Review of the decolonizing international biodiversity conservation debate

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Preface

This report will show a review of the debate around decolonizing conservation. In the last decade, decolonization has become a more prominent element in the conservation debate. It is based on the fact that colonial thought is still very much present in the way we address conservation. Ever since I started working with participatory action research at the age of nineteen, I became interested in the debate around research and projects with local and indigenous people in the Global South. When starting my studies at the Wageningen University of Research, I started to learn about all kinds of intricate issues, like corruption, human rights violations and the disregard for knowledge outside the western perspective. I realized that I wanted to learn more about this. This research started with a focus on recognition justice in nature conservation, aimed at the recognition and respect towards cultural differences and local/indigenous knowledge. While diving into this topic, I quickly arrived at the topic of decolonization. As there appeared to be a clear link between recognition justice and decolonization, I knew it had to be somehow incorporated into my research. While doing so, I found out that it would not be enough to only shortly mention it in my research. The topic of decolonizing conservation is fairly new in the debate and is quite a delicate matter. The injustices and rights violations happening all over the world are something that I cannot only slightly brush past, but it is deserving of its own research. Next to this, decolonizing conservation remains a bit vague in its understanding, as there are many different aspects to look at. To fully understand the gravity of the issue, I felt the need to first review the literature and knowledge on the topic. This will be primarily aimed at attempting to grasp the essence of decolonizing conservation and map who is contributing to this debate and how it is being looked at.

The main aim of this research will be to build a base for future research, as my professional ambitions are to continue with a PhD project after completing my Master, building on this research practice. I decided for this review, with the aim to understand rather than contribute. The hope is that this review will provide a starting point and a point of reference when exploring decolonizing conservation in practice in my Master thesis and eventually PhD. While writing this report I have learned so much about the topic and that knowledge brought me one step closer to specifying the field I want to continue working in. The combination of decolonization and conservation taught me so many new things, and challenged me to look further then what I thought I knew. Finally, I would like to thank my supervisor Kate Massarella, for supporting me during this experience, her genuine interest in the topic and expertise helped me a lot to get to the point I wanted to be at.

Loes Jeucken, Wageningen, 17th of June

Contents

1. Introduction

When colonial settlers started implementing their western ways of cultivation on foreign land the need for conservation started growing fast (Kashwan et al., 2021; Domínques & Luoma, 2020). This report, when referring to the colonial times, talks about the period, starting at the beginning of the fifteenth century and reaching out until the eighteenth and nineteenth century when colonies were starting to regain parts of their independence (Collins et al., 2021). It refers to global colonies, set up by Western European settlers. Due to overexploitation of the colonized lands, preservation of land and nature became a priority. The idea of creating protected areas arose, and soon after indigenous communities were forced to leave the land they had been living on for many generations (Kashwan et al., 2021; Domínques & Luoma, 2020). Restrictions were put on the access to the land to keep indigenous peoples from using its resources. Around the end of the eighteenth century, lasting through the nineteenth century until the twentieth century, different moves towards decolonization started happening, countries became independent and some of the rights were returned to the people who lived there, however colonialism never truly ended (Sultana, 2019; Kashwan et al., 2021; Collins et al., 2021; Ogada, 2020).

The introduction of the concept 'fortress of conservation, meaning the best way of protecting nature and its biodiversity is to create protected areas, excluded from humans, kept the legacy of colonialism alive (Sultana, 2019). In the post-colonial era, governments of previously colonized countries preserved the land rights and conservation approaches of the colonizers, by upholding and creating protected areas (Krauss, 2021; Domínques & Luoma, 2020). During this time, indigenous peoples struggled to retrieve and secure their rights to ancestral lands. The restrictions implemented to keep the indigenous communities from accessing the protected areas became stricter, patrolling the boundaries and the use of violence to enforce the rules and restrictions were more frequently used (Duffy et al., 2019; Büscher, 2015). In addition to this, protected areas were being extended not only removing indigenous communities from their ancestral lands but also forcing local villages and communities to relocate and leave their homes (Ogada, 2019; Duffy et al., 2019). However, the protected areas did not remain untouched by humans, Western influences still interfered with the preservation of the land. The urge to commodify nature and its resources remained present. The hunting practices of local people were prohibited but replaced with tourism, safari/trophy hunting and academic/scientific research. For example, as explained by Kashwan et al. (2021), the wildlife reserves in Africa use tourism around safari as a way to fund the conservation. However, other practices also started to emerge to please the white tourists, for example, trophy hunting, while indigenous communities were restricted from hunting for livelihood (Kashwan et al., 2021). These practices were justified and labelled under conservation.

Over the past decades, the protection and respect for indigenous communities became a more prominent aspect of the conservation debate. In the paper of Álvarez & Coolsaet (2018) the distinction is made between colonialism and coloniality, where coloniality refers to the influence of the complex power dynamics of colonialism within the practices of post-colonial societies. Addressing for example power and knowledge as ways to insert superiority. Different scholars are identifying this issue and the fact that colonialism in different forms is still happening in our present-day society, like African philosopher Mogobe B. Ramose (forthcoming). He explains that the feeling of superiority and the misrepresentation of the indigenous communities was common in the colonial period, and still is today. And even though there have been many attempts to respect the customary rights of indigenous communities, these elements of colonialism still prevail in the conservation paradigm.

There are many ways to interpret the consistency of coloniality, where some scholars call for rectification, and others name a different aspect of our society and behaviour in which coloniality is deeply rooted, like our education system for example (Sultana, 2019). Domínques & Luoma (2020) and Álvarez & Coolsaet (2018) argue that the consistency of coloniality is rooted in the avoidance of responsibility from the people still actively participating in upholding the legacy of colonialism and therefore call upon the need to decolonize. Despite everything that is known today about the situation, it is not easy to set decolonization in motion. Decolonization can be difficult to grasp, it is described as:

"efforts at re-humanizing the world, to breaking hierarchies of difference that dehumanize subjects and communities and that destroy nature and to the production of counter-discourses, counter-knowledges, counter-creative acts, and counter-practices that seek to dismantle coloniality and to open up multiple other forms of being in the world." (Maldonado-Torres 2018)

Decolonization cannot be just an empty concept in the conservation debate, it should be part of our discourse and needs to go hand in hand with actual actions in conservation practices (Sultana, 2019; Maldonado-Torres 2007, 2018). However, decolonizing does not mean disregarding what has happened in the past, as the wrongs of the past have not yet been righted (Breunlin, 2020). Decolonization can be applied to many different areas and aspects of conservation. In literature, decolonization is often linked to centring the voices of the marginalized minority groups in the global South, the voice of the indigenous, of the people who have been ignored for too long, and actively working to change the dominance of the global North and the complex power structure persisting decades after colonial times. Within these complex power structures, knowledge production is a very important aspect (Rubis, 2020, Collins et al., 2021). Decolonizing conservation and decolonizing knowledge have a lot in common. Both are about acknowledging the persistency of coloniality, and about incorporating ethical practices of engagement and giving all people a voice in the matter (Sultana, 2019; Mignolo, 2007). Where decolonizing conservation includes more additional aspects, the aspect of knowledge seems to be a large part of the issue.

1.1 Problem definition

Decolonizing conservation is becoming increasingly important and relevant in the conservation debate, as there is a move towards a conservation approach that aims to secure justice for indigenous people in terms of distribution, participation and most of all recognition. The aim lies in recognizing cultural values and differences within conservation. However, decolonizing conservation is quite difficult to grasp, as it has been framed in many different ways. Framing uses perspectives and opinions to explain an issue or phenomenon. It is constructing borders around a topic, by placing it in a specific context. There is a risk that different actors in the field of conservation build upon one specific framing, creating general approaches, and disregarding particular aspects of the situation (Leach et al., 2010). In addition, in the current debate, decolonizing conservation runs the risk of becoming an empty buzzword. Buzzwords are concepts of great importance in political, environmental and social debates (Massarella & Fiasco, 2022). It is often words that have become trending in the global debate, like sustainability for example, striving for change and hope. However, when looking at its link to framing, it can be seen that when a word lacks specific framing or has too many different framings, it loses its meaning and becomes empty. The development and influence of a buzzword are often crucial in the exploration and understanding of it (Massarella & Fiasco, 2022). Studying the different framings of a trending word in the global debate could help to avoid it from becoming an empty buzzword. And could therefore also be a valuable contribution to the current debate and research developments. This research seeks to contribute to the review of the different framings of decolonizing conservation by exploring different perspectives and aspects and what they mean together in the context of conservation development. In exploring these different framings, academic literature and the more practical perspective of NGOs are most prominently present. Additionally, this research will form the base for my future research in decolonizing conservation and its relevance in securing justice in conservation.

1.2 Research questions

MQ: What does the current debate on decolonizing international biodiversity conservation look like?

Subquestions

1. Who are the main actors engaged in the debate on decolonizing conservation?

2. How are these different actors framing decolonizing conservation?

3. What core elements can be identified across the framings?

4. How do the framings differ?

1.3 Report structure

Theoretical framework

In the theoretical framework section of this report, I will be discussing the two main theories used in this literature review, the theory of framing and discourse theory. In this section, I will be explaining each of the theories in more detail, supported by literature. I will also elaborate in more detail on how they were used during the literature review.

Methodology

The methodology section will dive into the different methods used to execute the literature review, for both data collection and data analysis. Each of the steps taken during the literature review will be explained here. This section will include details on search methods, literature selection and methods of structuring. At end of the methodology section there will be an extensive section on the ethics of researching this specific topic.

Results

This section of the report will follow the structure of the research questions. Starting with an elaborate piece on the actors involved in the debate around decolonizing international biodiversity conservation. The different actors are divided into groups and each of these groups is thoroughly discussed to determine their role and contribution to the debate. This part of the results will be supported by various visuals, made from the collected data. The next part of the results is dedicated to the different framings found in the literature and other sources. The framing reflects the different perspectives of different actors in the field, aiming to create an accurate representation of the current debate. I end the results by discussing some of the differences and similarities I found between the framings and some other aspects worth mentioning that I noticed during the literature review.

Discussion

In this chapter, I am discussing some of the key outcomes of the review and what that means for future research. I am answering the "What now?" question, as I aim to put the review in the perspective of the global debate, which includes future research. In this chapter, some of the main elements are addressed more specifically, again in the perspective of future research on this topic.

Conclusion

In this chapter I make a general summary of what has been discussed in the review, addressing some main points. With this chapter I close the report, finalizing all that has been said.

2. Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of this report highlights the two main theories used during this literature review. Each of the theories is explained by using academic literature. Next is discussed how they are relevant to this particular research and how they are used.

2.1 Framing & discourse

Framing is used in our everyday life, in the way we think or talk even. All of the knowledge we produce and every word that is defined uses framing. Framing is unavoidable in our daily life, it is only the determination of whose framing is the most relevant (Lakoff, 2010). There are some words, and some concepts that have multiple framings, and are not exclusively linked to one specific context, meaning they can still be interpreted in many ways. The person who frames affects the frame by their situation and experiences, as framing is based upon a perspective and opinion. Framing is part of our narratives, it determines the way we look at a situation or issue and how we experience it (Leach et al., 2010). The concept of framing states that one issue or topic can be perceived from many different perspectives and can be understood through different lenses depending on values, experiences and considerations (Chong & Druckman, 2007). Framing also refers to the methods of research, specific interpretations and other contextual assumptions that shape a concept and how it is understood in its broader social context (Leach et al., 2010). The outcome of framing concerns itself not with the 'what' question but rather with the 'how' and 'why' questions: how did the issue come to be? Why is it relevant? and How is it presented? (Scheufele et al., 2019; Leach et al., 2010). Framing determines how we interpret the knowledge presented to us. Topics and issues can have multiple framings, exploring these framings in a specific debate can have a substantial contribution to the securement of social and epistemic justice (Leach et al., 2010). Framing uses multiple areas to build upon, for this research the most relevant is the cultural and social context. For this, our lives, including our background, heritage, beliefs and values affect our perspective on an event or issue. It can influence the way we experience something, and this, in turn, influences our perspective (Tewksbury & Scheufele, 2019; Chong & Druckman, 2007)

To add another dimension to this theory section, I bring in the theory of discourse. Just like the framings theory, discourse looks at connections between words, ideas and individuals, and is constructed by its broader social context (Olssen, 2010). Discourse theory has become common use in the social sciences, it helps along in the process of meaning-making (Olssen, 2010; Wetherell et al., 2001). Learning about discourse enables a person to contribute to a wider range of discussions and dialogues. Language, written or spoken, is the tool to support emotions, impressions, thoughts and opinions (Mullet, 2018). However, discourse goes beyond these types of statements. In discourse, it is said that language is constructive, it helps to build beyond the word, and it does not simply represent (Wetherell et al., 2001). Just as framing, discourse does not concern itself with what is true and what is not, it concerns itself with the process of construction. Looking at how the meaning of a topic comes to be, how value is recognized, how some interpretations become more relevant than others and just simply how things are understood (Wetherell et al., 2001). Linking discourse to framing provides an extra dimension, as framing looks at the broader context in which a topic is placed, discourse looks beyond that to how that context gives meaning to a situation. So the two complement each other in analysis.

In terms of decolonizing conservation, the social and cultural context plays a significant part in how we come to understand the issue at hand. Where you come from or from which perspective you approach an issue can differ from someone else. What framing and discourse help with is bringing these different perspectives together, and looking at how they relate and differ from each other. By doing so, we find out how they can complement each other, what they mean together and understand who are the key drivers in the debate. As I placed my research about decolonization in the context of the conservation debate, it helps to give meaning and direction. Research about decolonization in the context of education would have a very different outcome and contribution. As Foucault mentions context can consist of constituting knowledge, the social practices, forms of subjectivity and power relations. For this research placing it in the context of conservation frames it and gives it a directed contribution. The way discourse theory and framing contributed to this research is mainly by challenging the way we perceive knowledge and understand language. It is not necessarily a concrete tool.

Wetherell et al., (2001) and Olsson (2010) say in their work, that knowing and learning discourse theory challenges the mind to look beyond the written word. Meaning that, the knowledge of discourse and going beyond language as a meaningless representation of our minds, is how discourse theory is used. It is a way of thinking, a way of looking at texts differently. Which is also the role it fulfilled in this review.

2.2 How was it used

During my review, I used the theory of framing as discussed in the paper of Hertog & McLeod (2003) combined with the general knowledge of the discourse theory as discussed above. The different aspects I used to help me determine the larger social context in which the text is placed (Hertog & McLeod, 2003). Exploring essential groups, word choice and specific perspectives can help to understand the perimeters of the topics. Whether it is linked to a solution or the obstruction of development, does not necessarily matter. Both identifications can help to grasp the topic of discussion. For example, in different framings, the role of a specific actor like the government can be different or have a different meaning to the concept. Studying this can also help to give insight on groups or individuals left out of framings. Moreover, exploring word choice can provide insights into the impact of a situation on the debate. The use of a word or even the absence of a word can indicate how different actors are dealing with the concept (Hertog & McLeod, 2003). This theory provides support on how to go about approaching studying framings and helps to identify different framings.

The use of the discourse and framing theories challenged me to look beyond what is perceived as common knowledge, at a variety of perspectives of one concept in this case decolonization of conservation. Having multiple contexts in which an issue is placed, can form an obstacle to fully comprehending a concept, making exploring these framings even more valuable to the current debate. It challenged me to look at the words being used when talking about decolonizing conservation, which words are being used repeatedly and which can support the framing of the concept. Framing also helped to expand my way of thinking and perceiving the concept as it allows me to explore more ways of looking at decolonization. It is easy to form an opinion about something after reading some articles or listening to a podcast, but there is often much more to it. By using the concept of framing theory, I challenged myself to hold off my opinions and look at the issue more objectively exploring as much information from as many different perspectives as I can.

3. Methodology

In this chapter, the methods used in this literature review will be discussed in detail. Starting with the research approach explaining the intent I set for this research in terms of approaches. Afterwards, I will be diving deeper into the methodology of data collection supported by a table showing the different sources I used. I will continue by elaborating on the methodology of my data analysis. I will be closing with an ethics section, as this is a delicate topic, where ethics are a crucial part of understanding my role in this debate.

3.1 Research approach

This research is qualitative which means, that I worked with non-statistical data, to better understand a concept (Bhandari, 2022). The research is based on *exploratory research*, where the main goal is to attempt to close a gap in existing research (George, 2021). The aim is not to get conclusive results but to create context around the problem and to form a base for further research, this is based on a *constructivist* approach. Constructivism approaches knowledge more abstract, through discourse and experiences (Mackenzie, 2011). The approach is based on the idea that the way we produce and perceive knowledge is depended on our personal experiences and is different for each individual. It calls upon the importance of social, political and cultural context (Stauffacher et al., 2006). There is not one truth on how we construct our knowledge. This approach links closely to this topic, it confirms why it is important to frame decolonizing conservation, considering multiple perspectives, as it can vary based on experiences and existing knowledge.

Considering the main question of this research; *'what does the current debate on decolonizing conservation look like?'*, it is crucial to have a balanced representation of sources from different parts of the world, to gain an, as complete as possible, insight into the debate. To address the first question of the research, I considered sources for data collection of this research from a wide range of places. The sources used were mainly, academic papers, webinars, on and offline texts and reports (NGOs). To keep the research structured I grouped the actors I found into the following groups: NGOs, Academic scholars and conservationists. I also added subgroups to some of the main groups, as can be seen in the table below NGOs are divided into indigenous rights advocacy organisations and conservation organisations and the academic scholars were divided into social science and natural science.

Table 1: overview of the sources divided over the fields they are in.

NGOS		ACADEMIC SCHOLARS		
Indigenous rights advocacy organisations	Conservation organisations	Social science	Natural science	Conservationist
Kalpraviksh (2020)	WWF	Álvarez & Coolsaet (2018)	Rubis (2020)	West & Aini (2022)
Global forest coalition	Conservation international	Collins et al. (2021)	Mbaria & Ogada (2016)	Kasaona (2020)
Forest peoples programme	WCS	Sultana, F. (2019)	Ogada (2019, 2020)	Kothari (2021)
Survival international		Mbaria & Ogada (2016)	Ybarra (2017)	
Our Land Our Nature		Mbembe (2016)	Kashwan et al (2021)	
		Domínguez & Luoma (2020)	Büscher & Ramutsindela (2015)	
		Kashwan (2020)		
		Asiyanbi (2019)		
		Waters et al. (2021)		
		Kashwan et al (2021)		
		Baldy (2015)		

*Note: the sources are an indication, not all the sources are included

The subgroups I found helped me to address question 2. For this question I dove deeper into all of the information, making sure each of the subgroups I made was validated through different examples and knowledge from the different sources. This helped to create an overview of the different perspectives in the debate and explore connections between different actors and sources, also linking back to see the difference in framing between the groups. Through this approach I was also able to address questions three and four, the subgroups helped me to identify and structure the core elements of each of the different framings, from the different actors. And by categorizing and putting the different framings next to each other, it was easier to explore the differences and similarities I found. Combining all these elements brought a clear review of the current decolonizing conservation debate. In the following chapters I will address, in further detail, how I collected my data, which parameters I took into consideration and how I analysed my findings.

3.2 Data collection

Data collection is important, as the data used should always add to the understanding of the theoretical framework of this research (Etikan, 2016b). It helps to have a directed search for papers that can contribute the right knowledge and experiences. I used the references and recommendations of the sources to find new sources. It is the referral of relevant scholars that extends to more relevant information, either scholars that contribute to the same topic of relevance or defy it in some kind of way (Etikan, 2016a). This research uses both academic literature sources and non-academic. For the academic literature, the choice was made to go for a **literature review**, as the aim of this research is to include as many different aspects of decolonization as possible. It aims to understand the existing literature, by summarizing, analysing and synthesizing relevant literature (Xiao & Watson, 2017).

Search method

For the search method of this review, I used a mix of **purposive sampling and snowball sampling**. Meaning that there is a conscious choice of scholars and sources, both adding value to the research as to a balanced representation. The primary database for this research was Google Scholar. Using 'decolonization + conservation; coloniality + conservation; decolonialize + conservation' as keywords for the search. A start was made with this for the proposal. I added some of the keywords used in these papers to expand the search in the scholar database. I started my sampling with some of the sources I got from this google scholar search for the proposal of this research. I used these sources to create a base, I expanded by looking at the sources used in these papers. I was able to expand my reference base quite a bit by using snowball sampling like this. In the later stages of the research, I used purposive sampling, to search for specific sources to support specific information. To make sure all the data I needed to create a complete literature review, I used google scholar to search for specific papers. By using key concepts like land rights, militarization, and education, in combination with decolonizing conservation, I was able to find the specific sources I needed.

To search for additional non-academic sources, I first took to google. I started with some NGOs I already knew, like Forest Peoples Programme. By looking at their webpage and reports I was able to search more specifically with the use of keywords and concepts. Together with some suggestions and further google searches, I was able to find the needed NGOs. Many of the NGO webpages had links to interesting webinars. I also used the different NGOs in Google to search for other sources like blogs and news articles. I was able to collect quite a reference base to support my literature review. Throughout the process of the review, I was able to gain the largest part of my sources out of snowball sampling, while filling in some gaps in the information with sources retrieved by purposive sampling.

Inclusion criteria

For academic literature to be included in this review, it had to suffice to a few criteria. Firstly, this review only includes English-written or English-translated articles. Secondly, this review includes only papers concerning conservation, not from other disciplines. The choice for this was made to keep it tangible. There is a lot written about decolonization, it reaches many different topics and practices. As it is rooted in the western perspective, and the western perspective is in its turn rooted in a lot of things we do, decolonization is emerging in many different topics. It was quite a challenge to not drift too far from conservation. For example, there is

quite a lot written about the commodification of nature, and while it is linked to conservation practices, it is a topic of its own. Therefore, it is mentioned in this review, but not extensive, and only through its connection with conservation. By looking critically at the link to the conservation of all the different aspects included in this review, I was able to keep it more tangible.

Another inclusion criterion is the fact that this review must have a well-represented source base. Therefore I did not exclude any scholars based on their descent or nationality. During the data collection, I specifically searched for papers to represent scholars and perspectives from different parts of the world. In this report, I talk a lot about how knowledge is perceived and that knowledge from some parts of the world still is not being recognized as valuable or legitimate. Therefore, it is crucial to not contribute to this in any way possible with this research. Below, the sources used in this research are shown divided over the perspectives they represent. I have tried to be as inclusive as possible.

Table 2: Representation overview

AFRICA	9
ASIA	5
AUSTRALIA	1
EUROPE	5
NORTH-AMERICA	3
SOUTH/CENTRAL AMERICA	3
NOTE* THIS OVERVIEW IS AN INDICATION OF THE REPRESENTATION OF ACTORSINCLUDED IN THIS REVIEW	

Lastly, to specify this review, only literature from the recent conservation debate was included, only using papers from the last ten years, 2012 till 2022. I chose this last criteria, to make sure I would represent the current debate, as that is the purpose of this research.

Source selection

Adding to academic literature I used webinars, on/offline texts, podcasts and NGO reports. In the prospect of further research into the practices of NGOs on the topic of decolonization, I did not address a geographical selection in my research. As I included two different groups of NGOs, two selection approaches were used. For the conservation organisations, I chose to use only organisations that focus on global conservation and therefore take part in the larger conservation debate. This means that smaller national and local conservation organisations were not included in this research. I made this choice for different reasons, the first one being that I wanted to limit the search a little. As I am discussing the global decolonizing conservation debate, it is more relevant to look at an organisation that also has a more global approach. Next to this, these conservation organisations are mainly used as support of some of the arguments made in this report, as they represent the opposite of the other NGO group, who are more relevant to this research. It was, therefore, easier and more tangible to limit the selection to large NGOs that are well-known and thus have a lot of information and are more often used as examples in the decolonization literature.

For the other group of NGOs, the selection was a bit more specific. I was looking for organisations that were actively participating in the decolonizing conservation debate. This turned out to be more difficult than anticipated. It was not always obvious when organisations were engaging with the decolonizing conservation debate. However, during the process of the literature review, I started noticing similar use of wording and concepts. I redirected my search, focussing on different elements in reports and web pages. For example, community conservation, or variations on it, was a very commonly used word. By exploring these concepts I was able to select the necessary NGOs for this research. I used purposive sampling again to start my search and added snowball sampling to expand.

For the remaining online sources, podcasts, webinars and other online texts like blogs, I turned to platforms like, www.forthewild.world, www.conviva-research.com/, www.consciouschatter.com, www.bfm.my, among others. To find these platforms I used the Wageningen University library, Google, Spotify and Youtube.com as search methods, because these platforms are familiar and often linked to the webpages of the NGOs. As these sources are a small part of this review, l had to be critical of the content. I searched for podcasts, webinars and

blogs that supported sources I already found or to fill in gaps I stumbled upon. I think that by adding this specific search, I carefully constructed my reference-base.

Important to note is that this review is descriptive, in the sense that it does not aim to expand existing literature, but rather tries to make sense of what has already been written. Additionally, this is a review, meaning that the main aim is to identify key themes relevant to the research questions, rather than summarizing a large body of literature (Xiao & Watson, 2017). Another aspect of a literature review that fits well is transparency, the impact of colonisation and the remaining injustices that are deeply woven into this research, require an approach that aims to collect as much evidence as possible, with as little bias as possible. This research does not seek blame or try to point fingers, it just aims to create a complete picture of what is happening (Xiao & Watson, 2017).

3.3 Data analysis

The main analysis was done through the methodology of discourse analysis. Discourse analysis is a well-known method in social science, it is said to look 'beyond the sentence'. I based my data analysis partly on the theory of Hertog & McLeod (2003). I used this theory mostly, to help me make sense of my findings. I used framing to structure the findings to create a coherent report. To structure my analysis I looked at two different aspects first. I started by looking at the authors of the academic papers and other sources, to determine, their nationality and where they studied, to keep track of my representation, an overview of which can be found in Table 2. And two, their field of expertise to determine the different actors involved in the debate, the results of this can be found in Table 1. The next steps of the data analysis are more in-depth, during the reading of the papers I mainly used *Axial coding*. These are coding methods to help structure the grouping process. Axial coding means finding relations between the collected data, and analysing as you go (Cooper, 2016). By using the axial coding I was able to group my sources and have the freedom to test, review and adjust them where I deemed needed, providing the most flexibility and best outcome.

I started with determining the larger social context in which the text was placed as in the theory of Hertog & McLeod (2003). I highlighted keywords, concepts and themes, I also looked at the identification of essential groups and at the word choice in the texts I included in the review. To answer research question one, I was able to construct an overview of the actors in the debate, using the identification of essential groups (Hertig & McLeod, 2003). In addition, through references in papers, googles searches and webpages of NGOs I was also able to identify the key actors in the decolonizing conservation debate, expanding and adjusting throughout the process. The next step was answering research questions two and three. I started by constructing a scheme with different framing, having each new source added to the right framing. In each of the papers and other sources, I analysed the larger social context in which the text was placed and the key themes that were being identified. By identifying these elements, I was able to also identify the framings to which the sources were placing their contribution to the debate. I went through all the readings, adapting the main framings where necessary, leaving me in the end with four main framings. I added all the data into an elaborate overview of framings linked to keywords, concepts and sources. I linked the different actors and to the different framings, I identified to see who was talking about what, I visualized this in Table 3. From the framings overview, I was able to start writing my results section.

To answer the final research question I first wrote the results of the first three questions, throughout the writing process I specifically tried to look for noticeable differences and similarities throughout the framings. I paid attention to differences in word choice, approach, perspectives and essential groups. Throughout the writing as well as the reading process a few things stood out, which I then incorporated into the final chapter of the results. I repeated this process until all the collected data was incorporated, and finalized my data analysis.

3.4 Ethics

In this chapter, I aim to address my awareness of my position on this topic. Talking about decolonization and colonial practices is a delicate matter for many. As I refer to in this report, there is a presence of 'white supremacy' and 'white saviourism', not only in the field of conservation. In this sense 'whiteness' refers to a way of thinking and not necessarily skin colour, even though that is where the concept emerged from (Ogada, 2020). When addressing a topic like this as a white person, it is essential to, not only be aware of the presence of the western way of thinking but actively defy it. History, cultural differences and development are just some of the things that need to be considered when writing about topics like this (Sultana, 2007). I grew up with a certain perspective, I have had a roof over my head, the opportunity to choose my education, etc. These are all aspects of privilege, I grew up privileged. Even though my upbringing has been open-minded and inclusive, I also had a very white curriculum for a long time and learned about 'developing' countries. I started to visit countries in the Global South and started to form my perspectives and I became aware of the biases and stereotypes created in Western societies. An awareness of my position and role in this topic, an awareness of my own biases and an awareness of how my actions and my words can impact others. However, with a topic like this, just having awareness does not suffice. As Sultana (2007) mentions it is the understanding of why not to speak for the other, why a balanced representation is essential and the importance of reflection. By keeping this in mind, I worked around my positionality and attempted to build upon a foundation of respect and recognition (Sultana, 2007).

Throughout this research, I reflected on my actions and the way I am representing literature on this topic. Checking my choice of words, evaluating on biases and the way I am handling the different perspectives. I paid careful attention to make sure as many different perspectives would be represented, not just the western perspective. In addition, I need to be aware of how my mind might not be completely decolonized (Matias, 2016). However, decolonizing does not mean disregarding what has happened in the past (Breunlin, 2020; Sultana, 2007). It means actively defying it and checking yourself on your actions. Throughout this research, I kept checking myself for risks of contributing to biases or misrepresentations. There is a danger of speaking for the other and contributing to epistemic inequality (Miller & Pinto, 2013; Sultana, 2007), by not having every perspective represented. This was a challenge, however, I used my contacts at Wageningen University and beyond that, to help me with this.

To end this section, I want to address the fact that this research intends to create a better understanding of the situation of the decolonizing international biodiversity conservation. Obtaining this knowledge and understanding will hopefully also assist me with future research on this topic. I aimed to create a literature review that has a balanced representation of the global debate, not just the western perspective.

4. Results

In the next section of this report, I will dive into the result of the research. The structure will be using the line of research questions as follows: first I will discuss the involved actors in the debate on international biodiversity conservation, identifying their roles and contributions to the debate. Next, I will continue by discussing the different framings used by the actors, this will be done through the identification of key elements and relevant information on current colonial practices in conservation to support the framings. Finally, I will be addressing the noticeable differences between the framings and discussing some notable elements within the literature.

4.1 Main actors in the decolonizing conservation debate

When looking at the current debate, many different perspectives are represented by various actors. I grouped the main actors I came across during my literature review. The three main groups I will be discussing are academic scholars, NGOs and conservationists. Some of these groups will be divided into subgroups and elaborated on based on their contribution to the conservation debate.

Figure 1: an overview of the key actors in the decolonizing international biodiversity conservation debate
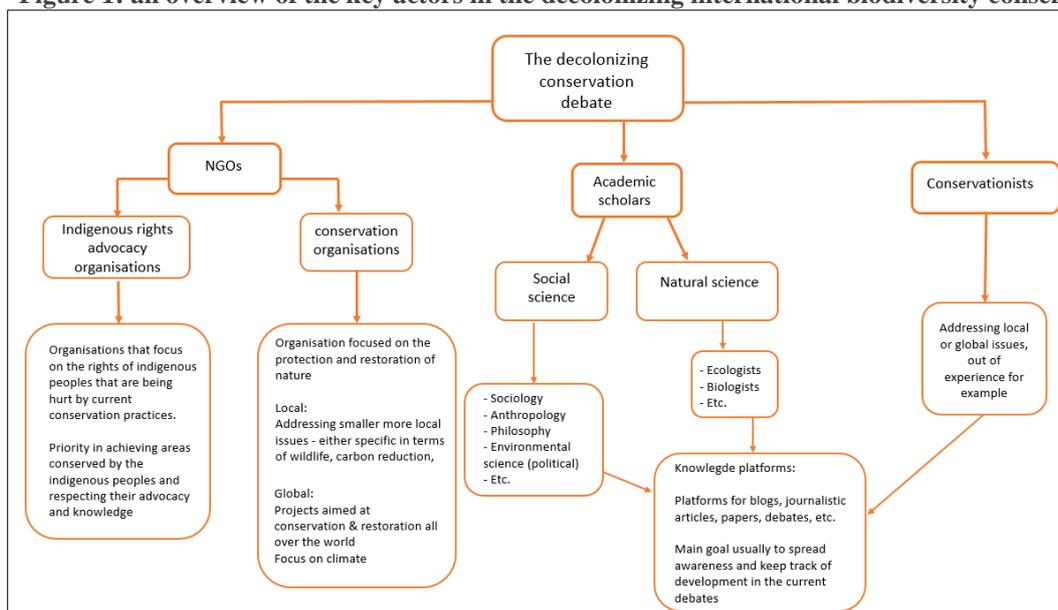
One prominent contribution comes from academic scholars. Scholars from many different specialities contribute to the debate, which is noticeable by the different perspectives visible in the debate. In this paper, the distinction is made between scholars in social science and scholars in natural science. The social science scholars (sociology, philosophy and anthropology etc.) are the largest group within this review. Scholars like F. Sultana, L. Álvarez & B. Coolsaet, L. Domínguez, & C. Luoma, Y. Collins and P. Kashwan, are part of this group. Even though they each address different aspects of the debate, there is a similarity in terms of approach. It is noticeable that social science scholars take a more general approach, diving less into specific cases, but approaching more through a particular concept or perspective. Therefore they provide somewhat different information than the natural science scholars, which are the other group of scholars included in this review. Some natural science scholars (ecology, and biology) within this review are, J.M. Rubis and M. Ogada. This group relies more on empirical evidence and case studies as methods. They differ somewhat in approach, as they are looking at more specific cases or events and writing about them. This group also uses more general concepts and perspectives to link to, but more as a way to understand their particular topic. The slight difference in approach caused the need for the division in this review, to better identify the different actors within the debate. Both approaches are incredibly valuable for the debate, however, it is noticeable that the social science scholars are more often engaging with the topic of decolonizing international biodiversity conservation, as the majority of the academic papers found on this topic are coming from social science scholars. There are also cases in which social science scholars and natural science scholars work together on papers, think of Kashwan et al. (2021) or Mbaria & Ogada (2016) in 'the big conservation lie'.

Academic scholars have brought the issue of decolonizing conservation to light in the academic world. For this research, the choice was made to include only scholars that are actively engaging in the decolonizing conservation debate. Academic scholars are using journals, websites and other knowledge platforms to share their work and perspectives. There is a relatively wide range of literature, from scientific papers, like the work of Sultana (2019), Kashwan et al., (2021) and Duffy et al., (2019) to blogs about the issues in conservation or personal experiences with the colonial legacy like the work of Kasaona (2020), Asiyanbi (2019) and Paige & Aini (2018). All sources are pressing the necessity to address this problem more and make changes. Both scholars of social science and from natural science are making a relevant contributions. Although I beforehand expected a more significant difference between the two, they appear to be relatively like-minded on this topic. Most scholars are also sharing their perspectives on what kind of changes they perceive to be crucial, this will be further elaborated on later on in this report.

Another group in this debate are the conservationists, individuals from all over the world passionate about the cause of conservation, not always academically trained, but often draw from experience or interest. I selected the conservationists that are actively engaging with the decolonization of conservation. It is seen that conservationists are often writing about specific places, placing their focus on the situations in those places. These places can be chosen out of interest or descent. Two examples of conservationists are, J.K. Kasaona & A. Kothari. Kasaona (2020) was born and raised in the North-western parts of Namibia, where he grew up in a small village. Drawing from his own life and experiences, he addresses topics and situations happening in Namibia. Kothari (2021) focuses on India, and with the organisation Kalpavriksh, he is contributing to the global debate. The experiences and perspectives this group adds to the debate are quite valuable. It highlights a more specific point of view, supported by explicit examples. By adding to this group, I am adding in individual perspectives of the conservationists derived from personal experiences to provide an extra paradigm to the debate. Academic literature can help a lot in the understanding of complex issues like this one, but actual lived experiences can provide new insights and help to understand the gravity of the situation in different places. The best knowledge on experiences should be obtained from conversations with the people who are experiencing the effects of the colonial legacy first-hand. However, due to the time frame of the review, this will not be possible. Through the perspectives of the local conservationists and their writing, I hope to obtain a small impression of what is happening.

The next group within the decolonizing conservation debate are the NGOs. During this review, it became clear that there are two types of conservation organisations involved. First, the indigenous rights advocacy organisations, these conservation organisations look at the different sides of conservation, preserving nature and its biodiversity is not their main priority. These organisations focus more on how to preserve nature without bringing harm to the local communities or violating their customary land and basic human rights. A few examples can be named for these groups. Kalpavriksh an organisation based in India, they are working with the concept of community conserved areas. The approach recognizes the knowledge of local communities when it comes to conservation. The organisation helps to secure and protect the customary land rights and offers support to communities in conserving their areas. What sets this organisation apart from even other organisations in this group, is that they are actively documenting cases of human rights violations. Next to this, an important factor is that their reports are primarily documentation instead of action plans, projects and promotion. They use webinars and reports to show progress and spread their message (Kalpavriksh, 2021).

The next organisation to be discussed is Forest Peoples Programme (FFP). This organisation is like Kalpavriksh engaging with the concept of community conserved areas and taking on a more facilitating role. They support the local communities, by helping with legal aspects and empowerment. By supporting these local communities, instead of more top-down approaches, human rights violations are reduced severely (Forest people programme n.d.). Through press releases, webinars, articles and briefings FFP exposes situations of injustice and defies powerful global forces at work in the conservation paradigm. Closing the Gap (2020) is a knowledge platform by FFP, it is used for the publication of papers and case studies. It also holds links to a series of short knowledge clips that highlight specific situations and cases all over the world, with the main

purpose to raise awareness of the problem and its cause (Closing the gap, 2020). Kalpavriksh and Forest Peoples Programme are similar organisations as they both advocate for the rights of local communities, and both take on a more facilitating and supporting role in projects.

Another similar organisation is Global Forest Coalition, they too are defending the rights of the local community when it comes to land ownership. They are actively working on the concept of the Community Conservation Resilience Initiative (CCRI), which is based on the support of community conserved areas. Global Forest Coalition is very open about methodology and published a report on it. The report shows a detailed overview of the methodology they use, including skill-sharing, assessment, engagement and reflection (Global Forest Coalition, 2014). The method is used for achieving recognition and securing customary land rights and ownership. It is interesting to see the level of transparency within the websites and reports of these organisations. They openly criticize current practices, including other organisations.

The final organisation in this group of NGOs is Survival international. This organisation is a little different because it has a more activist nature, they work together with communities to protect their land and livelihood (survival international, n.d.). Survival international not only works in the field on many different projects, but they are also actively campaigning and raising awareness. They are also the only organisation that names modern colonialism as a cause and is engaging with the decolonizing conservation, in these words. They are using their website and other media like YouTube to share stories and highlight the injustices that are currently happening all over the world (survival international, n.d.) To add to this, they are openly defying large global interests and organisations like WWF and WCS.

Besides the indigenous rights advocacy organisations, some organisations are primarily focused on biodiversity conservation. World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and many more global conservation organisations are working on the protection of land and nature. It varies from wildlife protection, anti-pollution or reforestation. The primary aim of these organisations is conservation. Moving along with current developments, most organisations are including some information on rights protection and collaboration with local communities. However, on multiple occasions, it came to light that there are severe human right violation occurring within the projects of these organisations. Especially WWF has been on the receiving end of quite some criticism. The organisation claim to strive for a harmonious society where nature and humans can be one (WWF, n.d.-a). With currently around three thousand running projects, WWF is an huge player in the battle against climate change. Their projects include for example reforestation, nature conservation and actively working against the extinction of endangered animals. However, WWF has received a lot of criticism over the last decades. Sources like BBC News (2019) and Beaumont in the Guardian (2020) have been criticising WWF for lack of oversight on projects leading to several cases of human rights violations like forceful relocations and for collaborations with organisations that are opposed to what WWF is supposed to stand for. In an investigation was stated that there was no evidence that WWF was directing any of these violations. However, it came to light that they were aware of the situation and continued to fund initiatives where these initiatives took place (Duffy et al., 2019).

There are also organisations like conservation international that seek the balance between the two groups. They are an organisation that focuses mainly on conservation purposes, however, on their website, they also dive into their rights-based approach in which they want to help indigenous communities to protect and conserve the land. Next to this, they acknowledge the customary rights to the land (conservation international, n.d.). This organisation cannot be categorized under the indigenous rights advocacy group, as it appears to be a secondary focus. Through webinars, papers and news articles they communicate about their work and give a platform to marginalized voices. Because their work is engaging with the debate in some aspects, they do deserve a mention.

This overview shows the different actors in the conservation debate. Important to note here is that there are more likely to be more types of actors involved in the conservation debate. However, for this research, I selected the ones that are according to the literature review the most relevant in the discussion of decolonizing conservation, either in the sense of valuable contributions, case studies or in showing where attention needs to go. The NGOs for example, the indigenous rights advocacy organisations are doing incredible work when it

comes to highlighting indigenous rights and the value of indigenous knowledge. However, when enacting my search for these organisations it turned out to be more difficult than anticipated beforehand. As mentioned on the websites of conservation international (n.d.), Forest Peoples Programme (n.d.) and Survival international (n.d.), as well as by Kothari (2021), more than half of the earth's land is customary to indigenous communities. However, they only manage a very small part of it. Therefore the relevance of indigenous rights advocacy organisations is growing, however, there are still not a lot of organisations that are focusing on indigenous rights as the organisation included here are doing.

There are more than enough conservation organisations, both global like WWF, WCS, the nature conservancy and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as well as smaller local organisations that focus on smaller local conservation issues, rather than justice issues. With the development of the conservation debate and the growing relevance of decolonization, it is noticeable that more global conservation organisations are starting to engage with the debate. WWF for example has also added a page on their website, dedicated to indigenous communities and the work that they do (WWF, n.d.-b). Indigenous rights and violations are discussed but with little and one-sided information aimed at publicity. It is because of the publicity that these global conservation organisations are receiving the most funding, while indigenous rights organisations receive little to nothing (Kashwan et al., 2021). For conservation these organisations are contributing significantly, however, for this research, these organisations show and confirm the flaws in the conservation practices. Literature names the developments that both environmental and social justice are becoming more prominently present in the approaches of conservation organisations, however on their terms and often from a western perspective (Asiyanbi, 2019; Kashwan et al., 2021; Duffy et al., 2019). In addition, it is often the conservation organisations that are on the receiving end of critique from scholars and conservationists. With the growth of the decolonizing conservation debate, injustices practices are being highlighted more frequently, shining a light on the issues from the Western perspective. So, even though conservation organisations are not necessarily contributing directly to the decolonization of conservation, they indirectly set the development of the debate in motion.

So to conclude, each of the actors and groups involved in the decolonizing conservation debate contributes in their way and provides a new perspective. These perspectives are brought together to provide the best and most complete overview of the debate. In the next chapter, I will dive into how these actors are framing the concept of decolonizing conservation. I will do that according to the theory of framing as elaborated in the theoretical framework.

4.2 Framing the debate

Decolonizing conservation is a broad topic, in the literature review of this report the body of literature around the topic is thoroughly discussed. However to answer the research question; "*How are these different actors framing decolonizing conservation?"*. The literature on decolonizing conservation uses the colonial practices and the colonial legacy to help frame the topic. The most prominent topic that is used to identify the decolonizing conservation debate is injustice and is inherently connected to the colonial legacy. It takes on many shapes and has been discussed through different framings. These framings help us to grasp the full extent of the debate and determine the larger contexts in which certain aspects are framed. In the following part of the result section of this review, I start by identifying the different framings found in the literature by referring to the key actors of the debate. In Table 3 later on in this section, an overview can be found of the key actors in the different framings that will be discussed in this chapter.

4.2.1 Decolonizing conservation practice

Within the debate of decolonizing conservation, conservation practices are often discussed. Most scholars tell the same origin story, the rise of the concept of the fortress of conservation at the start of the nineteenth century provoked the start of large issues of human rights violations (Domínguez & Luoma, 2020; Ogada, 2019; Waters et al, 2021). The protected areas were implemented to separate humans from nature, upholding dichotomies of nature vs people that have been part of our discourse for years (Büscher, 2015). Long after the end of the colonial period in the seventeenth century, this abuse of power was upheld and still is today.

The threat to our planet became the excuse to justify the violence, as it was in the name of conservation. In the battle against poachers and other threats to nature and wildlife, a 'shoot-to-kill' policy was implemented in some cases (Asiyanbi, 2019; Mogomotsi & Madigele, 2017). Poaching and trafficking were being labelled as the main reasons why this protection was needed (Duffy et al., 2019).

Indigenous and local communities who had been living in harmony with nature, whose livelihood depended on the natural resources of nature and who had been preserving it for generations, were excluded from the protected areas (Domínguez & Luoma, 2020; Kashwan et al., 2021). Restrictions on the use of nature's natural resources and heavy enforcement became the start of a dark era (Domínguez & Luoma 2020). The rise of militarized conservation to uphold the rules and restrictions of the protected areas was fuelled by complex power dynamics, and hierarchies (Asiyanbi, 2019; Kashwan et al., 2021; Duffy et al., 2019). In addition, the implementation of militarization does in no way address the larger problem and underlying industry leading to poaching (Duffy et al., 2019). It is the continuous marginalisation of indigenous peoples, the exploitation of natural resources by large profit-making industries and the complex social and historical context that is driving the poaching and trafficking industry (Hübschle, 2016; Duffy et al., 2019; Büscher & Ramutsindela, 2015). Conservation organisations are using local rangers to execute the enforcement of the rules and restrictions, using the local economic circumstances to their advantage. Publicity around the topic are reinforcing stereotypical narratives (Asiyanbi, 2019; Duffy et al., 2019). When debating about these kinds of practices, it is the voices of the people that suffer the most that are ignored, while these are exactly the voices that could show how these actions fuel more inequalities and injustices. It separates the solution from the problem because it is the local people who are considered the future of conservation (Duffy et al., 2019; Hübschle, 2016).

However, not everyone is opposed to the use of violence and militarization for conservation purposes. Mogomotsi & Madigele (2017) argue that green militarization has proven to be successful in reducing poaching. When objectively looking at the effectiveness of its purpose, reducing poaching, green militarization is working. In their paper Mogomotsi & Madigele (2017) do not or barely consider the human rights perspective, they evaluate purely the method itself. They do argue that there are some flaws to it and that it should be used in combination with other conservation efforts, for it to be sustainable, or rather the other way around (Mogomotsi & Madigele, 2017). An organisation like WWF are known to support and fund practices like green militarization to this day, justifying them using the possible extinction of species (Kashwan et al., 2021)

To work towards decolonizing conservation practice, it is crucial to understand these underlying causes, and the larger contexts in which the militarisation of conservation is placed, to be able to address the source of the issue. The persisting colonial legacy, marginalization of indigenous peoples, poverty, racism and inequalities are all a part of how this issue is being framed (Hübschle, 2016; Duffy et al., 2019; Büscher & Ramutsindela, 2015). The use of force in conservation has proven many times to be ineffective, and sometimes even works counterproductive. Because the key players in the decolonizing conservation practices are the ones being oppressed by it. Local and indigenous communities face the damages of this use of violence, while as many scholars agree upon they are the future of conservation (Duffy et al., 2019; Hübschle, 2016; Kothari, 2021; Kashwan et al., 2021). The same mindset can be found in different approaches throughout current literature, for example, the community conserved areas concept of Kalpavriksh environmental action group (2021), where the responsibility and management are in the hands of the local and indigenous communities living on the land. The main message is, that the use of violence and the exclusion of communities from protected areas is very much linked to a colonial mindset. Lack of recognition for indigenous knowledge and skills results in global organisations taking control, placing the protection of nature over the lives of indigenous communities (Kashwan et al., 2021; Duffy et al., 2019; Domínguez & Luoma, 2020; Ogada, 2019). Currently, there is an urgency to be critical of current approaches, and start to look at sustainable long-term approaches. By looking at the larger social and historical context of militarization of conservation and considering individual and community experiences, the process of policy adjustments can be facilitated (Duffy et al., 2019; Büscher & Ramutsindela, 2015).

4.2.2 Returning land rights

Ever since the colonial era of the fifteenth century, governments adopted the colonial conservation approaches, upheld and created protected areas (Domínques & Luoma, 2020). As mentioned on the websites of conservation international (n.d.), Forest Peoples Programme (n.d.) and Survival international (n.d.), as well as by Kothari (2021), in the current conservation paradigm about 65% of the earth's land is customary to indigenous communities. However, indigenous communities are only managing a very small part of the areas. Until this day, indigenous peoples struggle to retrieve and secure their rights to their ancestral lands. Currently, over 50% of the protected areas are placed on indigenous lands, meaning indigenous peoples either occupy or use them and are under the management of governments or governmental organisations. This, while indigenous peoples take up only 5% of the earth's population (Kashwan et al., 2021; Álvarez & Coolsaet, 2018). Indigenous peoples have lost large parts of their lands, through the disregard of customary land rights (Domínguez & Luoma, 2020). The long-lasting conflicts that have originated from the debate on land rights are still fuelling issues like inequalities and poverty (Ybarra, 2017; Domínguez & Luoma, 2020). The Euro-western perspective is putting immense pressure on the current conservation issues and the need for indigenous peoples to give up even more land for conservation purposes. Therefore the relevance of indigenous rights advocacy organisations is growing, however, there are still not a lot of organisations that are focusing on indigenous rights as the organisation included here.

Decolonization in terms of land rights, calls for rectification of the exclusions and compensation for the burden put on the communities. Maybe even more important, an adjustment of conservation strategies is crucial, the distribution of protected areas should be more evenly spread out globally, not just in the Global South (Kothari, 2021; Kashwan et al., 2021; Álvarez & Coolsaet, 2018). In addition, indigenous and local communities should be in charge of conserving their land, whether it concerns a protected area or not. The approach of Community conserved areas of Kalpraviskh (2021) is addressing quite a few issues within the debate. When reading about the approach brings together most of the elements of decolonizing international biodiversity conservation. The key element of the approach is to return the land rights to the indigenous and local communities and it relies on the indigenous knowledge to conserve the areas. Multiple organisations are engaging with this approach, as it has proven to be more effective in terms of sustainability and conflict that the protected areas (Kalpraviskh, 2021; survival international, n.d.; Forest peoples programme n.d.; Global Forest Coalition, 2019). Global Forest Coalition is calling it 'the community conservation resilience initiative, but it is based on the same principles. The approach recognizes and relies on the indigenous knowledge of the land and its nature, it allows communities to remain on their ancestral land and excludes the Euro-Western power dynamics. The concept of community conserved areas shows a lot of potential as a bridge between knowledge and implementation, as it engages with a lot of the aspects of decolonization theory. It would be interesting to further explore concepts like this and their value for conservation developments, and see how to get other organisations to engage with the concept as well. Decolonization of the land rights debate includes various aspects. One of them is that at this moment indigenous land rights are recognized but not enforced by law. To return the land to the indigenous communities, their land rights should only be recognized but also enforced by the government and governmental organisations (Ybarra, 2017; Domímguez & Luoma, 2020). Returning the ownership and customary rights to the indigenous communities. In addition, there is a need to recognize the connection between indigenous peoples and their land and acknowledge that no compensation can substitute the connection and cultural value of land (Ybarra, 2017).

4.2.3 Decolonizing conservation by addressing knowledge production

The next framing that will be discussed is the framing of knowledge. This framing refers to the way knowledge is perceived and recognized in the field of conservation. For example, the sense that indigenous knowledge of sustainable conservation should be regarded as valuable and considered together with or even over Euro-western knowledge (Tuck et al., 2014). In the paradigm of conservation, knowledge is a frequently discussed topic. Conservation as is practised in the present is often derived from Western perspectives. Western conservationists implement rules and restrictions that disconnect the indigenous peoples from their ancestral land (Rubis, 2020). It has been a common perspective that indigenous people have lost their rights to the land

and that nature needs protection from these indigenous communities (Rubis, 2020). Their knowledge of the preservation and nurturing of nature and its biodiversity is disregarded in current conservation practices (Kashwan, 2020). However, it is more commonly discussed by different scholars that it is precisely the knowledge of the indigenous communities that offers a solution in terms of conservation (Kalpavriksh, 2021; Forest Peoples Programme, n.d.; survival international, n.d.). It is a deeper understanding of the connection between humans and nature that separates indigenous knowledge from western ideology (Rubis, 2020 & Tuck et al., 2014). The western ideology calls for the disembodiment from place and its relation to humans, as the only way to properly conserve. Euro-western colonial practices have been dismissing the indigenous knowledge and capability of preserving and managing nature from the very beginning of the colonial period (Rubis, 2020). Even now its intricate power dynamics are preventing the attempted reclaim of the acknowledged value of indigenous knowledge. Scholars like Kothari (2021), Mabele et al. (2021), Rubis (2020), conservationist Kasaona (2020) and more are arguing that local and indigenous communities are the most valuable and essential stakeholders in the achievement of sustainable conservation.

Álvarez & Coolsaet (2018) and Maldonado-Torres (2018) extensively discuss the inferiority placed on the knowledge that is not produced in the Euro-Western society. This knowledge is being deprived of any scientific validity, leading to a one-sided discourse. Currently, knowledge production is valued by power, location and wealth, not by its contribution to a debate (Mabele et al., 2021). Moving towards decolonization of knowledge in conservation means giving a voice to the indigenous communities, respecting and valuing their knowledge with which they have been conserving land for generations (Kothari, 2021; Kasaona, 2020), and maybe even the most important one, decolonizing the mind of Euro-western societies. This is no easy task, to do so, a very large change is necessary for human behaviour and ways of thinking (Mabele et al., 2021; Mbembe, 2016). This conflict has strong connections with the colonial legacy as the Euro-western perspective is transposed onto the Global South, disregarding the knowledge and successful attempts for conservation of the indigenous communities in the area. This approach is often not only ineffective but also fuels environmental injustices (Álvarez & Coolsaet, 2018).

There are some more specific aspects to the knowledge framing. In the world of scientific research and practices, the same Euro-western colonial legacy remains present. One example named often in academic literature is the process of re-naming and re-claiming. Kasaona (2020) and Rubis (2020) argue that the process of re-naming not only disregards the indigenous knowledge and names but also represents a sense of unrightful ownership. The example of Rubis (2020) is that of the Orang-Utans, this is the name that is known all over the world. The name given by those who live in the same area is Maias, however, this name dismissed is in global vocabulary and replaced by the Western name Orang-Utans. Another example is set by Baldy (2015), she talks about the use of the word 'Coyote'. The way the word is used today is not the original meaning given by the native indigenous peoples. These are just two of the many different examples in the current conservation debate. Name giving is a part of the indigenous cultural practices and traditions, decolonizing it would mean honouring the indigenous practice of naming and recognizing indigenous names and traditions (Baldy, 2015; Rubis, 2020). The renaming process is imperial practice and epistemic injustice disguised as science. In a sense, it contributes to the adherence to a binary, that put western and indigenous knowledge across from each other, where indigenous knowledge is deliberately excluded from science and theorization (Rubis, 2020).

Achieving decolonization in the area of knowledge is in no way an easy task. It is said that recentring is highly necessary, meaning that the western perspective of knowledge is no longer perceived as the only valuable knowledge (Mbembe, 2016; Tuck et al., 2014). It does not mean that western knowledge and the western perspective should be dismissed and ignored, it means that knowledge production goes beyond just the western perspective (Mbembe, 2016). Indigenous knowledge of conservation needs to be honoured and validated. The connection to the land and its nature speaks out through language and through this knowledge in a way that the western perspective is unlikely to achieve (Tuck et al., 2014; Rubis, 2020; Baldy, 2015). In decolonizing conservation knowledge there is a need for a joint perspective, where there is equal respect for different ways of knowledge production (Mbembe, 2016). One thing most scholars and contributors to the debate can agree on

regarding decolonizing knowledge is that it appears to be opening up the western perspective for different epistemologies. Western education is recognized as a key aspect of this issue (Sultana, 2019; Charles, 2019).

Decolonizing our education system

As a part of the decolonizing knowledge debate, is the aspect of education. In our current education system, there is a lack of curricular diversity (Sultana, 2019; National Union of Students, 2014; Charles, 2019). With the persisting presence of colonial legacy in conservation practices, education is named as one of the aspects of why this is happening. There is a clear underrepresentation of scholars from the Global South, indigenous and marginalized voice are rarely heard in the curriculum of conservation studies (Subedi, 2013). In academia, curriculum, research methods, teaching styles and even recruitments the Euro-centric perspective prevails (Sultana, 2019; Mbembe, 2016; Charles, 2019) This will not say that this is happening everywhere, however, it is happening too much. Even students have protested and questioned why their curriculum was 'white' (National Union of Students, 2014). There is a growing need to engage more with diverse bodies of literature, aimed at representing different perspectives globally. In conservation education, for example, there is a focus on the unsustainable livelihood practices of local and indigenous communities and the development of new alternatives to maintain the Western standards of conservation (Sultana, 2019; Rubis, 2020; Mabele et al., 2021). Conservation practices are aimed at educating local and indigenous communities on how to preserve and conserve the land, nature and its biodiversity, failing to recognize the care and knowledge that indigenous and local communities have when it comes to conserving nature (Sultana, 2019; Rubis, 2020). Additionally, it also fails to address larger conservation obstacles like Euro-Western production and consumption behaviour. This dates back to the colonial period, when western cultivation put a huge strain on the land. It is not just in the field of conservation, where the effects of 'white education' is noticeable in practices. Sectors like business and health care are experiencing similar repercussions (Charles, 2019; National Union of Students, 2014).

Scholars like Charles (2019), Mbembe, (2016), Tuck et al., (2014), Subedi (2013) and Sultana (2019) call for the start of decolonizing education, to make sure future generations do better. Decolonizing one aspect is impossible when not addressing all pressing matters, which is likely why decolonization is such a difficult concept to grasp. Education can be used to educate future generations on morals and the diversity of knowledge (Mbembe, 2016). The current hegemonic approach to knowledge creates a challenge to expand the knowledge framework, it tends to suppress and dismiss any knowledge that does not conform with the Western approach. Therefore, it is not just a simple notion of adaptation that needs to emerge, it is a process of transformation (Sultana, 2019, Mbembe, 2016). Decolonizing our education would not only include reading a geographically extended body of literature, it would include a critical inspection of our academia, research methods, teaching styles, recruitments and also our curriculum (Charles, 2019). Decolonizing education and the learning process challenges to defy what is perceived as the standard and the right perspective. It is not just replacing content, it is seeing the value of broadening our perspectives (Subedi, 2013; Mbembe, 2014; Charles, 2019). Decolonization in education enables understanding of what is happening and the persistence of colonial legacies. The underrepresentation of certain perspectives teaches us that some voices do not need to be considered (National Union of Students, 2014). It is necessary to make the start to decentre the euro-centric perspective and knowledge and widen our range elevating suppressed voices, valuing different ontologies and epistemologies, while acknowledging the ongoing legacies (Sultana, 2019).

4.2.4 Racism in the decolonizing conservation debate

The next framing which I want to address in this review is that of racism. It is closely linked to what Álvarez & Coolsaet (2018) and Maldonado-Torres (2018) are arguing with the concept of coloniality, more specifically the coloniality of being. 'Coloniality of being' refers to the separation between inferior and superior, between being perceived as human or dismissed as a human, based on the colour of the skin. Racism goes beyond the justice paradigm, it is not something that is imposed from top-down hierarchies. It is this deeply rooted way of thinking that also finds its origin in the colonial period. In a general sense, racism is all around us, whether it is in having prejudice or judging someone based on the colour of their skin, or it takes a more physical form in which people are discriminated against, not given equal chances or even violence. There is this general sense

of white supremacy present in everything we do. In nature documentaries, for example, Ogada (2020) and Kashwan (2020) describe the concept of white supremacy in the context of conservation, where 'white' people are calling for interventions to save the planet. Resulting in celebrities being named conservationists and privileged white males that are advocating for nature conservation (Lang, 2018; Ogada, 2020; Kashwan 2020). However, important to note here is that the concept of whiteness not necessarily refers to one's skin colour, but rather a specific worldview and mindset, paired with ignorance (Ogada, 2020). The approaches of conservationists start from the intention to help, however, as Kasaona (2020) explains that their actions can be inconstant and the 'white saviours' become critics. There is no consideration for past efforts and tradition, and no constructive advice, just discredit and demotivation.

When taking another perspective on racism conservation, we quickly arrive at the concept of 'white saviourism'. White saviourism refers to the sense of white supremacy in regard to the Global South, for example in conservation practices in the Global South (Kasaona, 2020; Ogada, 2020). Where the Euro-western 'white' perspective is perceived to be superior and organisations and individuals go to local and indigenous communities to impose their views, disregarding knowledge and cultural beliefs in the process. It is the idea to help the 'poor', 'helpless' people in the Global South with our superior knowledge and skills (Kashwan et al., 2021; Lang, 2018). However, it goes even further, large corporations and individuals from the Global North take it upon themselves to also make a contribution to help save the planet, through volunteering projects, activism, and the support of global NGOs for the sole purpose of getting social media exposure (Kashwan, 2020; Asiyanbi, 2019; Ogada, 2020; Lang 2018). Whether social media exposure means, posting on personal accounts or getting the 'green image' as a corporation, the intentions are rarely anything other than an ego boost and in no way helping the cause. These are just a few examples of how racism is infiltrated conservation (Kashwan, 2020; Lang, 2018). It also closely links to the other framings as well, which is why I will not go into too much detail here. I did think it was deserving to name this framing separately as it is such a deeply rooted problem in conservation and our society.

The presence of Euro-western hegemonies and the hurt that has been inflicted not only now but also in the original colonial period leaves a mark. Mogobe B. Ramose (1999) explains that there are two steps to be taken, the first one being that the Euro-Western ideas of knowledge, reality and truth should let go of the colonial legacy. The following step would be the rectification of the colonised, territory restorations, return of indigenous rights and the acknowledgement of indigenous knowledge in the global discourse. To work towards decolonization there would need to be involvement of both opposing societies. Many of the scholars discussed in the review, name the same context, whether in different wording. Kashwan (2020), talks about a radical change in how local and indigenous people are being perceived and portrayed. Ogada (2020), also names the colonial legacy as the main issue, calling it a structure. He is describing the path to decolonization as, redefining and creating a new understanding of the power dynamics. One more example is Kasaona (2020), who writes about the step toward recognition of indigenous knowledge and the returning of the land to its rightful owners. Each of these statements shares similarities in the core of what decolonization should look like and each of them acknowledges the challenges it brings.

4.3 Expanding the decolonizing conservation debate

According to the literature review conservation practices, knowledge, land rights and racism are the framings most present in the current debate. While they share quite a few similarities, each of these framings builds upon its knowledge base. During the literature review, I also stumbled onto some topics that seemed to be introduced often as support of the four main framings. From the perspective of the research question, 'what does the current debate on decolonizing international biodiversity conservation look like?', these topics are relevant to mention as they are being used by many of the key scholars of this review and in the debate. These two topics show current trends in conservation development and conservation plans. Each of these topics supports what has been discussed in the framings, and provides more specific examples of current developments and how the actors in this review are engaging with them.

4.3.1 Commodifying conservation

Within the debate of decolonizing international biodiversity conservation, the commodification of nature and its natural resources is often addressed. It is often used to support the framing of conservation practices.The incessant prioritization of economic benefit which was known in the Euro-centric worldview made its transfer to conservation practices. Under the motto of "if it pays, it stays" and "selling nature to save it" market-based conservation arose (Collins et al., 2021; Kashwan et al., 2021; Domínguez & Luoma 2020; Kashwan, 2020). The commodification of nature and conservation is until this day still a part of conservation and is being justified because of how it generates funding. This too is, in a sense, a continuation of European colonialism and is upheld by the complex power dynamics of the global political economy. Saving the planet through conservation even became a trend, so large corporations would fund these practices to obtain a more pro-environment image (Collins et al., 2021). This commodification of nature and conservation is also contributing to the fade of indigenous knowledge. In tourism, Western knowledge of an area is produced, rather than adding an indigenous or local perspective (Rubis, 2020). In addition, while conservationists became hell bend on separating humans from nature. However, trophy hunting, safari and tourism were introduced to help fund the conservation initiatives (Kashwan et al., 2021; Domínguez & Luoma 2020). The damage of trophy hunting, ivory trade and game reserves are not being recognized, leaving nature to be exploited. About the commodification of nature is a lot to say and whether people talk about financial compensation and the equal economic benefits or about stopping the damaging practices of commodifying nature, it is larger power dynamics that need to be dealt with (Collins et al., 2021). There is little written, about how to go about handling this, just about what should happen. It involves intricate power relations with governments, large corporations, trade markets, modern-day consumerist behaviour and the financial need of conservation organisations. From whichever way this issue is addressed, there does not seem to be an easy answer.

4.3.2 Nature needs half: plans for the future of conservation

A significant part of the colonial legacy in conservation is linked to the use of protected areas. Literature refers to the social injustice aspect of the protected areas regularly, which is linked to the geographical element. There have been rising concepts of 'nature needs half' and 30 by 30, meaning that half the earth's surface should be reserved for nature, and half should be undeveloped (Kothari, 2021). This rising concept divides the world into high and low restoration priority areas, the high restoration areas should be transformed into protected and conserved areas, undeveloped and untouched by humans. Meaning, that when land is left undeveloped it also means that indigenous and local communities are expected to not change or develop (Kothari, 2021). When looking at the restoration priority areas of this concept, it is noticeable that the areas are primarily located in the Global South and not the Global North (Our Land Our Nature, n.d.; Survival international n.d.). To add to this, it includes highly populated areas in Global South. Currently, most of the protected areas are already located in the Global South, placing the burden of conservation on local and indigenous populations (Kothari, 2021). So, to achieve the nature needs half concept, the Global South should set aside even more land for conservation when the Global North is handing in the bare minimum. This highly complex development is leading to even worse power hierarchies. Not only does this concept disregards any value or rights of the communities in the Global South, but it also devalues black/brown lives, placing white lives in yet another undeserved superior position (Asiyanbi, 2019; Kothari, 2021). 50% of the current protected areas are placed on indigenous lands, meaning indigenous peoples either occupy or use them, while indigenous peoples take up only 5% of the earth's population. There is a clear unequal distribution of protected areas and an unequal distribution of the burdens of conservation (Kashwan et al., 2021; Álvarez & Coolsaet, 2018). The Euro-western perspective is putting immense pressure on the current conservation issues and the need for indigenous peoples to give up even more land for conservation purposes. Even though most conservation practices take place in the Global South, thus placing its burden on the Global South, it is the Global North that benefits most from it.

This example provides a clear image of what the future conservation plans will look like if we continue on this path, and confirms on many levels the need for decolonization. This example shows why actors are engaging with the different framings and are calling for a change. When looking at the land rights framing, for example, the fact that plans like these protected area expansions exist shows that the decolonization debate is highly

relevant (Survival international, 2021). Indigenous and local communities have lost and are still losing their rights to land, and according to these plans, they will continue to lose land. All this while the larger underlying issue remains unaddressed, the present Euro-western hegemony (Álvarez & Coolsaet, 2018; Krauss, 2021).

4.4 Differences and similarities

The different framings and elements of decolonizing conservation, have many aspects in common. In this chapter will be discussed exactly which differences and similarities stood out during this review, starting with a critical evaluation of the sources and their links to the different framing. The overview below shows which actors are engaging with which framings.

Table 3: An overview of the different actors and with which framing they are engaging

Conservation practice	Knowledge / Education	Land rights	Racism / white supremacy
Domínguez & Luoma (2020)	Alvarez & Coolseat (2018)	Domínguez & Luoma (2020)	Ogada (2020)
Collins et al (2021)	Sultana (2019)	Ogada (2019, 2020)	Kashwan (2020)
Rubis (2020)	Kasaona (2020)	Kothari (2021)	Lang (2018)
Lanjouw (2021)	Kothari (2021)	Kalpavriksh (2021)	Kasaona (2020)
Kashwan et al (2021)	Mbaria & Ogada, (2016)	Forest Peoples Programme	Asiyanbi (2019)
Kashwan (2020)	Baldy (2015)	Survival international	
Asiyanbi (2019)	Sultana (2019)	Global Forest Coalition	
Kasaona (2020)	Rubis (2020)	Alvarez & Coolseat (2018)	
Mbaria & Ogada (2016)	Mabele et al. (2021)	Ybarra (2017)	
Waters et al (2021)	Asiyanbi (2019)	Kashwan et al (2021)	
Büscher (2015)	Subedi (2013)		
Büscher & Ramutsindela (2015)			
Duffy et al (2019)			
Mogomotsi & Madigele (2017)			
Hübschle (2016)			

A few things that stand out when looking at this overview is that almost all the European scholars are engaging only in the framing of conservation practice, except for Lang (2018), who is actively engaging with the racism framing. As can also be seen is that the majority of the scholars and other actors are engaging with the conservation practice framing. Next to this, it is noticeable that all the NGOs are primarily engaging with the land rights framing. The land rights framing is from all the framings, the most concrete. Who has rights to the land, can be led back directly to many injustices and is also part of the move toward decolonization according to Kalpalvriksh, Forest Peoples Programme, Survival International and the Global Forest Coalition. Furthermore, the scholars and conservationists that base a lot of their research upon their own experiences are also engaging in some ways with the racism framing. There are not many scholars that address the racism framing as directly as Ogada (2020), Kashwan (2020), Kasaona (2020), Lang (2018) and Asiyanbi (2019). Except for the things mentioned above, there are not many distinctions noticeable between different actors in the Global South.

When looking with a more general perspective, considering differences in the context of the larger debate, a few things stand out. First, it is noticeable that there is a difference in the decolonization of conservation practices, in terms of tangible approaches and methods used for conservation purposes and a more general approach, where decolonization is addressed from the perspective of a theory or a way of thinking. And even though these two are still linked quite significantly together, in the decolonizing conservation debate a separation between the two is visible. Decolonizing conservation practices is more often discussed in detail, pointing fingers at organisations and societies. For example, the militarization of conservation, and forceful evictions. In the paper of Duffy et al. (2019) the aim is to expose violations and the effects on the indigenous communities, the paper also calls for accountability for the organisations that directly or indirectly by taking funds are contributing to the injustices. Also, the paper of Rubis (2020) aims to highlight the current practices in conservation and critique approaches. These are just two examples of this perspective, generally, this type of literature builds its decolonization perspectives off of a specific practice, for example, the practices of re-naming or militarisation. Because the aim is more specific, the perspective on decolonization is also narrowed down, more tangible, and applicable to specific situations.

On the opposite side of this is the more general perspective of decolonizing international biodiversity conservation. This perspective is often based upon a theory, for example, environmental justice like in the paper of Álvarez & Coolsaet (2018). Within this perspective decolonizing international biodiversity conservation is approached more generally, and the theory of environmental justice helps to frame the paper. The aim of this type of research using the more general perspective is often to discuss an aspect of how the framing or theory interacts with the topic that is being discussed or to state its importance in the debate like Sultana (2019) and Charles (2019) do with education. The more general perspective also creates a more general approach to Decolonization. When talking about decolonizing education, for example, there are opportunities to adjust and build further upon the ideas. Both perspectives show a very different approach and also result in a different type of research and paper. Where the first one is based on case studies and specific situations, the other is more based on theory and literature. The first one provides a more specific image of a situation while the other looks at a bigger overarching problem.

Then there is a difference noticeable in the perspective taken when addressing the issue. Some scholars choose to write about the perspectives of the indigenous communities, talking about situations from experiences like Kasaona (2020), or through case studies like Rubis (2020) and Waters et al (2021). This perspective is aimed at highlighting the situation and the injustices that are happening, describing the impact of such practices on communities. It is the cultural impact, dispossession of land and the violence and how the cultural beliefs, traditions and connections to place are not considered or even recognized (Waters et al., 2021). This perspective has some similarities with the first one described above, however, this one goes beyond the focus on the conservation practices and looks more at the impact on the local and indigenous communities. A clear example of this is the article of Kasaona (2020), his article is based on his own experiences and those of the people in the village he grew up in. He addresses different conservation practices and dives into the effects and impact on himself and the people in his village. During this literature review, I noticed that this perspective seems to be the least common, when digging through the internet, I was able to find this article. The approach to decolonization is derived from experience and is in this case quite personal. However, taking it out of its context and approaching it more objectively can provide new insights to support the decolonizing conservation debate.

Conservationists and scholars Ogada (2019, 2020), Kashwan (2020) and Asiyanbi (2019) use their perspectives and experiences they address the decolonization of international biodiversity conservation from a different perspective. They use their perspectives to highlight and critique the Euro-Western influence on the current conservation practices and developments. This perspective looks at the western political economy, the capitalist society, Eurocentric biases, education and white supremacy. This perspective is the most common within the decolonizing international biodiversity conservation debate. It is the persistence of colonial behaviour from Euro-western societies, racism and superiority. This perspective is rooted in most of the literature as many scholars agree that this is the source of most injustices and the key to decolonizing conservation. The papers

and articles are aimed at critiquing euro-western behaviours and exposing persisting hegemonies and other complex power dynamics. Decolonization within this perspective often calls for radical changes, the rectification of injustices and the acknowledgement of the colonial legacy. Many scholars and conservationists express support for specific approaches in conservation practices like recognition justice (Svarstad & Benjaminsen, 2020), spatial planning (Ogada, 2019), and community-based natural resource management (Kasaona, 2020) or community conserved areas (Kalpavriksh, 2021). It is often acknowledged that the approaches named above do not address the entire issue and that there is a need for an overall radical change in behaviour, but that does not mean these approaches cannot provide the first steps.

All these different perspectives and different approaches provide an aspect and insight into an overall incredibly complicated issue. The value of these differences and therefore also the value of this review is that by putting them side by side, we can create a pretty complete overview of the issues we are dealing with and through which angles and approaches we can get a step closer to decolonizing international biodiversity conservation. This does not take away the fact that there is still a long way to go and that there are only a few conservation organisations actively engaging with this debate. And as long as that remains true, visible positive effects and changes will remain minimum.

4.4.1 NGOs vs scholars

In the literature debate, it stands out that when talking about the issues around conservation heavy language is used. Scholars like Baldy (2015), Asiyanbi (2019), Álvarez & Coolsaet (2018) and many more are not afraid of calling the current practices what they are; colonial. Colonial legacy, colonialism and coloniality are all used to describe the situations. Also when talking about solutions, scholars talk about decolonization. These are all large and heavily loaded words to indicate the severity of the issues. However, what stood out even more is that when looking at the NGOs that are contributing to the debate colonialism or decolonization are not commonly used. Even though they address the same problems and injustices, they do not use the same terminology. Survival International (n.d.) is one organisation that does name colonialism specifically, as they are an activist organisation, they have done a campaign on decolonizing conservation. They even released a series of videos giving a platform to some indigenous and local people to share their stories and their personal experiences with the injustices of modern-day colonialism. However, when looking at Kalpavriksh, Forest Peoples Programme or Global Forest Coalition, they do not use the terminology of decolonization to talk about what they are doing. On their web pages, you see words like justice, rights and community conservation. When diving into what they are saying it is noticeable that they are engaging with the decolonization debate. There does not appear to be a clear reason, but it would be interesting to explore further.

5 Discussion

What does the current debate on decolonizing international biodiversity conservation look like? That is the question that started this literature review. Looking at all the literature and other information gathered on the debate of decolonizing international biodiversity conservation, one thing can be said for sure, current conservation practices are being heavily criticised. By doing a literature review like this, we gain an understanding of what is being said and how the debate is developing. Decolonizing international biodiversity conservation is a complex and enormous task, the many different and delicate issues discussed in the review show that a change is needed in the Euro-western mindset. However, it is incredibly complex to think about decolonizing the mind, scholars use the persistent colonial legacy to grasp the severity of the issues. In addition conservation practices like militarization, forceful evictions and the disregard for indigenous knowledge are also still currently happening. Numerous human rights violations form the base of this debate. Within each of the texts included in this review, came forward that the presence of the Euro-western hegemony has a persistent grip on all the framings of conservation discussed here. The current debate confirms this as the problem, but there does not seem to be one clear answer. However, knowing how deeply rooted modern-day colonialism is in conservation, helps scholars and organisations to search for ways to decolonize.

Decolonizing international biodiversity conservation is in no way an easy task. At this moment, the debate is engaging with framings like knowledge and land rights which call to de-centre the Euro-Western perspective and knowledge and for marginalized local and indigenous voices to be elevated. The debate also engages with the framing of racism in which is talked about the concepts of 'white saviourism' and 'white supremacy' within our present-day society. Next to this, we have the framing of conservation practices calling for the rectification of injustices and violations and the adaptation of conservation approaches. There is a need to acknowledge these ongoing legacies, recognize the value and success of indigenous methods of conserving land and nature and step away from the white gaze and incorporate a more representative curriculum in our education systems. There is a call to defy the Euro-western perspective, un-learning our current approaches and re-learning equality and recognition, stop silencing marginalized voices, and start recognizing the cultural value of indigenous knowledge.

After doing the literature review it is clear that there is a lot left to explore, even though decolonization theory has grown significantly in the past decades there is a lot to be discovered still. The different framings help to better grasp the topic to its full extent. Even though the different framings and perspectives within the debate provide a clear answer to the 'what needs to happen' question. However, the 'how' question is still a bit vague and not frequently discussed, it also brings all kinds of new challenges and questions. Various scholars and NGOs are working on this question, through concepts like recognition of justice and community conserved areas, currently most prominently discussed, they are trying to create a bridge between knowledge and implementation. However, the fact remains that the colonial legacy brings many different challenges to this development.

There is a lot written about what should be done and some organisations are making great progress on how to transfer the written ideas to practice. I agree with many of the scholars in this review, there is still not enough general understanding and recognition of indigenous peoples and knowledge. I argue that there is a lot to further explore on indigenous interaction with nature and that there still is a lot to learn. I also agree that there is a serious transformation needed in the Euro-western way of thinking and that that is where the issues discussed in the decolonizing conservation debate are rooted. This is no easy task and will need time. After this review, I argue that there are opportunities to be found in organisations like Kalpavriksh, Forest Peoples Programme and Global Forest Coalition. Rising concepts like community conservation, deserve further exploring and offer new and better insights into the continuation of the debate and the transfer to practice. Therefore, I want to argue, that it would be valuable to further explore how the bridge between knowledge and implementation of the decolonizing international biodiversity conservation could be supported and realized. The work of various scholars and NGOs is contributing a lot, but a lot still has to be explored and discovered.

6 Conclusion

To conclude, this review has resulted in an overview of the different actors involved in the current debate around decolonizing international biodiversity conservation and how they are framing the debate. The decolonizing conservation debate is large and complex, there are various actors involved, like scholars, NGOs and conservationists, that contribute to its development. Through different framings, we can understand better the severity of the injustices caused by the persisting colonial legacy and how we can build upon that to move towards decolonization. The different framings that are introduced give an insight into different aspects of the current situation in de conservation, using the persisting colonial legacy to support the move towards Decolonization. Each of the framings contributes a new perspective to the debate. The more practical side of the debate focuses on current conservation practices and land rights. Where scholars are discussing the changes that are needed, like returning rights and rectifying the injustices that have been happening all over the world. NGOs are creating a new way of conservation giving land rights back and putting indigenous peoples in charge of the protection of the land, offering only assistance and resources. These changes are still slow but are creating many opportunities for the future.

Where one aspect calls for rectification of injustices, the other aims for recognition of indigenous knowledge and a better understanding of larger global power dynamics. In the persisting colonial legacy, a lot is happening through the Euro-western way of thinking, and the way indigenous peoples are being perceived. Western knowledge is still being perceived as superior, in how we are dealing with conservation and even in our education system. Modern-day colonialism is all around us. In the decolonizing conservation debate, scholars are talking about how to decolonize knowledge. There is a persistent Euro-western superiority in knowledge, that we need to get rid of. There is a need to recentring knowledge, removing the Euro-western perspective out of the centre and bringing more different perspectives in. There is a need for the recognition of indigenous knowledge in terms of conservation. And there is a need for awareness of the persistent Euro-western hegemony and to step away from it. This is in no way an easy task, and there is a lot more to learn from indigenous perspectives on land preservation.

The complexity of the topic makes it that it is difficult to determine the next steps. As I mentioned before, there is a change needed in the Euro-western way of thinking, we need to decolonize the mind. However, there is very little written about how we could go about doing that. To indicate further research in these areas, I think it would be interesting to dive deeper into indigenous knowledge. And the indigenous connection to land, to understand why the land is so important and to explore their perspective on what is currently happening in the conservation paradigm and how they see the future of conservation. However, to do this, a lot of time and preparation are needed. It is a topic that needs careful consideration, to avoid contributing to the very injustices I am discussing in this report.

Another possible following research could focus more on the more practical side, while scholars mention little on how to work on returning land rights and implementing new conservation approaches. Some NGOs are actively engaging in the debate, by introducing community conservation. There is a lot to learn about this approach and how exactly NGOs are engaging with the different aspects of decolonizing conservation. It would be interesting to dive deeper into the concept of community conservation and how some of the NGOs that work with it are experiencing it. It would be valuable to learn about the impacts on the local communities and which aspects of the decolonizing conservation framings as discussed in this report are being taken into consideration with this approach. Even considering the other side of this story, looking at organisations that are not engaging with it, could provide new interesting insights.

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