaculture industry (Marriot 2003).

In Ecuador, as in other producer countries, the shrimp industry is a powerful sector dominated by middle- and upper-income economic classes with close associations to key personalities from within state institutions (EJF 2003; Garí 2000; Olsen and Coello 1995). The development of shrimp-farming activities in Ecuador has involved the construction of shrimp ponds in the intertidal and neighboring upland environments along the coasts. Initially, these ponds were located in salt flats where construction costs were minimal. However, as the pressure on land increased, the ponds began to displace mangrove forest areas and even to be located in supra-tidal lands. Prior to shrimp farming, some parts of the mangroves were already dedicated to agriculture (Bodero and Robabue 1995). However,

[43] The Pueblo Montubio is located along Ecuador's inland coastal zones, where approximately 50.000 Montubio families rely on the agricultre for their livelihood.

according to the Ecuadorian Military Cartographic Institute (CLIRSEN), the 26 percent loss of mangrove forests between 1969 and 1999 is attributable mainly to the uncontrolled expansion of shrimp aquaculture (CLIRSEN 2007).

Figure 6: Mangroves, Shrimp Ponds, and Salt Flats along the Ecuadorian Coast in 1984 and 1999



Source: C-CONDEM, 2007a

Beyond shrimp farming's contribution to wetland habitat loss, additional environmental impacts include: pollution and reduced water flow, soil and water salinization, depletion of ground and surface water supplies, reduction in wild fish and shrimp populations (due to loss of their habitat and by-catch fatalities),[44] as well as biological pollution of native shrimp stocks (EJF 2004; Olsen and Coello 1995; Snedaker at al. 1986).

Shrimp farming has resulted in the physical blocking of mangrove gatherers' access to and thus availability of mangrove resources and services (Fajardo and Torres 2004; Martínez-

[44] The collection of wild shrimp brood stock and post-larvae specimens, which are needed for stocking the ponds, uses a line net system that also collects other species.

Alier 2001), since the shrimp industry has privatized land that was once held as common property. This change has caused those who fish in mangrove areas to devote more time and energy to food collection while facing lower chances that they will gather sufficient shellfish for self-consumption and local sale (FUNDECOL 2002; Mera 1999). Furthermore, since most farmed shrimp production is exported to wealthy countries, the resources that are used are also unavailable for local consumption. Accordingly, food insecurity, poverty, and landlessness have increased among local people in the mangrove regions (C-CONDEM 2007a; Garí 2000; Ocampo-Thomason 2005). Additionally, there has been an increase of corruption, threats, intimidation, violence, and murder in these regions (C-Condem 2007a; EJF 2003; FAO 2008; Fajardo and Torres 2004; Garí 2000).

In 1999 Ecuador's shrimp aquaculture industry experienced its worst outbreak of viral disease, which led to a catastrophic crash. Historically, the industry has suffered 'boom and bust' disease cycles, due to its biological and ecological characteristics (EJF 2004; Marriot 2003), but the spread of the white-spot virus in 1999 to all four coastal provinces led to the abandonment of 40 percent of shrimp ponds. The following year, according to The National Aquaculture Chamber, out of an existing 180,000 hectares of shrimp farms, only 50,000 hectares were under cultivation (EJF 2004). However, since 2003, farmed shrimp exports have continually increased until present. Put simply, where the benefits of shrimp farming have tended to accrue to a powerful minority, most of the social and environmental impacts are suffered by poor and powerless populations.

4.4. From International Awareness of Mangroves to the Ambiguous Politics of the Ecuadorian State

At the same time as the shrimp aquaculture industry was beginning to expand rapidly in Ecuador in the late 1960s, the Ecuadorian government turned its attention to managing mangrove forests (Bodero and Robadue 1995). This change in attitude (at least in formal and rhetorical terms) can be attributed to the rising influence of environmental concerns at the international level, as well as to greater understanding of the multiple functions and values of wetlands (Matthews 1993). Worldwide, many scientific publications in this period demonstrated mangroves' physical and regulatory role as a coastline stabilizer, as well as their biological productivity. At the international governance level, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands was established in 1971, which was significant in terms of policies concerning

mangrove management.[45] Influenced by mainstream conservation approaches, the Convention exhorts the protection of wetlands, including mangroves, through integral reserves conceived of as wildlife sanctuaries without human presence (Cormier-Salem 2006). While this mainstream preservation paradigm shifted, during the 1990s, to a new paradigm that is more ecosystem-oriented and participatory, Ecuadorian law is still based mainly on the old sanctuaries paradigm. As a response to international concern, Ecuador adopted, during the 1970s and 1980s, a centralized government approach to mangrove management. This consisted principally of several laws and regulations prohibiting the destruction and alteration of mangroves and the installation of shrimp farm ponds (Bodero and Robaue 1995). A key moment came in 1985, when CLIRSEN published a document that revealed extensive mangrove damaged cause by shrimp aquaculture and urbanization processes (CLIRSEN 1990). In response to this, the government enacted Executive Decree 824, which declared mangrove conservation, protection, and restoration a matter of public interest. In addition, the government prohibited the traditional resource extraction practices of local users.

In general, with the exception of the creation in 1979 of the Manglares Churute ecological reserve (in the province of Guayas), the government did not allocate financial or administrative resources to the implementation of these mangrove conservation laws (Bodero and Robaue 1995). To understand this behavior, it is necessary to keep in mind the Ecuadorian economic situation during this period. In 1982 the country declared itself unable to pay its external debts; it was compelled by international lenders to increase primary export production in order to accumulate funds with which to pay this debt (Larrea 2006). As a consequence, the country enacted economic policies and programs that were contrary to its own domestic environmental legislation. Weak governance has, from the outset, characterized the mangrove management program, along with corruption and other illegalities (C-CONDEM 2007a; EJF 2003; FUNDECOL 2002). According to CLIRSEN's data, in spite of the fact that mangrove destruction was illegal, during the period 1969ğ1984

[45] The Ramsar Convention, adopted in 1971, enforced from 1975, was the first global, inter-governmental conservation treaty dealing with one specific type of ecosystem. It provides the framework for international cooperation for the conservation of wetland habitats, and aims to stem the loss of wetlands and to ensure their conservation and wise use. The convention currently has 135 contracting parties; 1,235 wetlands have been designated for inclusion in Ramsar's List of Wetlands of International Importance, covering some 106 million hectares (see www.ramsar.org).

the rate of mangrove loss per year was 1,439 hectares; from 1984 to 1987 it was 2,434 hectares; and from 1987 to 1991 it was 3,348 hectares (Bodero and Robaue 1995).

This evidence forced the centralized government to acknowledge the failure of its policies; in the late 1980s and at the beginning of 1990s the Costal Resource Management Program (PMRC) was launched. During Phase I of the program (1986ğ2000) PMRC played a key role in the transition from the previous and ineffective 'no use' policy to a more participative approach to mangrove management (Olsen et al. 1993). Here, it is important to keep in mind that from the early 1980s, the United Nations published a number of reports that emphasized the importance of traditional knowledge and local participation in the conservation of mangrove ecosystems (Matthews 1993). In addition, the influence of the social forestry movement on national policies and practices in the Asian mangrove regions was important for the Ecuadorian context. This movement, which led to changes in how international aid was being allocated, enabled the PMRC to access aid funding for the purpose of implementing small pilot projects based on integrated and participative management approaches (Bodero and Robaue 1995). As a result, the first 'special area management zones' were implemented along the Ecuadorian coast and the first 'user group agreements' were established. Both practices served to empower traditional users and to involve them in the management of the mangroves. Additionally, the institutional figure of the 'Ranger Corps' was created. They have played an active role in helping traditional users to organize themselves and in the drafting of user group agreements, although it was not until 1999 that this community-based stewardship achieved legal status. In that year, Ecuadorian President Jamil Mahuad enacted Executive Decree 1102, in which mangrove cutting was prohibited and the opportunity for traditional users to participate in mangrove management was legally established. According to my interviewees,

> Despite the fact we did not the claim the legal status as "use and custody" [as per Executive Decree 1102], but for "administration", this legal status (use and custody) allows any community to be in charge of the custody and care of an area, but also would give the shellfish gatherers more legal mechanisms with which to fight against the shrimp-farm owners. That is the reason why we saw this [Executive Decree 1010] as great progress, despite its limitations (group interview with two FUNDECOL members, September 6, 2010).[46]

[46] "Nosotros no pedíamos solo la figura legal de 'uso y custodia' (as Executive Decree 1102 does), sino su "administración", esta figura (uso y custodia) garantiza que esa comunidad está encargada de la custodia **y**

Several events and actors have contributed to this resolution: in 1997ğ1998 the el Niño climatic event caused severe damage along the coast, including substantial damage to shrimp pond infrastructure; in 1999, during the 7th Conference of Contracting Parties to the RAMSAR Convention, Resolution V11.21-15 called for the establishment of a moratorium on shrimp farming; also in 1999, as noted above, a devastating outbreak of the white-spot virus put the viability of the whole shrimp industry of Ecuador in danger. In addition to these more structural influences, a number of local factors, reflecting a rise in grassroots collective action, were also increasing pressure on management systems. These factors, which relate closely to the development of the identity of PAEM, will be discussed in detail in the following section, establishing a basis for closer examination of this new ethno-racial political subject.

4.5. Resistance: From Grassroots Local Struggles to the Emergence of a Regional Movement

As mentioned above, the harsh socio-economic conditions experienced by mangrove gatherers made them vulnerable to the impacts of the shrimp aquaculture industry. The absence of the state as a provider of basic needs, accompanied by the area's inherent isolation, and a lack of grassroots organizations pushed these vulnerable people into negotiating directly with a far more powerful actor: the shrimp-farming industry. In an initial phase, shrimp entrepreneurs gained the support of most of the locals by arguing that they would offer employment and local development. This was true during the process of pond construction and, more recently, when local people provided shrimp owners with shrimp larva (Fajardo and Torres 2004; FUNDECOL 2002). However, as expansion of the shrimp ponds shifted to a massive scale, wild fisheries started to become scarce and traditional users were unable to move freely through mangrove areas in search of food because the ponds were guarded as private property. There was also increasing awareness of the socio-ecological damage of shrimp farming and, with it, a rise in social unrest. Initial local opposition in specific areas was supported by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and technical staff, such as members of the Ranger Corps. This early opposition consisted mainly

cuidado de ese terreno y eso le daba más mecanismos legales a las concheras para enfrentar los camaroneros. Por eso lo vimos como un buen avance, a pesar de sus limitaciones".

of reporting illegal shrimp pond expansions and trying to ensure that due process would be followed, once violators were identified. However, the asymmetric power balance between shrimp farming and mangrove gathering actors, strongly in the favor of the former, led to rapid expansion of the shrimp aquaculture industry. Shrimp farmers were able to act with impunity, as is evidenced by the extreme rates of mangrove ecosystem loss along the coastline.

In spite of the many difficulties associated with articulating initiatives of opposition, in the area of Muisne (south of Esmeraldas), at the end of 1970s, a strong well-organized movement began, directly linked to the Peasant Organization of Muisne (OCAME). In this zone, using peasant-oriented models of intervention in rural areas, two priests, in line with liberation theology,[47] performed intensive organizational work with mangrove gathering actors. As a consequence, a solid associative structure was articulated. Working with OCAME, in 1991 a group of Catholic youth was set up during the time of the first shrimp virus, which would lead eventually to the grassroots ecological organization *Fundación Para la Defensa Ecológica*, or FUNDECOL (Foundation for Ecological Defense). As one of its members relates,

> Muisne has a long tradition of fighting. It started with our experience of the liberation theology movement. First, the struggle was a peasant struggle, with the OCAME, and then, with the government of Febres Cordero it dispersed; there were many people assassinated. Then, some of us split off in order to study in Chimborazo where we had ties of friendship with Monseñor Proaño, while others kept fighting. Afterwards, many of us went back and rejoined the struggle in Muisne, from there FUNDECOL was born (August 6, 2010).[48]

Due to its history, FUNDECOL membership consisted of a mixture of highly educated young individuals, traditional mangrove users, peasants, and labor union militants (Torres and Yépez 1999). Initially, its actions were focused on mangrove vigilance and the reporting

[47] Once the Episcopal Conference of Ecuador announced its support for national agrarian reform, the liberation theology was put forth by the progressive sectors of the Catholic Church. This progressive measure was immediately supported during the Second Vatican Council (1963) and The Second Conference of Latin American Bishops (Medellin, 1968).

[48] "Muisne tiene una larga tradición de lucha. Empieza con la experiencia de la teología de la liberación. Primero la lucha era campesina, con la OCAME, y luego con el gobierno de Febres Cordero se dispersa, hubo muchos asesinados. Entonces, unos cuantos de nosotros nos abrimos para estudiar a Chimborazo por los vínculos con Monseñor Proaño, pero otros siguieron peleando. Después muchos regresamos y nos juntamos a la lucha, de ahí sale FUNDECOL".

of offenders to the authorities. Later, the organization expanded its objectives toward conservation and community development. FUNDECOL's praxis was based on an essentialized narrative that stressed a direct relationship between cultural identity and the mangrove ecosystem, conceptualized as a 'territory.' As two of its intellectual members state: "The loss of territory [the mangrove ecosystem] means, for ancient communities, the loss of the space where they belong, where they self-identify, where they place themselves, recognize themselves, where they self-reproduce and transcend"[49] (Torres and Yépez 1999:164). Hence, its overall objective was the conservation and restoration of the mangrove ecosystem as the basis for rural development, by means of strengthening identification of mangrove gatherers with their ecosystem (Fajardo and Torres 2004). This work facilitated the emergence of a feeling of belonging, an 'Us'Ğ 'Ancestral Users of the Mangrove' with a shared history and subjectivity. FUNDECOL's narrative was influenced by both the ethno Afro-Colombian movement that developed in the early 1990s (see Escobar 2008; Restrepo 2002) and by its Ecuadorian counterpart (Ocampo-Thomason 2005; Walsh et al. 2005). During the mid-1990s, north of Esmeraldas, near the Colombian border, a dynamic movement of intellectual-activist and communitarian leaders called *Proceso de Comunidades Negras*ğPCN (Process of Black Communities) began to take shape. Primarily, they focused on the claim of territorial rights, based on the historical experiences of *cimarronaje*[50] from the period of the Spanish conquest up to the official end of slavery in 1851. This ethnicity-claiming process had its climax in 1998 when the new Constitution of Ecuador recognized Afro-Ecuadorians as an ethnic group and granted them the fifteen collective rights guaranteed to indigenous peoples in Ecuador, among them the right to territory. However, access to these rights has not been formally supported by legal regulation and although the ethno-organizational of the Afro-Ecuadorian community has had an impact, this has been limited to the local level (Walsh et al. 2005). Within this context, FUNDECOL made its first contact with the main gatherer and artisanal fishing organizations in the north. This relationship was strengthened in 1996 when FUNDECOL gave its support to afro-descendant organizations' claims for inclusion of the northern mangrove ecosystems within the National Protected Areas System (Fajardo and Torres 2004). Although FUNDECOL

[49] "La pérdida de territorio, para las comunidades de asentamiento ancestral significa la pérdida de un espacio a donde se pertenecen, en el que se identifican y reconocen, en donde se reproducen y en el que trascienden".
[50] It is conceptualized as the escapes and the strategies of escape of the slavery regime. These people, immersed in the dense jungle, settled communitarian and autonomous spaces called Palenques, where they developed and strengthened their identity and collective action (Walsh et al. 2005).

adopted the identitarian and territorial discourses of PCN, it did not acknowledge their claims to their afro-ethnic identity. As a FUNDECOL member relates:

> As the discussion concerning the blacks of Ecuador began, there was a manner of distinguishing between people, the black is black and the white is white. However, there came a time when it was claimed that this was not the proper way and the mangrove struggle was born. A struggle based on where its people are really living, in the mangroves. And we started to discuss that yes we are black people but also we are mangrove people, where there are other peoples too, and that we need to join together with these others peoples, and we have done it properly up until now in Ecuador (September 9, 2010).[51]

Here it is worth mentioning that apart from the ethno afro-Ecuadorian movement in the north of Esmeraldas, there were no other political organizing processes characterized by ethno-racial identity along the Ecuadorian coast. Whereas mangrove dwellers from this area were demanding environmental justice in terms of ethnicity (Ocampo-Thomason 2005), the remaining majority of mangrove people identified themselves by other economic activities such as shellfish or crab gathering. What is consistent is that in the mangroves of Ecuador, people are resisting environmental dispossession in ways that resignify indigeneity. This raises the following questions: does indigeneity have a core of essential criteria that describe specific oppressed social groups and justify its attached rights, or is it better understood as a term that is subject to changing boundary politics and epistemologies according to history and politics? In this regard, is it possible to imagine indigeneity beyond race or "blood and soil" principles?

In Latin America the concept of 'indigenous peoples' has been traditionally associated with a single racialized cultural difference derived from its historical continuity of the original inhabitants of a country (Bowen 2000). The usage of these assumptions, despite being questioned by contemporary social theory, wherein the conception of culture has shifted away from the idea of an inherent stock of traits to the active process of self-making, has been defended as a mode to redress past and present wrongs (Kenrick and Lewis 2004).

[51] "En un momento cuando se inició la discusión del negro en Ecuador sí que hubo esto de apartar, el negro es negro y el blanco blanco, pero en un momento se dijo esto no va por ahí y nace todo esto del manglar que es donde realmente el pueblo estaba viviendo y se empezó también a discutir, que sí somos pueblo negro pero y también pueblo manglar donde también hay otros, y en ese otro tenemos que juntarnos y lo hemos hecho bien hasta el momento en Ecuador".

Therefore, normative approaches to indigeneity, in which issues of power and dispossession are central, have gained more acceptance among scholars and activists, replacing earlier analytical ones (McIntosch et al. 2002). However, the very assumptions underlying the dominant concepts of indigeneityǴ racialized cultural difference and primo-occupantsǴ act as limiting criteria for many (neo-)colonial dispossessed social groups.

Due to its economic history, the ethno Afro-Ecuadorian discourse has had less receptivity in the south of Esmeraldas. Here, coupled with the boom of banana production during the 1950sǧ1960s, *mestizos* from the province of Manabí settled in the mangrove region. As a consequence, traditional mangrove users in the south, including FUNDECOL members, perceive themselves to be "multi-racial"Ǵ albeit mainly afro and *mestiza*Ǵ populations.

Since its beginnings, FUNDECOL has fostered cross-cultural and cross-boundary alliances in order to strengthen its own contestation activities as well as to articulate a broader movement of resistance; it has cooperated with universities and national and international environmental organizations. As a result of these collaborations, it was a co-founder of two international networks: IsaNet in 1997 and Red Manglar International[52] in 2001 (Fajardo and Torres 2004; Torres and Yépez 1999). Significant in this international process, due to the global visibility it brought to their struggle, were two appearances of Greenpeace's Rainbow Warrior ship: first in 1998, during a period of national activist volatility in support of mangrove conservation, when the ship docked in Muisne, and then again in 1999. A FUNDECOL member commented:

> It was important that the communities said to the world what they thought. And we knew that Greenpeace had a powerful communication system. The alliance with Latin American Greenpeace gave us the anticipated result because Greenpeace came with the Rainbow ship, reached Musine and we met, while all the television companies covered the event. It was the first time that Greenpeace had been here. The objective was to raise our voices in a single front against the shrimp-farming industry (June 7, 2010).[53]

[52] IsaNet is an international action network opposed to the shrimp-farming industry; it consists of organized groups from both producer and consumer countries. FUNDECOL ended its relationship with IsaNet in 1998 because of a difference in points of view. This experience was the starting point for the formation of the next international network, this time at the Latin American level (Fajardo and Torres 2004).

[53] "Era importante que las comunidades dijeran al mundo qué pensaban y sabíamos que Greenpeace tenía un sistema de comunicación fuerte, y había un Greenpeace Latino AméricaŚy esa alianza nos dio el resultado esperado porque Greenpeace viene con el barco, llegan a Muisne y nos reunimos, todas las teles lo cubrieron, era la primera vez que llegaba Greenpeace. El objetivo era levantar la voz en un frente contra la industria del camarón".

The year 1998 was a particularly strategic one for the movement because in the following year the moratorium for mangrove preservation (Decree 1907), declared in 1994, was due to end; it was also the year when Ecuador's shrimp production peaked. This critical situation triggered a symbolic performance: around 400 people from grassroots user organizations of the Ecuadorian coastal provinces, environmental NGOs, intellectual-activists, and media reporters broke the walls of an illegal shrimp pond and proceeded to reforest the area with mangrove trees. The participants in this action made a public declaration, which demanded that the Ecuadorian government implement a permanent ban on mangrove cutting and called for the delivery of all mangrove areas into the custody of ancestral users' organizations, under common stewardships:

> We presented a proposal to the state where we demanded the "administration" of all the mangroves. This legal status not only gives you the right to "use and care", but also the right to control the territory and to access the judicial system in order to ensure that the law is upheld. Moreover, it also acknowledges our territorial rights (group interview with 2 FUNDECOL members, September 6, 2010).[54]

The Minister of the Environment responded by granting a continuation of the 1994 moratorium and by punishing illegal shrimp farming offenders (Bulletin NŪ14 del WRM, August, 1998). Ultimately, this event served as the basis for the articulation of the various local mangrove users' organizations into a national coalition, *Coordinadora Nacional para la Defensa del Ecosistema Manglar*, or C-CONDEM (National Coordinating Committee for the defense of Mangrove Ecosystem), which was created, once again, by the leadership of FUNDECOL. As the C-CONDEM leader observed,

> [T]he C-CONDEM was only created on paper, and FUNDECOL was leading the process. We wanted to create a national movement. Then we started to mobilize Ś It is a radical, political and defensive organization, not about projects. This is our role. In 1999 we brought in Greenpeace again to reaffirm our work, we consolidated our national presence, and at that time we used to

[54] "Nosotros presentamos una propuesta al Estado donde pedíamos la "administración" de los manglares. Esta figura no sólo te da el derecho de uso y cuidado sino también el derecho a controlar y acceder a la justicia para que se haga cumplir la ley. Además también reconoce nuestra territorialidad".

have exchanges between organizations, to share our experiences (August 6, 2010).[55]

In 1999, Executive Decree 1102 was enacted, which allowed for the creation of mangrove gathers' stewardships, commonly known as *custodias*. This fostered grassroots organizations' development, including their alliance with universities and NGOs, as they worked to meet the requirements for receiving these *custodia* concessions, which were imposed by the government (Ocampo-Thomason 2005). The *custodias* are valid for 10 years (with the option of renewing); in the first instance, they were primarily outside of the demarcated protected areas but with a small number inside of protected areas. Some *custodias* were co-constituted as custodial protected areas and are co-managed by the state and traditional users' organizations. Finally, some others are located in areas that fall under the legal status of protected mangrove forests but are not awarded a national protected area classification (the predominant type). However, during the period 2000ğ2009, only 24 *custodias*, which represents a relatively low number compared with the number of eligible organizations, were delivered to mangrove users' organizations (ECOBIOTEC 2009a). This outcome is a result of the high economic cost associated with administering a *custodia* and the formal requirement that binds those in charge of it to ensure the mangrove's preservation. Since there is no economic support for setting up a *custodia* the mangrove users' organizations have to self-finance both their actions to stop the expansion of the shrimp industry and the work of protecting their custodial area from exploitation by other gatherers who do not have stewardships.

In spite of the fact that the government conceded to the protestor's demands by extending the moratorium on mangrove cutting and establishing the *custodia* program, it did not take any direct legal or political actions to stop shrimp farming. Therefore, the illegal shrimp enterprises, which constituted the majority of the expansion, continued to operate with impunity and, still worse, none of the abandoned shrimp ponds reverted either to state control or to traditional gathering users (C-CONDEM 2007a).

[55] "Pero la C-CONDEM fue creada de hecho y FUNDECOL la seguía liderando, queríamos hacer esta apuesta nacional, y se empezó a motivarŚ quién quiere apostarle, esto es una organización radical, política y de defensa, y no es de proyectos, eso lo hacen las organizaciones locales. Ése es su rol. En el 99 volvemos a traer a Greenpeace para reafirmar el trabajo, ratificamos nuestra presencia nacional, ya hacíamos intercambios de experiencias entre organizaciones, contábamos nuestras experiencia".

4.6. *Pueblos Ancestrales del Ecosistema Manglar*: A Novel Ethnic Political Subject

Over the years, the critical situation of these local communities continued to deteriorate; in spite of a stabilization in levels of mangrove coverage (CLIRSEN 2007), the bio-aquatic fisheries in the region collapsed. Along with the rise of the shrimp industry, other sources of pollution also increased, including mining activities, African palm monocultures, and waste water from neighboring cities. At the same time the number of gatherers also rose, because of the lack of economic alternatives. In the case of the northern border region, this happened due to forced displacement from Colombia. Farther south it was related to the generally poor economic situation in Ecuador in the 1980s and 1990s. As a result, the possibilities for securing one's livelihood in these coastal areas have been slowly dismantled, year after year. In the face of this situation the mangrove gatherers' claims to territory rights based on ethnicity closely reflect those made previously by indigenous ethnic communities. In the following years, after the establishment of C-CONDEM, the members of this movement worked to consolidate its presence along the whole of Ecuador's coast. One local promoter was designated to each coastal province, to strengthen its members' skills in different working areas such as legal, political, and technical fields. Through this work, C-CONDEM reached out to organizations in all the coastal provinces, promoting FUNDECOL's discourse over territorial rights and cultural identity.

Then, in 2007, representatives from the main organizations affiliated to C-CONDEM celebrated the First Congress of the Ancestral Peoples of the Mangrove Ecosystem in which they self-positioned as Ancestral Peoples and, hence, claimed their collective rights,

> to reaffirm our status as distinct peoples under the enlightenment of the Ecuadorian Constitution and the Ancestral Law, with full rights based on our condition [as peoples] [collective rights, including territorial rights], we urge immediate consideration in every public policy with full recognition of our territorial rights as a fundamental and unavoidable guarantee for our continuity and transcendence as distinct peoples. The destruction of the mangrove ecosystem is the main threat to our rights and our territory; we demand measures to stop the industrial activity conducted by shrimp aquaculture (Declaration I PAEM Congress 2007).[56]

[56] Los pueblos y comunidades ancestrales del ecosistema manglar de la costa ecuatoriana, en el marco del Primer CongresoŚ. decidimos: reafirmar nuestra condición de Pueblos Ancestrales a la luz de la Constitución

As this declaration shows, the political subject PAEM was constructed on a sense of belonging connected to the idea of ancestrality *within* a natural ecosystem. These Ancestral Peoples bear a different culture, based on long-standing inhabitation of and adaptation to the mangroves, as is shown the following quotation:

> The mangrove has become, over time, a cultural referent and an element of cohesion and identification for the cultures that live there. Through the daily fishing and gathering practices in these areas, a cultural way of life has been forged. Traditional activities that are expressed in songs, in dances, in storytelling and legends have been developed around the mangroves (C-CONDEM 2007a:71).[57]

This representational discourse naturalizes the relationship between cultural identity and ecosystem place. The place-based identity of the PAEM presents similarities with the regimes of representation seen in indigenous and afro-descendant movements. For all of them, land claims are framed in a discourse in which territoriality is seen to support the maintenance of a cultural way of life that is itself represented as an appeal to environmentally sustainable reasoning and practice:

> The PAEM have managed their territory, where its history is forged, where their life is weaved every day, wisely and harmoniously. They have established an intimate and complete relationship of belonging with their territory. Their mode of organization and their subsistence economy ğ based on fishing, hunting and gathering ğ mean that these people do not have a sense of themselves as being apart from this ecosystem (C-CONDEM 2008:5).[58]

Política del Estado Ecuatoriano y del Derecho Ancestral, con plenos derechos derivados de nuestra condición (Derechos Colectivos, incluidos los Territoriales); exhortamos la consideración inmediata en todas las Políticas Públicas de la necesidad del pleno reconocimiento de Nuestros Derechos Territoriales como Garantía Fundamental e Ineludible para Nuestra Continuidad y Trascendencia como Pueblos Ancestrales. La destrucción del ecosistema manglar es la principal amenaza contra Nuestros Derechos y Nuestro Territorio, exigimos medidas para parar la actividad industrial de Acuacultura de camarón.

[57] "El manglar se ha constituido, a través del tiempo, en un referente cultural y un elemento de cohesión e identificación de culturas que allí se asientan, así a través de las faenas diarias de pesca y recolección en estas áreas se ha determinado la forma de vida de estas culturas. Faenas que se expresan en los cantos, en los bailes, en los cuentos y leyendas que alrededor del manglar se han desarrollado".

[58] "Sabia y harmónicamente los PAEM han manejado su territorio, donde se forja su historia, donde se teje todos los días su vida. Han establecido con él una íntima y absoluta relación de pertenencia. Formas de organización y economía propia, autosuficiente; pesca, caza y recolección hacen que estos pueblos no se entiendan fuera de este ecosistema".

However, traditionally this ethnic political subject has consolidated groups otherwise differentiated along racial lines. Hence, the peculiarity of this new political subject is its ethnic identification with a particular ecosystem, while being constituted from a multi-racialized group of members. As the C-CONDEM president states:

> Today we name ourselves the PAEM, but there [in the mangrove] we are indigenous, cholos, afros, montubios, mestizos, and also some of us are called whites. We live there, it is our habitat, territory, our home, our natural enterprise that god has given to us (C-CONDEM president, interview on Palabra Suelta EcuadorTV, April 2010).[59]

The term PAEM refers to the idea of native status while distancing itself from racial connotations. It enables this political subject to debate issues in terms of indigeneity and indigenous rights while at the same time transcending the racialized segregations normally associated with these concepts. In this regard, this social movement has elaborated a counter discourse that justifies its right to own mangrove ecosystems as the collective property of an ancestral community. They have done this by appealing both to 'nativeness' and their unique cultural systems, which are directly linked to the mangrove ecosystems that they inhabit.
This self-positioning from the beginning of 2007 as 'ancestral peoples' reflects a response to the Ecuadorian political climate of the period, during the elaboration of the Ecuadorian Constitution (November 2007ğJuly 2008): it built on the newly established precedent of indigenous rights protection by making a claim for a cultural identity (and its associated territorial rights). In November 2006, the Alianza País (AP) presidential candidate, Rafael Correa, won the elections and immediately called for a Constituent Assembly, which began the following November. Among the ruling coalition of AP, there were several key personalities with long histories of supporting the Ecuadorian environmental movement, and the AP's Governmental Plan contemplated explicit environmental proposals.[60] These factors

[59] "Hoy nos denominamos PAEM, ahí estamos indígenas, estamos cholos, afros, montubios, mestizos, y los denominados blancos también, estamos ahí, vivimos ahí, ese es nuestro hábitat, territorio, nuestra casa, nuestra empresa natural que dios nos ha dejado". See Palabra Suelta, Ecuador TV (April 27, 2010). http://www.ecuadortv.ec/ecutopnw.php?c=3621.

[60] Alberto Acosta was the most important member, and widely supported the environmentalist sector. However, there were other members such as Lucy Ruíz and José Serrano who also had close ties to this group. On the other hand, the AP Government Plan incites a search for a new relationship between humans and nature. That new relationship should be based on the principle of harmony and would not have a place for the commoditization of nature. See http://www.rafaelcorrea.com/docs/Plan_de_Gobierno_Alianza_PAIS.pdf.

contributed to a situation in which the mangrove peoples' movement saw a key opportunity to reduce their vulnerability and to gain power by securing recognition of their collective rights. As the C-CONDEM president stated, "we wanted to established precedence in order to avoid shrimp-farming owners being able to legalize their properties. There had been several attempts to do this under previous governments" (28 August, 2010).[61] However, this objective is still to be accomplished, as there has been a negative response from the Ecuadorian state to appeals by the PAEM. In this sense, while there is clearly a new political subject here, it is as yet unable to secure recognition. Indeed, this will be an uphill task, considering that the model for the ethnic political subject is associated with a delimited, single racialized group. As several authors point out, the indigenous model remains the normative heart of ethnic recognition, and this is directly linked to the racial category of 'Indian' (Anderson 2007; Hooker 2005; Ng'weno 2007; Wade 2010). A further limitation relates to the politics of the Correa government, which is characterized by its confrontational and delegitimizing attitudes towards most social organizations that strive to maintain independence from the state, as well as towards those with environmental claims.

Finally, it is worth noting that cultural identity politics is not only associated with economic and political goals but also has cultural and symbolic dimensions. Regardless of the fact that they have not yet received official recognition, this new political subject has already positioned counter images about mangrove people that re-value and de-stigmatize a way of life. In the words of one C-CONDEM leader:

> I believe that the people are proud about what they are, I am shellfish gatherer and I am proud, and I am not less than the other peoples, we have earned this identity, this respect and the associated rights to be a dignified person. We are all equal, and along this path the people start to feel good about themselves (August 9, 2010).[62]

[61] "Queríamos sentar un precedente para evitar que los camaroneros pudieran legalizarse. Ya hubo varios intentos en anteriores gobiernos".

[62] "Yo creo que la gente se siente orgullosa de lo que es, yo soy conchero y me siento orgulloso y no soy menos que el otro, hemos logrado esa identidad, ese respeto a su derecho, a ser una persona digna y punto, somos igual, en ese caminar la gente se va sintiendo bien".

4.7. Conclusions

The present chapter has described the basic features of an emerging new political subject, *Pueblos Ancestrales del Ecosistema Manglar*. It can be understood as a creative response to inequalities caused by the dominant global economic development model, which is based on economic growth and transnational market integration. The shrimp-farming industry dynamics of Ecuador, to which this new political subject is a response, imply the advance of modern industry into ever more isolated geographical spaces in search of new raw materials that can be incorporated into the logic of capitalist production. This geographical expansion of capital has brought about new encounters between different social actors with unequal degrees of power and antagonistic territoriality claims. Faced with the threat of losing their way of life and their livelihood as a result of the degradation and destruction of the mangroves of Ecuador, communities linked to these mangroves have chosen to enact a politics of difference (of peoplehood), with the aim of articulating an emancipative political project, capable of confronting the power relations supporting this degradation. In their articulation of this innovative community, processes and actors have converged to generate a new form of ecosystem based on multiracial, multicultural, ancestral identity. At the global and national levels, the emergence of indigenous and Afro-descendant movements during the 1980s and 1990s, and of their ethnic discourses, led to reforms in the legal frameworks of a great number of Latin American countries and to the recognition of collective ancestral rights, including the right to territory. This new state configuration, coupled with increasing attention to environmental issues during 1990s, enabled the adoption of new environmental management approaches, informed by changes in the global conservation discourse, where biodiversity, and traditional knowledge and practices were viewed as valuable. Finally, at the local level, first the Catholic Church and its option for the poor and, more recently, the ecologist movement, were key contributors to the configuration and consolidation of mangrove users' organizations.

In spite of the difficulties they have faced in attaining formal acknowledgment in the national legal system, the PAEM subject has successfully positioned itself as a political actor in Ecuador and has become a recognized interlocutor with the state. Among the movement's primary achievements is that it has made visible the existence of human populations living within a fragile and threatened ecosystem who wish to continue to live there. This visibility has been coupled with the re-evaluation of a stigmatized economic activity, and a heightened

appreciation for the mangrove gatherers and their rights to access and utilize mangrove resources. In this respect, although they have not enjoyed significant formal political success, the PAEM movement has clearly succeeded in asserting a political identity, converting the Ecuadorian environmental governance system into one characterized by the inclusion of PAEM as a political subject.

Finally, this case study suggests that the combination of natural resource depletion and the special legal status of indigenetiy in Ecuador, which entails rights to collective land, may be encouraging the deployment of novel claims to indigeneity. This question about indegenity has relevance in modern times, as many marginalized groups across lines of race, geography, class, culture, and gender are framing their demands for social justice in terms of indigeneity. However, the ways in which we might understand this "multi-racialized indigenous ecosystemness" in relation to the normalized model of indigeneity is addressed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V

Resisting Environmental Dispossession in Ecuador: Whom does the Political Category of "Ancestral Peoples of the Mangrove Ecosystem" Include and aim to Empower?[63]

Abstract

The development of shrimp aquaculture in Ecuador caused massive ecological damage, particularly on the mangrove areas. Consequently, the livelihood of the population linked to this ecosystem was disrupted. Faced with environmental dispossession, the population engaged in the defense of mangroves by articulating a national grassroots movement. In 2007, this movement implemented a novel identity politics strategy that linked mangrove ecosystem to indigeneity, and positioned itself as "Ancestral Peoples of the Mangrove Ecosystem-PAEM". This article focuses on the political economy of the shrimp-farming industry in Ecuador, showing the interrelation between environmental dispossession, collective action and identity formation, and analyzing how this novel political identity is understood by different members of this social movement. The work argues that PAEM refers to a category that is closely linked to the processes of mangrove defense, in direct opposition to the shrimp farmer's identity, rather than to an essentialized conception of identity based on "nativeness".

Key words

Identity politics, Ecuador, Mangrove Ecosystem, Social Movements, Political Ecology

5.1. Introduction

Shrimp farming ğ the cultivation of shrimps in brackish water ponds along estuaries and other zones ğis a globalized industry that has the highest rates of profitability among the seafood industries (Rivera-Ferre 2009). Since the 1970s, it has been promoted by aid agencies, international financial institutions and governments as an alternative to over-exploited wild fisheries and as a means of increasing economic growth, creating new sources of employment, reducing poverty, improving food security and repaying foreign debt (FAO

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2006; Rivera-Ferre 2009). It has been concentrated in tropical developing countries, mainly in Asia and Latin America, whose governments chose, or were forced, by these international directions to promote it through policies that tend to favor large corporations and an entrepreneurial rationale (Bailey 1989; Hall 2004; Rivera-Ferre 2009). These trends in shrimp aquaculture applies as well to the Ecuadorian case.

Ecuador is one of the first leading Western shrimp-producing countries. The origin of Ecuadorian shrimp aquaculture can be traced back to the limited industrialization process of the mid-1960s (Larrea 2006). Nowadays around 90 percent of Ecuadorian shrimp production is based on farming practices (Marriot 2003).

Despite the public acknowledgment of its positive economic benefits at a macro-level, critical voices have also been raised to denounce its local social and environmental implications (Garí 2000; Guest 1999; Martínez-Alier 2001; Meltzoff and LiPuma 1986; Thomason-Ocampo 2005; Veuthey and Gerber 2012). In Ecuador, as well as in other shrimp-producing countries, the pattern of shrimp-farming development has involved intensive exploitation of natural resources with subsequent environmental degradation, the immediate costs of which have been mainly borne by the poor who depend directly on these natural resources for their livelihoods.

One of the worst-affected social groups has been the mangrove gatherers. The growth of Ecuadorian shrimp aquaculture relied mainly on its geographic expansion, with the removal of mangrove forests to construct shrimp ponds (Twilley 1989). As a result, mangrove gatherers started to see their traditional means of production destroyed and their traditional resource use rights eroded. This situation generated widespread confrontation and resistance along the Ecuadorian coast and led to the emergence of a national grassroots social movement of among the coastal poor in 1998. Under the leadership of the first-tier organization named Foundation for the Ecological Defense of Muisne-FUNDECOL (its Spanish acronym), the National Coordinating Committee for the Defense of the Mangrove Ecosystem-C-CONDEM (for its Spanish acronym) was formed[64]. Since its foundation, C-CONDEM has established cross-cultural and transnational alliances. Its work has focused mainly on resisting the expansion of shrimp aquaculture by denouncing and confronting ineffective or unfair government resource management policies, calling for legitimizing of local people's rights to resource access and management, and proposing new institutional

[64] See Gerber and Veuthey (2010) for an account of the origin and political trajectory of FUNDECOL.

and legal frameworks regarding access to and use of these ecosystems. Generally speaking, and despite the organization's strength and activities, the Ecuadorian state has not satisfied C-CONDEM's demands, thereby aggravating the marginalized situation of mangrove gatherers.

Faced with this situation, in 2007 C-CONDEM implemented a novel identity politics strategy aimed to achieve more power over the means to secure the mangrove gatherers' own livelihoods. The social movement positioned itself as "Ancestral Peoples of the Mangrove Ecosystem"-PAEM (Spanish acronym) and started to demand its territorial rights (collective mangrove titles). In doing so, the movement claimed a native status (in terms of indigeneity and indigenous rights) while distancing itself from the racial connotations typically associated to this kind of politics. C-CONDEM's new politics of representation enabled its members to transcend the "racialized" divides usually linked to ethnic identities as its social base was constituted by a "multi-racialized" group (Latorre 2013). However, is this novel political identity helping empower mangrove gatherers as a whole? Who is included in and excluded from this politics of peoplehood? Does PAEM serve to articulate projects aimed at achieving social justice beyond the exclusive notion of "nativeness" suggested by this identity label?

In order to address these questions, this article focuses on the political economy and ecology of the shrimp-farming industry in Ecuador, showing the interrelation between environmental dispossession, collective action and identity formation. The aim is to analyze how this novel political identity is represented and understood by different members of this social movement of the coastal poor of Ecuador. Special attention is given to who is included or excluded by this new political strategy. Elsewhere (Latorre 2013), I have addressed the role of the mediations that have taken place and of the mediators that have participated in the emergence of this novel political subject. This case study is particularly relevant as it introduces a novel political subject in the domain of environmental and indigenous rights. By preventing itself from being racially essentialized, this new identity reveals ways in which indigeneity and working class identities might actually be compatible.

This article is organized as follows. After explaining the methodology used, the theoretical framework used here is briefly described. Broadly framed within the field of political ecology, this work focuses specifically on the topic of environmental identity and social movements. Secondly, the heterogeneous social landscape of the Ecuadorian mangrove

areas is described, in order to facilitate the understandings of who is included and excluded by this new political strategy. In the third section, by documenting the connections between environmental transformation, mangrove governance regimes and regional political economy, the historical context behind the structural forces that set the stage for C-CONDEM's identity politics is also described. Subsequently, the different understanding of this political category by various political leaders of the movement are analyzed, paying special attention to who this new regime of representation includes and excludes. Finally, some conclusions are drawn and presented in the last section.

The empirical research was carried out in three rounds of field trips to Ecuador between 2009 and 2012. Overall, I spent 11 months in the field, during which I conducted a total of 92 interviews. Several group and individual interviews were made with C-CONDEM executive board members about the process of C-CONDEM's formation, its work and its self-positioning as "Ancestral Peoples". Additionally, I attended various C-CONDEM internal meetings and assemblies and had access to extensive archival information compiled by the organization. Complementarily, the main leaders of C-CONDEM grassroots organizations, who participated in the first congress of the Ancestral Peoples of the Mangrove Ecosystem in 2007, were also interviewed. The objective was to capture their understanding of this political identity and to outline the biography of each organization. Furthermore, I practiced participant observation during 5 months in diverse mangrove areas along the coast in order to explore the identity of mangrove gatherers in their everyday life and to better understand the conditions in which they live. Finally, several interviews with representatives of the shrimp-farming sector, academics, NGO members and state personnel were also conducted.

5.2. Environmental Identity and Social Movements

Political ecology is a field of research that, despite its more than four decades of development, does not have a commonly accepted definition (Walker 2003). Nevertheless, there is a consensus on the idea that this field of research seeks to achieve an integral understanding of how environmental and political forces interact to mediate social and environmental change (Peet and Watts 2004; Robbins 2003). In doing so, it embraces a plurality of approaches, theories and areas of inquiry (Bryant and Bailey 2005; Peet and Watts 2004). Generally speaking, the literature distinguishes between two major approaches

ğ structuralist and post-structuralist ğ to the topic of civil society and environmental/agrarian change. This divide was particularly noticeable during the 1990s in relation to the theoretical understanding of the new (peasant) social movements that were becoming prominent in Latin America (Brass 2002; Petras and Veltmeyer 2001; Veltmeyer 1997). The competing views focused mainly on the role played by the objective and subjective dimensions of these grassroots social movements and on their class character and basis. Whereas structuralists argued for a class-based analysis in which these collective identities were understood as socio-economic actors responding to material demands (despite their not framing their collective identities in a class-based language), post-structuralists claimed that these collectivities represented a new radical subjectivity and aimed to reaffirm their identities as a way to empower themselves, thus explaining their agency in cultural terms. Over time, a middle position in which both dimensions (objective material conditions and human subjectivity) are seen as intertwined has gained consensus among scholars. In this sense, identity politics have been largely conceived as a struggle over material resources or political power with important cultural, symbolic and moral connotations (Breton 2008; Perrault 2001; Petras and Veltmeyer 2001; Veltmeyer 1997; Wade 2010). However, Marxist scholars have pointed out two main risks associated to this particular form of political strategy: that of covering socio-economic differences under non-class and all-embracing idioms such as "indigenous peoples", and that of undermining class-based alliances at the expense of strengthening ethnic/racial frontiers (Brass 1991, 2005; Breton 2008; Petras 2008). In contrast with this second critique, the case presented here deploys a novel non-racialized cultural identity politics which has enabled a racially heterogeneous group of mangrove gatherers to establish class-based alliances among themselves.

Identity politics understand identities as shifting, de-centered, contextual and relational constructions, susceptible to political mobilization and entangled with other subject positions such as class, gender, sexuality. Additionally, the fluidity of identity meanings, as well as their contested character and socio-political categories, are emphasized (Jackson and Warren 2005; Wade 2010). Finally, in order to better grasp these flexible and fluid identity processes, scholars have proposed new concepts such as "articulation", "becoming", or "positioning" (Clifford 2007; Hoffman French 2004; Murray-Li 2000).

This new conceptual understanding of identity and identity politics has moved the focus of inquiry to the study of both the political context in which people choose to identify with certain identity labels and the meaning they ascribe to them (De la Cadena and Starn 2007;

Hamilton and Placas 2011; Jackson and Warren 2005). Here, political ecology has played a relevant role in showing how power and identity are often negotiated through resource use conflicts. In this regard, identity politics can be put into service as a way of talking about, debating and contesting various forms of resource property and access.

In Ecuador, as generally in the Global South, the environment is largely a livelihood issue. This fact influences the nature of the environmental movements in these areas. As such, these movements are normally conceptualized as "livelihood movements" or as part of the "environmentalism of the poor" (Martínez-Alier 2002b; Peet and Watts 2004; Robbins 2003). It means that their struggle responds to their material interest in the environment as their source of livelihood. Therefore, the nature of this type of conflicts is characterized by a resource-led dispute rather than by an inherent environmental consciousness (Folchi 2001). This fact explains why these movements rarely express their demands in strictly environmental terms. However, because of their direct dependence on the environment to make a living, it is more likely that these people are interested in managing environmental resources in a sustainable manner.

As Robbins points out (2003), it is common that these actors assert their identities through the way they make a living. In this way, their "livelihood identity" serves to connect disparate groups, blurring other lines of identification such as class, ethnicity or gender. However, as he also contends, the opposite trend exists as well. Sometimes these actors articulate other subject positions, like ethnicity or gender, as political identities, while at the same time advancing their livelihood and ecological concerns (Robbins 2003; Veltmeyer 1997; Wade 2010). This is the case in Ecuador, where cultural identity politics have played a relevant role since the 1990s. In this country, the indigenous movement and, to a lesser extent, the afro-descendant movement abandoned their class-based mode of organization to adopt an ethnic strategy aimed at advancing land claims and other demands. These movements have vindicated land rights, conceptualized as territory, as the basis for their cultural way of life. Also, they have furthered ecological concerns, since they see the reproduction of the environment as an integral aspect of the reproduction of their cultural way of life and identity (Lucero 2008; Roger 1996). These claims were legally recognized for the first time in the Constitution of 1998, a fact that led to the redefinition of the legal status of indigenous peoples (and afro-descendants) and the very meaning of citizenship (Breton 2008; Lucero 2008; Jackson and Warren 2005).

In Ecuador, claims to indigeneity have thus become a powerful basis for securing collective land rights, something which, in turn, has set the stage for the subsequent definition of new indigeneities. These new identifications are associated to mobilizations demanding control over resources, especially land, and ecological struggles (see Bauer 2010; Bazurco Osorio 2006, and González 2009 for other cases along the Ecuadorian coast). Currently, many social groups are losing their rights to control the sources of their livelihoods and their physical environments are being quickly deteriorated. Faced with this situation, these groups may see that framing land rights in terms of indigeneity allows them greater leverage in negotiations with the Ecuadorian state. Furthermore, these new political subjects are emerging in places that have not been traditionally associated with indigenous peoples or where these are said to have disappeared or were assimilated many years ago. Besides, within their processes of becoming, they are re-signifying the concept of indigeneity in novel ways that, in the case of PAEM, challenge the very foundational premises of the term. That is, these new deployments of the term "indigeneity" suggest a volatility of the changing boundary politics of belonging and exclusion (De la Cadena and Starn 2007). In particular, PAEM's politics of peoplehood suggest the splitting of indigeneity from its racial connotations, contrary to what is characteristic in Latin American countries (Anderson 2007; Wade 2010). In this region, the concept of "indigenous people" has a direct association to the racial category of "Indian". In this sense, as Wade (2010) contends, there has been a tendency among scholars to consider the indigenous (read Indian) as the classic model of ethnic subject. Therefore, the dominant conceptions of indigenous people in Latin America assume a racialized cultural difference. There is an underlying assumption that equates ethnic identifications within a single racial category.

This case study presents both similarities and differences with other cases in other Latin American countries such as Honduras and Brazil, where mix-raced groups with a physical appearance that clearly identifies them as afro-descendants are claiming indigeneity status (Anderson 2007; Hoffman French 2004). Therefore, in Brosius' words, "within the nexus of environment and indigenous rights, everything is in flux and nothing is stable. Rather than being faced with monolithic agents we find ourselves enmeshed in shifting contexts and emergent terrains" (Brosius 1999).

5.3. The Organizational Structure and Social Heterogeneity of the Ecuadorian Social Movement for Mangrove Defense

Mangrove gatherers are a very heterogeneous social group in terms of organizational process, racial perception and patterns of settlement. Moreover, this socio-economic activity involves gender differences along the Ecuadorian coast.

In the north of the province of Esmeraldas, mangrove gatherers are mostly afro-Ecuadorians. They live both in 44 small isolated communities inside the Reserva Ecológica Manglares Cayapas-Mataje (REMACAM protected area) and in semi-urban areas such as the city of San Lorenzo. The REMACAM is part of a continuous mangrove belt that commences in the central area of the Colombian Pacific Coast (Cape Corrientes) and finishes in the south of Esmeraldas province. It is believed that afro-Colombians who moved to the Ecuadorian side in past centuries have formed one of the principal human contingents of these isolated communities (Ocampo-Thomason 2005). There has been a close link between mangrove inhabitants on the both sides of the border until the present day. They started to organize themselves in the 1990s, as a reaction to the shrimp-farming expansion, and their movement was strengthened at the beginning of the 21st century when the government agreed to grant mangrove *custodias* to traditional mangrove users' organizations. With the support of several NGOs, many grassroots organizations were integrated into two federations[65] (FEDARPOM and FEDARPROBIM) and, between 2002 and 2003, thirteen grassroots organizations were granted *custodias* in the north of the province of Esmeraldas (Coello et al. 2008). From the beginning, this organizational building process, which was principally initiated to improve mangrove gatherers' living conditions by introducing sustainable mangrove resources management practices, was part of the Afro-Ecuadorian social movement (Garí 2000; Ocampo-Thomason 2005). In the 1990s, the latter actor achieved national scope and formed socio-organizational networks in different provinces of the country (Sánchez 2009). During this decade, influenced by both the Afro-Colombian ethnic movement (principally the *Proceso de Comunidades Negras*[66]) and the Ecuadorian indigenous movement, the Afro-Ecuadorian social movement adopted a cultural difference

[65] The two federations created in 1996 were AGOCREM in the canton of San Lorenzo and CONMANGLAR in the Eloy Alfaro canton. They gained legal status in 1998 when the former changed its name to FEDARPOM-SL (Federación Afro-Ecuatoriana de Recolectores de Products Bioacuáticos del Manglar San Lorenzo) and the latter was re-named as FEDARPROBIM-EA (Federación Afro-Ecuatoriana de Recolectores de Productos Bioacuáticos del Manglar Eloy Alfaro) (Garí 2000).

[66] Process of Balck Communities.

identity politics strategy. They claimed collective rights based on their cultural specificity (blackness), in the same way that the indigenous peoples claimed theirs (indigenousness), as derived from their long-standing inhabitation (ancestrality) in relative isolated areas.

Specifically, in northern Esmeraldas, the afro-Ecuadorian organizations that were facing serious land grabbing and environmental deterioration problems initiated a socio-political project called *La Gran Comarca del Norte de Esmeraldas-GCNE*, aimed at consolidating a black autonomous territory. As part of this process, black activists adopted and re-signified symbols and practices related to the history of the afro-Ecuadorian population in the province such as the *Palenques* (spaces outside the influence of the Spaniards) founded by the maroons (fugitive slaves). Although GCNE designed an organizational model that maintained the existing grassroots organizational composition, it gave the proposed structure's three levels new names, renaming the grassroots organizations Communitarian Councils, which would be integrated in second-level organizations called Palenque Councils, which, in turn, would comprise the third-level organization named the Regional Palenque Council (personal interview with a black activist leader, January 13, 2012)[67]. FEDARPOM and FEDARPROBIM would be two of these Palenque Councils and REMACAM mangroves would be under GCNE's management.

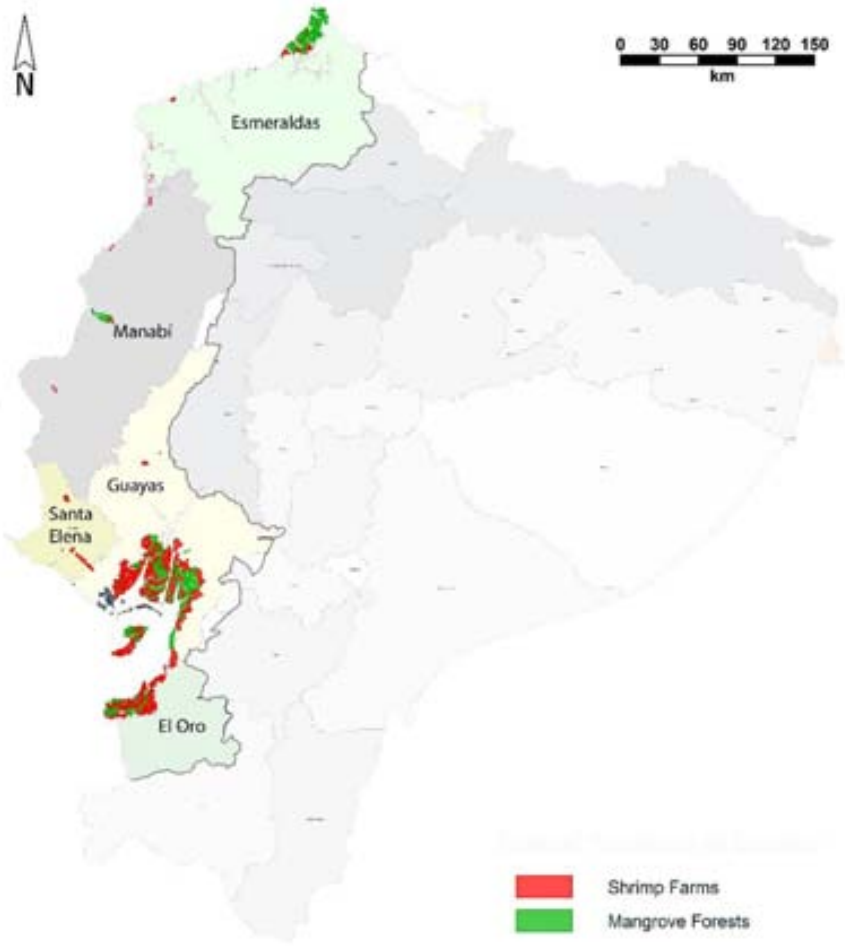
Despite the 1998 Ecuadorian constitution recognition of afro-Ecuadorians as an ethnic group and grant of territorial rights under the category of territorial circumscriptions (TC), over the years this Afro-Ecuadorian ethnic movement has lost its strength. This is due in part to the government's reluctance to facilitate the effective development of afro-Ecuadorians' TC, permitting the encroachment of monocultures, mainly oil palm plantations, in their territory (Sánchez 2009).

In order to understand PAEM political articulation, it is important to note that FEDARPOM and FEDARPROBIM are also members of C-CONDEM. In the early years of the 1990s, these federations allied with FUNDECOL and formed the coalition *Frente de Esmeraldas* (Esmeraldas Front) with the goal of declaring the northern mangroves a protected area. This was achieved in 1995 when the Ecuadorian state created the REMACAM. Foundational members when C-CONDEM was created in 1998, these federations adopted an explicitly afro-ethnic discourse during the burgeoning years of the afro-Ecuadorian movement.

[67] Today, the Consejo Regional de Palenques is named Confederación Afro-Ecuatoriana del Norte de Esmeraldas-CANE.

Although this caused tensions between the federations and C-CONDEM, they have remained integrated to this day (Garí 2000; Ocampo-Thomason 2005). Moreover, when C-CONDEM positioned itself as PAEM in 2007, these federations participated in the process, which meant the (momentary) abandonment of their afro-Ecuadorian ethnicity.

Figure 7: Coastal Provinces of Ecuador and Mangrove and Shrimp Farm Extension



Source: Military Geographical Institute, 2012.

In contrast, in the south of the province of Esmeraldas, the remaining mangrove area is minimal and the population's cultural and social composition is more diverse. Here, the number of mangrove gatherers is very small and they are organized in one single

organization named FUEMBOTH[68]. This organization belongs to the NGO FUNDECOL, which, as mentioned before, was the initiator of the strongest opposition to shrimp-farming activities; most of its members are now on the executive board of the national organization C-CONDEM. As for racial perceptions, people in this southern region of Esmeraldas commonly identify themselves as either afro-Ecuadorian or *mestizo*. This area absorbed a large population of immigrants from other parts of the country during the banana boom of the 1960s which gave it a more heterogeneous ethnic-racial composition and partly explains why FUNDECOL's discourse and political strategy diverged from that of the north of the province. Nevertheless, this organization also adopted an essentialized place-based cultural narrative that underscored the direct relationship between cultural identity and the mangrove ecosystem, conceptualized as territory. Its objective was to strengthen the identification of mangrove gatherers with this ecosystem as a means to raise ecological awareness among mangrove gatherers (Torres and Yépez, 1999).

In contrast with the rest of Ecuador's provinces, where mangrove-gathering activities are traditionally performed by men, mangrove-gathering is predominantly a woman's task (principally shellfish gathering activities) throughout the entire Esmeraldas province. However, a lack of economic alternatives has blurred this gender division in recent years (field notes, January, 2012).

The *mestizo* category is dominant in the center-southern provinces, which can be explained by the socio-economic history of this coastal region. Here, the harsh conditions of exploitation during the colonial period and a subsequent thorough process of modernization in the Republican period led to a general perception that the indigenous population disappeared in the 19th century (Aráuz 2000). However, during the last decade of the 20th century, a process of re-ethnicization among indigenous decedents took place, resulting in state recognition (2008 Constitution) of a novel ethnic group in the central-southern provinces: the "Pueblo" Montubio (Montubio people). This process has also played a very important role in the politics of representation of C-CONDEM's base in the central province of Manabí, as will be explained in the next chapter. Very few mangrove gatherers' grassroots organizations exist as the presence of mangroves is very limited in this area. Most of the few existing organizations are part of C-CONDEM, and their populations tend to live in

[68] Federación de Usuarios del Ecosistema Manglar y del Bosque Húmedo Tropical de Muisne (Federation of Users of both Mangrove Ecosystem and Humid Tropical Forest of Muisne).

communa settlements near the estuary. There are no mangrove *custodias,* as the very few mangrove remnants have been designated as a protected area ğ however, mangrove subsistence activities are allowed.

In the southern provinces (Guayas and El Oro)[69], mangrove gatherers are more numerous because the area of mangroves is greater and the fisheries are, to some extent, more productive. As for organization, this social group has close ties with the artisanal fisheries sector in this area, to the extent that some first-tier organizations are composed by both artisanal fishers and mangrove gatherers. These grassroots organizations are articulated and associated with second-tier and national-level organizations principally related to the artisanal fisheries sector. However, some of them are also affiliated to C-CONDEM. In this regard, first-tier but also second-tier organizations in this area involve multiple organizational affiliations. There are also a considerable number of mangrove gatherers who work independently. It is in these provinces that most mangrove *custodias* are granted. Nevertheless, the number of mangrove gatherers' organizations holding a *custodia* is still very limited in comparison to the large number of organizations without *custodias* and to the number of independent gatherers.

A great heterogeneity also exists with respect to the region's lived environment. Some of them are long-standing inhabitants of islands located near the mangroves with a strong place-based belonging. Indeed, people born in these isolated mangrove areas refer to themselves and also are referred to by others as *ancestrales* (ancestral). This territorial identification played an important role in their favorable reception of the concept of PAEM, as the following quote shows:

> The people say that I am of the ancestral people, that I was born and grew up here and nobody can expel me from here. People [this ancestrality] defend and identify with it. This is the reason that explains why there was positive reception here to the demand for collective rights as "Peoples" [the PAEM proposal] (president of a former C-CONDEM's grassroots organization in Guayas, 1 December 2011)[70].

[69] I have expressly omitted any reference to the province of Santa Elena because it was only created in 2007. Before, the area belonged to the province of El Guayas. This being the case, it shares the same characteristics relating to the reality of the mangrove gatherers.

[70] La gente dice yo soy ancestral, yo nací y me crecí aquí y nadie me saca. Se defiende y lo identifica, en el caso nuestro lo manejamos así, por eso hubo acogida cuando se planteó lo de pedir derechos colectivos como pueblos.

Other inhabitants were born on the islands but subsequently migrated to the mainland and now live in large urban or semi-urban areas; and others have always lived in the mainland. Although there is no direct correlation between living near the mangroves and being granted a mangrove concession, there is a tendency for this two to be correlated. The reason is that during the first years after the process of granting concessions started, the state opted to grant the concessions to those mangrove organizations that were settled near the mangroves because they could exercise better control over the territory (personal communication 18 October 2011).

Like other forms of capitalist penetration in the rural sphere, the development of the shrimp-farming industry and its associated process of mangrove destruction have led to a drastic diversification of income-generating activities among mangrove gatherers, which includes abandoning traditional practices and becoming wage laborers in other economic sectors. Unlike other agribusiness activities (such as the banana and oil palm industries) which are likely to evict peasants from their land, but retain them as peasant labor force, shrimp-farming production employs very few workers[71]. Indeed, according to my interlocutors, shrimp farmers tend to hire non-local people to avoid potential shrimp-production thefts (see also Beitl 2012; Ocampo-Thomason 2005).

5.4. The Political Economy and Ecology of the Shrimp-Farming Industry

The following section reviews the evolution of the pattern of shrimp-farming development and mangrove forest management, focusing on the interconnection between environmental and social change, the policies and actions of the state, and the resistance actions of the social group of mangrove gatherers. This evolution is divided into five phases taking into consideration different issues regarding mangrove property rights, dominant representations, and management policies and regulations. The objective is to present the historical background which shaped C-CONDEM's positioning as Ancestral Peoples of the Mangrove Ecosystem in 2007.

[71] However, until 1999 many mangrove gatherers provided shrimp farmers with the wild shrimp seed necessary to initiate the production in the shrimp ponds. This activity was very well paid and in turn contributed to reducing local opposition in the early years of the industry's development. Nowadays, shrimp processing and packing are the activities that provide the most employment for unskilled workers, mainly women.

Phase I: Mangroves as Wastelands and Mangrove Gatherers as "Backward" People

Up to the late 1970s mangrove ecosystems were considered wastelands that did not contribute to increasing national economic development. Therefore, when the shrimp-farming industry emerged, it was welcomed without any kind of concerns. Its inception was characterized by a lack of any meaningful planning, control or consideration of long-term impacts (Olsen and Coello 1995). Particularly, its consequences on the way of life of those populations linked to the mangrove ecosystem were overlooked.

In spite of the ancient occupation and common management practices of the mangrove by its inhabitants, this ecosystem, as well as the whole intertidal zone where it is located, is considered a "national good of public use". This means that the property of mangrove land belongs to the state and gives to the intertidal zone an inalienable and imprescriptible character. However, this zone can be permanently used under conditions established by the Code of Maritime Police. In practice, it means that this area was virtually privatized in favor of the shrimp-farming industry through the mechanism of concessions.

This concession-granting system applied to the intertidal zone was complex and involved many different agencies and departments. A concession consisted of a ten year lease, with fees charged of less than US$10 per hectare and year (Olsen and Coello 1995). It did not provide any incentives to adopt intensive farming methods and discourage environmental degradation.

Between 1979 and 1986 the industry expanded very rapidly in Ecuador. The huge return, along with the high price of shrimp in the international market and the abundance of shrimp in the developmental phase known as "post-larvae"ğ the wild input necessary for the ponds ğ explain this rapid growth. The abundance of applications for shrimp farm permits exceeded the capacity of the public administration (Pérez and Robadue 1989). According to CLIRSEN, from no shrimp ponds in 1969, 89,368 hectares of ponds were built by 1984 (CLIRSEN 1990). This saturation means that many ponds were built without one or more of the required permits (Pérez and Robadue 1989). Bribes and corruption were common practices (Olsen and Coello 1995). During 1985, the government established several deadlines in order to register the large number of unauthorized shrimp ponds. However, the enforcement of this measure was continually postponed until April 1987 and then indefinitely put off, following a year of crisis caused by the drop in oil revenues (Pérez and

Robadue 1989). This lack of governmental support to the powerless mangrove inhabitants triggered their organizational shaping and collective actions in the following years.

Out of the total number of shrimp farms in 1984, 70 percent were constructed on mangrove forest areas, 15 percent on salt flats, and 15 percent on agricultural land (upland) (LiPuma and Meltzoff 1985 in Sutinen et al., 1989). In 1979, this enormous mangrove deforestation led to the passing of Supreme Decree2939, which forbid the transformation of mangroves into shrimp ponds. As a consequence, part of the expansion of the shrimp-farming industry carried out on transformed mangrove soil became illegal. According to Robadue (1995), 9 percent of the shrimp ponds were considered illegal in 1984 and the average loss of mangroves per year between 1969 and 1984 was 1,439 hectares (Olsen et al. 1995).

Apart from the acquisition of the shrimp pond areas, shrimp farmers claimed control of buffer zones around them which local people could not trespass. To ensure this, the presence of armed guards, who shot at and set dogs on traditional users whenever they infringed upon shrimp property boundaries, was common (personal communication 6 August 2010). Over the years, a number of deaths and disappearances have occurred in suspicious circumstances, the causes of which are presumed to be linked to the shrimp industry. This massive mangrove loss in a very short period of time, combined with the privatization of the mangrove people's productive and reproductive space, contributed to strengthening a sense of belonging among mangrove gatherers in opposition to the others (shrimp farm owners). Moreover, these quick transformations and negative impacts contributed to the emergence of the first voices that recognized the need for more effective natural resource management practices in the Ecuadorian mangrove areas.

During this period, and due to the predominance of extensive farming methods, this industry relied directly on the abundance of post-larvae and clean sea water for shrimp production. However, the harmful techniques employed to collect post-larvae and the large destruction of mangroves caused the first post-larvae shortages in 1984. As a result, the shrimp-farming sector, concerned about the long-term stability of the industry, solicited support from the USAID to finance research. This research was carried out in mid-1984 by a group of scientists from Miami University who examined the relationship between the shrimp aquaculture industry and the loss of the mangrove ecosystem. The report was very critical of the anarchic shrimp-farming expansion and its effects on wetland ecosystems. It urged the government to zone all mangrove areas in order to protect access for traditional uses (Snedaker et al. 1988).

In summary, during this phase the Ecuadorian state claimed legal authority over mangrove areas to grant long-term leases to those who had the financial means to develop significant aquaculture projects and other enterprises. In doing so, it did not acknowledge the traditional rights and historical uses and practices that have been performed by mangrove people for centuries. Instead, it solidified new property claims by newly-resident shrimp farmers and absentee owners and agribusiness managers. Furthermore, the state authorized the industrial transformation of the coastal strip into a mosaic of interlocked and contiguous ponds. From a multiple-use area where different groups of users co-existed, the mangroves became a mono-use land mainly dominated by one powerful and unified group of actors.

Phase II: Mangroves as a Rich Biodiversity Ecosystem and Mangrove Gatherers as a Threat

The rapid growth of shrimp farming on the coastal strip of Ecuador from the end of the 1970sto the early 1980s presented a major challenge for Ecuadorian regulatory agencies. The concerns were confirmed when, in 1985, CLIRSEN published a document that revealed the extensive damage caused by shrimp aquaculture and the associated urbanization processes (CLIRSEN 1990). In response to this destruction, from 1985 onwards, specific and stricter shrimp-farming lease and operating permit requirements were adopted (Perez and Robadue 1989). In addition, the government implemented Executive Decree 824, which declared mangrove conservation, protection and restoration a matter of public interest. This decree also prohibited the traditional practices of local users. During the following two years, the government passed Ministerial Decrees 498 and 238, which granted the category of "reserved forest" to 362,802 hectares of wetland areas.

This change in the government's attitude (at least from a formal and rhetorical point of view) can be partly attributed to the rising influence of environmental concerns at an international level as well as to a greater knowledge of the multiple functions and values of wetlands (Matthews 1993).As a reflection of this international concern, during these years (1985-1989), Ecuador adopted a mangrove ecosystem conservation policy based on a centralized government approach. It mainly consisted in the implementation of several laws and regulations prohibiting both the destruction or alteration of mangroves and the installation of shrimp farm ponds. However, with few exceptions, the government did not allocate any financial or administrative resources to enforcement (Bodero and Robadue 1995). Since the

economic and political circumstances favored the expansion of the shrimp-farming industry, the pace of mangrove loss increased. According to Bodero and Robadue (1995), during the 1984-1987 period the rate of mangrove loss per year was 2,434 hectares, while during the 1987-1991 period it reached 3,348 hectares.

The lack of sustainability of this ecosystem change, and even of the shrimp-farming industry, contributed to the implementation of the Joint Project Agreement, known as the Coastal Resource Management Program (CRMP), signed in 1986 by the Ecuadorian and U.S. governments. It was designed to establish "how to institutionalize progress toward more sustainable forms of development along Ecuador's coast" (Olsen 2000, 1) and was implemented by the University of Rhode Island (USA) in partnership with Ecuadorian institutions. Initially conceived as a 3-year pilot project, it was extended up to 2008. Between1986 and 1989, the CRMP was dedicated to exploring viable alternatives to the failed policy of prohibiting mangrove cutting. The staff realized that achieving this task implied engaging both the shrimp-farming sector and the government in a policy-making process that should emphasize the sustainability of the shrimp-farming industry (Olsen and Coello 1995).With this objective in mind, in 1986 the CRMP sponsored a national symposium where a draft strategy for a sustainable shrimp-farming industry was presented. However, the conclusion was, as Olsen and Coello (1995) stated, that there was little interest on the part of the government and the industry in following up on the strategy as a whole. On the one hand, the shrimp-farming sector was very skeptical regarding collaboration with the government, and its interest was reduced to obtaining technical assistance on specific problems such as water quality and post-larvae supply. On the other hand, the government's intention was limited to implementing some economic measures to reduce illegal shrimp exports and classifying, as stated above, all mangroves as "reserved forest". Thus, little concern for the mangrove peoples' well-being was manifested.

Failing to engage the most powerful agents to reverse the path of coastal ecosystems change, the CRMP focused on local authorities and constituencies who were more likely to participate in coastal resource management (Robadue 1995). At this stage, mangrove gatherers as well as traditional fishers were feeling the impact of lost productivity and access to natural resources. This way, the CRMP had a direct effect on fostering indigeneity through activation of the local population as a whole.

In 1988, the CRMP, motivated by this community-level support, made another attempt to engage the shrimp aquaculture industry at a national level. Its objective now was to advance

toward the diversification of the industry (Olsen and Coello 1995). Hence, in 1990 it sponsored another national symposium. This time, all the actors agreed on the need for a coherent national strategy developed through a collaborative process involving both the private and the public sectors. However, during the meeting, shrimp-farming interests were only focused on the way to maximize the value of their exports (Olsen and Coello 1995). Once again, the broader objectives of the coastal management program found little support within the industry.

In short, Ecuador's mangrove governance policies focused during this period on the centralized enforcement of a virtual prohibition of mangrove uses. Furthermore, these policies not only benefited the consolidation of a powerful industry that overexploited and misused fisheries resources, coastal estuaries and mangroves, but also accused traditional users of having the same harmful impact as the shrimp-farming industry. In view of this situation, the CRMP made an effort to adopt an alternative approach to management that took into account the wide variability of the physical characteristics of mangrove ecosystems as well as the claims and needs of the coastal communities and the resource users. Nevertheless, this effort yielded poor results as the CRMP did not have enough legal and political power to confront the authority of both the state and the shrimp-farming industry.

Phase III: Pilot Resource Management Areas based on a Participative Approach

Finally, in 1989 the Ecuadorian government adopted the University of Rhode Island's initiative in coastal resource management as an Official Program (Executive Decree 375). The aim of this new strategy was to make a transition from the previous ineffective centralized regulatory approach to another one meant to emphasize local and adaptive governance processes (Olsen et al. 1995). The high level of social unrest among user groups and their willingness to participate in resource management allowed the CRMP to design and test different tools based on participative and action-oriented approaches (Bodero and Robadue 1995).

The project mainly consisted in the creation of six pilot and representative areas along the coast (Special Management Zones or ZEM, for its Spanish acronym) where a planning and resource management process would be started at the local level. Motivated by the accelerated decline of the socio-economic well-being of poor coastal communities, the

objective was to foster local structures that could later implement future resource policies (Ochoa 1995).

Complementing the ZEM planning, the CRMP also initiated an educational project and carried out a set of small-scale practical exercises in resource management. These exercises were aimed at building community leadership and strengthening user groups' abilities to function and participate effectively in the ZEM planning process (Ochoa 1995).

From an operative point of view, the CRMP created the "zone committees", one in each ZEM, as the main decision-making spaces. They were comprised of public authorities at different levels as well as by community and user groups. However, every organization had to be legally registered in order to have the right to speak and vote. This precondition led to the formation of hundreds of user organizations which saw their participation in this instance as a hopeful way of increasingly improving harsh socio-environmental conditions (Bodero and Robadue 1995). This organization-building process was the basis for the shaping a national-scale grassroots mangrove movement.

During the 1992-1994 period, the Ecuadorian framework for coastal resource management was restructured and decentralized. In that period, the government passed Executive Decree 3399, which implemented the new CRMP administrative procedures.

In 1993, the CRMP elaborated a national mangrove policy proposal which was presented at the National Symposium on Mangrove Management. Once again the document emphasized the failure of the current penalty-based mangrove ecosystem policy and advocated for sustainable use and conservation relying on local constituencies. In particular, the proposal recommended the multi-use of mangroves, the adoption of site-specific management plans, the involvement of communities in mangrove stewardship and the reforestation and restoration of mangrove degraded areas, the commitment and leadership of national authorities, and the improvement of the living conditions of local communities (Robadue 1995).

Finally, in 1995, through Executive Decree 3327, sustainable traditional mangrove activities were officially recognized and allowed. In contrast, this norm also recognized the illegal shrimp farms that had been constructed before the passage of Decree 1907 in 1994[72]. It is worth noting that, in 1991, illegal shrimp farms occupied an area of 14,037 hectares, i.e.10

[72]This decree re-affirmed the public interest in mangrove conservation and established a five-year mangrove close season.

percent of the total 145,996 hectares (Olsen and Coello 1995). Furthermore, as Table 1 shows, until 1995 mangrove areas followed a declining trend. Thereafter, their destruction was partly reversed because the five-year mangrove closure period began in 1994.

Table 3: Evolution of the Typologies of Soil Uses (1984-1999)

Typologies of soil uses (ha)					
	1984	**1987**	**1991**	**1995**	**1999**
Mangroves	182,157	175,157	162,187	146,939	148,483
Shrimp ponds	89,368	117,729	145,998	178,072	175,167
Salt flats	20,022	12,274	6,321	5,109	4,548

Source: CLIRSEN, 2007

While the sustainable multi-use of mangroves was guaranteed and participative and decision-making instances were created to formally include coastal communities and users in resource management, no illegally-constructed ponds reverted to the state during this period. On the contrary, since the first suspension of a shrimp farm license (1985), the government has legally recognized them through diverse normative mandates. Accordingly, the poorest groups, whose daily well-being depends on the harvests from coastal waters and estuarine ecosystems, have lost access to their natural source of livelihood. As a result, their quality of life has been eroded to the extent that the sense of poverty has reached profound levels. This vulnerable situation explains why the ecosystem-based indigeneity political strategy has been well received among mangrove gatherers.

Phase IV: Recognition of Traditional Mangrove Uses and Granting of Resource Access through Mangrove Concessions

The year 1999 can be considered a turning point in Ecuadorian coastal resource governance. The most salient event, from a democratic point of view, was the enactment of Executive Decree 11022, which provided traditional mangrove users with the possibility of accessing mangrove concessions (commonly known as *custodias*) and prolonged the mangrove cutting ban of 1994. It is worth mentioning that this decree literally used the term "ancestral users of the mangrove ecosystem" in reference to this social group. Hence, through this law, the Ecuadorian state acknowledged the "nativeness" of mangrove gatherers.

This Decree was conditioned by several key factors: at the international level, during the 7th Conference of Contracting Parties to the RAMSAR Convention (May 1999), resolution

V11.21-15 was adopted, which exhorted the establishment of a moratorium on shrimp farming, while, at the national level, the shrimp-farming industry was devastated by the White-spot virus after reaching the highest level of shrimp production in 1998 (Marriot 2003). The outbreak of this disease aggravated the already critical situation along the coast caused by the 1997-1998 El Niño climatic event. In addition to these structural influences, a number of factors related to the grassroots movement also exerted pressure on the Ecuadorian government. In this regard, an important event, given its public visibility, was the presence of Greenpeace's Rainbow Warrior along the Ecuadorian coast in 1998 and 1999. The first year, the ship docked in Muisne (to the south of the province of Esmeraldas) and, with the support of grassroots user organizations from different Ecuadorian coastal provinces, environmental NGOs, intellectual activists and journalists, the walls of an illegal shrimp pond were broken and the area was reforested with mangrove trees. To this end, the participants made a public declaration in which they demanded the Ecuadorian government to impose a total and permanent ban on mangrove cutting and to deliver all the mangrove areas (including those transformed into illegal shrimp ponds) into the custody of ancestral user organizations and under common stewardship (personal communication 7 June 2010). This event was also key for the constitution of C-CONDEM.

In 2000, Ministerial Decree 172 was issued, which set the requirements for obtaining new mangrove concessions. *Custodias* were valid for 10 years (with an option for renewal) and granted their holders exclusive use of the land. From 2000 to 2007 the competent authority granted a total of 26 *custodias*, which encompassed 19,514.99 hectares of mangroves (Coello et al. 2008).

According to the spokespersons interviewed for this paper, the *custodia* mechanism was seen by grassroots user organizations as a great achievement because it acknowledged the users' rights to access and use the mangroves and gave them more tools to fight against the potential expansion of the shrimp industry. However, as they claimed in 1998, these organizations demanded not only "use agreements" like the ones established in the decree, but also the right to control and administer all mangroves under common concessions. Furthermore, they demanded the reversion of the illegal shrimp ponds so they could be reforested and made available for mangrove gatherers (personal communication 6 September 2010). The failure in accomplishing these demands has had serious implications, which are explained in the next section.

Phase V: Mangrove Gatherers' Self-Oppression and the Mangrove Concessions as New Enclosures

The *custodia* management strategy facilitated the stabilization of the mangrove areas (CLIRSEN 2007), but it has resulted in poor socio-economic benefits (Coello et al. 2008). In general, inland fisheries along the coast had collapsed, and along with the few mangrove areas left, the quality of estuarine water was declining as other sources of pollution (apart from shrimp farming) were increasing. Besides, social unrest among mangrove people has increased in recent years (Beitl 2012; ECOBIOTEC 2009), in particular due to the fact that few mangrove user organizations are granted *custodias* in comparison to the large number of mangrove gatherers (organized and independent);moreover, despite the reduced extent of mangrove areas without concession, those who have not been granted a *custodia* do not have any other alternative than entering into these areas to secure their livelihoods (field notes 10 September 2010). In the words of C-CONDEM: the *custodia* system "does not imply the acknowledgment of our territorial rights, and in practice it has meant a sort of privatization of the mangrove areas that generates conflicts among the communities" (C-CONDEM 2010, 9).

The current situation reveals how these mangrove *custodias*, rather than becoming a suitable mechanism to solve the problems of mangrove people, have transformed the remaining mangroves into a new type of enclosure that fuels conflicts between gatherers regarding their possession.

5.5. The Politics of an Environmentally Dispossessed Social Group: Inter-Subjectivities of "Ancestral Peoples of Mangrove Ecosystem".

As described in the previous sections, more than forty years of shrimp-farm production have undermined the biophysical conditions of the mangrove ecosystems and, as a consequence, the livelihood of thousands of mangrove gatherers has become critical. Today, mangrove gatherers are less likely to collect sufficient shellfish for both self-consumption and local sale (field notes 7 June 2010). This fact, in turn, has forced them to intensify the use of the already scarce natural resources. Besides, some of the traditional mangrove practices have disappeared and, as a result, many coastal communities have been forced to move to other regions or to simply change their way of life. Faced with this situation, the mangrove

gatherers movement led by C-CONDEM responded by enacting a novel political strategy that linked ecosystem to indigeneity.

As explained in the previous chapter, in 2007, in the city of Quito, representatives from the main organizations affiliated to C-CONDEM celebrated the First Congress of the Ancestral Peoples of the Mangrove Ecosystem, in which they declared themselves as "Ancestral Peoples" and, hence, claimed their collective rights. This grassroots movement articulated a discourse about territorial rights and indigenous identity based on the concepts of "ancestrality" and "peoplehood". Specifically, C-CONDEM's novel identity politics emphasized their sense of belonging in connection to the idea of ancestrality within a natural ecosystem (the mangroves). This regime of representation was publicly defined by C-CONDEM's executive board as a political strategy to properly fit with the dominant scheme and representations of the "indigenous people" category. In line with the work of Wade (2010), it is possible to state that these collectivities have had to claim their indigeneity in ways that it looks like "indianness", as this was the conventional model of ethnic subject. The aim was to increase their possibilities of being legally recognized by the Ecuadorian state. However, this public image of PAEM differs slightly from the way the local leaders of the movement understand this identity category. According to a member of C-CONDEM's executive board:

> One is not a member of an ancestral people because he or she was born there [in the mangroves]; on the contrary, it is they who carry out the use and customs that have been ancestrally exercised, i.e. to respect nature, to gather the best fish and shellfish, to respect the closed seasonsŚ All this has been carried out by our people without need for law enforcement, but of course, there is a need to regulate [the mangrove uses] because, as you say, new comers are arriving and you do not knowŚ We must tell them: 'Look, the size is this one, the gathering is done in this way, this is a closed seasonŚ look, on San Antonio's day nobody goes out gathering, instead they all go dancing' (C-CONDEM executive board member).

To cite another leader, born in a community close to the mangroves in the province of Esmeraldas:

> I consider that the category of PAEM encompasses those that are there [in the mangroves] and the newcomers who settle there, because they become part of us, this is the truth. Without taking into consideration that they arrived recently, they migrated, they went there, people look for work and nobody has the right

> to expel them, nobody can say to them "go away" because they are looking for a better way of life, but they have to integrate themselves, to respect the rules (C-CONDEM member 6 December 2011).

The inclusiveness of the term PAEM, which embraces the newcomers, is also expressed by another member from the province of Guayas, who is also a native of a mangrove community:

> In relation to immigrant gatherers, these people came from the city to live in a community, leaving their comfort and all the rest. This is because these people depend on the mangroves, because nobody from the city would come to do other things than gathering crabs, shellfishŚ I would not have any objection to include them because they are going to rely on the mangroves (C-CONDEM member 1 December 2011).

Another member of C-CONDEM who, unlike the previous leaders, was not born in the Ecuadorian coast, let alone a locality near the mangroves, but moved to El Oro fifty years ago and started to work as a mangrove gatherer:

> The PAEM referred first to those who were natives, but I felt part of them because of the fight that I had undertaken. And I still feel part of them, because I started the fight here with my father-in-law and two mates. For this reason, I say he[the president of the commune of Bellavista], who sold the village and the mangroves to the shrimp farmers, he was granted a mangrove concession because he is native, but to be a native does not necessarily mean to take care of the mangroves, on the contrary (C-CONDEM member 19 September 2010).

As can be gathered from all these statements, being "Ancestral Mangrove Peoples" is not necessarily or exclusively related to a native status. Elements such as the defense of the mangroves (against the shrimp farmers) and the adoption of environmentally sustainable practices and uses play a more determinant role in choosing who is included or excluded from this political category. In this sense, I suggest that the label "Ancestral Mangrove Peoples" expresses a relational identity in direct opposition to that of the shrimp farmer; they are two opposite ways of life with different economic rationalities and levels of attachment and dependence on the environment.

However, the term "Ancestral Mangrove Peoples" excludes most of the mangrove gatherers who choose to remain independent from any organization. In the words of a member of C-CONDEM: "The term 'ancestral' enables us to take distance from the shrimp farmers; you say 'the Ancestral' and the shrimp farmers are not included. But many authorities use the

term ‘traditional’ and there is where the confusion starts, because not everybody is in the same struggle” (personal communication 9 October 2010). This comment underlines the idea that, as shrimp farmers have already lived for more than forty years in the area, they can be considered traditional users as much as mangrove gatherers can. Rather, in the opinion of this C-CONDEM member, the two groups embrace antagonist behavior patterns and value systems.

Therefore, I argue that this political category is mainly understood by this social movement as a cultural way of living with nature, in oppositional and confrontational relation to the “shrimp farmer’s identity”. That this is so despite the fact that, in this politics of representation, the stress is put on the origin and long-standing presence of these people in the mangroves (ancestrality) as a key element for establishing a cultural difference and, therefore, to be included in this identity label. In this sense, while this social movement strategically emphasizes the principle of “soil” ğ typically associated to the dominant indigenous discourse ğ as a way of increasing the possibility of achieving legal recognition of their territorial rights, this political category also includes the new comers who, despite not being native or ancestral, have decided to organize themselves, help defend the mangroves and adopt sustainable traditional practices. That is, those who engage in mangrove protection and care are considered “Ancestral Mangrove People” independently of their origin.

Moreover, the strategy of this novel cultural identity politics confronts Marxist critiques of cultural identity politics[73] ğ in particular, the idea that it has the potential to downplay class solidarity by reinforcing racial/ethnic divides, which in turn, benefit powerful capitalist actors. PAEM has served to facilitate class-based solidarity and empowerment to contest agribusiness dispossession by unifying a racially heterogeneous group. Therefore, this work suggests that the subject defined through this new deployment of the term “indigeneity” can be understood as a counter-hegemonic formation that seeks social justice against contemporary environmental dispossessions. Nonetheless, this political category excludes one of the most powerless mangrove gatherers’ sub-groups, i.e. independent mangrove gatherers. In line with what Gerber and Veuthey (2010) name the “greening of the agrarian question”, this case study shows that the agrarian classes and groups of the 21st century are

[73] Tom Brass is possibly the scholar who has most clearly advanced this position (see Brass 1991, 2005).

an important force, not only in the struggle for environmental sustainability, but also in the struggle for democracy and justice.

5.6. Conclusions

This article has presented a case study in which identity politics have served to articulate a liberating political strategy to contest serious injustice in the field of environmental degradation. Identity politics can be understood as a struggle for recognition and as a necessary condition to overcome distributive and political injustices. As Schlosberg (2004) contends, the lack of recognition is highly interlinked with the destruction of local environment and the exclusion of people from the political sphere.

In this particular case, the social movement for the defense of mangroves, positioned as "Ancestral Peoples of Mangrove Ecosystem", not only claimed the valuation of a specific group identity, but also to overcoming the structural factors that were subordinating and even destroying a cultural way of living with nature. This lack of recognition, closely linked to the process of shrimp aquaculture development, was manifested through politics of exclusion on the part of the Ecuadorian state that encompassed: a) the prioritization and promotion of the shrimp-farming industry over other sectors and activities such as the ones performed by mangrove gatherers. The state, motivated by the possibility of obtaining large amounts of foreign exchange, decided to support the development of this mono-aquaculture export product. This process entailed the allocation of common pool resources such as fresh water, post-larvae fisheries and public land to the shrimp-farming industry at the expense of the mangrove gatherers' customary rights over these natural resources; b) the lack of enforcement of the legal framework that protected the mangrove ecosystem and, therefore, the lack of protection of the mangrove gatherers' means of production. Consequently, the shrimp farmers expanded over protected mangrove areas, causing serious ecological damage. The Ecuadorian government, instead of revoking illegal shrimp farm concessions and working to restore extensive healthy and multi-use mangroves, rewarded the actor responsible for this situation by continuing its process of normalization; c) the acknowledgment of the mangrove gatherers' traditional use rights over the mangroves arose when the ecological health of the mangroves and their fisheries was already critical. Besides, this acknowledgment was reduced to those few mangrove areas which survived the expansion of shrimp aquaculture and was limited in relation to the scope of the mangrove gatherers' decision-making rights. It has been argued that all these processes contributed to

aggravate the marginalization and environmental dispossession of the mangrove gatherers, and subsequently inspired their contentious identity politics. C-CONDEM's politics of peoplehood sought to reduce mangrove people's vulnerability and to contribute to their empowerment by gaining collective title rights over the mangroves. In this regard, they justified their indigeneity by claiming to have an ecosystem-derived cultural particularity as a result of their ancestral occupation of the mangrove areas. Thus, this new indigenous discourse distinguished itself from the dominant ones, which underscored cultural differences primarily in terms of the cultural transmission of a racially defined population (Anderson 2007; Wade 2010). This novel ethnic identity was intended to unify a ethnical/racial heterogeneous social group to undertake collective action, while at the same time trying to define a public representation that was as close as possible to that of the dominant model of indigeneity. However, it is claimed in this article that, in practical terms, this political identity is much broader than it actually appears to be in C-CONDEM's public discourses. For C-CONDEM members, the term "Ancestral Mangrove Peoples" refers to a contentious category closely linked to the processes of mangrove defense and sustainable use practices, in direct opposition to the shrimp farmer's identity, rather than to an essentialized conception of identity based on "nativeness". Hence, it is more than a reductionist and essentialist category aimed at the articulation of an environmental justice project.

This case study is emblematic of how the current depletion of natural resource is pushing the changing political boundaries of indigeneity. In Ecuador this legal category entails rights to collective land and this novel deployment of the term challenges the very racial assumptions underlying the contemporary structures of ethnic alterity in Latin America. In this sense, it also calls for critical thinking about hegemonic indigenous epistemologies that define who will or will not count as indigenous. Likewise, it also raises questions about the need and the legitimacy of land claims (or, in a broader sense, of ecological subsistence rights) on the grounds of contemporary environmental dispossessions.

Finally, this case challenges one of the main Marxist critiques of indigenous movement politics: that identity politics tends to prevent class-based alliances within ethnically/racially diverse social groups.

CHAPTER VI

The disruption of Ancestral Peoples of the Mangrove Ecosystem: class and ethnic differentiation within a changing political context[74]

Abstract

This paper analyses the evolution of C-CONDEM's identity politics after 2009 onwards when a new political context of opportunities emerged. In 2007, the racially heterogeneous social movement for the defense of mangroves led by the organization C-CONDEM positioned itself as the "Ancestral Peoples of Mangrove Ecosystem" and claimed the right to collective ownership of the Ecuadorian mangrove areas, including those that had been previously and illegally transformed into shrimp farms. This political strategy was aimed at increasing their power over the means they use to secure their own livelihoods. However, the refusal of president Correa's government to acknowledge the existence of this political subject, combined with its policy of granting legal status to the majority of the illegal shrimp farmers, have contributed to the fragmentation of the social movement and the reshaping of its politics of representation. C-CONDEM has lost its main mestizo members on the southern coast but is continuing fighting for mangrove collective titles by adopting now the hegemonic racialized ethnic discourse.

Key words

Ecuador, grassroots social movements, indigeneity, mangrove ecosystem, identity politics, shrimp-farming industry.

6.1. Introduction

While the concepts of "ancestrality" and "peoplehood" are often associated with claims to indigenous territorial rights, they have played a central role in the formation, successes and eventual failures of the Ecuadorian social movement "Pueblos Ancestrales del Ecosistema Manglar" (PAEM, Ancestral Peoples of the Mangrove Ecosystem), through which an ethnically and geographically diverse community has positioned themselves as "Ancestral

[74] We would like to thank C-CONDEM and all its members for their openness and hospitality and to connect social justice and environmentalism. The first author acknowledges support from the European ENGOV FP7 Project (266710) and from the Spanish MICINN Project (CSO2010-21979).

Peoples" who belong to a specific natural ecosystem: the mangroves. This novel ethnic-based political strategy has been aimed at increasing their power over the mangrove common-pool resources as defense against the appropriation and exploitation by shrimp farmers.

The shrimp-farming industry, i.e. the cultivation of shrimps in brackish water ponds along estuaries and other coastal areas, has been presented as a common pattern of resource exploitation leading to conflict situations in many countries of Latin America and elsewhere (Bailey 1988; Dewalt and Vergne 1996; Standley 1998; Veuthey and Gerber 2012). Very often its development has been allowed at the expense of coastal ecosystems. Especially critical has been the depletion of mangrove ecosystems, which provide many environmental services, including coastal erosion protection and, not least, food and building supplies for marginalized groups whose livelihoods depend on direct use of the mangrove (Bailey 1988; Ocampo-Thomason 2005). In Ecuador, as in other countries, the disturbance of the mangrove ecosystem and the depletion of its resources are closely tied to the issue of property rights and to the institutional arrangements made for their management (Garí 2000; Ocampo-Thomason 2005; Veuthey and Gerber 2012). According to Ecuadorian law, mangrove ecosystems and the intertidal area across the entire coast are considered part of the national patrimony. Formal private ownership of land in these areas is forbidden and their use and management is the responsibility of the government. Nevertheless, lands in these areas have been informally managed by traditional mangrove gatherers under common-property regimes since pre-Columbian period (Marcos 2005).

Before the development of the shrimp-farming industry in Ecuador, traditional uses ğ mainly crab and shellfish gathering, along with charcoal production ğ continued to play an important role in the subsistence economies of impoverished inhabitants along the Ecuadorian coast (Bodero and Robadue 1995; Torres and Yépez 1999). With the expansion of shrimp-farming at the end of the 1960s, the situation changed and mangrove areas (as well as the overall intertidal zone) came to be seen by the Ecuadorian state as a possible source of economic development, through promotion of this industry. Ecuador became one of the first Western shrimp-farming producers and extensive mangrove damage was caused (CLIRSEN 1990). In the following years, mangrove gatherers organized and a social movement, which would eventually become PAEM, began to take shape, with defensive actions of direct resistance developing across the whole of the Ecuadorian coast, some of which were coordinated between regions, many of which were not.

In the locality of Muisne, which is located to the south of the province of Esmeraldas where Afro-Ecuadorian claims for territorial rights had been successful in the 1990s, a strong grassroots organization emerged ğ Fundación para la Defensa Ecológica (FUNDECOL, Foundation for Ecological Defense). FUNDECOL lead the process of bringing together, over the years, diverse mangrove gatherers organizations from different Ecuadorian provinces into a national organization. As a result, in 1998 the Coordinadora Nacional para la Defensa del Ecosistema Manglar (C-CONDEM, Coordinating Body for the Defense of the Mangrove Ecosystem) was formed.

From the start C-CONDEM's aim was to gain legal status for the mangrove as a common-pool resource, as a defense against the appropriation and exploitation by shrimp farmers. Specifically, C-CONDEM's goal was the complete control and administration by mangrove gatherers' organizations of the mangrove areas (including those illegally converted into shrimp farms that would be reforested and made available for mangrove gatherers) (personal interview with C-CONDEM ex-president, September 6, 2010). In this regard, in 1999 the Ecuadorian government opened the possibility for mangrove gatherers' organizations to access a mangrove area in concession (they are commonly known as *custodias*). This was seen by grassroots user organizations as a great achievement because it acknowledged the users' rights to access and use the mangroves and gave them more tools to fight against the potential expansion of the shrimp industry (Latorre in press). However, these *custodias* were implemented only in few mangrove areas which had survived the expansion of shrimp aquaculture and were limited in relation to the scope of the mangrove gatherers' decision-making rights.

Elsewhere (Latorre 2013) we have described how in 2007 C-CONDEM, faced with the above-described situation, implemented a novel political strategy, based on the reference to the concepts of "ancestrality" and "peoplehood," in order to demand territorial rights (collective mangrove titles) that would give them more control over the natural resources from which they live. Having positioned themselves as "Ancestral Peoples," who belong to a specific natural ecosystem - the "Pueblos Ancestrales del Ecosistema Manglar" (PAEM, Ancestral Peoples of the Mangrove Ecosystem) - the ethnically and geographically diverse membership of C-CONDEM claimed a native status (in terms of indigeneity and indigenous rights) while at the same time distancing themselves from the idea that their claim was racially based. C-CONDEM's ethnic politics of representation was internally adapted to reflect the racial/ethnic heterogeneity of its ecosystem oriented social base, in spite of being

performed, as a political image, in a manner closer to the dominant racialized, model of indigeneity (Latorre 2013). In order to increase C-CONDEM's possibilities of being legally recognized, the PAEM claim to indigeneity was made in such a way that it looked like "indianness," as this is the conventional model of ethnic subject (Wade 2010). In the following pages we examine how the complexities of this racially heterogeneous claim to indigeneity are related to the successes and failures of C-CONDEM's identity politics in the period from 2009 onwards, following the reelection of Rafael Correa to a second term as President of Ecuador.

C-CONDEM's original claims to indigeneity, as a strategy for securing territorial rights, can be partly explained by the hegemony of the Ecuadorian indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian movements in 2007, which began in the 1990s (Becker 2008; Lucero 2008; Sánchez 2009), when "nationalities" and "peoples" movements throughout Latin America claimed collective rights based on their cultural and ethnic difference from "white-mestizo" society. These claims were recognized by the Ecuadorian constitution in 1998, giving indigeneity a special legal status that includes the ability to leverage land rights. At the end of 2006, when Rafael Correa won the national elections with a progressive discourse that emphasized ecological and social concern, he announced his intention to open a constituent assembly process in order to reconfigure Ecuador's institutional order. This was seen by C-CONDEM as an opportunity for mangrove gatherers to reduce their vulnerability and to empower themselves (personal interview with C-CONDEM ex-president, 15 October 2010) by gaining collective rights over the mangroves, as a means to force the government to take action and curtail illegal shrimp-farming ponds while finally reforesting and restoring the mangrove ecosystem. In C-CONDEM's self-positioning as PAEM, a community of belonging and solidarity emerged for a period among mangrove gatherers' organizations from across Ecuador, which both entailed and blurred intra-group differences.

In recent years as Ecuador has implemented a development agenda that classifies shrimp-farming as a key commodity sector, the national C-CONDEM movement has lost momentum. Increasingly, regional and typically more ethnically homogenous groups are playing a key role in representing the demands of people living in and from Ecuador's mangroves. Having discussed elsewhere in detail how PAEM came into being, our aim here is to analyse the process of its dis-integration and the subsequent different response strategies adopted by different parts of C-CONDEM's grassroots organizations, in an effort to better

understand the social and materials contexts that make ethnically heterogeneous indigeneities like the PAEM possible.

Research for this article was carried out during three field trips to Ecuador between 2009 and 2012. The first author spent a total of eleven months in the field and conducted several group and individual interviews with the members of C-CONDEM's executive board regarding the process of C-CONDEM's formation, its work, it's positioning as "Ancestral Peoples" and the current process of legal regularization of existing illegal shrimp-farming activity. The first author also attended several C-CONDEM internal meetings and assemblies, had access to the organization's extensive archives and interviewed all the main leaders of the C-CONDEM organizations that participated in the first congress of Ancestral Peoples of the Mangrove Ecosystem in 2007. The biography of each member organization was studied, and attention was given to documenting their understanding of the new political identity category of PAEM and their points of view and positions in relation to the new shrimp-farming regularization policies. Additionally, during the most recent field visit, for grassroots organizations that had abandoned the C-CONDEM social movement, we specifically asked about the reasons that had motivated their departure. This work was complemented by participant observation, also by the first author, of the political and economic activities of daily life in diverse mangrove areas along the coast of Ecuador over a five month period. The aim was to study the identities of mangrove gatherers' as part of their everyday life and to better understand the reality they live. Most of this time, three continuous months, was spent in the province of El Oro, during which the first author lived with a C-CONDEM spokesperson who also works as a crab gatherer. Finally, this empirical field work was complemented by interviews with representatives of the shrimp-farming sector, local academics experts, members of other environmental NGOs and state personnel.

We begin by setting out the analytical context for the study with a review of the academic discourse concerning identity politics and indigeneity in Latin America, with our particular focus being the situation in Ecuador. Next, we review the changing shrimp-farming industry situation in Ecuador, starting with the period prior to the establishment of the Correa government moving through to the present legalization program, and juxtapose this with the changing political opportunity context and the responses of C-CONDEM's political members to these changing conditions. Finally, some conclusions are drawn concerning the

implications that shrimp farm regularization and associated legal reforms may have for mangrove gatherers as a social group.

We find that, in much the same way that the PAEM identity became imaginable thanks to a combination of factors ğ severe material pressures on the mangroves, recognition of indigenous peoples land rights throughout Latin American, and international attention on Ecuadorian mangrove destruction (Latorre 2013) ğ its disintegration can be linked to the coincidence of several new aspects of Ecuadorian politics: after many years of moratorium, the Correa government is now regularizsing (i.e. making legal) the once illegal shrimp farms, creating new incentives for commercialization and an exploitation; and petitions to acknowledge the PAEM category in the 2008 Constitution were officially rejected, while the categories of montubio, afro-Ecuadorian, and indigenous people as ethnic groups were granted collective rights, disempowering the mangrove gatherers' movement, as a whole. In this new political context, the solidarity across C-CONDEM's grassroots organizations, which was underpinning the PAEM identity politics has been broken and underlying class and race/ethnic differences within the C-CONDEM's grassroots members, are once again coming to the fore.

6.2. Indigeneity and Cultural Identity Politics in Ecuador

The term "indigenous people" does not have a fixed and natural set of referents; it is rather a socio-political category with collective rights attached to it, which has become a legal term applied in international and national frameworks throughout the world. Before the 1980s the term was sometimes used to describe various different peoples across the world. Today it is used more as a universal term, to speak about an identity claimed by many peoples with very diverse historical backgrounds. In many cases, peoples who share the same expectation that international and national legislations will acknowledge their complaints about dispossession, generally with regard to land and resources use rights. Initially promoted by a transnational indigenous rights movement (Niezen 2000), over the decades the cause of indigenous rights has been taken up by the United Nations and has a place within an international political context that champions cultural diversity as part of a neoliberal model of capitalism and democracy (Clark 2005; Lucero 2001; Valdivia 2005).

Despite the fact that the transnational indigenous rights movement has refused to impose a closed definition of the term "indigenous," opting instead to allow the indigenous peoples to

undergo their own self-identification processes, a set of ideas sketching the prototype of indigenous peoples has prevailed in international legal decisions, which functions as a reference for the legitimization of "authentic" indigenous peoples. This template of indigeneity is based on the colonial categories of American "natives" and "aboriginal" Australians. As the concept traveled to other contexts its meaning has been transformed to suit into new geographical contexts (Bowen 2000), while retaining the root idea of an 'original other.'

Generally, indigenous peoples is a label used to describe the descendants of the original inhabitants of a country or at least of those people who occupied it prior to the arrival of the successive waves of, usually colonial, settlers. They are culturally distinct from the dominant society and tend to share experiences of dispossession and marginalization (Bowen 2000; Gausset et al. 2011). While this narrative has been overtly criticized by many scholars, as it is based on essentialized and obsolete anthropological concepts concerning culture and identity, others have defended it on the grounds that it serves normative principles of social justice and facilitates the equalizing of power relationships (Beteille 1998; Kuper 2003; Asch et al. 2006). There is ongoing controversy and debate over a broad range of issues, ranging from the suitability of granting special rights to indigenous peoples to the very definition of the concept (Bowen 2000; Kenick and Lewis 2004; McIntosch et al. 2002), with the latter being the part of that discourse toward which we hope to make some contribution here.

In Latin America the concept "indigenous peoples" is directly associated with the racial category of "Indian," and includes the consideration of racialized cultural difference. Academic study of Latin American "indigenous peoples" and "afro-descendants" has traditionally been carried out separately. The former has been ascribed as the object of study of "ethnicity"[75] and the latter that of "race." This reflects an underlying presumption that the category "indigenous people" is defined in cultural terms (i.e. Cultural Otherness) in contrast to that of "afro-descendants," which has often been defined through reference to phenotypical criteria (the Phenotypic Otherness). However, as Wade (2010) has points out, this separation between phenotype and culture mistakes the former for being entirely culturally constructed and the latter for being entirely without cultural aspects. He argues,

[75] Ethnicity is an ambiguous concept that has had different meanings in different regions throughout history. Currently, in Latin America, it denotes cultural difference and is normally associated with the concept of indigeneity (Ng'Weno 2007; Hooker 2005).

instead, that both categories - "indigenous peoples" and "afro-descendants"- should have aspects of both racial and ethnic categorization.

This split between the two objects of study, he contends, can be explained, in part, by the different locations that the two categories have occupied in the colonial structure of alterity, which have been maintained throughout the process of the nation-state-building, during the Republican period. The distinction can also be linked to the existing tendency among scholars to consider the indigenous (understood as Indian) as the conventional model of the ethnic subject. This means that, in practice, those communities that have claimed their ethnicity have had to do so in ways that look like "indianness" (Anderson 2007; Wade 2010), reinforcing the establishment of a hegemonic ethnic subject based on the underlying assumption that all ethnic identifications fall within discrete racially homogeneous categories.

This social classification and inequality vocabulary, dating from the period of European colonialism, is embedded in current academic, popular and political discourses about indigenous rights and its meaning and connotations have shifted, over time, along with changing socio-political circumstances. Ecuadorian and more generally Latin American cultural identity politics have played an important role in this redefinition process. During the 1980s-90s the indigenous movement and to a lesser extent the afro-descendant movement abandoned earlier class-based forms of organization and adopted an ethnicity based strategy for negotiating land claims and demands for other rights[76]. This flexibility suggests the presence, in Ecuador, of kind of identity politics discussed by Wade (2010), Lucero (2001), Perrault (2001) and Sawyer (1997), which encompasses both material and symbolic. These authors conceptualize ethno-racial identities as shifting, decentered, contextual, relational constructions, subject to political mobilization and entangled with other subject categories such as class, gender and sexuality. This presumption, that there is a fluidity to ethno-racial meanings, as well as to their contested character and socio-political categories (Becker 2008; Lucero 2001; Valdivia 2005; Wade 2010) is more compatible with what we have observed in the mangrove gatherers movement.

Today, in conjunction with these new analytical approaches, the focus of inquiry has centered in studying both the political context in which people choose to identify with certain

[76] It is worth mentioning that "Indians" in Ecuador already had land rights, without mobilizing the language of ethnicity, since the passage in 1937 of La Ley de Organización y Régimen de las Comunas Indígenas y Montubias (Indigenous and Montubias Commune Law).

identity labels and the meaning they ascribe to them (Hamilton and Placas 2011; Jackson and Warren 2005). The former implies inquiring about the reasons and the processes by which identification occurs as well as observing whom it empowers and whom it excludes. The latter involves asking about the many ways of being "indigenous" over time and space. The dynamic and contingent nature of identity formation and politics is thus underscored, "without guarantee" in Hall's (1996) words, meaning there is no guarantee that their constitution through the action of specific forces, structures and events will lead to their institutionalization or will last over time. This is exactly the situation in the case study considered in this paper, as the new political context created since 2009 onwards has set the stage for the fragmentation and subsequent reconfiguration of C-CONDEM, thus articulating a new political strategy and defining a new public representation. In this sense, in order to better grasp these flexible and fluid identity processes scholars have proposed new concepts such as "articulation", "becoming", or "emergent indigeneities" (Hathaway 2010; Clifford 2007; Hoffman French 2004).

With regard to the Ecuadorian politics of ethnic representation, several academics have analyzed the factors explaining its emergence (see Becker 2008; Clark 2005; Yashar 2005). I would like to emphasize two of these factors given their importance in shaping these new identities as it will later be discussed. The first is the consolidation of transnational networks, especially those related with the environment, indigenous rights and development aid, and the second is the establishment of the neoliberal state.

With the emergence and hegemony of the Ecuadorian indigenous movement (usually identified with the activity of the organization CONAIE[77]), the previous "ventriloquist" forms of representation ğ in Guerrero's terminology (1994) ğ eventually ended and the indigenous peoples started to speak for themselves. From then on, CONAIE publicly offered counter-representations of indigenous peoples that challenged the prevailing views on these groups. In this sense, the language of indigeneity, closely linked to ideologies of assimilation and modernization, was positively valorized and ready for the acquisition of special citizenship rights. As many scholars have noted, this political subject used strategically essentialized images of indigenous peoples and globally accepted ideas on them in order to

[77] Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador (Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador).

gain organizational and institutional strength, political legitimacy and access to financial resources from diverse multi-scalar networks (Clark 2005; Perrault 2001; Valdivia 2005).

Their self-representation included mainly images of indigenous peoples as caretakers of the environment, the idea of their cultural identity as imbued in place, the concept of land reconfigured as territory, the notion that this territory is a fundamental space for their culture and life, and the creation of a national indigenous identity conceptualized as "nationalities" and "peoples" (Lucero 2008; Roger 1996; Sawyer 1997). These representations have subsequently worked as a template for PAEM's politics of representation (Latorre 2013).

As I have already stated, these images have been mainly provided by the national organization CONAIE and its Amazonian and Highland counter-parts, which have become hegemonic among the diverse Ecuadorian indigenous organizations. Other indigenous organizations' self-representations such as those of FEINE[78] and FENOCIN[79] have been relegated to a second place (Lucero 2001). CONAIE's politics of representation, particularly its conceptualization of "nationalities" as having a unique culture, language and territory, has limited the coastal indigenous organizational process as most of the groups claiming indigeneity there do not speak a native language. As González (2009) contends, those organizations positioning themselves as indigenous peoples and seeking CONAIE's membership have had difficulties being accepted by the latter for this reason. However, being under CONAIE's umbrella implies the benefit, among others, of gaining institutional strength and receiving financial support[80]. Finally, in what regards identity identifications in the Ecuadorian coast, this region is commonly seen as having lost its indigenous population a long time ago. Here, depending of the locality, the predominant identity labels are "montubio", "cholo", "negro" and the most commonly used is "mestizo". None of these have the "nationalities" characteristics preferred by the CONAIE.

What is relevant for the case presented here is the idea that during the 1990s CONAIE's indigenous politics may have set the stage for the subsequent assertion of new indigeneities. These new identifications are associated to collective mobilizations for resources, especially to land and ecological struggles (see Bauer 2010; Bazurco Osorio 2006; González 2009). Many social groups are currently losing the right to control the sources of their livelihoods

[78] Federación Evangélica de Indígenas Ecuatorianos (Ecuadorian Evangelical Indigenous Federation).
[79] Federación Nacional de Organizaciones Campesinas, Indígenas y Negras (Federation of Peasant, Black and Indigenous Organizations
[80] González explains that access to PRODEPINE economic resources had an important weight for the *Communas* of Santa Elena's process of re-indigenization (González 2009).

and their physical environments are being quickly deteriorated. Confronted with this situation, these groups may see that defining land rights in terms of indigeneity allows them greater leverage in negotiation with the Ecuadorian state. These new political subjects are emerging in places that have not been traditionally associated with indigenous peoples or where indigenous peoples are said to have disappeared many years ago through assimilation. Hence, these new identity strategies have not emerged without tension. Within their processes of becoming, they re-signify the concept of indigeneity in new ways that, in the case for example of PAEM, challenge the very foundational premises of the term (racialized cultural difference and primo-occupants). In particular, PAEM's politics of peoplehood suggest separating indigeneity from its racial connotations. Stressing its cultural difference exclusively on the basis of its long habitation of mangroves, PAEM pushes indigeneity's epistemology and politics in a way that invites to see this concept beyond race or "blood and soil" principles (Latorre, Chapter V). This case has similarities to and differences from other cases in other Latin America countries such as Honduras and Brazil, where mixed-raced groups with a clear afro-descendant physical appearance are claiming indigeneity status (Anderson 2007; Hoffman French 2004). PAEM, which did not have a unified physical appearance, has not achieved legal recognition as indigenous peoples from the state, a fact that in turn, has limited its process of consolidation and empowerment, as argued in this paper.

6.3. Correa's Governmental Policies Promoting Shrimp-Farming Industry in Intertidal Areas

The Shrimp-Farming Industry Prior to Correa's Government

Prior to the establishment of the current government, the dynamics of the Ecuadorian shrimp-farming industry represented a complete institutional failure, as the industry's activities predominantly occurred outside the legal framework. Despite Decree 2939's ban on the conversion of mangroves into shrimp ponds (Robadue 1995) in 1978, the major depletion of mangrove areas took place between 1969 and 1984, as shown by Table 4 below, and lasted with decreasing tendency until 1995. Consequently, a large percentage of the expansion of the shrimp-farming industry carried out in converted mangrove soil was illegal. The trend of mangrove conversion was halted in 1995 by Decree 1907, which was passed in 1994 and established a five-year mangrove closure.

Table 4: Evolution of the Typologies of Soil Uses (ha)							
	1969	**1984**	**1987**	**1991**	**1995**	**1999**	**2006**
Mangroves	202.201	182.157	175.157	162.187	146.939	148.483	148.230
Shrimp ponds	0	89.368	117.729	145.998	178.072	175.167	175.748
Salt flats	52.938	20.022	12.274	6.321	5.109	4.548	3.706

Source: CLIRSEN, 1990, 2007

In 1999, the shrimp-farming industry suffered a violent outbreak of a viral disease called the White-spot virus, which led to a catastrophic crash (Spurrier Baquerizo - CAAP 2007). By 2003, the shrimp-farming industry had started to recover, but it was not until 2007 that it reached the same productive levels as before the outbreak (Spurrier Baquerizo - CAAP 2007). Therefore, the changing political climate at the end of 2006 coincided with a turning point in the shrimp-farming sector, with the result that the new government held in its hands the possibility of pursuing either of two basic trends: on the one hand, redressing the socio-ecological damage and illegal expansion caused by the shrimp-farming industry by limiting the growth of this sector, or, on the other hand, fostering its reactivation and discarding past illegalities. Correa's government opted for the second option, as described in the next section.

The Process of Shrimp-Farm Regularization

On October 15, 2008, president Correa passed Decree 1391, which was intended to legalize the estimated 42,000 hectares of illegal shrimp ponds located in the intertidal zone. Decree 1391 established year 1999 as the top limit for the ponds to be included in the regularization process. As seen in Table 4, the shrimp-farming industry grew very little after 1999, so the decree practically included all offenders.

This Decree also set the conditions for the mangrove reforestation process to be carried out in the illegal farms or in adjacent areas. It established the percentage of land to be reforested according to the size of the farms: 10 percent in properties of up to 10 hectares, 22 percent in properties ranging from 11 to 50 hectares, and 30 percent in those having between 51 and 250 hectares. The reforestation had to be completed within the first year following initiation of the process. Finally, the Decree prohibited the granting of new permits for the establishment of shrimp farms in the intertidal zone and established a window of 90 days after its coming into force to submit to the reforestation process. This deadline was subsequently postponed until March 31, 2010 as a consequence of the negative impact of

the international financial crisis on the Ecuadorian economy, thanks to the perception that the promotion, rather than the restriction, of the shrimp-farming sector was necessary (Decree 1442). In 2010, the government issued two new decrees. The first one, Decree 397, granted 90 extra days to small farmers (0-10 hectares) so they could initiate the regularization process. This group included not only the largest number of illegal properties, but also the most difficulties in fulfilling the government's requirements. The second decree, Decree 261, stipulated the obligation for shrimp producers to pay the required taxes and to enroll their workers in the Ecuadorian Social Security Institute. It was a general practice among shrimp producers to hire unskilled workers by the day, with the result that they lacked access to any health insurance. Furthermore, the decree limited any potential farm extensions to 50 hectares for natural persons and 250 hectares for juridical persons. With these measures, the government justified its support for powerless groups, mainly small shrimp farmers and unskilled workers. Moreover, it claimed that the measure would recover a considerable amount of mangrove area.

The implementation of the reforestation process was carried out without the full consideration of environmental and scientific criteria. Moreover, the criterion that recommended reforesting the areas close to shrimp ponds was interpreted very broadly, with the result that any area found to be suitable for the growth of mangroves was considered a valid area for reforestation (personal interview with the undersecretary of the Sub-secretary of Marine and Costal management, October 18, 2011). The broad interpretation of this criterion also opened the mangrove concessions to reforestation, even though most of them had mangrove-deforested plots. This conflict led in turn to C-CONDEM's internal division and to the resignation by some important second-level and grassroots organizations from C-CONDEM membership, as will be explained in the following section.

6.4. The Disarticulation of the Political Subject PAEM

C-CONDEM firmly opposed Decree 1391 and accused the government of rewarding and legitimizing illegal activities. In the words of C-CONDEM'S former president: "Decree 1391 meant forgiveness and oblivion" (personal interview, January 15, 2012). He added that the government was rewarding the industry that had been continuously violating the rights of the Ancestral Peoples of the Mangrove Ecosystem for more than 40 years. This former C-

CONDEM president concluded that this decree privatized the mangroves and put the interests of capital before the social function of mangroves. He argued that the mangrove ecosystem had strategic value for Ecuador's food sovereignty and the well-being of Ecuadorian coastal rural communities, this value being more important than all the revenues derived from the shrimp-farming industry (personal interview, January 15, 2012). In the end, C-CONDEM rejected the reforestation process included in the decree as well as any other agreement with the shrimp-farming industry.

Although C-CONDEM's executive board took this radical position, different members of the organization had different points of view, particularly about the process of reforestation and their relationship with the shrimp producers. Divergence of opinion arose mainly from C-CONDEM members in the El Oro province, who believed that the process of reforestation was an opportunity to obtain economic resources: most of these organizations had been granted *custodias* over areas suitable for reforestation as part of a potential partnership with the shrimp producers. As a result, C-CONDEM lost the support of the strongest organizations in El Oro province, as these signed several reforestation agreements with the shrimp farmers' federations. As the president of one of them explained:

> We do not speak to each other because of the regularization issueŚ what we ask for at a national level, is that manual labor be managed by the [mangrove gatherers'] organizations, this was the disagreement that they [C-CONDEM] had with me. If the right to work is not guaranteed, if you do not carry out the reforestation project, you, as a shrimp farmer, whom are you finally going to hire? As a shrimp farmer, you will hire independent mangrove gatherers, Peruvians, wherever and at the prize that suits you. What we have defended is the right to work. Regarding the other aspects [of the regularization], we do not agree with them, but how are you going to fight against the very state? The state legalized what was illegal, but who is going to finally do it [the reforestation], if we do not do it? (Personal interview, 27 September 2010)[81].

This testimony is very representative of a common view among many mangrove gatherers' organizations, according to which the legalization and reactivation of the shrimp-farming

[81] No nos hablamos por el tema de la regularizaciónŚ nosotros lo que pedimos a nivel nacional, es que la mano de obra la den a las organizaciones, ese fue el desacuerdo que tuvieron conmigo. Si no se cumple el derecho al trabajo, si no haces tú la reforestación tu como camaronera a quien terminarás contratando? A los independientes, a los peruanos, que como camaronero contratarás donde más te convenga pues y a menos precio. Nosotros lo que hemos defendido es el derecho al trabajo, el resto no estamos de acuerdo, pero cómo te vas a poner a pelear contra el mismo estado, el estado legalizó lo ilegal, pero quién lo terminará haciendo si no lo hacemos nosotros?.

industry was a fact and consequently worthless to keep fighting against the industry, claiming the reconversion of lost mangroves as well as their collective ownership as Ancestral Peoples. They were conscious that the political context had changed, and in this new situation they intended to work with the government and the shrimp farmers. In agreement, another ex-member of C-CONDEM stated:

> The breakdown point came in 2009, and it was mainly due to their political radicalism [C-CONDEM's]. They never take political positions other than radical ones, they do not think about the benefit it represents for the community in terms of quality of lifeŚ The government legalized what was illegal, perfect, but now that it is legalized, we do not have the strength to recover the mangrove. Then we must work with the enemy, yes, and our policy is to work jointly with the shrimp farmers in order to resolve the issues concerning the *custodias,* the monitoring and the management of the area... It would be much better to get the shrimp farmers that are already regularized and working legally in order to coordinate our efforts because, otherwise, we are never going to recover the mangrove areasŚ So, we have to take advantage of the opportunity created by the government, in its requiring shrimp farmers to work with the communities (Personal interview, 1 December 2011)[82].

This view was more easily adopted by the organizations that had been granted *custodias*, which, in turn, has had a negative impact on those mangrove gatherers' organizations and independent gatherers without *custodias*. The former group is using the rights associated with their *custodias* to deny access to the mangrove areas to the latter less powerful groups.

In light of this situation, C-CONDEM and its remaining member organizations have changed their political strategy. As C-CONDEM's director executive stated: "We are trying to use what we got from the 2008 Constitution"[83]. They have focused on the protected areas that are co-managed by C-CONDEM members and are claiming these areas as Community Protected Areas or as Territorial Circumscriptions, depending on the case. The main goal is for the mangroves in those areas to "be managed directly by our organizations". With this

[82] Los puntos de quiebre fueron en el 2009, y fue la radicalidad política, nunca tienen otra política que ser radicales y no pensar en el beneficio comunitario de la calidad de vidaŚel gobierno legalizó lo ilegal, perfecto, pero ahora que ya está legalizado no tenemos esa fortaleza de recuperar el manglar, entonces trabajemos con el enemigo, sí y nuestra política es trabajar en conjunto con el camaronero para fortalecer el tema de custodia y vigilancia y manejo de la zona...sería mucho mejor vincular a los camaroneros que ya están regularizados y que están legalmente trabajando para trabajar en una forma coordinada porque pensar que vamos a tener una devolución de los espacios jamás, entonces hay que aprovechar esa oportunidad que brinda el gobierno de que las camaroneras tienen que trabajar con las comunidades.

[83] Estamos tratando de utilizar lo que ganamos en la Constitución.

purpose, C-CONDEM has reshaped its politics of representation to take advantage of the ethnic rights granted by the constitution. As mentioned above, before the passing of Decree 1391, the organization was using an ethnic discourse that emphasized mangrove gatherers' attachment to a particular ecosystem (territory) while distancing itself from any kind of racial connotations (Latorre 2013). Yet since Decree 1391's passage, it has incorporated the ethno-racial labels acknowledged by the 2008 Constitution into its discourse about the "Ancestral Peoples". The new constitution not only confirmed the acknowledgement of indigenous groups and afro-Ecuadorians as "Peoples", but also recognized the identity label of "montubio" as "People". Accordingly, these social groups are now better positioned to claim rights to territory.

As such, C-CONDEM organizations located in the north of the Esmeraldas province, comprised of racially homogeneous afro-Ecuadorian inhabitants who had adopted during the 1990s-early 2000s an Afro-ethnic discourse to defend their natural resources, currently represent themselves as "Pueblos Negros del Ecosistema Manglar" (Afro-Ecuadorian Peoples of the Mangrove Ecosystem) and demand the transformation of their *custodias* into "territorial circumscriptions". As the leaders of the FEDARPOM and FEDARPROBIM state:

> We identify ourselves as Ancestral Peoples of the Mangroves, but [with this category] we are not getting anything. If when C-CONDEM had presented the [PAEM] proposal to the Ecuadorian government, this government had acknowledged it...but it did not happen. In contrast, the category of Afro-Ecuadorian as a "peoples" is now recognized by the 2008 Constitution. This is why we now wanted to use it. Even the COTAD law is saying that [petitions for territorial circumscriptions (CT)] will be allowed in protected areas (president of FEDARPROBIM, 6 December 2011)[84].

> My opinion is that we should petition for CT because we have conserved our mangroves for long time, we have fought against the shrimp farmers, we have fought against our own people, then, if there is the opportunity, if the law now gives us the opportunity, because if the Ecuadorian state grants us the CT of the

[84] Nosotros nos identificamos como pueblos ancestrales del manglar, pero pasamos desapercibidos porque debe haber algo que soporte esa calidad de PAEM. Si cuando la C-CONDEM presentó al estado la propuesta y el estado hubiera dicho ya chévere y decreta, pero no pasó. A diferencia de lo que está sucediendo con la declaratoria del pueblo afro. Por eso ahora nosotros queremos agarrarnos también de las bondades del estado, de la constitución, porque la ley mismo del COTAD está diciendo que se permitirá [pedir circunscripciones territoriales] en áreas protegidas.

> mangroves, it has to give us money in order to conserve the area. We want to go in this direction (president of FEDARPOM, 14 January 2012)[85].

> In [the 1998 Constitution] CT was acknowledged but [the 1998 Constitution] created many obstacles to obtaining it, and in relation to collective rights [the 1998 Constitution] only acknowledged collective rights for the indigenous peoples and the afro-Ecuadorians as applicable. So, we knew that the [Ecuadorian government] would be reluctant to grant us territory because there was also still the debate over whether we were really from here. In contrast, the 2008 Constitution clearly establishes the collective rights of the indigenous peoples, of the afro-Ecuadorians and of the Montubios. Moreover, it clarifies the concept of CT, and the COTAD law further develops the right to CT. Now that the law acknowledges the ancestral right even within a protected area, then I say that the first step is to convert our mangrove *custodias* into *comunas*. Afterwards, once we have four or five *comunas*, we convert them into a CT of mangroves. This is our strategy, or dream. This is a right we have to claim for ourselves (FEDARPOM's member and also leader of the GCNE project, 13 January 2012)[86].

In the province of Manabí, which is conventionally thought of as the original place of the Montubios, C-CONDEM's organizations have positioned themselves as "Pueblos Montubios del Ecosistema Manglar" (Montubio Peoples of the Mangrove Ecosystem) but, unlike the northern groups, are claiming for their territory the category of "protected community area":

> Here [in the coast of Manabí] people identify with the montubio identity. They consider themselves as montubios because they come from the Montubio area [inland areas]. Montubios came here in the past and remained here for several generations, and they are also ancestral peoples. Besides the montubio

[85] Mi opinión es pedir Circunscripción territorial-CT porque mira nosotros hemos cuidado durante mucho tiempo el recurso manglar, nos hemos peleado con el camaronero, nos hemos peleado con nuestra misma gente, entonces si hay la oportunidad, si la ley nos da hoy la oportunidad, porque si una vez el estado nos aprueba esto de la CT del manglar, es el estado que tiene que poner los recursos para poder mantener esa área, pues vámonos por esa vía.

[86] En [la constitución del 1998] quedó como circunscripción territorial y con una serie de dificultades para lograrlo, y los derechos colectivos de esa época decían que se reconozcan a los indígenas y a nosotros los afroecuatorianos o negros en lo que sea aplicable, y ahí sabíamos que nos iban a poner un candado para el tema del territorio porque todavía había el debate de que no éramos de acá y un sin número de cosas. A diferencia de la de ahora, la del 2008, que sí determina bien claro los derechos colectivos para los indígenas y Afro-ecuatorianos y montubios, y aparte de eso determina bien lo que es una CT y aparte de eso está la COTAD que puntualiza bien lo de la CT. Ahora la ley dice que se reconoce el derecho ancestral incluso en área protegida, entonces yo digo vamos a por la figura de comuna y no por custodias, y luego cuando tengamos unas 4 o 5 comunas las convertimos en una CT del manglar. Esa es la estrategia, el sueño. Es un derecho que tenemos que exigirlo.

> identification, [the reason to use the Montubio identity] is because as PAEM we do not have recognition in the 2008 Constitution. Then, in order to get the official recognition of the comunitarian protected area that we are demanding, despite the fact that we also can demand it as *comuna*, but in order to have more power, we re-affirm our montubio identification. With it, we are immediately granted a right that PAEM does not have. We need to do the double acknowledgment in order to access the collective rights. This is the reason why we self-identified as Montubio Peoples of the Mangrove Ecosystem (personal interview with ex-former president of C-CONDEM and member of the NGO FIDES, 21 January 2012)[87].

In the same vein, groups in the south of Esmeraldas, a racially heterogeneous zone, are demanding the transformation of the currently co-managed protected area into a community protected area (personal interview with a leader of FUNDECOL, 9 October 2011), rather than deploying the conventional ethnic discourse. This latter management category was also acknowledged by the constitution and is viewed by FUNDECOL as a category superior to those of mangrove *custodia* and co-managed protected area.

These new politics of representation suggest that in a context of both internal weakness and an adverse opportunity structure, C-CONDEM finds it politically convenient to adopt the hegemonic racialized ethnic discourse. Since C-CONDEM's major *mestizo* bases divided the movement, the legally recognized ethno-racial labels have resonated well with the remaining base organizations. As this conventional ethnic discourse is constitutionally acknowledged and implemented by both the Ecuadorian indigenous and the afro-Ecuadorian movements, it appears to have greater political strength, notwithstanding the current government's reluctance to further develop the groups' collective rights. Nevertheless, as of this moment, the government has failed to acknowledge C-CONDEM's demands.

[87] Aquí hay una identificación montubia. Ellos sí se sienten montubios, vienen del área montubia. La gente montubia ha venido y se ha asentado hace varias generaciones y por eso constituyen pueblos ancestrales. I además de la identificación también es porque como PAEM no tenemos un reconocimiento en la constitución, entonces para lograr que se nos otorgue el AP comunitaria, a pesar que como comuna sí se puede, pero para darle más fuerza, tenemos que reafirmar esa identificación montubia porque ahí ya tenemos un derecho ganado, lo que no tienen los Pueblos del manglar. Entonces necesitamos hacer el doble reconocimiento para poder acceder a esos derechos también. Por eso nos denominamos Pueblos Ancestrales montubios del manglar.

6.5. Conclusions

This case study has demonstrated the process of fragmentation and subsequent reshaping of the politics of representation of the mangrove defense movement under Correa's mandate. As a result, the potential radicalism of the political identity category "Ancestral Peoples of the Mangrove Ecosystem," intended to unify C-CONDEM's heterogeneous base and to fight their marginalization as a collectivity, has vanished in the new context created by President Correa's government.

President Correa had the opportunity to redress the past wrongs of shrimp-farming and to implement targeted policies to improve the mangrove gatherers' living conditions. As C-CONDEM claimed in 2007, his government could have worked toward the reconversion of the entire illegal shrimp farm extension into new mangrove areas. Although such a measure could not have guaranteed the elimination of mangrove fisheries and therefore the improvement of the mangrove gatherers' wellbeing, it might have served as the first step in that direction. Such a measure might have introduced greater balance to the unequal power relations between the shrimp-farming sector and the mangrove gatherers. Instead, pressured by the need for increased economic revenues, Correa's administration decided to legally guarantee the industry's means of production in spite of past illegalities. With this decision, the mangrove gatherers' expectations of recovering a significant part of the depleted mangrove area completely vanished. This dramatic change in expectations transformed the conditions of opportunity that had previously served as a common objective for the mangrove defense movement: to obtain the right to collective ownership of the mangrove areas, including those that had been illegally transformed into shrimp farms. Experts have argued that in the wake of this dramatic change, the already existing social differences in C-CONDEM's base have begun to create tensions inside the movement and to lead to its subsequent fragmentation. Within the new political context characterized by the regularization of the shrimp-farming industry, class differences (in terms of *custodia* holders) among C-CONDEM's base, coupled with their varied compatibility with the ethno-racial categories (Afro-Ecuadorian, Indigenous people, Montubios) recognized in the 2008 Constitution as "Peoples," have emerged as limiting factors for the movement's unity.

The organizations that abandoned C-CONDEM membership were *custodia* holders and identified themselves as *mestizos*. This sub-group found itself at a considerable disadvantage, compared with the rest of C-CONDEM's members, in maintaining a strong

rationale for using an ethnic discourse to fight for territorial (mangrove) rights. For this reason, it appears that they have decided to renounce fighting for mangrove collective land titles in terms of ethnicity and accepted their *custodia* status as a valuable mechanism to improve their conditions of living. The rest of C-CONDEM's members, although most of the *custodias* have been granted, have decided to keep fighting to obtain greater autonomy and power over the mangrove areas. These members have adopted the hegemonic racialized discourse, as they have determined this to be the best political strategy to achieve their goal. By focusing on the evolution of C-CONDEM's politics of representation, this article has aimed to illustrate the dynamism of the process of identity construction and of identity politics along the Ecuadorian coast, especially as they relate to indigeneity.

In addition, the politics of Correa's government with respect to intertidal areas have led to a reconfiguration of power relations in those areas that is shaping new forms of exclusion/inclusion and inequality, both within groups of mangrove gatherers and between the gatherers and the shrimp farmers. In this case, independent mangrove gatherers and gatherers who are organized but lack *custodias* are the most vulnerable sub-groups. Absent the implementation of structural changes, the future prospects for mangrove gatherers are very likely compromised. Traditional mangrove practices may decrease and be exercised only by those organizations currently holding *custodias*. The remaining *custodia*-less mangrove gatherers will have to change their cultural way of life.

The study of this case raises normative questions that implicate concepts such as citizenship, democracy, and rights linked to environmental dispossession: Is environmental discrimination analogous to other kinds of discrimination based on race or gender? Is it legitimate for environmentally dispossessed groups to be granted differentiated citizenship and rights? Is the setting of some limits to environmental exploitation necessary to strengthen democracy?

CHAPTER VII

Conclusions.

This final section provides a synthesis of the overall dissertation highlighting the main contributions that it makes in relation to the existing literature in the fields of political ecology, social movements, and race-ethnicity studies with a special focus on Latin America. Afterwards, it draws possible future lines of research by considering several issues and themes that have either addressed superficially or left apart because of time or financial constraints.

7.1. Summary and Main Theoretical Contributions

The Macro-Perspective Approach

Chapters II and III have attempted to respond to the overall research questions raised by the macro-perspective approach. Chapter II has examined the modalities in which environmental dispossession has occurred and the ways it has been resisted in Ecuador during the global capitalism phase; the main driving forces and offenders behind these processes of environmental disruption; and the social groups more adversely affected by them, which, in turn, are contesting them. It has also searched for regular patterns in both processes ğ environmental dispossession and resistance ğ across time, space and commodities.

The aim has been to deepen understanding of the connection between the increase in social metabolism (in terms of flows of energy and materials, including water and wastes), the commodification of nature, dispossession and resistance during the current globalization phase of capitalism in the global South. Furthermore, the case of Ecuador has enabled a comparison of the related processes of commodification of nature and resistance during the neoliberal and post-neoliberal phases in the country.

The novelty of this study lies in its addressing the topic in a systematic way, i.e. drawing general findings from 64 social conflicts taking place in Ecuador between 1980 and 2012. The findings can be synthesized as follows:

a) Ecuador has, over the past thirty years, rearticulated its position as a commodity exporter and has effectively integrated into the global economy through the intensification and diversification of its commodity exports. In this new stage of world capitalism Ecuador has been a supplier of both raw materials and luxury goods. It has also established itself as an outsourcing "exporter" of cheap labor and of sites where hazardous and resource-intensive production activities are tolerated. It represents a new commodity export niche characterized by the establishment of market-led conservation activities.

b) Both national and transnational capital accumulation is being achieved through the exploitation of Ecuador's competitive advantages in terms of both cheap labor and natural resources. This implies the externalization of the social and environmental costs of primary production, via "competitive" integration into global markets.

c) At the local level, this strategy of market integration has exhibited a clear pattern of impacts, which is, on the one hand, defined by privatization of commons, deterioration of the local environment and displacement or reduction of the local residents' access to land and other natural resources, while, on the other, leading to increasingly precarious labor conditions, including exposure to contamination in workplaces, and polarization of incomes. Following Harvey (2005), we have referred to this pattern as "accumulation by environmental dispossession", meaning the accumulation of wealth is mainly based on the exploitation of natural resources and concentrated in the hands of a global capitalist class comprised of national and transnational elites, whereas dispossession of land and resources tends to fall on already disadvantaged social groups.

d) There seems to be a blurring of the traditional North-South geographical divide between exploiter and exploited during the post-neoliberal period, as a result of the presence of a growing Ecuadorian capitalist class and the substantial rise of Chinese investment. These shifts suggest that the "neoliberalism" category is losing explanatory power and that economic and environmental exploitation is being increasingly driven by "state capitalism" such as it exists in China.

e) The main groups suffering and resisting environmental dispossession are income-poor rural and racially discriminated populations whose main motivation for resistance is direct reliance on natural resources for subsistence. Moreover, they have raised three basic

demands that are distributed across commodity types but are all reasonably consistent over time. First, in relation to large-scale infrastructure projects and the expansion of existing extraction (mineral and forestry sectors) and non-traditional export sectors, protesters have tended to adopt a strict oppositional stance and have demanded the right to participate in decision-making processes that affect them directly. Secondly, where existing extractive frontiers have become old and resources are spent, protesters have also demanded environmental restoration. And thirdly, in their resistance to environmental dispossession at the hands of the corporate agri-food sector, protesters have demanded improvement in both ecological and social standards and the prioritization of the social functions of environment and resources over the private interest of capital. This last demand is also made by protesters resisting the commodification and privatization of communal assets, such as basic water, sewage services, communal areas and traditional knowledge. All three types of demands are predominantly framed in a rights-based language that suggests convergence with the dynamics of resistance around the general position of environmental and social justice, e.g. rights to indigenous territories, to food sovereignty, to land, to a healthy working and living environment, and rights of nature. This indicates a common ground that allows further alliance-building between environmental, agrarian and labor justice movements. Both national and international NGOs are key actors that have consistently supported the networking of protesters within Ecuador and have sometimes even transnationalized these struggles. Their participation has also been fundamental in sustaining the politics of the legal actions and public campaigns in which protesters most often engage, reinforcing the environmental justice tone of their resistance.

f) Finally, while the outcomes of these struggles are very heterogeneous, there appears to me that some trends reflect the progression of the political economy of the Ecuadorian state over time. At one extreme, resistance to the expansion of extractive frontiers has had very few successful results, while environmental restoration struggles have mainly succeeded, particularly over the last ten years. Struggles for better social and environmental standards in production have seen more mixed results. In cases where results had been poor during the neoliberal period, the companies have been forced to comply with the Ecuadorian legislation throughout the post-neoliberal period. However, standards have remained very low, with the state responding to pressures demanding to keep down production costs in order to attract foreign capital investment. In addition, under Correa's mandate there has been a reduction

in spaces for dialogue and participation, with increasing limitations placed on the organized civil society and direct confrontations between the government and protesters who strictly opposed extractive activities. Instead of supporting participation, the government has tried to reduce the incentive for conflicts by devoting economic resources to compensate for losses resulting from extraction and by implementing a set of social policies, financed to a large extent by oil exports, which aim to reverse the vulnerable situation of low-income populations generated during the neoliberal period. While these policies address, to a certain degree, the symptoms of Ecuador's history as facilitator of accumulation by dispossession, this study suggests that the underlying cause for it ğ the commodification and global trading of Ecuador's natural resources ğ not only remains intact but is now becoming a political project of the Ecuadorian state. These post-neoliberal Ecuadorian state politics reflect what Svampa (2013) calls "the new commodities consensus" in Latin American countries.

In turn, chapter III has tried to build a bridge between the macro and the micro perspective by examining the food system in the globalization phase, with a special focus on the shrimp-farming commodity chain. It has also analyzed the geographical distribution pattern of shrimp-farming production and farmed shrimp consumption, and described the main characteristics of the shrimp-farming intensive production system and its socio-environmental impacts.

The Corporate Food Regime

The restructuration of the agri-food system in the globalization phase of the capitalist system has mirrored the pattern of market deregulation and privatization observed in the overall global economy. The result is what McMichael (2009b) calls "the corporate food regime (CFR)", i.e. the specific (but unstable) configuration of the agri-food system since the 1980s onwards. The main features of this new agri-food regime are:

a) Agri-food systems have become longer and increasingly complex chains, although the degree of globalization of the different commodities is highly variable. The same applies to the level of economic concentration of the different segments in agri-food chains (Friedland 2004). However, the general trend is for the most profitable ones ğ the input supply,

processing and distribution sectors ğ to be dominated by a few large corporations (oligopolization) (Belo Moreira 2011; Otero 2008).

b) Despite this global food market integration, driven by market liberalization and privatization, the Northern powers' mercantilist practices have not been halted (McMichael 2005). In fact, while Southern countries have opened their markets by signing bilateral agreements such as NAFTA or submitting to the IFIs' management of their so-called foreign debt crisis, the Northern countries have kept their agri-food subsidies in place.

c) A new international food divide has developed in which Northern countries provide cheap stable grains to the global South in exchange for high-value food commodities such as off-season fresh fruits and vegetables and seafood products. This new trend, in which the global South produces non-traditional export commodities using the technological paradigm of the Green Revolution (an intensive monoculture production system), is commonly known as the Second Green (or Blue) Revolution (DeWalt 1985). However, in contrast to the first one, this revolution is driven by private initiatives and destined to satisfy affluent global markets (Morales and Morales, 2006). Lately, from the 1980s and 1990s onwards, international development agencies (IDAs) and financial institutions (IFIs) have been playing a key role in the promotion of these corporate-driven intensive production systems in highly indebted globalized Southern and other poor-income countries (GRAIN 1997; FAO 2011; Rivera-Ferré 2009a).

d) Two complementary types of agri-food chains have emerged within these corporate-driven global markets: on the one hand, there is a high-quality produce supply chain dominated by organic, fresh and relatively unprocessed food for transnational classes of rich consumer; on the other, there is a cheap and popular supply chain characterized by standard food containing high rates of chemicals, toxins, fats, salts and so on for transnational classes of poor consumers (Friedmann 2005). In this sense, class-based consumer patterns do not necessarily match the geographical North/South divide.

e) The Supermarket Revolution has taken place to the detriment of the food manufacturers' hegemony. In other words, the retail sector has become dominant and is exercising power upstream and downstream of the supply chain. In this regard, global sourcing as articulated by the retail sector and by process-driven TNCs has become a predominant practice. Its

implementation has entailed the emergence of the contract farming phenomenon, in which capital-intensive producers in the global South are submitted to the power of these dominant actors (Otero 2008).

Three main factors explain the current hegemony of the retail sector: first of all, the existence of a monopsony in the food distribution industry (Burch and Lawrence 2005), i.e. a situation in which a relatively large number of food processing companies are forced to sell their products to a limited number of globally-focused retailers who wield enormous purchasing power in an increasingly concentrated market; secondly, the appearance of supermarket "own-brand" products, which compete with the branded products of the food manufacturing companies (Burch and Lawrence 2005); finally, the retail sector's ability to meet the new consumer patters. Among global rich consumers there is an increasing concern about issues regarding quality, safety, health, biological and cultural diversity, animal welfare, environmental pollution and so on, and this has resulted in a parallel increasing demand of new products such as ready meals, home meal replacers and convenience food whose intrinsic characteristics (innovation and flexibility in production) place the retail sector in an advantageous position as compared to manufactured food companies (Busch and Bain 2004).

f) The emergence of a new private-driven global regulatory framework governing food standards and quality. More and more, retailers have begun to promulgate their own private regulations motivated by their vulnerability in relation to the consumers' perception, as they are directly linked to them. Complementing this trend, the process of third party certification (direct auditing) has also emerged. This process is mostly explained by the need to have a more reliable food system regulation, now that the capacity of the states to exercise food quality control has been considerably reduced under the WTO's trade agreements. The voluntary standards that de facto rule global trade are not seen by many actors, such as NGOs, as a sufficient guarantee of control. And this, in turn, has led to the development of their own stricter and better integrated sets of standards. In relation to these private regulations, however, significant issues regarding accountability, transparency and democratic input, among others, have also emerged (Busch and Bain 2004).

g) Technological innovation has drastically influenced the form adopted by current agri-food systems. In the field of transport and information, technological improvements have enabled

the reduction of costs, the promotion of trade and the improvement of logistics efficiency in global agri-food systems. The corporations involved in intermediation ğ whether financial or commercial ğ are the ones that have taken better advantage of this technological progress. This, in turn, has granted them a decisive competitive advantage that has reinforced their power and contributed to the consolidation of the oligopolies (Belo Moreira 2011).

In the biotechnology field, the control exerted by a small number of TNCs linked to the agrochemical and pharmaceutical industries has led to the dominance and strengthening of the above-mentioned modern agriculture paradigm **(**Otero 2008). This agrochemical-technological package and the emergence of transgenic crops have mutually reinforced each other. In fact, transgenic crops are being promoted by the dominant actors as the most suitable solution for the current food and energy crisis. As a result, a new fuel/feed/food complex of crops is gaining in importance. This reality has also facilitated the process of abstraction of food and its transformation into a mere commodity (McMichael 2010).

h) The hegemony of the financial sector over other economic sectors in this global capitalism phase has also been translated into the agri-food system. Nowadays, this sector has become a major source of influence and control over the activities of the global food system (Busch and Lawrence 2009). This power is expressed in its involvement at all points of the agri-food chain: from farmland, food production, input supplies, storage and logistics, to inspections and certification, food processing, retailing, and food services. Consequently, other agri-food actors have started to act in the same way as the financial sector.

i) Within the Corporate Food Regime (CFR) the already existing socio-ecological contradictions in former food regimes have deepened. At the ecological level, the lengthening of agri-food production chains plus the expansion of petro-intensive agri-food production systems (in both intensity and extension) have resulted in a growing dependence on fossil fuel. This situation is thus contributing to the anthropocentric climate change. Other environmental costs associated with the intensive use of agrochemicals and other modern agricultural practices are: pollution and health problems, soil degradation and erosion, and loss of agricultural biodiversity. In social terms, the current corporate logic of agri-food systems, which seeks exchange-value rather than use-value, has proved to be useless in meeting worldwide human food needs. As such, despite the fact that food production has increased at a higher rate than the population growth, the number of hungry and

undernourished people has also expanded (Otero 2008). Moreover, Southern countries have come to produce a greater share of their exports in the form of grains, fruits and vegetables, but their ability to feed their own population has decreased. Additionally, the long-standing process of peasant eviction from the land associated with modern agriculture production systems has intensified with the expansion of this type of production systems to other crops (mainly non-traditional commodities and agrofuels). The dramatic consequences of this peasant proletarianization process are being exacerbated as global Southern cities are unable to absorb these displaced rural masses (Murray-Li 2010).

h) However, peasants and, more generally, the rural poor have not remained politically passive in front of these devastating effects. On the contrary, they have engaged in struggles against dispossession that have sometime led to the formation of social movements acting at local, nation and/or international levels. Moreover, these struggles may continue with the effort of reflective subjects with the capacity to link their fight with issues of development, citizenship, human rights, culture, and/or co-production of sustainable living patterns**.** The social movement in defense of the mangrove areas here presented in detail is an exemplary case of these resistance struggles against environmental dispossession, in which the defense of the access to natural resources is intertwined with cultural and environmental concerns.

The Blue Revolution and the Luxury Shrimp-Farming Commodity

As mentioned before, the IFI's management of the so-called crisis of the foreign debt has served to impose Economic Adjustment Programs on indebted countries. These programs included, among other things, the promotion of export-led non-traditional commodities such as high-value aquaculture products.

Nowadays, aquaculture has become one of the fastest-growing animal-food producing sectors (FAO 2012). This fact is interrelated with the growth of international fish and fishery products trade and other drivers linked to the present globalization phase (FAO 2011). Traditionally, aquaculture fish trade has been dominated by high-value species (shrimp, salmon and tuna), targeted to supply lucrative international markets. More recently, these same species are also being consumed in middle-income countries (FAO 2011). In this regard, while shrimp farming still follows to a great extent the traditional South-North flow pattern, with the US, Japan and the EU as major consumers, South-South flow patterns are

becoming increasingly important. Demand-driven factors (population and income growth associated with urbanization processes and awareness of healthy diets) as well as supply-driven ones (expansion of intensive industrialized systems and growth of the retail sector) explain this new trend (Rivera-Ferré 2009b; Wurmann et al. 2004; FAO 2011; Sedaca 2010). Concurrently, low-value species are increasing their share in world trade. These species are traded in large quantities, not only nationally but also within major producing areas (Asia and Latin America) and globally (FAO 2012).

Shrimp (wild and cultivated) continues to be the most internationally traded fishery commodity. In the last decades, the proportion of cultivated shrimp production has considerably increased and nowadays this modality of shrimp dominates international trade (Anderson and Li 2010).

The shrimp species that are currently suitable for cultivation are typical of tropical and semitropical regions. There is a huge disparity across continents and geo-regions in shrimp-farming production. The activity is mainly developed in tropical Asian and Latin American countries, and distributed in an almost 80:20 ratio between the two regions (Anderson and Li 2010). The main Asian producers in order of importance are China, Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, India, and Bangladesh. Their Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) counterparts are (also in order of importance): Ecuador, Brazil and Mexico, which in overall terms account for 72 percent of the total farmed production in the region (Anderson and Li 2010).

The shrimp-farming value chain is a corporate-driven sector in which processors, feed-input suppliers and retailers are the most powerful actors. In line with other export-oriented food industries, a small number of large retailers control the growth of the international distribution channels, which in turn enables them to impose quality, safety, environmental and ethical criteria to both producers and processors. In response to this retail dominance, processors are becoming more geographically concentrated, vertically integrated and intensively linked with global supply chains (FAO 2012). This vertical integration tends to happen between large shrimp producers and processors. Currently, in the LAC region two basic types of shrimp-farming producers can be identified: on the one hand, a dominant group of medium and large-scale vertically integrated and export-oriented producers, having highly sophisticated and mechanized systems; on the other, a minority group of small-scale producers, working individually or associated among them. They tend to sell their crops to

the former group which uses them to complete their own production and processing products (Wurmann et al. 2004).

Historically, the white-leg shrimp was exclusively farmed in the LAC region, while Asian shrimp producers almost exclusively cultivated giant tiger prawns. This division allowed both regions to reach a certain "unstable equilibrium" in relation to market distribution, species and volumes. However, as of 2000 Asian shrimp producers began to cultivate white-leg shrimps as well. This shift has brought about tremendous effects in the political economy of this commodity: the direct result has been the rapid rise in world shrimp supply followed by a sharp decrease in average prices, affecting export incomes all over the LAC region. This new dominance of Asian shrimp producers in the production of this specific species is forcing LAC producers to develop differentiated products in order to remain competitive (Wurmann 2011). Taking this trend into consideration, some experts predict that, in the medium and long term, only those producers that are more vertically integrated will be likely to remain in an increasingly competitive and highly vertically-integrated market.

Just as among capitalist shrimp farmers (both national and international) and increasingly global shrimp consumers, there is also a class/race component in the distribution of the socio-ecological liabilities associated to this industry. In this sense, poor-income/"racialized" local groups tend to be the ones most affected by environmental disruption. Likewise, from a global economy point of view, the shrimp- farming commodity chain still follows the general ecologically-unequal exchange pattern (Martínez-Alier 2002b) in which shrimp-farming products are mainly consumed by Northern high-income consumers, while socio-ecological liabilities are borne by a large Southern poor-income population. Within this latter group, the population depending on mangrove resources has been most critically affected. An important reason for this is that, unlike other export-led food mono-crops, which tend to retain rural population as low-wage labor force, the shrimp-farming industry provides very few jobs. Hence, this disadvantaged population is deprived of an easy access to their traditional source of protein, while the generation of employment is not always equivalent or enough to secure their access to fish and fishery products on sale.

Faced with this situation, this disadvantaged group has engaged in collective actions of resistance which have sometimes led to the configuration of powerful social movements, as seen in the Ecuadorian case. Scholars have traditionally classified these political actors as

"livelihood movements" (Robbins 2003), manifestations of an "environmentalism of the poor" (Martínez-Alier 2002b), and/or members of an "environmental justice movement" (Schlosberg 2007). These expressions underline both the importance of the environment as a direct means of subsistence for a considerable amount of population in the global South, and the socio-ecologically and politically unequal distribution causes triggering these collective actions. Sometimes, as shown in the case study here presented, in the course of these livelihood struggles ecological and cultural issues are also raised. More specifically, in the Ecuadorian struggle in defense of the mangroves, a tangle of ecological, livelihood and cultural issues have been raised which I have further examined in the micro-perspective approach.

The Micro-Perspective Approach

Chapters IV, V, and VI have dealt with the research questions posed within the micro-perspective approach on the topic of current resistance to environmental dispossession in the global South. All of them have tackled different aspects of the Ecuadorian social movement in defense of the mangrove ecosystem.

In particular, chapter IV has addressed the questions specifically regarding the articulation of the political subject PAEM, the main features of its politics of representation and its understanding from both a theoretical and a political point of view. In this sense, it has claimed that this political subject must be understood as a creative response to the threats experienced by the mangrove-dependent population, which might entail the loss of their way of life and their livelihood. Communities linked to the Ecuadorian mangroves have chosen to enact a politics of difference (of peoplehood) with the aim of articulating a political emancipation project capable of confronting the power relations that support Ecuadorian mangrove degradation. In fact, this social movement represents itself as "Ancestral Peoples of the Mangrove Ecosystem-PAEM". This political category has enabled the movement to discuss mangrove dispossession in terms of indigeneity and indigenous rights while at the same time distancing itself from racial connotations. This novel ethnic political category can be partly explained by the racially heterogeneous composition of C-CONDEM's grassroots members.

The movement's political discourse has stressed its sense of belonging as connected to the idea of "ancestrality" within a natural ecosystem. It has also made emphasis on its differentiated culture, based on a long-standing habitation and adaptation to the mangroves. As such, this narrative has naturalized the relationship between cultural identity and ecosystem. This place-based identity of PAEM presents similarities with the regimes of representation seen in Ecuadorian indigenous and Afro-descendant movements. For all of them, land claims are framed in a discourse in which territoriality is seen to support the maintenance of a cultural way of life that is itself represented as environmentally sounded.

In the configuration of this political subject a multi-level set of different processes and actors has been involved. At a global and national level, it is important to highlight the emergence of indigenous and Afro-descendant ethnic movements during the 1980s and 90s, a phenomenon that led to reforms in the legal framework and to the recognition of collective rights (including collective land ownership) in many Latin American countries, including Ecuador. The increasing attention to environmental issues during those decades, which enabled the adoption of new environmental management approaches, was also relevant. These approaches, in contrast to the previous conservationist views, biodiversity issues and traditional knowledge and practices were seen as valuable. At a local level, first the Catholic Church with its support to the poor and, more recently, the ecologist movement have been key contributors to the configuration and consolidation of this political subject.

This case has shown how, in the mangrove areas of Ecuador, people are resisting environmental dispossession in ways that re-signify indigeneity. The combination of natural resource depletion and the special legal status of indigeneity in Ecuador, which entails rights to collective land, may be encouraging the deployment of novel claims to indigeneity. In this regard and in line with other scholars (De la Cadena and Starn 2007), I have suggested that the concept of indigeneity is better understood as a term subjected to changing political and epistemological boundaries according to history and politics. As such, PAEM's novel use of the term "indigeneity" has posed the challenge of imagining this concept beyond the race or "blood and soil" principles, which have pervaded the dominant conceptions of the term "indigenous peoples" in Latin America. In other words, indigeneity has been traditionally associated in Latin America with a single racialized cultural difference derived from the historical continuity of the original inhabitants of a country. Despite the fact that

anthropological theories have long ago proved wrong the essentialist cultural premises underlying these conceptions, there is a certain agreement among scholars and activists to accept them with the purpose of redressing past and present dispossession (Kenrick and Lewis 2004). However, these very assumptions underlying the dominant concept of indigeneity also act as limiting criteria for many neo-colonial dispossessed social groups.

This situation has become very controversial in modern times as many marginalized groups, across lines of race, geography, class, culture and gender, are increasingly framing their demands for social and environmental justice in terms of indigeneity (ethnicity). In this process of "becoming indigenous", they have experienced many difficulties to gain formal acknowledgement, regardless of the legitimacy of their demands, because they do not fulfill the premises associated to the dominant models of ethnicity. PAEM's ethnic political subject exemplifies this ethical disjunction. It is worth reminding here what several authors have pointed out: that the indigenous model remains the normative heart of ethnic recognition, and this is directly linked to the racial category of "Indian" (Anderson 2007; Hooker 2005; Ng'weno 2007; Wade 2010).

Chapter V has put its emphasis on the research question related to the historical context of the structural forces that have set the stage for the emergence of the novel ethnic political subject PAEM, as well as on whom PAEM aims to empower.

In order to answer the former research question, this chapter has presented a thorough analysis of the evolution of the shrimp farming development and mangrove forest management patterns, focusing on the interrelations between environmental and social change, the policies and actions of the Ecuadorian state, and the resistance actions of the social group of mangrove gatherers. In doing so, it has identified five phases in that evolution, according to different issues regarding mangrove property rights, dominant representations and management policies and regulations. It has shown how, throughout the evolution of the political economy and ecology of the shrimp-farming industry, the Ecuadorian state has completely neglected the mangrove gatherers' existence and rights. These politics of exclusion on the part of the Ecuadorian state have entailed:

a) The prioritization and promotion of the shrimp-farming industry over other sectors and activities, such as the ones performed by mangrove gatherers. The state, motivated by the

possibility of obtaining large amounts of foreign exchange, decided to support the development of this mono-aquaculture export product. This process entailed the allocation of common-pool resources such as fresh water, post-larvae fisheries and public land to the shrimp-farming industry at the expense of the mangrove gatherers' customary rights over these natural resources;

b) The lack of enforcement of the legal framework that protected the mangrove ecosystem and the resulting lack of protection of the mangrove gatherers' means of production. Consequently, shrimp farmers expanded over protected mangrove areas causing serious ecological damage. Instead of revoking illegal shrimp farm concessions and working to restore extensive healthy and multi-use mangrove areas, the Ecuadorian government rewarded the actors responsible for this situation by continuing to regularize their activities;

c) The eventual acknowledgment of the mangrove gatherers' traditional use rights over the mangroves when the ecological health of the mangroves and their fisheries was already critical. Besides, this acknowledgement was reduced to those few mangrove areas that survived the expansion of shrimp aquaculture and was limited in relation to the scope of the mangrove gatherers' decision-making rights.

It has been argued that all these processes have contributed to aggravate the marginalization and environmental dispossession of the mangrove gatherers, and subsequently have set the stage for C-CONDEM's contentious identity politics. Following Schlosberg (2004), I have suggested that this case of identity politics must be seen primarily as a struggle for recognition, which is a necessary condition to overcome distributive and political injustice. I agree with this author when he contends that the lack of recognition is highly interlinked with the destruction of local environment and the exclusion of people from the political sphere. Therefore, C-CONDEM's positioning as PAEM might be understood as a way of claiming the valuation and recognition of a specific group's identity, while at the same time trying to overcome the structural factors that were subordinating and even destroying a cultural way of living with nature. This case also raises questions about the need and the legitimacy of land claims (or, in a broader sense, of ecological subsistence rights) on the grounds of contemporary environmental dispossession.

Chapter V has also examined the degree of inclusiveness of the PAEM political category. It has analyzed how PAEM is represented and understood by different members of this social movement in order to see who is included or excluded from this politics of peoplehood. In this regard, I have argued that this political category is mainly understood by social movement itself as a cultural way of living with nature, in opposed and confrontational relation to the shrimp farmer's identity. This is so, despite the fact that, in its politics of representation, the stress is put on the origin and long-standing presence of these people in the mangroves (ancestrality) as a key element to develop a cultural difference, and therefore, to be included under this identity label. The emphasis on the principle of "soil", typically associated to the dominant indigenous discourse, was an attempt to define a public representation that was as close as possible to that of the dominant model of indigeneity. In doing so, they thought that their possibility of achieving legal recognition of their territorial rights would increase. However, in practical terms, this political category also includes the new comers who, despite not being native or ancestral, have decided to organize themselves, help defend the mangroves and adopt sustainable mangrove traditional practices. Consequently, this term only excludes those mangrove gatherers who have chosen to remain independent from any organization. In this sense, C-CONDEM's political strategy of deploying a novel non-racialized cultural identity politics has served to facilitate class-based solidarity and empowerment to a racially heterogeneous group in order to contest agribusiness dispossession. This reality contradicts Marxist critique of cultural identity politics, which underlines its potential to downplay class solidarity by reinforcing racial/ethnic divides, thus benefitting the powerful capitalist actors. Finally, this is an exemplary case of what Gerber and Veuthey (2010) have termed as the "greening of the agrarian question": the agrarian classes and groups are important forces in the struggle not only for democracy and justice, but also for environmental sustainability.

Chapter VI has addressed the research questions specifically related with the Ecuadorian state's response to PAEM's demands and how this response has affected the social movement. In this regard, it has examined the evolution of the Ecuadorian movement for the defense of the mangroves during Rafael Correa's governmental mandate in terms of both internal cohesion and strategy. It has analyzed the new political context of opportunity emerged during this period, and has then shown how, within the new situation, the political subject PAEM has been disarticulated.

The Ecuadorian movement for the defense of the mangroves celebrated two more meetings (in 2008 and 2009) to re-affirm its self-positioning as Ancestral Peoples of the Mangrove Ecosystem even if this ethnic political category was not acknowledged by the 2008 Constitution. However, after the Ecuadorian government's decision to regularize the shrimp-farming industry, therefore discarding its past illegal actions, C-CONDEM started to experience difficulties in maintaining its cohesion as a unified movement. With this decision, mangrove gatherers' expectations to recover a significant part of the depleted mangrove area and obtain collective ownership over it definitely vanished. From this point on, the solidarity at C-CONDEM's base, which was also underpinning PAEM's political strategy, broke down and the (class and racial/ethnic) heterogeneity of that base became a limiting factor to its unity. It has been explained how C-CONDEM lost the support of the strongest organizations of the Southern provinces, made up of *custodia* holders who identified themselves as *mestizos*. In the light of this situation, it has been suggested that their decision to renounce fighting for mangrove collective land titles in terms of ethnicity, and to content themselves with their *custodia* status, can be partly explained by their disadvantaged position ğ in comparison to the rest of C-CONDEM's base ğ when it came to embrace an ethnic discourse to fight for territorial rights. Once most of C-CONDEM's *mestizo* base split from the movement, the legally recognized ethno-racial label fitted well with the remaining base organizations. Taking advantage of this, these organizations have decided to continue fighting for more autonomy and power over the mangrove areas by embracing the hegemonic racialized ethnic discourse.

Therefore, by focusing on the evolution of C-CONDEM's politics of representation, this chapter has aimed to illustrate the dynamism of the process of identity construction and politics, especially in relation to indigeneity, in the Ecuadorian coast.

Finally, chapter VI has also highlighted the process of re-configuration of the power relations that has taken place in the mangrove areas during Correa's mandate. In this sense, new forms of exclusion/inclusion and inequalities have emerged within the groups of mangrove gatherers and between them and the shrimp farmers. The chapter has pointed out that, without the implementation of new structural changes, the prospects for mangrove gatherers in the near future are very unfavorable. Traditional mangrove practices may be expected to

decrease and be executed only by the organizations that have already been granted *custodias*. The rest of the mangrove gatherers will have to change their cultural way of life.

C-CONDEM's achievements, beyond the rise and fall of the political subject PAEM, have been depicted across all chapters in this work. I have argued that this social movement has become a recognized interlocutor with the state. As such, it has transformed the Ecuadorian environmental governance system into one characterized by the inclusion of mangrove gatherers' voices and participation. In this context and as pointed out by Latta (2007), PAEM's can be seen as a struggle to deepen democracy and claim substantive citizenship, despite the fact that it has not been able to halt and reverse the mangrove gatherers' process of enclosure. This situation reflects what some scholars have described as the recognition and capability dimensions of (in)justice (Schlosberg 2007; Tschakert 2010), that is, the misrecognition of a cultural way of life and weakening of certain groups' capabilities by hindering their flourishing as a social group.

The mangrove gatherers' current critical situation does not devalue C-CONDEM's efforts to make visible the existence of a human population living within a fragile and threatened ecosystem, who wishes to continue living there. In this sense, it is not just a livelihood that is soon to be destroyed but a cultural way of life with nature. I have argued that through C-CONDEM's fight, a reevaluation of a stigmatized economic activity and a heightened appreciation of the mangrove gatherers and of their rights to access and utilize mangrove resources have both occurred. This positive evaluation has been achieved on both sides of the relationship, i.e. among mangrove gatherers themselves and among the rest of the Ecuadorian society.

In fact, C-CONDEM's usage of identity-based arguments can be seen as the struggle for recognition of a social group that has developed a sustainable way of life, but is defined and dismissed as backward and therefore excluded from full membership in the social and political realms (struggles for political agency and citizenship). Following Hobson (2003), it is possible to state that identity politics struggles are not about identity itself; they are about groups seeking to represent the concerns and experiences of their constituents, to make visible their stories of discrimination and devaluation.

This is not only valid for PAEM's case or for identity politics struggles in general, but also for broader resistance fights as this thesis has evidenced in the case of Ecuador. In many instances, struggles to politicize existing socio-ecological orders (and injustices) are struggles for a more democratic citizenship, through which nature may be actively politicized in ways that also lead to environmental sustainability. In this sense, and as a concluding remark, I would like to suggest, in line with Latta (2007), that subaltern political actors can be seen as active citizens in the reconfiguration of more socially and environmentally sustainable futures. Taking into consideration the current acceleration of the processes of accumulation by dispossession and the difficulties that these actors are facing to consolidate effective resistance, this is certainly not an easy goal.

7.2. Future Lines of Research

I will now outline some of the topics and aspects that have not been fully covered in this work and could become future lines of research.

a) In relation to the macro-perspective approach, the comparative study of different cases of resistance to environmental dispossession in Ecuador has considered the state as a homogeneous actor in order to facilitate the exercise. However, taking into consideration that the major change between the neoliberal and post-neoliberal phases of Ecuadorian history is actually related to the nature of the state, the study of its role, across scales and institutions, in different types of natural resource struggles could complement my macro-perspective conclusions.

b) Regarding the global agri-food system and, in particular, the farmed-shrimp commodity chain, an interesting point to be further developed would be the study of the Ecuadorian shrimp-farming industry over time. More specifically, it would be relevant to examine how the Ecuadorian shrimp-farming production sector has responded to both Correa's politics and the ongoing changes in the global shrimp-farming production market. Is this industry adopting more environmentally sound technology to become more competitive at an international level or to meet international healthy and quality standards? How have Correa's politics ğ and the introduction of new taxes and economic requirements ğ affected Ecuadorian shrimp farmers along a class line? Have Ecuadorian shrimp farmers' responses followed a class-based pattern?

c) This dissertation has focused on shrimp-farming production. However, to analyze inequalities and potential conflicts emerging from other stages of this commodity chain could be also very interesting. In particular, the study of the processing and packaging stages may be relevant because, as far as I know, there is very little literature on them. Furthermore, it is in those specific stages where most of the labor force (mainly women) is concentrated, with weak or inexistent trade unions.

d) Throughout the various chapters studying the Ecuadorian social movement in defense of the mangroves, I have pointed out the changing nature of conflict in the mangrove areas: from the initial "shrimp farmers *vs.* mangrove gatherers" conflict to the intra-mangrove gatherers conflict, presently coming to the forefront. In fact, C-CONDEM's identity politics was an attempt to overcome this situation. In this respect, a deeper analysis of this new type of conflict (at the mangrove gatherers' level, instead of as a result of the social movement) is still to be performed. Does this new type of conflict display any differences across space or class? What types of alliances are being established due to these intra-group conflicts?

e) The international dimension of the Ecuadorian social movement in defense of the mangroves has been very superficially addressed in this work. In this regard, it could be relevant to see how PAEM's politics were received by C-CONDEM's counter-parts in the international network REDMANGLAR.

f) The pattern of the Ecuadorian shrimp farming development has resulted in the enclosure of the mangroves and the non-viability of mangrove gatherers' activities in the medium-term. Under these circumstances, it would be interesting to study the mangrove gatherers' point of view about their critical situation. Are they aware of their future prospects? What do they think about them? Are they already resigned? Or, on the contrary, do they think that organizing and struggling is still worthwhile?

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Appendix I: Inventory of cases (I)						
Number	Name	Resistance cases over "Accumulation by Dispossession"				References
		Locality	Date	Commodified activity	Commodity	
1	The Salango *Comuna* against the Ecuadorian fishing company Pesquera la Polar	Salango	1977-2005	Food processing (fishmeal)	Fish	Varea, A., *et al*., 1997.
2	The Prior informed consultation in the oil blocks 20 and 29	Tena	2003-2008	Mineral extraction	Oil	Latorre, 2005; Izko, X., 2004; Frente de Comunidades Kichwas de Rukullacta *et al*., 2004.
3	The National Park Podocarpus' defense against the mining activity.	Podocarpus	1985-1993	Mineral extraction	Metal ore	Varea, A., *et al*., 1997.
4	The *Comuna* of Agua Blanca against the poly-oil pipe.	Machalilla	1990-1991	Energy infrastructure project	Oil pipeline	Varea, A., *et al*., 1997.
5	Rose cut industry's polluting practices in Pedro Moncayo (Pichincha).	Pedro Moncayo	2009-ongoing	Non-traditional agribusiness	Roses	Korovkin, T., 2003, 2005; Breilh, J., *et al*., 2005.
6	The Tabacundo irrigation canal: irrigation water for indigenous peasant communities versus water for flower plantations	Pedro Moncayo	2005-2008	Non-traditional agribusiness	Roses	Poats, S., *et al*., 2006; Catillo, M., 2006.
7	After the Dragon's Blood tree: Shaman pharmaceuticals in the Ecuadorian Amazon.	Pastaza	1992-1996	Bioprospecting	Dragon's blood latex	Pohlenz de Tavira, A., 2009.
8	The Shyri mining project.	Santa Isabel, Girón, San Fernando, Cuenca	2004-ongoing	Mineral extraction	Metal ore	First author's field work (December 2008-March 2009; March-June 2013)
9	The Pungarayacu oil block	Tena	2008-ongoing	Mineral extraction	Oil	Varela, R. (w/d)
10	The Sugar cane factory La Troncal	La Troncal	1993	Food processing	Sugar cane	Varea, A., *et al.,* 1997.
11	Ancestral mangrove gatherers fight for the creation of the Ecological Reserve Cayapas Mataje (REMACAM)	San Lorenzo, Eloy Alfaro	1994-2000	Non-traditional agribusiness	Shrimp	Varea, A., *et al.,* 1997.
12	Puerto Ebano against shrimp-farming industry	Sucre	1985-2002	Non-traditional agribusiness	Shrimp	Varea, A*., et al*., 1997.
13	The multi-purpose project Quevedo-Vinces	Quevedo-Vinces	2002-2011	Energy infrastructure project	Hydropower-dam	Sasso, M.J., 2008; Kuffo,Ch., and G. Jácome, 2006. First author's field work (March-June 2013).

14	The Daule Peripa hydropower dam	Daule river	1982-ongoing	Energy infrastructure project	Hydropower-dam	FIAN, 2009; Macías, M. w/d. First author's field work (March-June 2013).
15	The Rio Grande Dam	Chone	2009-ongoing	Energy infrastructure project	Dam	Anchundia, A., 2012. www.agenciaecologista.info First author's field work (March-June 2013).
16	The Carondelet community against the oil palm company Palmeras del Pacífico	San Lorenzo	2004-2005	Non-traditional agribusiness	Oil palm	Cañas Benavides, V., 2009
17	Guadalito y la Chiquita against four oil palm companies	San Lorenzo	2003-ongoing	Non-traditional agribusiness	Oil palm	Naizot, A.L., 2011; Carrere, R., et al., 2001.
18	The neighborhood Propicia Uno against the Esmeraldas refinery	Esmeraldas	1998-ongoing	Energy infrastructure project	Oil refinery, oil pipeline	Gordillo, D. M., 2008
19	Environmental liabilities in the oil field Libertador	Pacayacu	2005-ongoing	Mineral extraction	Oil	Del Pozo Vallejo, R., 2010.
20	Perenco guilty for environmental liabilities	Coca	2005-2010	Mineral extraction	Oil	Guaranda Mendoza, W. (w/d).
21	Petroecuador found guilty of environmental damage	Orellana	2005-2010	Mineral extraction	Oil	Guaranda Mendoza, W. (w/d).
22	The Lowell mining company in Shuar territory	Warintza	2004-2006	Mineral extraction	Metal ores	Chicaiza, G., 2010; Latorre, 2012.
23	Jimbitono against mining and hydropower projects.	Jimbitono	2006-2007	Energy infrastructure project	Hydropower-dam	Chicaiza, G., 2010; Latorre, 2012.
24	International Minerals Corporation (IMC) in Molleturo	Molleturo	2004-ongoing	Mineral extraction	Metal ore	Latorre, 2012. First author's field work (March-June 2013).
25	The mining company RTZ in Molleturo	Molleturo	1995-1997	Mineral extraction	Metal ore	Acción Ecológica, 1997.
26	Iamgold in Quimsacocha	Cuenca	2004-ongoing	Mineral extraction	Metal ore	Latorre, 2012. First author's field work (March-June 2013).
27	The DBCP class action suit in the U.S courts: Banana workers against Dow, Shell, Standard Fruit and Occidental Chemicals	Coast	1993-ongoing	Traditional agribusiness	Banana	ALDEA, 2011, 2012; Varea, A. *et a*l. 1997.
28	The Armadillo case: indigenous in voluntary isolation	Yasuní Park	2006-ongoing	Mineral extraction	Oil	Narváez, R., 2012; Personal interview with the former coordinator of the Plan of Precautionary Measures (January 16, 2012).

29	Ecuadorian environmentalist NGO against Durini Group's business proposal Ecoforest 2000	Eloy Alfaro	1991-1993	Commercial logging	Timber	Varea, A. *et al*., 1997.
30	The Chachi indigenous centre El Encanto against the private wood-processing group Durini.	San Jose de Cayapas	1993-1995	Commercial logging	Timber	Varea, A. *et al*., 1997.
31	The EUCAPACIFIC project in Muisne	Muisne	2002-2005	Commercial logging	Eucalyptus	Gerber, J.F, 2010.
32	The logging company Botrosa in El Pambilar	El Pambilar	1998-2011	Commercial logging	Timber	CEDHU *et al*., 2009.
33	Achuar and Shuar against oil activity in their territory	Shuar territory	1998-2008	Mineral extraction	Oil	Chávez, G.. *et al*., 2002; Melo, M., 2006; Grunwald, P. *et al*., 2005; Jimbicti Pandama, T., 2004.
34	The XI Oil Bidding Round and the preceding process of prior consultation.	Southern Amazon	2011-ongoing	Mineral extraction	Oil	First author's field work (March-June 2013). www.pachamama.org.ec
35	Cuenca's inhabitants against an industrial polygon	San Andrés de Chiquitad	1985-1987	Industrial facility	Land	Varea, A., *et al*., 1997.
36	Dayuma: a case of police brutality and military misconduct	Dayuma	2007	Mineral extraction	Oil	CEDHU, 2007.
37	The project FACE-Profafor	Center-South of the Highlands	1997-ongoing	Carbon offsets	Pine	Granda, P., 2005; Albán, M., and María Argüello, 2004.
38	Conoco in the Yasuni National Park - oil extraction	Orellana-Pastaza	1989-1993	Mineral extraction	Oil	Varea, A., *et al*., 1997.
39	The block 23: oil activity in Sarayaku Territory	Sarayaku	1996-ongoing	Mineral extraction	Oil	Chávez, G.*, et al*., 2005; First author's field work (March-June 2013). www.sarayaku.com.
40	The Fundecol case: a fight for mangrove gatherers' rights	Muisne	1986-2003	Non-traditional agribusiness (aquaculture)	Shrimp	Latorre, 2012.
41	The Curipamba Sur mining project	El Congreso (La Naves)	2007-ongoing	Mineral extraction	Metal ore	Chicaiza, G., 2007.
42	The Fruta del Norte mining project	Los Encuentros	2008-ongoing	Mineral extraction	Metal ore	Latorre, 2012.
43	The anti-mining struggle in Ecuador's Intag region	Junín	1995-ongoing	Mineral extraction	Metal Ore	First author's field work (2010, 2011).
44	The Mirador mining project	El Pangui	2006-ongoing	Mineral extraction	Metal Ore	Latorre, 2012.

45	The Panantza - San Carlos mining project	Limón-Indanza	2006-ongoing	Mineral extraction	Metal Ore	Latorre, 2012.
46	The construction of the oil pipeline OCP	Mindo	2001-2003	Energy infrastructure project	Oil pipeline	Andrade, M., 2009; Maldonado, A and A. Almeida, 2005.
47	Interagua in Guayaquil: a case of water privatization	Guayaquil	2004-2010	Basic service provision	Water	Joiner, E., 2006; Cárdenas, C and D., Cabrera, 2006.
48	The Texaco case	Lago Agrio, Sucumbíos, Orellana	1990-ongoing	Mineral extraction	Oil	First author's field work (March-June 2013). http://chevrontoxico.com/.
49	Pronaca in Tsachila's territory	Santo domingo de los Colorados	2000-ongoing	Food processing	Pork and poultry	First author's field work (March-June 2013). CAO, 2011a, 2011b
50	The sociobosque project	Whole Amazon	2008-ongoing	Carbon Offsets	Environmental services	www.pachamama.org.ec.
51	De Cameron tourist resort in Monpiche	Muisne	2011	Tourism	Beach	First author 's field work (2012)
52	Communa Berdum against the shrimp farming activity	Tonsagua	2010-ongoing	Non-traditional agribusiness	Shrimp	First author 's field work (2012)
53	Mangrove gatherers against the Decree 1391	The whole coast	2009-2012	Non-traditional agribusiness	Shrimp	First author's field work (2010, 2011, 2012). Latorre, 2013.
54	The Bilsa commune against the shrimp-farming activity	Muisne	2012-ongoing	Non-traditional agribusiness	Shrimp	www.ccondem.org.ec
55	Indigenous opposition against Arco's oil activities	Villano	1989-2000	Mineral extraction	Oil	Proaño, J., 2005; Rodríguez, G., 1998.
56	The Hidrotambo project	San Pablo de Amali	2002-ongoing	Energy infrastructure project	Hydropower	First author's field work (March-June 2013). www.inredh.org
57	The Hacienda los Álamos: a banano case	Naranjal	2002	Traditional agribusiness	Banana	www.bananalink.org.uk
58	The building material enterprise La Cecal in Selva Alegre, Intag	Selva Alegre	2010	Mineral extraction	Building materials	First author's field work (2010, 2011).
59	The building material enterprise Lafarge in Selva Alegre, Intag	Selva Alegre	2011	Mineral extraction	Building materials	Zorilla, C., 2011.
60	Landfill contamination in Puerto Rico	canton Lago Agrio	2008-ongoing	Landfill	Waste	Solíz, M.F., 2011; Bonilla, B., 2011
61	The Yasuní ITT oil block	Yasuní Park	2003-ongoing	Mineral extraction	Oil	Espinosa, C., 2012; Martin, P., 2010

62	Landfill contamination in Cayambe	cantón Cayambe	2009-ongoing	Landfill	Waste	Soliz, M.F., 2010.
63	The commune Puerto Cabuyal against tourism entrepreneur	Jama	2000-ongoing	Tourism	Land	FENOCIN *et al*., 2012.
64	Montubios in Colimes against displacement	Colimes	2012-ongoing	Traditional agribusiness	Land	ASOMAC (ASOCIACIÓN DE MONTUBIOS DE COLIMES), press releases.

Appendix II: Inventory of Cases (II)																		
Number case	Drivers			Offenders				Cause of mobilization										
	IFIs (WB; IDB; IFC;) , IAAs (USAID), IGA (FAO)	International demand	National demand	vertical integration	National enterprise	State (included national enterprise)	Transtational enterprise (US, C, EU, A, Ch, Xi, J, B, Co, U)	Pollution (WE; H.B, E)	Displacements	labor exploitation	Deforestation	Water shortage/degradation	Potential loss of livelihood and cosmovsion	External control of key resources (sovereignty)	Loss of access to basic services	Failure of socio-economic and environmental promises	Non-consultation	Privatization of indigenous knowledge
1			x		x			E		x								
2		x				x		E			x							
3		x					EU	E			x							
4		x				x	A						x					
5	x	x		x				WE										
6	x	x		x								x						
7		x					US											x
8		x					C						x					
9		x					C										x	
10		x	x		x			E										
11	x	x		x	x			E	x		x							
12	x	x		x	x			E	x		x							
13			x			x	B	E	x				x					
14	IDB CAF		x			x	EU	E, H.B	x									
15			x			x	CH		x				x					
16		x		x	x					x								
17		x			x		Co	E										
18		x				x		E, H.B										

19		x				x		E, H.B										
20		x					EU	H.B, E										
21		x				x		E										
22		x					US						x					
23	IIC-IDB, WB	x	x		x								x					
24		x					US						x					
25		x					EU						x					
26		x					C	E	x				x					
27		x					US	H.B										
28		x				x							x					
29	IFC-WB GEF	x	x								x							
30		x	x		x					x								
31		x		x	x		J, Xi, US	E				x						
32		x	x	x					x									
33		x					US	E	x		x		x					
34		x						E	x		x		x					
35			x						x									
36						x		H.B, E							x			
37		x					EU									x		
38		x				x	US	H.B, E	x		x		x					
39		x				x	A, US, EU	H.B, E			x		x					
40		x		x	x			E	x		x		x					
41		x					U	E				x						
42		x					C	E			x	x	x					
43		x					J, C, Xi	E	x		x	x	x					
44		x					CH	E	x		x		x					
45		x					CH	E	x		x		x					
46		x					US, EU, A, C	E, H.B										
47	WB IDB		x			x	US								x			
48		x				x	US	H.B, E	x		x							
49	x		x	x	x			H.B, E										
50			x			x							x					
51		x	x		x				x				x					
52									x									
53		x				x			x		x		x					

54		**x**			**x**				**x**								
55		**x**					**US**	**E**								**x**	
56			**x**		**x**							**x**					
57		**x**			**x**			**WE**		**x**							
58			**x**		**x**			**E**									
59							**EU**	**H.B, E**									
60		**x**	**x**			**x**		**H.B, E**									
61		**x**				**x**		**H.B, E**			**x**	**x**	**x**				
62		**x**	**x**			**x**		**H.B, E**									**x**
63			**x**		**x**				**x**								
64			**x**			**x**			**x**								

Drivers: WB= World Bank; IDB= Inter-American Development Bank; IFC= International Financial Corporation; IAAs= International Aid Agencies; IGA= Inter-governmental Agencies); **Offenders:** (US= United States; C= Canada; EU= European Union countries; A= Argentina; CH= China; Co= Colombia; Xi= Chile; U= Undetermined); **Pollution**: (WE= Working environment; HB= Human body; E= Environment);

Appendix III: Inventory of Cases (III)																																									
Number case	Protesters												Demands								Strategies										Outcomes								Role of the state		
				NGOs																																					
				National																																					
	Indigenous peoples	Montubios	Afro-Ecuadorian peoples	Technocratic	Radical (H.R; D; I)	International	Women	Trade-unions	Social movements (I; P; L; A; T)	Urban inhabitants	Water boards	Peasants-fishers-gatherers-workers	Opposition to the project	Better labor conditions	Economic compensation	Better environmental conditions	designation with the category of protected area	Compliance with legislation	Access to/better distribution of natural	Environmental restoration	Shareholder/financial activism	Direct action	Legal action	Public campaign-boycott	Negotiation	Compliance Advisor Ombudsman (CAO)	Territorial autonomy (identity politics)	Scientific research	Community-based watching initiatives	Scale-up	Project interrupted	Project non-interrupted	Compensation	Repression-Criminalization	Environmental improvements	Fairer distribution of natural assets	Negotiated alternative solution	Legal decision	Supporting the offender(s)	Intermediator	Supporting the Protester(s)
1												x		x		x						x					x								x				x		
2	x								I				x									x	x				x					x							x		
3				x	H.R/D	x							x				x						x	x							x								x		
4				x								x							x			x			x												x		x		
5	x								I	x		x				x		x											x						x				x		
6	x			x							x	x							x			x	x							x						x			x		
7	x								I				x								x			x			x				x								x		
8	x			x	H.R/D	x			I; P			x	x							x			x	x				x		x	x								x		x
9	x				H.R/D				I				x										x				x					x							x		

10				x	H.R/D					x						x						x	x	x				x							x				x		
11			x	x	D								x				x					x		x					x	x	x								x		
12				x	D							x	x				x					x	x						x		x								x		
13				x	H.R/D	x			P			x	x									x	x	x						x							x		x		
14					H.R	x						x			x					x			x	x						x		x							x		
15		x			H.R/D							x	x									x	x						x			x		x					x		
16			x		H. R			x	A					x		x						x	x				x										x		x		
17	x		x	x	H.R	x			I, A							x		x		x			x				x	x										x	x		
18			x	x	D					x										x		x	x	x														x	x		
19				x	H.R				T			x								x			x															x	x		
20					H.R				T			x								x			x										x					x	x		
21					H.R./D				T			x								x			x										x					x	x		
22	x			x	D				I				x									x					x				x								x		
23										x		x	x									x										x							x	x	
24					H.R/D		x		T			x	x									x		x								x		x					x		
25					D							x	x									x									x								x		
26	x				H.R/D				I, T		x	x	x									x		x	x							x		x					x		
27					I			x				x			x								x	x						x								x	x		

28	x			x	H.R/D				I				x					x					x	x							x					x					
29	x			x	D,I								x											x							x	x									x		
30	x			X	D;I				I				x											x			x				x									x		
31					D	x						x	x										x	x								x								x		
32					H.R/D							x	x					x					x								x	x								x		
33	x				H.R/D	x		x	I				x								x	x	x	x			x				x	x			x					x		
34	x				H.R				I				x										x				x			x				x					x		
35					D							x	x									x	x	x							x									x		
36					H.R							x							x	x		x												x					x		
37	x				D	x			I			x	x											x					x										x		
38	x				D; H.R	x			I				x					x					x	x					x								x		x		
39	x				H.R/D	x			I				x									x	x	x					x								x		x		
40			x		D	x	x		T			x	x				x			x		x	x	x					x		x	x							x		
41	x	x			D		x		P	x			x									x		x														x		
42					D		x					x	x									x		x						x									x		
43					D	x	x		T			x	x								x	x		x							x									x		
44	x				D		x		T, I			x	x									x		x					x										x		
45	x				D		x		T, I			x	x									x		x					x										x		
46					D	x				x		x	x									x	x	x							x									x		
47						x				x								x	x			x	x	x		x		x		x						x			x		

48	x				D, H.R, I	x			I, T						x					x		x	x	x				x		x						x	x		
49	x				H.R, D					x		x				x		x		x			x			x		x	x	x		x			x			x		
50	x				D				I				x										x									x					x		
51					D				T			x	x										x	x						x		x					x	x		
52									T			x	x										x	x			x				x		x				x	x		
53			x				x		T			x	x						x	x		x	x	x			x				x						x		
54									T, P			x	x										x	x			x				x		x				x		
55	x				D	x			I				x		x					x	x	x		x	x		x	x		x		x				x		
56					H.R							x	x									x	x							x		x				x		
57						x		x	P			x		x				x				x		x						x		x				x		
58												x	x							x		x	x							x		x				x		
59												x				x		x		x		x	x		x						x			x			x		x	
60					D					x								x		x		x	x					x						x	x		
61	x			x	D;H.R; I	x			I	x			x										x					x		x		x				x		x	
62					D					x						x		x				x	x		x			x	x				x			x		
63									P			x	x					x					x	x									x	x					
64		x			H.R								x					x					x											x	x				

Protesters: NGOs: (D= Denounce; I= Investigation; H.R= Human rights); **Social movements**: (I= Indigenous movement; P= Peasant movement; A= Afro-Ecuadorian movement; T= Thematic movement).

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Appendix IV: List of Topics and Question Guide for the Interviews

Block I: Information about the mangrove gatherers and traditional mangrove uses

- Their situation before the shrimp-farming industry
- Type of mangrove fisheries management
- Social relationships among communities/families
- Gathering activities and social relationships
- History of each community

Block II: Information about grassroots organization

- Type of organization (crab or shellfish gatherers, mixt, artisanal fisheres)
- Nº of members/gender relations
- Date of foundation
- *Custodia* holders or not. Extension of the *Custodia*; Location.
- Articulation to supra-level organizations: Federations/C-CONDEM/Artisanal fishermen Organizations.
- The location where gatherers live (city*, communas*, islands, mainland, etc)
- Land rights over their communities.

Block III: Information about resistance actions against shrimp farmers and resistance organizational process.

- Period of time when the shrimp ponds started to be built.
- Expectation among mangrove gatherers.
- Period of time when resistance action began
- Who initiated the process of resistance and why.
- Type of collective actions.
- Supporters/alliances (The Church, peasant organizations, intellectuals; NGO).
- How are the mangrove gatherers grassroots organizations articulated in each region. Type of support provided. Organizations' weaknesses and strengths.
- PMRC and their influence in the organizational process of mangrove gatherers.

Block IV: Articulation with C-CONDEM

- When and why?
- Opinion about C-CONDEM objectives and structure
- 1998 and 1999 International campaigns (Greenpeace, formation of C-CONDEM, goals (self-administration of mangrove areas)).

- 1999 Decree about *custodias*. Personal opinion about the scope of this decree, how was applied en each area. Alliances.
- Problems and valuation of the *custodia* mechanism.

Block V: PAEM self- positioning

- What were the objectives
- Was it a bottom-up or top-down political strategy.
- Why in 2007? How was the process of socialization of this strategy with the basis.
- Activities celebrated in each Congress (2007, 2008, and 2009).
- Participants
- Alliances (CONAIE?).
- Personal understandings (who is included and excluded). Ancestrality versus Environmentally sound management practices/trajectory of fight and organizing.
- Personal evaluation of this political strategy.

Block VI: Process of shrimp-farming regularization

- Personal opinion about Decree 1391. Legalization of past illegalities.
- The process of reforestation related to the regularization process.
- How is it being carried out in each area.
- Dilemmas among mangrove gatherers about their participation or not and why.
- How are they evaluating Correa's government and their policies.
- Changes in the power relations in each area.

Block VII: *Custodias* and conflictivty

- Number of *custodia*s in each area versus mangrove areas of free access.
- Number of organizations with/without *custodia*
- Independent gatherers
- Costs of taking care of the *custodias*/Economic support provided by the state.
- Exclusive use or not. Perception about the "property/ access to" the mangroves.