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Dissecting deforestation: discourses on the role of local communities and global drivers

Master's thesis

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Abstract

Deforestation and loss of forests is a key global environmental and socio-economic concern. Factors behind deforestation have been of high interest to academics and politicians alike in order to be able to identify effective ways to address it.

This master's thesis research looks at discourses around key emerging themes in global deforestation and environmental policy; the role and rights of indigenous people and local communities in tackling deforestation and the socio-economic, indirect drivers of deforestation. Discourse analysis was used as the theoretical framework and as the tool to identify and dissect the discourses around these thematics.

The study identified two distinct discourses, one on rights of indigenous people and local communities and one on drivers of deforestation, each made out of three different narratives that have a distinct mixture of how they frame the problem at hand, what solutions are provided and what is left silenced. Within each discourse the narratives that can be labelled more reformist or managerial focusing on market and economic measures, on governance improvements or on win-win benefits of tackling deforestation are the more dominant variants of the narrative.

The focus of each discourse and what was left silent can provide further insights into the meanings, assumptions, interpretations and contexts behind a discourse, including; 1) power issues, structures and property ownership regimes are still often not addressed in deforestation discourses, 2) a strong focus on IPLC rights can risk shifting the political attention even further away from the socio-economic drivers of deforestation and power structures behind them, 3) property rights regimes and privatisation seem to be strengthening additional key element of the neoliberal ideology with these deforestation discourses, in addition to other hallmarks of neoliberalism, and 4) even if presented as global policy discourses, the deforestation discourses continue with a heavy focus and application on tropical areas and countries in the Global South with little attention being placed on their implications in the Global North.

The analysis builds on literature on global forest discourses and especially deforestation, showing a broadening scope of the discourses beyond global forest policy discourses identified earlier, often focusing on direct and local drivers of deforestation. The discourses of this thesis cover deeper dynamics of global economics and governance systems, and links to discourses on rights-based approaches, justice and de-colonial movements. This indicates that the global discourses on deforestation stretch beyond the silos of forest policy discourses, reflecting also other societal meta-discourses. this thesis also confirms the deepening connections of deforestation, and therefore global forest policy discourses, to discourses on rights-based approaches, justice and de-colonial movements – aspects which have not yet been fully integrated in the earlier reviews of global forest governance discourse

As governments are looking into adoption and enforcement of new regulations to tackle deforestation, understanding the likely impacts, power interests and possible outcomes of these discourses are becoming increasingly relevant, indicating that a broader overall mapping of such discourses would be warranted in order to design adequate political and societal measures to tackle deforestation.

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1. Introduction

Deforestation, and loss of forests is a key global environmental and socio-economic concern. Forests are home to most of terrestrial biodiversity, are known to hold more than half the global carbon stock in soils and vegetation, and provide livelihoods close to two billion people (FAO, 2020). Scientific authorities (IPBES, 2019; IPCC, 2019) as well as international environmental politics have all placed halting of deforestation high up on the political agenda, with numerous international declarations aiming to put an end to loss and destruction of forests. Accordingly, social, economic and ecological factors behind continuing loss of forests have been of high interest to academics and politicians alike, with scholars from different fields taking different approaches aiming to solve the puzzle.

In the fields of socio-economic research much attention has been put into identifying and understanding the economic and societal *drivers* of deforestation. Especially earlier studies in this field looked at the practices and livelihoods of local people and communities living closest to the forests that were being depleted, often also blaming these communities (e.g. Agrawal and Gibson, 1999; DeFries et al., 2010; Rudel et al., 2009;). Recognition of the complexities behind deforestation has nonetheless kept on growing and the causes of deforestation are seen to be ever further from the forest dependent communities themselves (Angelsen and Kaimowitz 1999). Rather than seeing local shifting cultivation or fuelwood collection as key drivers of deforestation, more attention is currently being drawn to growing global demand for commodities such as beef, soy and palm oil as drivers of deforestation (Curtis et al., 2018; Rudel et al., 2009).

At the same time, increasing attention has also been put on the agency and role of indigenous people and local communities (IPCL) in preserving forests, especially in the fields of social sciences and humanities. Communities have also been put forward as having a stronger interest in good tenure of the forests and better knowledge to combat deforestation than state authorities or technical experts – especially in the tropics (e.g. Brosius et al., 1998; Larson et al., 2010). In addition, growing awareness of social justice and rights of previously colonised territories and their people has also increased the importance of agency and role IPCLs in tackling forest destruction (e.g. Dressler et al., 2010; Howell, 2014)

This master's thesis research looks at some of these most prominent and pertinent contemporary discourses on halting deforestation and narratives within them; discourses more focused on the socio-economic drivers of deforestation and the more humanistic and societal discourses on deforestation, emphasizing especially the role and rights of people living in and close to the forests in question. The research uses discourse analysis as a tool to dissect these discourses that underpin also much of today's politics on fighting deforestation.

This introduction briefly covers the origins of the different approaches to stopping deforestation – the approach highlighting socio-economic factors and the approach highlighting more the social and humanistic factors of – and their transition into discourses. The introduction then takes a brief overview of discourse and policy analysis on global forest issues in general in order to better locate these discourses. Then the specific research questions of this thesis are identified and sharpened, before diving into the chosen theoretical framework of discourse analysis and the methodology used to carry out the analysis, followed by results and discussion.

1.1 Drivers of deforestation

The thesis focuses on discourses and research around the term *deforestation.* However, despite being a broadly used term especially in environmental discourse as well as politics, there isn't yet a

consensus definition of deforestation (de Oca et al., 2021). One of the most commonly used definitions is likely that of FAO (2018), which defines deforestation as a permanent conversion of forests to other land use, such as agriculture.

This wording however excludes much that might be more commonly perceived as “forest destruction” and referred to as deforestation in public and political discourse. In research literature and for more quantitative purposes, such other types of forest destruction might be described as ‘forest cover loss’ or ‘forest degradation’ (Curtis et al., 2018, FAO, 2018). this thesisuses the term deforestation as a broad “catch-all” term for the destruction of forests, whether technically classifieds as forest cover less, degradation or permanent land use change.

Literature in the field of environmental and political economics, studies on global environmental changes as well as to some extent natural sciences commonly distinguish between the drivers of global deforestation as immediate, proximate or direct ones and as the preceding indirect or underlying drivers (Geist and Lambin, 2002). this thesis uses the term ‘direct drivers’ to refer to drivers such as expansion of infrastructure and cropland or increased wood extraction. ‘Indirect drivers’ is used in reference to for example economic and political factors such as trade liberalisation, market prices, national policies or property rights (Angelsen and Kaimowitz, 1999; Geist and Lambin, 2002).

Not surprisingly there is no common formula that scholars agree on to consistently explain why deforestation (or other ecosystem conversion) happens. Scholars more often rather conclude that there are no simple causal factors behind it and the drivers are rather a mixture of indirect causes leading to direct ones, in interplay with one another (Curtis et al., 2018; Lambin et al., 2001; IPBES, 2019) Despite the complex mixture of varying drivers, there are also important differences between continents and regions. Commercial agriculture for globally traded commodities are particularly relevant in the tropical forests of the Amazon basin, Indonesia and South East Asia, with different commodities leading the destruction in different countries. In the Congo Basin and Central America agricultural practices for domestic markets or local livelihoods are described to have similar or even a slightly bigger impact than commercial agriculture on scale of deforestation (Curtis et al., 2018).

Looking beyond the FAO definition of deforestation, logging and timber extraction are the main drivers of ‘forest degradation’ and ‘forest cover loss’ that equally result in significant losses of biodiversity, resilience and carbon storages of forests even if not causing permanent land use change (Curtis et al., 2018; Hosonuma, 2012). Degradation can also be further driven by fuelwood collection, charcoal production and uncontrolled fires (Hosonuma, 2012).

Earlier accounts of drivers of deforestation throughout the 1960s and 1980s have put more emphasis on the direct causes of deforestation such as small-scale farming by locals, fuel wood collection and rural population growth (DeFries et al., 2010; Rudel et al., 2009). Since then, however, there has been a clear reckoning that focusing only on the direct drivers will not suffice to mitigate deforestation (Angelsen and Kaimowitz, 1999; Lambin et al., 2001, Rudel at al. 2009). As Lambin et al. (2001) poignantly conclude: “Rather, individual and social responses follow from changing economic conditions, mediated by institutional factors. Opportunities and constraints for new land uses are created by markets and policies, increasingly influenced by global factors.”

Raised awareness on the indirect drivers of deforestation linked to markets, trade and politics has made it clear that expansion of agricultural production, especially for globally traded commodities is the main driver of deforestation today (Curtis et al., 2018; Pendrill et al., 2019). This in turn, has put more attention to those key agricultural commodities such as beef, soy and palm oil, their

consumption and supply chains as drivers of deforestation (Boucher et al., 2011; Henders et al., 2015; Pendrill et al., 2019). A growing body of research is thus addressing the roles and responsibilities of a broadening range of actors across the whole supply chain, from the producers, to traders, retailers and all the way to end consumers (Lambin et al., 2018;), making 'deforestation risk' emerge as a type of supply chain risk analysed by market operators (Mammadova et al., 2022) The deepening and growing understanding of the drivers of deforestation has also caused a prominent change in the debated possibilities to curb deforestation over the past decades, with clear political implications. This shift is well captured by DeFries et al. already in 2010 who pointed out that deforestation in the beginning of the 21st century is increasingly linked to "demand in distant urban and international locations" and conclude that *"*We therefore suggest that policies to reduce deforestation among local, rural populations will not address the main cause of deforestation in the future".

It is increasingly recognised that so called supply side policies and measures that focus only on the areas where deforestation is taking place won't be sufficient to limit deforestation. Changes are also needed on the demand side of the market and across the supply chain (Henders et al., 2015). Consequently, the past couple of decades there has been a growing amount of private sector led commitments to clean up the supply chains of deforestation risk commodities, and company or even sector-wide zero deforestation pledges (Lambin et al., 2018; Weber and Partzsch, 2018) as well as pioneering legislation in the EU to stop market access of certain commodities unless it is proved they are free from deforestation (European Commission, 2023).

Despite the growing amount of initiatives aiming to tackle the demand side, the whole supply chain and in order to limit deforestation, the impact of such initiatives is still widely questioned (Lambin et al., 2018; Weber and Partzsch, 2018) and government strategies and policies to address these indirect drivers of deforestation are still scarce. Analyses of political measures and government strategies to tackle deforestation have found such measures and strategies to repeatedly fall short of addressing these drivers (Henders et al., 2018; Kissinger, 2012; Weatherly-Singh, 2019). For example, Weatherly-Singh and Gupta (2015), who analysed national readiness strategies for internationally funded programmes to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+), concluded that these national strategies did not yet sufficiently target the growing demand for timber and agricultural commodities, expanding commercial agriculture, or other associated indirect international drivers behind it.

All in all, policy debates, private initiatives, as well as research on drivers of deforestation have shifted focus more towards the indirect drivers of global markets, commodity production and demand side measures, and further away from direct drivers and practices of the local populations. Interestingly however, many of these same communities are receiving renewed attention in those same arenas, not just as causes of deforestation that need to be "fixed" but also as potential solution holders. The next chapter of this thesis dives into the evolution of the role of indigenous people and local communities in causing and halting deforestation.

1.2 Role of indigenous people and local communities in deforestation

The role of indigenous people and local communities (IPLCs) has been in the spotlight of various nature conservation initiatives for at least the last three decades (Dressler et al., 2010). The understanding of the role of these communities in tackling or driving deforestation, and otherwise protecting nature, has not only evolved thanks to the advancements in research on the socio-economic drivers of deforestation as described above, but also thanks to extensive research in fields such as social sciences (e.g. Dressler et al., 2010; McCarthy, 2005), development studies

(Cornwall & Nyamu-Musembi, 2006; Kindornay et al., 2012, Roe, 2008; Uvin 2007), institutionalism (Agrawal and Gibson, 1999; Cashore et al., 2021, Ostrom, 1990) and anthropology (Brosius et al., 1998; Li, 2007b). During colonial rule of much of the world's tropical forests, it was taken as given that states and governments were best suited to manage and control common pool resources such as forests (Agrawal, 2003).

Local communities were portrayed as ignorant and illiterate and were seen to rather be in the way of efficient and rational resource use. On the other hand, the resources also needed be protected from the '"ignorants" and from the "tragedy of commons" (Agrawal and Gibson, 1999), which symbolizes the assumed degradation of an environment when many individuals have access to a limited, common resource and are expected to focus on maximising their own benefit (Ostrom, 1990). This thinking led to the so called 'coercive conservation' model creating protected areas like national parks that are closed off from human livelihoods and local populations (Dressler et al., 2010; Büscher and Fletcher, 2015).

Following from the failures and falls of colonialism and the coercive conservation model, , new research especially in the field of social studies started to argue more forcefully that local communities actually do know how to manage their resources sustainably, and even better so than any state or centralised authority. Local populations know the local ecological conditions best and they also have privileged traditional knowledge that other more distant operators such as the state cannot have (Dressler et al., 2010; McCarthy, 2005).

In addition, it was shown that communities even built their own effective institutional arrangements to do so (Ostrom, 1990; Agrawal and Gibson, 1999). Communities might for example collectively restrict access to forests, agree on acceptable amounts of resource extraction and guard forests from outsiders (Agrawal, 2003). The rise of so the called community based natural resource management approaches (CBNRM) went together with influential academic work showcasing how the 'tragedy of the commons' that promoted a thesis of private resource ownership is theoretically and empirically flawed (Arts, 2021).

The growing interest in CBNRM was also a good fit with the rise of the broader neoliberal political and economic agenda since the 1970s (Büscher and Fletcher, 2015), "perversely hybridized with wider neoliberal restructuring" as Dressler et al. (2010) put it. As the dominant economic ideology moved away from liberal and Keynesian models to a neoliberal ideology, in the field of conservation this shift was typified by a roll back of governance from centralised state authorities to to local community members and by creation of new governance structures that bypass the traditional state control (Büscher and Fletcher, 2015; Igoe and Brockington, 2007).

The coinciding of the neoliberal political agenda and CBNRM might seem slightly paradoxical, as the rise of community based approaches were commonly driven by different ideologies such as progressive desires to democratize and to redress colonial injustices (McCarthy 2005). The coinciding doesn't thus necessarily mean CBNRM is a "creation" of neoliberalism. However, both neoliberalism and CBNRM were at least partly responding to similar challenges, namely the failure of a modernist state and the powerful neoliberal agenda has very likely influenced the perception and advancement of CBNRM initiatives and how the concept has evolved (McCarthy 2005, Li 2007a).

By early 1990s the evolution of community-based approaches to forest and other natural resource management had adopted a stronger emphasis on the social and livelihood impacts of such schemes, linking conservation to the idea of sustainable development, and even further to other pressing global challenges like poverty reduction (Roe, 2008). Eradication of poverty, secure

livelihoods and justice became equally important aims of these community approaches as forest conservation (Dressler et al., 2010).

Today's advocates of community based approaches to forests often refer not just to livelihoods of the communities but to their *rights* to the lands and resources they manage. The shift of focus from involvement and recognition of communities to their rights, is part of a wider shift towards "a rights based approach" that swept over the field of development during the 1990s (Cornwall & Nyamu-Musembi, 2006; Kindornay et al., 2012; Uvin, 2007).

This new framing of rights in the forest conservation domain has also made communities – and particularly indigenous peoples – the new 'guardians of the forests'. Forest dependent communities are thought to be the best protectors of forests against all evils, from the threats of deforestation, to coercive conservation and to other unsustainable exploitation (Colchester, 2007; RRI, 2008; Sze et al., 2022).

Today, rights of IPCLs and community based approaches become a broadly adopted and accepted part of the political landscape of conservation. They are one of the most central topics of efforts to stop deforestation in the UN climate negotiations through the so called REDD+ initiatives (Howell, 2014; Robinson et al., 2014) as well as in the implementation of the global Convention on Biological Diversity, especially in relation to protected areas (Maxwell et al., 2020). As a testimony to this, the latest conference of the parties (COP15) of the CBD adopted a new Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, which has been credited for adopting "a strong rights-based approach for the first time in the CBD framework" (Parks and Tsioumani, 2023).

The past decades have thus seen the emergence of deeper understanding of the socio-economic, indirect drivers of deforestation beyond the direct causes, such as livelihoods of local communities. At the same time the role of IPCLs as guardians of the forests in their immediate proximity has equally gained a wider recognition.

The next section takes a closer look at policy discourse analysis relating to global deforestation and forest conservation issues. This allows to take a look at some of the earlier 'trends' in discourses on tackling deforestation, as well as how they (or not) refer to the drivers and causes of deforestation as well as to the role of IPCLs.

1.3 Discourses on deforestation

Discourse analysis has already been widely applied to study forest governance and policy with some helpful summaries provided by Arts and Buizer (2009), Arts et al. (2010), Leipold (2014) and Winkel (2012). Yet, De Jong et al. (2017) do note that "it was not until the late 1990s that forestry social scientists began to embrace the discourse" theory and analysis.

While the scope, topics and use of discourse analysis in relation to forests is varied and diverse, several scholars have recognised the existence of overarching global discourses on forests. They are shared by actors from local to global level, having an important impact on forest governance and policies (Adger et al., 2001, Arts and Buizer, 2009; Leipold, 2014). Even if the focus of this thesisis on discourses related to forests and deforestation, several of these discourses closely link to discourses on the broader global environmental changes (e.g. Adger et al., 2001) and development (e.g. Roe, 1991; DeJong et al., 2017).

Adger et al. (2001) identified two prominent discourses across different fields of global environmental politics, one of which was deforestation. They described a global environmental 'management' discourse that portrays local rural people clearing forests as the inevitable culprits of

deforestation, pushed by overpopulation and consumption. The second discourse named ‘populist’ on the other hand frames local populations as victims of global forest and agri businesses, even they could be the heroes with agency. According to Adger et al. (2001) inputs of the populist discourse into global intergovernmental negotiations, such as into forest policy in early 2000, represents a mixture of these discourses.

Taking a closer look at forests in the field of global environmental policies, Arts et al. (2010) have laid out display of different global discourses stemming from forest policy debates. They described deforestation as one of the main discourses emerging in the 1980s, quickly forming a part of the sustainable development meta-discourse. The evolution of this discourse is further described as one that has expanded and made broader links to issues “such as biodiversity loss, poverty reduction and climate change” and is increasingly focused on avoiding deforestation through compensatory actions and payments for ecosystem services, such as REDD+.

Around the same time, in the 1980s and early 1990s, a discourse on forest-related traditional knowledge – as part of the broader concept of traditional ecological knowledge (Berkes et al. 2000) – was also emerging in the global political sphere. Traditional knowledge also became a central term of the sustainable development meta-discourse, uplifting indigenous peoples and their knowledge as a key to environmental and forest conservation (Arts et al., 2010; Newing, 2008). The discourse promotes indigenous, local or traditional knowledge next to Western world science, challenging the control of knowledge by ‘experts’ (Berkes, 2004; Newing, 2008). However, as the discourse on traditional knowledge grew more dominant, it also attracted varying interpretations, many of which were more related to commercialisation of traditional knowledge or to management of natural resources and not necessarily to the recognition of the broader rights of IPLCs to their culture and territories (Newing, 2008).

Ample, further scholarly interest in discourse analysis on deforestation and forest conservation has been sparked by the inclusion of these topics in the global climate policy arena, especially in the form of REDD+ programmes (e.g. Bäckstrand and Lövbrand, 2007; Den Besten et al., 2013; DiGregorio et al., 2017; Nielsen, 2014 and 2016).

Bäckstrand and Lövbrand (2006) identified three broader meta-discourses in the global climate policy arena around projects aiming at sequestering carbon in forests, especially in tropical ecosystems, in global climate negotiations, such as REDD+. Two of these three discourses, named as *ecologic modernisation* and *civic environmentalism* have since been identified as the most prevailing ones, at least in the context of REDD+, with the first being the hegemonic and more institutionalised one and the latter more of a counter discourse (Bidone, 2022; DiGregorio et al., 2017; Nielsen, 2014).

The third, *green governmentality* discourse, emphasizing the all-encompassing state powers to manage natural resources and environmental issues in general, especially through techno-scientific expertise, monitoring and research, might have been more overlapping with the two other meta-discourses or had less political power behind it (DiGregorio et al., 2017).

The ecological modernisation discourse is built around storylines of cost-efficiency, marked based solutions and technological fixes, and even if it seems to rely on economic realities, it largely omits the direct or indirect drivers of deforestation (Bäckstrand and Lövbrand, 2006). Rather, with its emphasis on markets, the private sector and voluntary regulation, the discourse is more inclined towards the benchmarks of neoliberalism (Humphreys 2009) and has some similarities with the ‘managerial’ approach to environmental issues described by Adger et al. (2001).

The discourse on civic environmentalism on the other hand puts much focus on the need of local participation in any projects at hand, already promoting the importance of IPLCs in forest protection, even if running short of calling for the absolute rights to these groups (Bäckstrand and Lövbrand, 2006; Nielsen 2014).

Follow up study by Bäckstrand and Lövbrand (2019) that looked at how these discourses have prevailed in the international UN climate negotiations observed that the civic environmentalism discourse had strengthened and at the same time evolved into more of a *climate justice* discourse. This evolution of the discourse puts more emphasis on sovereignty and agency of groups like IPCLs and frames climate action as a matter of larger political, economic and just transition needed.

This thesis builds on this evolution of global forest discourses when it comes to tackling deforestation, based on discourses on global forest governance, environmental change and development already analysed in literature. Based on the literature review for this study, there haven't yet been overarching efforts to map out the current different discourses related specifically to tackling global deforestation (outside of specific geographical or political contexts like UN climate negotiations) carried out by scholars.

While this thesis neither aspires to do a comprehensive mapping, it aims to build more detailed descriptions and understanding of contemporary discourses on deforestation around two different themes that have recently penetrated the field: 1) the socio-economic and especially underlying drivers of deforestation which research often links to the causes of deforestation but which are still poorly addressed on political level and 2) the role of indigenous people and local communities and their rights in tackling deforestation, linked to the emergence of broader social justice angle in global environmental discourses. Through this analysis, this thesis hopes to add to the contemporary understanding of the different emerging discourses on tackling deforestation and their possible implications.

As discourse analysis, the aim of this thesis is not to identify the most effective ways of tackling deforestation or global forest protection but rather to look at motivations, rationales, values and powers behind these the discourses and the solutions they offer, and what might they achieve or cause if turned into practice and political action.

In the following chapter, the exact research questions for this analysis are identified, continued by a description of the theoretical framework provided by discourse analysis and the research methodology applied. I then conclude with the results of the analysis and a discussion of the results.

2. Research aim and questions

This thesis looks at the two prominent thematics that have emerged in research and global policy arenas on halting global deforestation, the discourses that have formulated around them and their divergences and linkages; 1) the role of socio-economic, indirect and underlying drivers of deforestation and 2) the role of indigenous people, local communities and their rights. As summarised in the introduction of this study, these thematics already have a grounding in discourses on global environmental change, development and forest policies especially, that have been described in earlier literature.

More detailed assessment and description of how these thematics have become part of discourses on halting deforestation is merited as they gain increasing recognition in societal and political debates and shape our views of global environmental problems and their potential solutions.

The research questions for this thesis therefore are the following.

1. What are the key elements of global policy discourses on deforestation and the narratives they form, focused on either tackling global socio-economic drivers of deforestation or on rights of indigenous people and local communities as key to halting deforestation?
2. Where do the discourses emerging from the narratives place their attention and what do they leave silenced and unproblematic?
3. How do these discourses diverge in the efforts to tackle deforestation and what kind of linkages are made?

Through careful analysis of these discourses the research aims to shed more light on the political, economic, societal agendas linked to these discourses in comparison to one another. As these discourses – whether focusing on drivers or rights of IPCLs – have the stated shared objective of tackling global deforestation and its negative consequences, it is also relevant to investigate how do these discourses relate to one another, if they are mutually reinforcing or perhaps competing and how do these discourse shape our views on fighting global deforestation.

Lessons learned from this analysis, even if focusing on the specific issue of deforestation, can hopefully inform the academic research on discourses on global environmental and social challenges in general. In addition, any insights can hopefully also inform organisations and groups currently practicing discourses on deforestation in order to strengthen the discourses needed for durable solutions.

3. The Theoretical Framework

Discourse analysis is described as a powerful tool to help to explain change and how ideas become actions, in politics, in the society and in people's minds. This chapter first examines the insights that discourse analysis can provide according to scholars in the field and then takes a closer look at methodologies to analyse discourse, and the methodology chosen for this study, which is based on first identifying its different narratives and then specific key elements of each of these narratives.

3.1 The revealing capabilities of discourse analysis

Discourse analysis is a popular and prominent approach in social sciences and builds on a post-structuralist view of the world (Feindt & Oels 2006, Hajer & Versteeg 2005). Central to this view of the world is that all knowledge and realities are seen to be socially constructed by giving meanings to the phenomena experienced in order to make sense of the world (Goodwin 2011).

Discourse analysis is thus a theoretical framework that recognises that discussions, texts and speech are about much more than just words and language. It focuses on the meanings, arguments and structures embedded in discussions, texts, speech and even practices. It emphasizes the understanding of the cultural, historical and societal context of which the discourse is part of. In a post-structuralist spirit, according to the theory, words and language cannot just 'mirror' the reality but will always be laden with meanings, assumptions, interpretations and contexts (Metze & van den Brink 2006, Hajer & Versteeg 2005, Fischer and Forester 1993, Sharp & Richardson 2001).

Even if discourse itself can be a very broad and even a slippery concept (Metze & van den Brink 2006, Arts et al. 2010), a popular, 'catch-all' definition of discourse that is also suitable for the needs of this research has been provided by Maarten Hajer (1995) who describes discourse to be "an ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categorizations that are produced, reproduced, and transformed in a particular set of practices and through which meaning is given to physical and social realities."

In the context of this study, the ideas and concepts studied refer particularly to ideas about global deforestation, its causes and solutions to it.

Arts et al. (2010) describe the different approaches to discourse analysis and theory by categorising them into 'thin' and 'thick' approaches. The thin approaches are less rooted in post-structuralist thinking and consider discourse to be one factor among many others that explain politics or societal changes. The thick approach sees all reality as discursive and socially constructed, claiming that it is impossible for us to escape the influence of our social systems. This approach follows closely on the footsteps of the eminent social theorist Michel Foucault (Arts et al. 2010).

Discourse analysis has been deemed useful to better understand societal norms and struggles, and to provide insight in addition to analyses focusing on more strictly on language, interests or institutions. Discourse analysis is helpful to have a critical look at power struggles linked to meanings and knowledge that can go as far as shaping people's identities and our ideas of "reality", "truth" and what is possible – or not (Hajer & Versteeg 2006, Metze & van den Brink 2005, Powers 2007).

In the words of Vivian Schmidt (2010) "Without discourse, understood as the exchange of ideas, it is very difficult to explain how ideas go from individual thought to collective action".

The discourses currently taking place – and analysed in this research – on tackling deforestation are tightly interwoven with layers of policy, from European to global level. As part of the specific discourses analysed here, the case for specific kinds of policies needed or not needed is being made. Analysis of the discourses is therefore closely intertwined with analysis of policy, and the theoretical frameworks also regularly overlap.

Policy studies and analysis influenced by post-structuralist views of the world and inspired by Foucault might go as far as arguing policy *is* all discourse (Goodwin 2001, Fairclough 2013). On the other hand, discourse analysis can also be seen as a tool, but not the only tool, to study and analyse policy and policy making (Fairclough 2013).

Whichever way the relation of policy and discourse analysis is exactly portrayed, discourse analysis has without a doubt had an important influence in the field of policy studies, as discourse itself has on policies. Fischer and Forester (1993) have described the emergence of discourse analysis in the field as the 'argumentative turn' in policy analysis.

The argumentative turn encouraged to analyse policies as argumentative processes rather than just as statements about how 'things are' (Hajer and Versteeg 2005). It also shifted the attention into analysing not just what social problem 'were' but rather how were the social problems constructed through discourse (Goodwin 2011). As described by Bacchi (2000): "This work starts from the idea that people do not discover problems, they create them".

In brief, discourse analysis can be crucial for understanding how changes in policies come about and how different phenomena are interpreted (Fischer and Forester 1993, Hajer and Versteeg 2005).

Thanks to these revealing capabilities of discourse analysis, it has also been widely applied to analysis of environmental policies and politics (e.g. Hajer 2002, Goodwin 2011, Sharp & Richardson 2001), including policies on forests, land rights and deforestation. For example, in the context of forests, Winkel (2012) noted that the discursive turn in forest policy analysis has been critical in allowing to problematize many aspects that "conventional policy analysts take for granted".

Thus, this research will take advantage of the theoretical frameworks of both discourse and policy analysis to reflect the current societal debate on halting deforestation. The guidance and examples of scholars applying discourse analysis to politics and policies will be followed.

The theoretical framework follows the lead of the above mentioned scholars like Hajer, Van den Brink & Metze and Sharp & Richardson that have used discourse analysis inspired by Foucault in in policy analysis, especially in the field of environmental policies, assuming discourse to play a dominant role in shaping our society. This approach provides powerful analytical tools to deconstruct and unpack the meanings, ideas, assumptions and power struggles of the discourses of interest in this research.

Despite the popularity of discourse analysis, it is also known for its lack of clear structure and even more so clear methodology, giving discourse analysis an image of 'anything goes' research (Metze & van den Brink 2005, Goodwin 2011). This means on the one hand that the actual carrying out of a discourse analysis can easily be left rather vague in literature, but on the other hand it also means that there is substantial liberty in how to approach an analysis.

In order to help to focus the analysis of this thesis and to provide an 'analytical strategy' (Goodwin 2011) this thesis takes a closer look at the narratives that make up a discourse and the key elements of each of the narratives.

3.2 Identifying the narratives of a discourse

A good tool to analyse a discourse can be provided by identifying its different **narratives** or storylines. Some authors might at times be distinguishing between narratives and storylines (e.g. Hajer in Van den Brink & Metze 2006) but in the context of this thesis– as in much of the literature – the two are taken as largely synonymous (e.g. Hajer 1993, Kaplan 1993). *Narrative* will be the chosen word used to refer to this component of a discourse in this study.

A narrative ties events, ideas and understandings together to form a captivating 'short hand' for the discourse, or for any discussions for that matter. They construct realities, tie events together, draw causalities and both illuminate and hide different aspects of an issue (Hajer & Versteeg 2005, Nielsen 2014, Hajer et al. 2006). In the words of Nielsen (2016): "Storylines make up, and can alter, the substance of a discourse. Discourses, in turn, can give them an overarching meaning and connect them to other storylines." Narratives in general are seen as an age old way for humans to make sense of the world, give meaning to it and come to terms with changes, processes and other complex issues (De Fina & Johnstone 2015, Herman et al. 2010, Kaplan 1993, Hajer 1995).

Beyond discourse theory however, there is also another independent, and interdisciplinary theory on narratives, used all the way from studies of literature and linguistics to communication and psychology, having gained also popularity among social sciences as an approach to analyse stories. Discourse theory and narrative theory thus have various overlaps and links, even if nothing close to a clear hierarchy or organisation (Herman et al. 2010).

In the field of social sciences in the wider sense, increased popularity of both theories – the narrative theory and discourse theory – can be seen as a part of what could be called the 'linguistic turn' in social sciences (Herman et al. 2010). Michel Foucault is a key source and inspiration in both fields, narrative and discourse analysis, and they build on various similar concepts and ideas. In Foucault's view, the telling of stories can be seen as a strategy for ordering the world's 'flow of discourse' (Herman et al. 2010).

In the field of linguistics themselves, more attention has been put to the structures, regularities and sequences of narratives. The point of view and emphasis of discourse theory on narratives is different. Hajer (1995) argues that storylines are means of organising and holding discourses, and the world views that follow, together. In other words, storylines or narratives can also been seen as something that ties the different elements of a discourse together (Behagel and Turnhout, 2011).

In general, discourse theory seems to pay more attention to how narratives shape, limit and enable practices, policies and many other aspects of the society while also aiming to tease out the powers behind certain narratives (De Fina & Johnstone 2015). These revealing aspects of narratives will also be the focus of this study.

Building on this theoretical framework, this thesis identifies narratives as parts of the broader discourse with a sequential and meaningful representation of events, characters and causalities. Narratives give meaning to specific events and phenomena in the world and presents specific actors as certain kinds of characters in the story. Narratives help to identify the building blocks of the discourse as a whole, which this thesis defines as more oriented towards giving and shaping meaning, reveal power dynamics and constructing what is perceived to be "reality".

3.3 Key elements of a narrative

There are numerous aspects of a narrative that can be selected for further analysis. According to Jones & McBeth (2010) for example, narratives can a) define problems (or problems are often

even explained through a narrative structure), b) provide the moral of a story that offers the ‘solutions’ to the problems at hand, often suggesting prompt action, c) shed light on the values and assumptions behind a narrative and d) might even reveal who gets to take part in a discussion or in policy making and who not. In addition to this, the analysis of the narratives this thesisfurther builds on the helpful ‘ What is the Problem Represented to be’ framework developed by Carol Bacchi (2009) and later reproduced by Goodwin (2011).

The **problem definition** of a narrative deserves particular attention due to its revealing capabilities and it has also been a topic of numerous theoretical approaches of its own, not only as part of a narrative (Bacchi 2000, Goodwin 2011).

Especially when analysing political discourses, the framing and presenting of the problem becomes central. Discourse theory tends to reject the idea that certain problems would just ‘exist’ and in line with its post-structuralist world view, discourse analysis rather pays attention to how problems are constructed, defined and framed in the discourse. As noted by Bacchi (2000) and various other scholars, already the work of Foucault drew attention to the fact that discourses “form” the objects of which they speak, rather than just identifying them.

A classic example of discourse analysis in environmental politics that exemplifies “how a narrative constructs a particular problem” is given by Maarten Hajer et al. (2006) in their research on the politics of acid rain in Europe. Hajer et al. (2006) describe how dead trees, when explained through the narrative of industrial pollution and consequent acid rain that was suspected to kill trees, were not anymore a natural phenomena. Rather they became a structural and a political problem that needed to be addressed with specific kind of pollution control measures.

As this example highlights, how problems are created and given shape to has been one of the key contributions of discourse theory to policy analysis as an elementary part of policy making is to identify what is to be changed and in response to what kind of a problem (Bacchi 2000, Goodwin 2011).

The representation and definition of a problem through a discourse can also be an act of exercising of power, to impose a particular focus on the discourse or political debate (Hajer & Versteeg 2005). How a problem is represented can define who are the interested parties in the discourse and what kind of roles are being allocated in the discussions (Bacchi 2000).

The way that a problem is framed also defines the **possible solutions,** the plausible alternatives to resolve the problem and thus essentially define the landscape of policies and other responses that can be considered (Fischer and Forester 1993, Hajer & Versteeg 2005, Goodwin 2011). In the words Fischer and Forester (1993): “solution depends on the prior work of problem construction and reconstruction, and this work is deeply rhetorical and interpretive, if little understood.”

Hence, interests and power relations behind a certain representation of a problem and the solutions the solutions that come with it merit careful investigation in discourse analysis. These key elements of a narrative make up its ‘theory of change’, which describes how change is envisioned to happen in a given narrative (Weatherley-Singh & Gupta 2015) – a key topic of interest not only in discourse analysis but also in studies on policy, management and many other areas (e.g. Stein & Valters 2012, Zittoun 2009).

In addition to the plausible solutions, a thorough investigation of the representation of the problem will also help to see what is **left unproblematic and silenced** in the framing of the problem. As already discussed, what is being left unproblematic by the problem definition to a certain extent preempts the possible responses considered. Silencing certain aspects of the narrative and its

problem definition limits the scope of decisions supposedly needed, defines what makes it to the agenda in policy making and where more political power should be exercised (Bacchi 2007, Powers 2007).

Equally however, depending on where attention is placed through the narrative, it can also ease the grip of power in some areas, and as Powers (2007) puts it, “provide obscure areas of tolerance for resistance”. Identifying such silences can therefore open up new ways to frame the problem to start with and unroll a whole new range of solutions, issues to be put on the agenda and relevant actors to consider (Goodwin 2011).

Bacchi (2007) further argues that the problem definition of the narrative and the solutions it draws out should also be seen as an ethical question, especially in politics. The way that the narrative and its problems are constructed will already point the finger to the ‘bullies’ or the victims, the ones that need to be punished or others that need to be protected – all matters with further societal implications (Bacchi 2007).

In summary, to expose these underlying powers of narratives and discourses they form, specific attention is paid to the following elements of each identified narrative. While these are undoubtedly a non-exhaustive list of interesting elements in a narrative and in the discourses they make up, they nevertheless provide a helpful starting point to deconstruct the discourses studied in this research.

a) Problem definition and its framing
b) The solutions offered as part of the theory of change of the narrative
c) Silences left unproblematic

First, in order to answer research question 1. the key narrative elements in policy discourses on deforestation and its drivers and/or rights of IPLCs will be identified and the narratives these elements make up, analysed. For research question 2. the focus of the discourses that the narratives make up and tie together is identified, and what they leave silenced will be further teased out to better reveal the structures, powers and interests embedded in the discourse. Finally, in response to research question 3. the discourses that have emerged will be further compared and analysed in relation to one another.

4. Research methodology

This thesis is carried out as a qualitative research, which is the adequate design in order to "understand, explain, explore, discover and clarify situations, feelings, perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs and experiences of a group of people" (Kumar, 2011). Discourse analysis is the chose qualitative research method for this this study. This chapter provides a detailed explanation of how the data for this thesis was gathered and analysed.

4.1 Data sources

The questions of this research focus on the *global policy discourses* on tackling deforestation, with a specific emphasis either on the socio-economic drivers of deforestation or the role of indigenous people and local communities. Public discourse can be captured through different sources of data, commonly consisting of texts, publications, talks, speeches, dialogues and debates as well as observed practices and actions (Goodwin 2011, Metze & van den Brink 2006, Fischer and Forester 1993).

For the identification of the discourses and their narrative, the following sources of data were used in this research: 1) grey literature available online in the public domain, 2) speech, text and practices in public stakeholder events on the topics of the research questions, and 3) interviews with relevant experts from organisations identified to be vocal in the discourses identified.

The data was collected during an extended time period from June 2019 to April 2020.

The main sources of data, an overview of the quantity of data analysed and the relevance and purpose of the data for the research questions are all outlined in table 1, with further details available in annex I.

Data source	Quantity of data	Research relevance
Participant observation in two conferences discussing rights of local communities and / or deforestation	Two public 2 – 3 days events	Scoping of the main discourses, observing them in practice and identification of key actors and organisations practicing them in order to refine research questions.
Grey literature publicly available online (publications, reports, website texts)	23 publications	Identification of main discourses of actors that promote, advocate and work on halting deforestation either with a focus on drivers of deforestation (e.g. agricultural commodities) or on rights of local communities on land and natural resources.
Semi structured interviews with representatives of organisations identified as central in building the discourses in question	11 interviews	Filling in the gaps from the other data sources, providing a more detailed and insightful understanding of the different features in the discourse, with a particular focus on research question 3.

Table 1. *Overview of data sources*

4.2 Data collection

4.2.1 Participant observation

First steps of data collection was carrying out participant observations in two international stakeholder conferences relevant for the research questions during summer 2019. The observations were done as a 'participating observer' in the two events – a role which allows to observe the events as an outsider or a guest while participating in some aspect of the events like coffee break discussions or by asking questions from the audience (Bernard, 2017).

The first event was the Global Landscapes Forum Annual Conference, held in Bonn, Germany 22 – 23 June 2019 with the theme "Rights in the Landscape". The GFL boasts to be "world's largest knowledge-led platform on integrated land use, dedicated to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and Paris Climate Agreement" and is led by well known international institutions like the United Nation's Environmental Program, the World Bank and the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR). The 2019 edition of the platform's annual meeting, which usually takes place back to back to the UN climate convention negotiations in Bonn gathered more than 600 participants from around the world and had a particularly focus on rights and the leadership and participation of youth.

Another occasion for participant observation was the LANDac Annual International Conference held 4 – 5 July 2019 in Utrecht, the Netherlands. LANDac stands for the Netherlands Land Academy which is a "partnership between Dutch organisations and their Southern partners working on land governance for equitable and sustainable development" and is financially supported by the Dutch government. Their annual gatherings bring together especially academic researchers but also private sector, civil society representatives and policy makers. The theme of the 2019 event was "Land governance in transition: How to support transformations that work for people and nature?" and it had close 300 participants from around the world.

These events were chosen based on their agendas and themes, relevance to the research topic, suitability for the timeline of the research and feasibility and access for the author to participate.

In the events, while carrying out participant observation and note taking, unstructured and spontaneous brief interviews were carried out with other participants on the topics of this research. The data complied from these events were notes from presentations, speeches and discussions in the event, from Twitter conversations during the event with the given conference hashtag, as well as official conference reports or proceedings.

The events were also key in making first contact with some of the experts for further interviews of this research as well as to identify established, vocal or interesting organisations actively communicating, advocating and operating in the field of rights, land and deforestation.

4.2.2 Interviews

Identification of interviewees on the research questions started from the participation observation in the two public events (see above) and was further guided by the identification of relevant organisations appearing out of the grey literature search as described in the following section. Sampling of interviewees could thus be called *purposive* as the interviewees were searched for based on their engagement in and knowledge on a specific issue, the prominence of their employer in the debates and with a clear idea in mind of the purpose of these interviews (Bernard, 2017). A couple of additional interviewees were identified via snowball or responded driven sampling i.e. by asking for recommendations in the first round of interviews as well as in events attended (Bernard, 2017).

Through this method 11 interviews were carried out with representatives of different organisations, each of them lasting from 30 to 60 minutes. The interviews were mostly carried out in June –

September 2019 with one additional interview in February 2020. Of the 11 interviewees found through purposive and snowball sampling, seven represented non-profit organisations mostly active on environmental or human rights issues. Three more interviewees represented different kinds of multi-stakeholder organisations brining together private, public and civil society sectors, and one interviewee represented a financial institution. While the interviewees were mostly identified through their employer or affiliation to a relevant organisation, each of them were asked to speak in personal capacity and express their own opinions during the interview. A full list of the people interviewed is provided in Annex I.

The interviews were semi-structured, meaning the structure of the interviews was be guided by but not strictly limited by a guideline document, presented in Annex II, including the key topics and questions relevant for the research questions. The structure of the guideline aimed to ensured that all key areas of interest were covered and that the data collected was comparable but also modifiable according to the expertize of the interviewee. The advantage of this method chosen is its flexibility and that it allows to further dive into issues of relevance and interest coming up during the interview (Kumar 2011).

Each of the interviews was carried out by Skype, recorded (with the permission of the interviewee) and transcribed for more detailed analysis. The transcript was further complemented by notes taken by the interviewer during the interview. However, the recordings of two interviews failed partly making it impossible to transcript the full interview. This seemed to be due a corruption of the recording file that was discovered only months after the original recording making it unfeasible to repeat the interview. For these interviews, notes taken during the interview were the main source of data.

4.2.3 Grey literature

The most substantial body of data acquired for this research was grey literature available publicly online. The approach was carried out in two steps, by 1) identifying organisations prominent in the public discourse on the topics in question and by 2) identifying a publication such as a report or a briefing of that organisation on the topic of research. As the focus of this research is discourse in the public domain, Google searches were used as the main tool for both steps as a relatively high ranking in Google searches can be taken as an indication of the visibility and reachability of the grey literature (see for example Mahood et al. 2014).

First, to identify the relevant organisations for the discourses six Google searches were carried out to map out discourses on tackling deforestation either highlighting the role of global socio-economic drivers of deforestation or the role of indigenous and local communities and their rights.

Two searches were carried out with the search terms *global drivers*, *deforestation*, *tackle* and *cause* and additional two searches with the terms *rights*, *communities*, *land* and *forests.* In addition, two searches were carried out mixing up the search terms; *communities, deforestation* and *drivers of deforestation, rights*.

As the data gathering extended over a period of a year, the same six Google searches were carried out twice during the period, in its beginning in July 2019 and in the end in April 2020. As the ranking of Google search results are influenced by timing, location and earlier searches on the same computer (Mahood et al. 2014), two searches were carried out to minimise some of these biases and by selecting grey literature that persistently appeared in the Google searchers over the period of time, avoiding “one off” results that have been popular only during a short timeframe.

First, to find the relevant organisations in the public discourse the following search results were excluded; academic articles, news articles or blogs without a clear author voice and results that lead several times to the same web page or publication. Following this 12 organisations were identified from each search. Given that some organisations appeared several times through the searches, altogether 52 different organisations were identified, including civil society, research and inter-governmental organisations as well as private sector initiatives and multi-stakeholder platforms.

Of these 52 organisation, 19 appeared only once or twice during the 12 rounds of Google searches and were thus omitted from the final selection. In addition 9 ‘organisations’ were rather platforms for voices of others (e.g. the LandPortal) or for governmental negotiations (e.g. UN Forum on Forests), and didn’t really carry a voice of their own. Based on this 9 additional organisations were excluded from the final selection of 24 organisations. A summary of the search words used and the organisations that resulted in from the Google search is visualised in figure 1.

The final list of grey literature analysed originated mostly from non-profit environmental, human rights or development organisations (10 of the 23 pieces of literature), from non-profit research organisations (3), governmental or public bodies (3), international financial institutions (3) and from inter-governmental or multi-stakeholder organisations (2). Only one piece of literature form the private sector made it to the sample.

Once the relevant organisations for the discourses on rights, land, forests and deforestation were selected, one substantial publication from each organisation on the research topic was identified through either from the website of the organisation or from the original Google search.

To ensure a certain level of ‘quality’ of the grey literature for the purposes of this research, inspiration was taken from the ‘taxonomy of grey literature’ developed by Kepes et al. (2010) and further elaborated by Adams et al. (2013). These authors focused their research in other fields and did not apply their methods to discourse analysis, but given the lack of literature on specific methodologies for selecting grey literature for discourse analysis, their approach was taken to provide some guidance.

These authors characterise literature on a scale of different tiers or ‘shades of grey’ (Adams et al. 2013) evaluating the literature based on the “outlet control (the extent to which content is produced, moderated or edited in conformance with explicit and transparent knowledge creation criteria) and source expertise (the extent to which the authority of the producer of content can be determined)”.

The aim of this research was to find grey literature with a relatively high degree of control and expertise to ensure that the discourses analysed would be representative of the organisations and potentially more widely adopted. Hence the focus was on grey literature of 1st Tier or slightly on the side of the 2nd Tier as characterised by Adams et al. (2013).

This meant that the documents would typically be books, chapters, government or think thank publications (1st Tier) or company and NGO studies, publications and newsletter (2nd Tier). Sources that were not in written (e.g videos) and presentations that could also be part 2nd Tier were excluded as well as 3rd Tier materials like blog posts, letters, social media posts etc. - apart from a few exceptions (see below). However, as the sources needed to be publicly available online, books were mostly excluded. In addition, the grey literature needed to be published after 2000 to narrow the focus of the research to discourses that can still be assumed to be relevant, leading to some further exclusions.

To find a relevant and sufficiently recent pieces of literature, of 1st or 2nd tiers from each of the 24 organisations, the following steps were taken:

1) If the search results that had led to the identification of the organisation as relevant, pointed to a piece of grey literature that matched the above described criteria, that publication was selected, prioritizing the most recent publication. This led to the selection of 11 pieces of grey literature.
2) Website of the of the organisation was searched by going through a possible ‘publications’ section of the website or by using the same search words in a search within the website that had qualified the organisation in the first place or by doing additional Google searches with the name of the organisation, original search words by adding the file type ‘pdf’. Through this method 10 additional pieces of grey literature were selected.
3) The earlier steps failing to find a suitable publication etc. piece of grey literature representing 3rd tier quality such as a website text that otherwise matched the criteria of selection was included in the analysed literature. This resulted in 2 additional pieces of grey literature being selected.

For one organisation out of the 24 originally identified as relevant, the tree steps identified above still failed to lead to a relevant publication or piece of grey literature and the organisation was thus excluded from the selection.

This resulted in 23 pieces of grey literature for further analysis, ranging from briefings of 4 pages to reports of 140 pages. On average, the publications were 35 pages long each. A full list of the organisations and grey literature analysed is provided in Annex III.

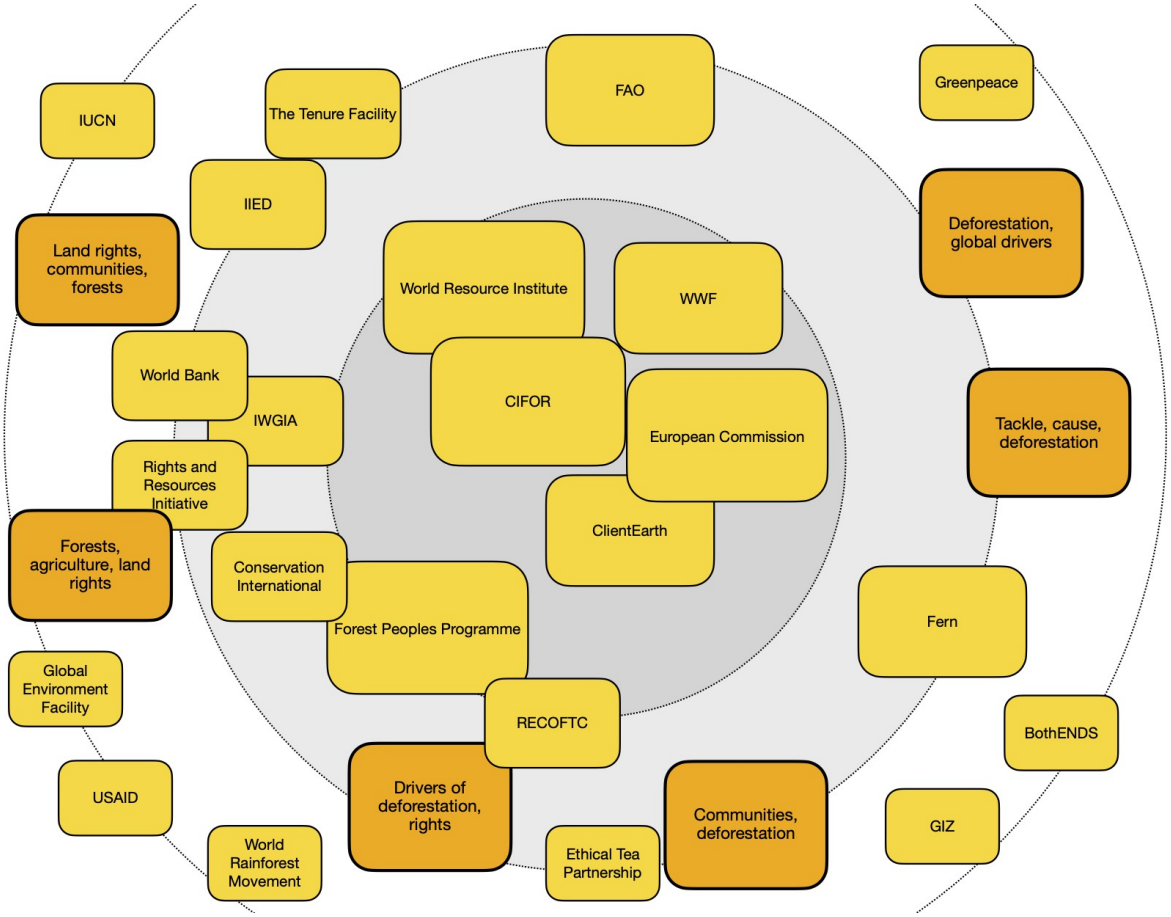

Figure 1. *Google search words used (in orange boxes) and most relevant organisation (in yellow boxes) emerging from the searches. Organisations in most outer circle appeared just in relation to one of the searches, in the middle circle in response to two or three searches and in the inner circle in response to more than three searchers. Size of the yellow boxes indicate the amount of mentions of the organisation across all searches.*

4.3 Data analysis

Once collected the data was analysed using the methods of qualitative research for data processing (Kumar 2011). In summary, the research data was made of:

- Notes from participant observation in two events
- Agenda brochure and final report of proceeding of the two events
- 23 pieces of grey literature of 35 pages each on average
- Transcripts of 9 full interviews and of 2 partially recorded and transcribed interviews
- Notes from 11 interviews

As is common for discourse analysis all the data was first coded (Kumar 2011, Bernard 2017). The coding started from data gathered from the events and interviews, which were first coded with the themes of the research questions and then complemented with other themes emerging from the data. The coding was done by highlighting sections of the text with different colours. These pieces of text were then organised in spreadsheets according to the code assigned to them in order to start identify emerging narratives and discourses in relation to research question 1. on rights of local communities to land and forests and to question 2. on drivers of deforestation and role of communities in tackling them.

Following the coding of the first sets of data from events and interviews, the full body of data from the grey literature was also coded in a similar fashion. Partly the same codes as applied earlier to the data from events and interviews were used but some of the codes were further modified or new codes added. An overview of the codes emerging from each set of data is provided in **table 2.**

When narratives started to emerge from the data, earlier coded pieces of text were re-coded. Following from the further coding of the grey literature, the first discourses identified were reviewed, grouped, sometimes combined and additional discourses were added.

Data source	Codes used
Participant observation notes, brochures and final reports	• Deforestation and forest pressures • Globalisation and development • Rights • Local communities • Governance and power
Transcripts and notes from interviews	• Deforestation and forest pressures • Socio-economic context • Rights • Local communities • Rights – forests interlinkages
Grey literature	• Forest conservation • Drivers of deforestation and forest destruction • Governance and regulation • Development and colonialism • Rights • Power, role of corporations and economics • Rights – forests interlinkages

Table 2. *Overview of codes emerging from the different datasets*

To conclude, it is important to consider that a few caveats arise from the research methodology. First of all, sample size both in literature and interviewees is relatively small which lowers its representativeness. Use of Google searchers to gather the grey literature for this thesisalso comes with its biases and limitations. First, gathering of grey literature was limited to English language publications only and second, web based search engines are known to adapt results based on location, popularity and personalised features (Godin et al., 2015).

In addition, while discourse analysis can be a powerful analytical tool to analyse phenomena shaping our society, it also a very loose methodology leaving plenty of liberty to the author of the

research and room for subjective interpretation which means that the personal qualities, experiences and views of the authors can more easily penetrate through.

5. Results

The data analysis was carried out to identify prominent narratives in the public discourse on halting deforestation, that highlighted one of the emerging themes in this field; 1) the socio-economic and especially underlying drivers of deforestation or 2) the role of indigenous people and local communities and their rights in tackling deforestation.

Two distinct discourses emerged, one around each of these themes, made up of several narratives with similar key elements. While each of the three narratives around a specific theme contain various nuances and some variety within them, analysis of their key elements showed that they had a critical amount of similar elements to allow combining them into one discourse for the purposes of this research. this thesis labels these two discourses as:

- The rights and local communities discourse
- The drivers of deforestation discourse.

They were distinguished by the way they explained the causes and problems behind deforestation across the respective narratives making up the discourse, as well as how they portrayed the possible solutions and ways to tackle it. Each one also put more emphasis on one of these narrative elements, with the other one focusing more on the problem (drivers of deforestation) and the other on the solution (IPLC rights). They also had a different approach to agency when it comes to tackling deforestation, with one discourse leaving agency quite ambiguous (drivers of deforestation) and the other being very explicit about it (IPLC rights).

Notably, each discourse also mostly “talks past” the other, leaving some of the main elements of the other discourse on the side, or even silenced. For example, the first discourse on rights and local communities, not surprisingly, heavily emphasises the importance of land rights for communities to be able to tackle deforestation, the discourse on drivers of deforestation remains more ambiguous on the role or importance of property and land rights.

From a careful analysis of the data gathered through participant observation, interviews and grey literature, six different narratives were distinguished across the discourses; three around the theme of rights and communities and three on the theme of deforestation and its causes. Although most of the sources analysed were a mixture of the different narratives – and occasionally even a mix of the two different discourses – several patterns were still detectable. Each of the three narratives in the discourse were given an indicative name to describe their main approach to the issue.

The narratives on making up the discourse on rights and local communities were identified as:

- The instrumental rights narrative
- The fundamental rights narrative
- The new property regime narrative

The narratives on making up the discourse on deforestation, its causes and drivers were identified as:

- The rational economics narrative
- The improved governance narrative
- The power and oppression discourse

Within the two discourses, the narratives that were most commonly used across the literature sources and by different interviewees were the narrative on instrumental rights in the rights and

local communities discourse and the narrative on rational economics in the discourse on drivers of deforestation.

As earlier explained in the theoretical framework (see section 3.3) each narrative was further analysed to identify its key elements: a) the problem definition and its framing, b) the solutions offered as part of the theory of change of the narrative, and c) silences left unproblematic in the narrative, and thus in the discourse as a whole.

The following sections lay out in detail the key elements of each of the identified narratives in the two discourses in order to respond to research questions. An overview of all the narratives of each discourse is presented in table 3. After going through each of the narratives, a further analysis on the similarities and differences of the two discourses is carried out.

5.1 Rights and local communities discourse

The main ethos of this discourse argues that indigenous people and local communities are the best guardians of forests (and other natural resources) against extraction like deforestation. If they only have their rights to their territories recognised and upheld, these groups have the knowledge, tradition and culture to manage forests sustainably and to keep deforestation at bay. IPLCs are the solution holders of this discourse, and are often presented to know better than governments or others currently controlling land and forests. This discourse is thus built around shared ideas of the **solutions** needed.

As the “solution holders”, the discourse grants indigenous groups and local communities a good deal of agency as those that hold and known the needed solutions. At the same time, the discourse is not just about shining a spotlight on IPLCs but clearly centred around rights and justice.

The unifying **problem** definition across the narratives of this discourse is the lack of clear and recognised land tenure rights by IPLCs to territories that would historically or traditionally belong to them or that they depend on. The origins of this problem often point to colonialism, the colonial mindset and the imposition of cultural norms and customs of the colonisers. In the stories that emerge, IPLCs might be described mostly as the victims of these injustices or as the heroes now standing up to claim back their rights.

> *“Inequality is the greatest challenge of our time and we can measure its detrimental effects on the economic, social and environmental progress across the globe, Strengthening and enforcing the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities to manage their own forests and lands rebalances the equation.”* Darren Walker, president of the Ford Foundation in Tenure Facility, 2017, p.1)

The forces behind the problem cover a wide range from the past colonisers to modern day corporations but the most commonly addressed ones would be state governments and any authorities unwilling to decentralise their powers.

While the solutions of the discourse are broadly consistent, focusing on the recognition, securing and granting of IPLC rights to land especially, the motivations behind these proposed **solutions** to deforestation can vary across discourse, bringing together some unusual “allies” behind one discourse (see below). On the one hand the call for land rights of IPLCs are motived by a fundamental sense of justice and by universal human rights, irrespective of the exact outcomes of these rights, even if the discourse mostly assumes the outcomes to be benign for forest conservation.

> *"Today, indigenous movements see the right to territory as inseparable from rights more broadly"* (IUCN, 2016, p. 6)

On the other hand, securing tenure rights to land, including by IPLCs, is seen not only as a solution in its own right but also as key stepping stone to other assumed benefits, such as more productive and effective management of land and forests or reduced climate emissions.

> *"Rights-based approaches to ecosystem restoration are vital to combating the climate crisis and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals."* (Global Landscape Forum 2019 outcome statement)

The discourse on rights and local communities holds a complex relation to land tenure, property and ownership of common resources. As IPLCs are adapting their demands on land rights to today's governance structures, many are calling for 'demarcation' and formal recognition of land "ownership" by national governments to carve out their territory from the state-owned commons. Even if such calls are a regular component of the discourse. clear moral positions on property ownership or privatisation of resources are still largely **left silent** in the discourse.

Another silence in the discourse is the omission of what are the drivers behind the growing pressure on land and forests from which communities need to protect themselves, and how would better recognition of rights help to reconcile with those root causes. This silence is made especially apparent by the research questions of this thesis and comparison of the two identified discourses.

Finally, even if rights were very much treated as something universal in this discourse, it mostly appeared in a specific geographical context. Examples, visuals and representatives mostly referred to communities in the Global South close to tropical forest areas, in countries considered to be "developing" – with the exception of indigenous groups that came together under this discourse across different geographies and states. Landowners and farmers of the Global North didn't seem to be part of this discourse.

Overall, the discourse on rights and local communities was most often upheld and used in the grey literature by organisations representing or with close ties to IPLCs, most of which are non-profit and civil society organisations. The most common narrative of these groups was the one on fundamental rights, supported by the data from interviews and participant observation.

However, the discourse is also increasingly common in the grey literature by governmental agencies and financial institutions, resulting in some unusual bed fellows from indigenous groups to governmental agencies that might otherwise seem at odds with one another but had found common tune on improved tenure security within this discourse.

Business and private sector representatives on the other hand were still relatively absent from this discourse, as well as governmental bodies from the Global South. It needs to be noted however, that this can also be due to the data collection methods which favoured sources available in the internet and in English language.

The next section takes a closer looked at the key elements of each of the three narratives in the discourse.

5.1.1 The instrumental rights narrative

This narrative was by far the most popular and widespread one in relation to deforestation (as well as other sustainable land use issues) and the rights of IPCLs. In this narrative it is essential to grant IPCLs their rights to land and forests and to ensure tenure security because of the important outcomes and results this will yield. Rights, in this narrative, serve as instruments to reach the

ultimate goals which are linked to the global challenges such as deforestation, climate change and poverty eradication. The narrative focuses on the instrumental values of these rights, rather than on the fundamental recognition of rights per se. The holders of this narrative were also most likely to adjust or tweak the narrative according to the situation in question, the perceived audience and other factors across the data analysed.

This narrative points to land governance and the lack of it as a central **problem** as well as the division and abuse of power that lets governments or corporations with short sighted, profit driven interests to rule over local communities living from or close to the lands in question. Forests particularly are being lost to the "tragedy of commons". Unclarity, overlapping land claims and absence of fair and just governance, all contribute to the tragedy.

> *"In [country X] we've worked with the palm oil concessions. And those concessions were given out on a very unclear land rights footing. So they immediately led to a lot of conflict […] And if you're in a context where you also want to conserve forests it's quite essential to then indicate who are the owners and rights holders to that forest if you want to have any meaningful impact on them besides setting them aside on paper for an oil Palm development."* (Interviewee 10, 13 September 2019)

The states or the private sector that often nominally hold the rights to land exploit them carelessly and in a short-sighted way in this narrative. In the tropical, forest-rich regions of the world especially, national governments are the 'official' land owners but seem to be incapable or unwilling to do their job well.

The simplified **solution** of this narrative suggests that recognising, securing and implementing the rights of IPLCs to land and forests is the key to a better future and the solution to problems like deforestation. The narrative usually refers to governments and states as the gatekeepers to this new order but in addition all actors from donors and investors are needed. IPCLs themselves are solution holders, thanks to their proximity to the forests, traditional knowledge, history and experience, they know how to take care of the forests and create sustainable livelihoods for themselves – if only allowed to do so.

The benefits arising from appropriate recognition of rights in the narrative are most commonly linked to forest protection, climate change mitigation and improved livelihoods for communities, as well as to economic development possibilities overall.

> *"Research has shown that where Indigenous Peoples' and local communities' rights are secure, rates of deforestation are lower and carbon storage and biodiversity higher."* (The Tenure Facility, 2017, p. 2)

While building on the notion of recognising *rights*, the narrative puts a much heavier emphasis on "tenure security" over land, forests and resources. It recognised that particularly customary right holders such as communities are lacking tenure rights and that this hampers possibilities for anyone interested, including the private sector, in investing in land of forest management. It is thus in everyone's interest to try to clarify and secure tenure for these communities.

> *"Tenure security is a low cost strategy towards environmental and climate goals."* (Rights and Resources Initiative, 2014, p. 1)

> *"Reliable access to land creates incentives for sustainable economic activity and encourages investment. This promotes production and can lead to increased food security in the long run."* (GIZ, 2019, p. 8)

> *"The ultimate objective is to secure property rights that will promote economic growth, food security, natural resource management, and stability."* (USAID, 2013, p. 10)

The **theory of change** appears twofold in this narrative, sometimes even slightly contradictory. On the one hand, change comes through enabling and welcoming new investments from the outside into the territory, enabling sustainable development. The beneficiaries in this case are not only the communities but the society as a whole as such investments are seen to secure economic growth and development in a broader sense.

> *"An effective land governance and property rights system is fundamental to the broad process of economic and political development."* (USAID, 2013, p. 9)

On the other hand, rights and tenure security will make sure that communities take good care of the land forests, which is partly based on the idea that they will manage to keep "outside intruders" out of the territories.

> *"Secure legal title for indigenous peoples and customary landowners is often associated with intact forest cover and low or zero deforestation rates, even in the face of intense pressure at the forest frontier."* (Forest People's Programme, 2018, p. 37)

The external pressures that are threatening the customary rights of IPLCs in the first place in this narrative and the pressures that are now driving communities to seek for formal recognition of their land rights are left **largely silent** in this narrative. The concern is not on how to ease these external pressures, but rather on how to make sure communities have the means to protect themselves and their lands from these pressures.

The assumption that the better recognition of land tenure rights of communities benefits those areas from an environmental point of view also largely leaves out any 'imperfections' these communities might have, for example in their capabilities or interests to protect the forests or use land in a non-extractive way.

Within this instrumental rights narrative, some of its proponents are actually keen on securing tenure rights for the sake of productivity and economic growth, following the logic of privatisation as an antidote to the tragedy of commons. How do the calls of recognition of land rights and 'demarcation' of land go together with capitalist ideas of property ownership is however left silent in the other narratives of the discourse.

All in all, this narrative was especially apparent in the data from grey literature and from the events I participated in. While the narrative was practiced across all the different stakeholder groups, it was particularly emphasised by governmental agencies and financial institutions, highlighting the benefits such as economic development or environmental protection that would follow from better recognition of rights.

5.1.2 The fundamental rights narrative

This narrative sets out a world where everyone should have their basic rights respected and met, irrespective of any instrumental values or benefits that might follow. While rights should be universal, they aren't equally accessible to everyone or are even on purpose not granted to some groups. The notion of rights in this discourse is based on international human rights declarations, with language on 'fundamental rights', ranging from workers' to indigenous groups' rights. In the context of this narrative, the rights to land, natural resources and to property, to adequate livelihoods and rights to the preservation of culture are especially highlighted.

The **problem** definition of this narrative starts from injustices and violations of human rights per se, which then further leads to destruction of nature, forests, damage to climate or other globally detrimental consequences. The narrative often starts from with a historical reference from already centuries ago, when the rights of many communities and particularly of indigenous peoples were violated by colonisers from the industrialising world. Most of these injustices are still waiting to be resolved as the many modern forms of colonialism are still in power.

> *"Key questions remain: How are past illegalities and injustices addressed? How are human rights protected?"* (Forest Peoples Programme, 2018, p. 4)

While the narrative presumes that the rights of local communities and indigenous peoples are in theory recognised and morally unquestioned, it blames those in power for not implementing these rights in practice. These power holders are usually described to be ruling national governments or international institutions, but sometimes also the colonising countries, their corporations and maybe even their citizens are held responsible for ensuring that the fundamental rights of IPCLs are restored.

> *"Strengthening and enforcing the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities to manage their own forests and lands rebalances the equation [of global inequality]"* (The Tenure Facility, 2017, p. 1)

The **solutions** of this narrative equal a fundamental redistribution of (land) rights, to IPLCs especially. Similarly to the instrumental rights narrative, these communities are also the solution holders if only granted the rights they deserve.

The **theory of change** of this narrative suggests that rights of IPLCs need to be recognised to rectify power balances and to correct past (or current) abuses of power, for the sake of social justice, and for a fairer and better world in general. If granted their rights, communities and people on the ground will be able to protect themselves and their means of living and to hold back deforestation and other destruction.

The narrative puts less emphasis on the instrumental values or benefits of securing land rights but might rather note that research seems to show that securing rights would have many positive "side effects" such as forest conservation or carbon sequestration. Still, these are a secondary matter in this narrative.

> *"There is the UN declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples. Because they've been there for generations and independently of whether they would be good managers or not, they have the right to their lands that they have managed for generations."* (Interviewee 8, 28 August 2019)

Unlike the instrumental rights narrative this narrative included voices slightly more open to recognising possible "imperfections" of IPLCs and traditional communities overall. Particularly the deeper interviews showed that the proponents of this discourse tend to think that rights holders must also have the right to use their resources in extractive matter if conditions so require e.g. to sell their forests for corporate exploitation or to harvest resources from the forests to meet their needs.

For example, in one of the events where participant observation was carried out, there was a detailed discussion on a case where communities in Liberia had gained rights to forests thanks to new community forestry legislation in the country and had soon sold logging rights on the land to big corporations with poor conditions and little income for the community.

> *"Too bad. Sometimes it just doesn't work, and rights do not protect forests." (Interviewee 2, 9 July 2019)*
>
> *"If all those thousands of communities in Indonesia that claim to be indigenous get an indigenous status and therefore full ownership of the forest rights, it doesn't mean that that forest is going to remain standing." (Interviewee 2, 9 July 2019)*

In addition, there is a fairly wide recognition among the proponents of the narrative that local communities might be far from ideal in respecting and implying these universal rights internally, e.g in the case of women and children within the community. So-called elite capture was a familiar phenomenon for those working closely with communities on the ground. Therefore the mission to secure basic human rights doesn't stop at the borders of the community but might require 'improvement', education and guidance within the community in this narrative.

> *"One challenge observed is ensuring that the model of benefit sharing is truly equitable and fair to all community members, as benefit sharing can be affected by societal divides in the community, and is susceptible to elite capture."* (ClientEarth, 2019, p. 38)

Similarly to the narrative on instrumental rights, this narrative remains rather **silent** about causes of the mounting pressures threatening rights of IPLCs, even if the ever-growing threat of these pressures (such as demand from markets or corporate interests in land) is often mentioned as a reason for the urgency of rights recognition. If and how these pressures should be tackled is not a central part of the narrative.

The narrative also treats rights as an absolute concept without much recognition or notion of the fact that different rights of different groups might be in conflict with one another. The strong references to traditional territorial rights of indigenous groups particularly, dating back to times before Western world colonialism, takes these rights as almost eternal and leaves less room for example for the rights of more recent arrivals on the same territories. For example local herders moving across vast territories, peasants or immigrant workers, as well as the rest of the globalising population equally dependent of forests, land and a stable climate are left outside of this narrative on rights.

This narrative was particularly present in the data gathered through interviews and participant observation but did also appear in the grey literature by civil society organisations especially. Nevertheless, interviewees upholding the fundamental rights discourse admitted that they'd often use the instrumental rights narrative in public debates as topics like climate change mitigation were often seen as a more weighty political arguments than "just" the need to respect basic human rights.

> *"I think rights debate as a purely rights debate is difficult to sell in our materialized society."* (Interviewee 4, 22 July 2019)

5.1.3 The new property regime narrative

The third narrative making up the rights and local communities discourse that could be identified from the data was a more subtle and a less prevailing, but nevertheless a distinctive one. This narrative isn't just about having rights, whether for their fundamental or instrumental value, but it rather focuses on challenging some of the dominant views on (land) ownership and governance of sustainable management altogether. It clearly links IPLC land rights to community tenure regimes and portrays them as an alternative to the colonial, private land ownership regimes backed up by the tragedy of commons theory.

Nevertheless, it still holds many of the same key elements in its problem definition and the solutions put forward and often also intertwines with the other right-based narratives.

The narrative starts from an ideal place where traditional communities have collectively managed their land and resources with a different logic of ownership than most of the modern world. The **problems** start when colonisers or outsiders impose new rules and order on these communities, including rules of privatisation and state ownership where property is clearly defined and marked – in line with the common wisdom on how to prevent the "tragedy of commons". Communities, local people and others that don't have access to the authorities or that don't want to adapt to the ways of ruling of the new authorities are often left out of this order.

> "Formalization has also commonly, in the past, prioritized private individual rights over collective rights." (IUCN, 2016, p. 8)

Centralisation of power over these resources in the hands of governments or other state authorities is part of the problem that the narrative aims to resolve, which means it will easily encounter powerful opponents among those currently holding more power over land and resources, such as the state and governments.

> *"Governments see those kind of concepts like food sovereignty, collective rights as a threat to the, to the state sovereignty." (Interviewee 5, 26 July 2019)*

The solution in this narrative lies in community ownership and management of resources and property like forests and land. The narrative implies that collective, communal management of resources will ensure their sustainable use, emphasizing that "ownership" of property doesn't need to imply only private ownership. The **theory of change** therefore relies on a change in the model and way of governance of the resources, leading to different kinds of outcomes.

> *"Forest privatization rarely increases a country's slow growing natural forest, despite its non-market benefits and ecosystem services to the public." (USAID, 2013, p. 28)*

> *"[...] the universal declaration of human rights establishes rights to property alone and in association with others" (IUCN, 2016, p. 7)*

The narrative calls out especially governments to recognise and to include this kind of 'ownership' model, of for example land, in their current governance regimes even if such higher authorities aren't necessarily part of the traditional, communal regimes.

> *"Some indigenous tribes are now actively seeking legal land ownership not because they believe in it but because they want a legally recognized and binding mechanism that ensures they can stay on their land." (Conservation International, 2016, p. 4)*

The call for community-based regimes goes together with the aim to decentralise power. Even if in many cases the narrative just calls for an 'additional' form of land ownership to be adopted next to the existing ownership schemes, like private or public (state) ownership, this might be perceived as threatening the current power balances.

> *"Devolving rights to manage state-owned forests to local communities and smallholders also provides opportunities for enhancing the contribution of the informal sector to the SDGs."* (FAO, 2018, p. 94)

> *"Decentralization offers potential to accelerate and create more responsive tenure recognition processes, closer to local communities."* (WorldBank, 2017, p. 13)

The explicit focus of this narrative on the governance system also allows space to discuss *responsibilities* of communities over land and resources. As the common English language saying goes, “with rights come responsibilities” and this narrative is the only one to touch upon the responsibilities of IPLCs. This also reveals the silence of the two other narratives on questions of responsibility over sustainable management and use of resources on a global scale.

> *“Basically any rights also come with responsibilities. So it's about how do you create, and for whom, a good governance system.”* (Interviewee 8, 28 August 2019)

The **silences** of this narrative include, similarly to other narratives of this discourse, the lack of recognition of market demands, economics and other pressures of the outside world outside of the communities, and how collective, new property regimes would avoid succumbing to their forces any better than other property regimes.

In contrast to the silences of the two other narratives of this discourse, this narrative has a slightly clearer position to land tenure and ownership questions. Still, it also contains calls for ‘demarcation’ and formal recognition of land ownership by national governments for specifically delineated communities, carving out their territory from the state owned commons in certain ways similarly to private (land) property. This leaves a curious space of “communal privatisation” in the narrative, the implications of which are not explicitly addressed. The logic of of such communal privatisation and of drawing out explicit lines and rights of community ownership is in many ways similar to the logic of privatizing land to protect it from the “tragedy of commons” from which the narrative mostly aims to distance itself.

The narrative on new property regimes was most commonly found in grey literature, rather than through the interviews and participant observation, which could be a hint of the more theoretical or academic nature of this narrative. It was most commonly, but not only, found in the grey literature from research oriented non-profit organisations, that linked it with broader frameworks of decentralisation of power.

5.2 Drivers of deforestation discourse

This discourse is bound together by its focus on systemic factors in the society that are underpinning deforestation, such as the economic model and its incentives, rules and governance and distribution of power. These systemic problems go beyond a specific industry, corporation or government but rather name the problematic elements of the socio-economic system without necessarily pointing fingers to specific actors. Contrary to the discourse on rights and local communities, this discourse is thus about a shared approach to the **problem definition**, and has more variety in the solutions it entails.

The systemic **problems** the discourse highlights include uncontrolled economic growth and global commodity demand which appear almost as an unavoidable part of what is presented as development. Without development, tackling poverty and covering of basic needs are similarly portrayed to drive for destruction.

> *"Anticipated global economic growth and changing diets will exacerbate the demand for agricultural commodities; making deforestation an intolerable externality of food production systems."* (GEF, 2014, p. 2)

The power of the economic forces in this discourse is linked to weak and poor governance systems of land and forests as well as imbalances in power and wealth behind these governance structures.

The interests and motives behind the problems described by this discourse tend to be varied but protection of vested interests and acquiring or holding on to power are commonly hinted at across the different narratives of the discourse. However, due to the more system-oriented perspective of the discourse it is altogether less focused on specific actors or their agency.

> *An alternative interpretation of the causes of insufficient or negligent government performance in regularizing and enforcing community tenure rights is a lack of political will in the face of large scale investments in agri-business, forestry, mining, and oil and gas production, usually through government concessions.* (World Bank, 2017, p. 14))

Solutions of this discourse are abundant and varied, ranging from differently designed economic incentives to changing Western world consumption patterns and to just changing whomever is power. Securing land rights of IPLCs, similarly to the rights and local communities discourse of this thesis, might be referred to as one of the solutions needed but only as one piece of the overall puzzle.

> *"Although rights recognition has improved overall, old pressures on land and resources – competition for control and for profits – continue and are exacerbated by new ones, such as climate change, resource declines and degradation, and new interests in large-scale agribusiness, biofuels or carbon sequestration."* (IUCN, 2016, p. 6)

The analysis also shows that some of the solutions of this discourse have already been co-opted by actors that are major drivers of deforestation themselves and with questionable commitments to truly systemic changes, and thus more prone to promote solutions rather perceived as "greenwashing".

While the discourse eloquently lays out the different levels of systemic shifts needed to halt deforestation, including changes in power structures, it leaves most of the agency needed for these changes **silent**. Who holds the power to change these systems isn't clearly pointed out in this discourse, whereas the discourse on rights and local communities has a more clearly assigned IPLCs as the ones having and needing agency. Even if imbalances of power between different groups are referred to in this discourse, it remains elusive on the groups of actors that should have more power and how they would get it. Specific actors, such as IPLCs, have less agency in this discourse but are rather also assumed to be subject to the conditions of the system.

Similar to being silent about agency, this discourse is also less vocal about societal factors not governed only by rules and economics, such as culture, tradition, beliefs. As revealed by the research questions of this study, agency on the other hand is at the centre of the discourse on rights and local communities.

This discourse appeared across the different data sources by different organisations but most commonly in the grey literature and in interviews of non-profit organisations, with an emphasis on environmental matters and usually with more affinity in the Global North.

Business, private sector representatives and governmental bodies especially from the Global South used this discourse much less. Similarly to the other discourse on rights and local communites, many of these sources navigated and varied between the different narratives and nuances of this discourse, depending on the context and perceived audience.

The following section once again takes a closer looked at the key elements of each of the three narratives in the discourse on drivers of deforestation.

5.2.1 The rational economics narrative

The most common narrative across the data and within the discourse on drivers of deforestation, was a narrative built around economic drivers and the strive for "development". This narrative sees 'development' as economic growth and increased production, leading to more wealth and better livelihoods for everyone. In this narrative, economic factors determine what people (and corporations) will do, portraying people as rational economic actors. This was also the narrative with most flexibility across the data according to the holder, situation and perceived audience of the narrative.

The **problem** of this narrative is that the economic development, as things currently stand, is set to take place at the expense of forests, nature and communities depending on them.

> *"We cannot stop such global processes [land grabbing, investments, globalisation], but maybe we can find ways to make them more beneficial to people and the planet" (*LANDAc Conference report 2019, p.3)

The starting point of the narrative is a world where many still struggle to make ends meet. Those that have their basic needs met, strive for more wealth as individuals or for bigger profit as corporations. A gateway out of poverty for many regions and communities is assumed to be inclusion into global markets and trade.

> *"The pressure comes from new industrial concessions, demand for land to grow biofuels, oil and mineral exploration, creation of forest protection zones, and increasing competition for land and resources for habitation and livelihoods."* (USAID, 2013, p. 25)
>
> *"Consumption of agricultural commodities in particular has given the EU a huge and largely unacknowledged footprint in the rainforests."* (Fern, 2015, p. 5))

Globally traded commodities frequently appear in this narrative. For example beef, palm oil, soy and timber are all often listed as the main culprits of destruction, together with those that consume these products for various uses from biofuels to food.

> *"Economic growth based on the export of primary commodities and an increasing demand for timber and agricultural products in a globalizing economy are critical indirect drivers."* (CIFOR, 2012, p. 6)

The narrative includes a variety of **solutions** but the clear combining idea behind these solutions is that the economic drivers of development need to be changed, with at least two distinguishable ideas on how to do so.

The first one is an overall reduction in the global consumption of commodities that drive deforestation to lower the overall pressure on land. Northern consumers, citizens, governments and corporations are first and foremost responsible for delivering this solution.

> *"European consumers could hold more power over the global market in agricultural commodities than any other group in the world. Their ethical and environmental concerns are well established. They are the highest per-capita consumers of fair-trade and organic produce in the world. They recycle and reuse. They have been at the forefront of putting pressure on industrialists who cause deforestation…"* (Fern, 2015, p. 21)

> *"That has been one of the demands coming from our indigenous partners, which has emphasized that basically governments in the North also have a responsibility to address the patterns of consumption which are fuelling dispossession and destruction of their territories."* (Interviewee 9, 3 Sept 2019)

The second solution offered is to better "manage" the growth and development driving destruction, which is otherwise taken as given. The needed "management" of the economic forces is often covered by rather loose terms such "sustainable forest management" or "smart agriculture" in the narrative.

> *"While pressures on land from agribusiness and extractive industry sectors will continue, they should be better controlled and channeled by governments in ways that reduce their social and environmental impacts."* (World Bank, 2017, p. 25)

This solution framing also suggests that interfering with economic growth is a price too high to pay for the society as a whole and therefore not desirable.

> *"In other words, modifying a driver's activity is generally less costly than stopping the activity altogether."* (CIFOR, 2012, p. 37)

> *"Brazil's economy is founded on the export-led growth of the agriculture sector."* (Greenpeace, 2009, p. 23)

Offering and developing alternative livelihoods for local communities or other actors that are exploiting forests is also part of the solutions of this narrative. When local communities don't master the sustainable management of land and forests themselves, they can be steered with assistance and the right kinds of economic incentives, such as payments schemes for ecosystem services.

> *"Providing economic incentives to smallholders and communities to manage trees on forest lands is likely to prove rewarding."* (FAO, 2018, p. 16)

As the narrative strongly relies on the power of economics and views people as rational, economic actors it naturally **leaves silent** other aspects defining societies and communities, such as culture or tradition – which are very present in the narratives of the other discourse on rights and local communities.

The narrative also largely leaves silent aspects of agency in the current economic system of markets, demand and supply. While the narrative isn't shy to point fingers at corporations and industries relentlessly seeking higher profits through exploitation, these actors are rather framed to just be subjected to the system rather than having power or responsibility over it. Agency needed for changes in the system nonetheless remains elusive.

This narrative was regularly put forward by non-profit organisations that point to the need to change global markets, sometimes linking this narrative with the next narrative described in this thesis on improved governance.

Interestingly, the narrative on rational economics was also used by the two interviewees with closer ties to the private sector. For example, a few speakers from the events where participant observation was carried out that exemplified the narrative tended to be government or financial institution representatives eager to point out that forces bigger than their powers were at play in deforestation, taking advantage of the lack of agency in the narrative.

5.2.2 The improved governance narrative

Another common narrative emerging from the data on the causes of deforestation was one of poor governance of land and forests, locally and nationally. The aspects of 'governance' this narrative refers to include rules and structures of the system such as enforcement and implementation of legislation, appropriate resources of the authorities and adherence to international agreements. Poor governance can be demonstrated as anything ranging from corruption and inaccessibility of areas to authorities, all the way to lack of skills and knowledge by the authorities.

> *"The largest economic incentive for the expansion of Brazil's cattle sector into the Amazon is lack of governance."* (Greenpeace, 2009, p. 4)

According to this narrative, the **problem** lies less in the rules like legislation itself and more in the structures needed to implement them. National governments or authorities are held responsible for law and order that should guard forests and communities sufficiently. If national laws and rules are not sufficient, the narrative upholds authorities against international commitments, such as UN agreements or declarations.

> *"Key indirect drivers of forest loss and rights violations are flawed national land allocation frameworks that do not recognise customary land rights, lack transparency and suffer from weak mechanisms for prior community consultationand FPIC"* (Forest People's Programme, 2018, p. 25)

Causes behind this poor governance provided by the narrative most commonly include poor, incompetent or even corrupt (state) authorities, leaving power in the wrong hands and also too distant from the realities "on the ground". However, some versions of the narrative frame governance problems merely as a "technical" ones, caused by the lack of resources or knowledgeable staff, sometimes also within the local communities themselves.

> *"The underfunded forestry departments of many countries lack adequate trained field staff and equipment to monitor logging activities and ensure proper forest management."* (USAID, 2013, p. 27)

> *"Most countries currently lack the data to quantitatively identify and address drivers, particularly on the national level."* (CIFOR, 2012, p. 37)

The **solutions** of the narrative included generic calls for better and improved governance, on the right level of the society. Sometimes these improvements could just be "technical improvements" needed among the authorities, which also offer justification for an ample set of interventions by external actors, for example through development aid.

While states are mostly seen as the ones guilty of bad governance, they are also the ones held accountable for improvements in this narrative especially. The narrative thus builds on the ideal of democratic societies where people can hold their leaders accountable and where governments are expected to represent the people.

> *"Ultimately only governments can address the issues of illegality and land rights."* (Fern, 2015, p. 13)

> *"Our opinion is that we believe in stronger governments who represent the people and are accountable to the people that basically, that we believe in democracy."* (Interviewee 5, 26 July 2019)

The intense focus of the narrative on the right kind of governance and institutions leaves a certain level of **silence** around the interests and power structures behind the existing governance arrangements, similarly to the rational economics narrative. This leaves the agency for change or sources of counter power elusive. Even where conflicting interests between different governmental policies for example were explicitly mentioned, the narrative didn't dive deeper into the issue.

This also means that a certain level of sovereignty of national governments is left unquestioned in this narrative, making it more silent on whether the rules and laws already in place are legitimate to start with. Data from the more in-depth interviews confirmed this silence being also due to a certain caution in judging what is right or wrong for other countries, especially between countries or organisations in the global South and North.

This narrative gathered perhaps the widest range of proponents, across the data analysed, from the non-profit sector to governmental agencies and to the international research organisations with a more "neutral" reputation. It was practiced both in conferences as well as in grey literature across different groups, making it a promising narrative around which to form broader coalitions.

5.2.3 The power and vested interests narrative

The third narrative in this discourse on drivers of deforestation focuses more on power relations, their imbalances and vested interests as the driving force of forest destruction. In distinction to the other two narratives of the discourse which allude factors like corruption, illegality or power of economic incentives, this narrative focuses on even deeper system failures that might be behind these factors.

> *"Understanding rights requires an understanding of history and of power relations."* (IUCN, 2016, p. 12)

> "*There are many tools and approaches available to settle land disputes between more equal parties. However, resolving asymmetrical conflicts requires a high level of political commitment and decisiveness."* (GIZ, 2019, p. 12)

In this narrative the **problem** lies with clear imbalances of power that determine the direction of travel. Those that have power exploit it e.g. to the detriment of forests and are not held

accountable, cannot be expected to act responsibly and are likely to even cheat if they can. Not only is power unequally distributed but it's also used ruthlessly by undemocratic governments, well-off elites and of corporate powers like agri-businesses. The different power holders are united by the fact that they have vested interests, they benefit from the current state of affairs and will resist any changes to the existing system.

> *"An alternative interpretation of the causes of insufficient or negligent government performance in regularizing and enforcing community tenure rights is a lack of political will in the face of large scale investments in agri-business, forestry, mining, and oil and gas production, usually through government concessions."* (World Bank, 2017, p. 18)

> *"Powerful national agribusiness, logging, mining and business interests control legislatures and otherwise seek to block, weaken or annul progressive legislation in support of community land rights."* (Forest People's Programme, 2018, p. 24)

Power was often tied to the ownership of resources and especially land in this narrative. Big landowners might include not only corporations but also individuals and families that have acquired land through historical arrangement or as concessions from the state. This highlighted how several interests (and narratives) might be linked to groups often put together as "farmers" or "forest owners".

> *"The farmer's union the commercial farmers union was against it, was against this idea of the right to food, the right to land. They say that it would lead to land grabs, public land grabs."* (Interviewee 5, 26 July 2019)

Accusations of hypocrisy or even 'greenwashing' was also mostly part of this narrative within this discourse, portraying the power holders playing two faced games, especially if scrutinized. For example, governments or corporations might publicly adopt new measures against deforestation such as zero-deforestation pledges, while in reality continuing their practices largely unchanged.

> *"Global private and public financial institutions like the World Bank are promoting agribusiness and industrial infrastructure, while also hosting global funds for reducing deforestation."* (Forest People's Programme, 2018, p. 27)

> *"Climate change discourse has assisted these states to further denounce it and to devise new or reinforce existing policies and laws to eradicate shifting cultivation in the pretext of forest conservation and development."* (IWGIA & AIPP, 2012, p. 8)

The **solutions** proposed in the narrative mostly point to redistribution of power and the assets that lie behind the power, in this case particularly land and forest resources. This could mean bringing new people to the tables of decision making and expelling others. As more immediate first steps, better transparency (of corporate actions especially) and accountability against clearly laid out rules are also part of the narrative.

> *"So the next step is for large companies to open up their supply chains to full scrutiny and to commission independent public audit of their performance on land rights and deforestation."* (Fern, 2015, p. 12)

> *"Mining and commercial logging operations tend to be promoted by governments and evidently benefit from irregular or absent formal tenure arrangements."* (World Bank, 2017, p. 18)

The narrative however remains **silent** about the underlying assumption that certain power arrangements would be better than others from the point of view of protecting forests and

their people. For example, the narrative commonly suggests that giving power to local people and communities would also prevent deforestation but it isn't explicit about reorganising power within any new groups . The narrative also leaves silent how would any new power holders avoid the corrupting lure of power and wealth that seems to grab everyone else under its spell.

This third narrative of this discourse was mostly brought up by non-profit organisations both in the interviewees as well as in the grey literature. The narrative was notably absent for example in the literature by international research organisations and very carefully worded if hinted at all in the grey literature by government agencies, giving a flavour of the potential sensitivity of this narrative.

Narratives on rights and local communities	Instrumental rights	Fundamental rights	New property regime
The problem	Unclarity and lack of security over land tenure and rights – “tragedy of commons” Short sightedness because of lack of security – tragedy of commons Overlapping land claims and absence of land governance Incompetent land tenure by state or other ‘official’ owners	IPLCs lack rights to their lands to be able to manage them sustainably People and communities have rights in theory but they are not recognised, implemented or enforced States, governments, colonisers have stripped off fundamental rights of IPLCs Unresolved legacy of colonialism	State and private ownership of land and resources Oppression of communities and their governance systems by colonisers and state regimes Commons framed as likely victims of unsustainable management Centralisation of power over resources, especially to state authorities
Solutions and theory of change	Tenure security will incentivise sustainable management by communities and keep exploiters out Tenure security will incentivise investments that are needed for sustainability and livelihoods Benefits forest protection, climate change mitigation, reduced poverty and economic development	Recognition of basic human rights, irrespective of “benefits” Rights need to be recognised by governments and national authorities, to restore power imbalances If granted rights, communities on the ground will be better equipped to protect themselves and their forests. ‘Improvements’ also needed within the power structures of communities.	New collective governance model will lead to better outcomes for land and forests and restore traditions Collective governance models can break the assumptions of the “tragedy of commons” Decentralisation of power leads to better adapted, community specific solutions
Silences	Drivers behind the growing pressure on land and forests from which communities need to protect themselves. Any imperfections of IPLCs in tackling deforestation Relation of IPLC land rights to land ownership and privatisation	Drivers behind the growing pressure on land and forests from which communities need to protect themselves Any conflicts of rights between different communities or groups	Demands and pressures of markets and the external world Relation of communal land rights (and management) to resource privatisation

Narratives on deforestation drivers	Rational economics	Improved governance	Power and vested interests
The problem	Unmanaged economic growth and development Growing global demand for certain commodities Poverty and lack of sustainable livelihood opportunities rights kinds of economic incentives for local communities	Weak and poor governance, lack of enforcement of (international) rules and legislation Lack of resources or knowledge needed for improved governance Wrong 'level' of governance, too far away from the objects governed	Power imbalances Protection of vested interests Power being in the wrong hands e.g. corporate interests and wealthy land owners Hypocrisy or greenwashing
Solutions	Reduce global consumption and demand of key commodities Manage growth and development to make them more sustainable for "green" Provide alternative livelihoods or incentives to poor communities	Better enforcement and implementation of rule of law by states and authorities More resources and technical capacity to authorities and communities Democratic governments that can be held accountable	Redistribution of power and resources, especially land and forests Transparency and accountability to clear rules by power holders
Silences	Factors defining behaviour and societies beyond economics e.g. culture Power holders behind the economic system What or who could have agency to drive solutions	Power and interests behind certain governance structures Legitimacy of national laws and rules, and national sovereignty What or who could have agency to drive solutions or build "counter power"	Assumptions making certain group of power holders better than the other Elusive on why would certain groups have the needed agency to drive the right solutions

Table 3. *Summary of the narratives identified in each discourse and their key elements*

5.3 The two discourses: diverging or coming together?

The previous section outlined the different narratives, three in each discourse, and the key elements that distinguish each of the narratives as well as brings them together into two separate discourses: a discourse on drivers of deforestation and a discourse on rights and local communities. This chapter aims to respond to the research question 3. and looks at how do these two discourses and their narratives, diverge in the efforts to tackle deforestation, and what kind of linkages are made between them. I explore questions with the guidance of the key elements of the narratives, similar to chapters 5.1 and 5.2 above.

First of all, the two discourses **diverge** in the fact that the discourse on drivers of deforestation was more brought together by its definition of and focus on the problem, whereas the rights and local communities' discourse was more tied together by the solutions it proposes. The drivers of deforestation discourse points at systemic problems such as economic growth, growing demand for deforestation driving commodities, development it its current format, governance (or lack of them) structures and power imbalances behind these systems. The rights and local communities discourse rather formulates the problem as the *lack* of what the discourse offers as a solution; the lack of clear and recognised land tenure and other rights of IPLCs, lack of governance systems and lack of political agendas to secure these.

The **problem definitions** of the discourses also had a different temporal focus. The drivers of deforestation discourse was more focused on operating rules of societies today and in the future, with less of looking back and reflecting on rectifying wrongdoings of the past. The rights and local communities discourse on the other hand went further back in time when defying the problems behind forest destruction, with a particular focus on colonialism when lands and cultures of IPLCs had been attacked by Western world colonisers. In this discourse the problem (and solutions) were in a way about claiming back something that had been lost, about restoring justice that had previously existed.

Most **convergence** and common ground between the two discourses was around the problem of unclear, non-existent or wrong kinds of land tenure and governance rules and arrangements. Overlaps can be found especially between the narrative on instrumental rights in the rights and local communities discourse, and the improved governance narrative in the drivers of deforestation discourse. Both narratives slightly brush aside power interests and the different motivations that might be upholding the governance problems and rather assume there to be a shared interest to implement internationally agreed declarations e.g. on climate or human rights, and to make sure that land governance rules are clear for everyone. Clarity, security, implementation, enforcement and improvements were key words around which these two narratives were wrapped around, making them either the most dominant narrative of the discourse (instrumental rights) or the one with most widespread support across different stakeholder groups (improved governance).

On the **solutions** to deforestation, the two discourses diverged even more than on the problems they identified, which also reveals their different fundamental goals. The solutions of the rights and local communities discourse were focused around a specific group of solutions holders i.e. IPLCs, quoted as the "guardians of the forest" who have the agency to implement the needed changes, thanks to their traditions, culture, knowledge etc. The solutions of the other discourse were less focused on a specific group of actors and their agency and more about system level changes such as economic drivers, power relations within a society and about governance rules.

This divergence between the solutions of the discourses could also be described as the drivers of deforestation discourse having a more “outward” oriented focus beyond the territories where deforestation is taking place and the local communities. The rights and local communities discourse on the other hand appears more “inward” oriented, focusing on solutions in the governance of the land areas and communities already threatened by deforestation and other pressures.

These differences in the discourses also reveal them having different ultimate objectives at the end of the day. The drivers of deforestation discourse presents the environmental objectives like protecting forests or fighting climate change as the ultimate aims of the discourse, with land rights and restoring justice for IPLCs rather as an important means to an objective. For the rights and local communities discourse, repairing injustices and giving IPLCs their rights is the ultimate objective, and protection of forests and natural resources rather a valuable side effect of this. However, if needed to be, environmental values could be sacrificed, at least to some extent, for the sake of self-determination and rights of IPLCs (e.g. in case they would want to clear forest areas).

The way these two discourses mainly frame the problems behind deforestation and their solutions, thus mostly diverged, with some linkages around the edges of the discourses, showing as overlap across specific narratives. This doesn’t necessarily mean that the discourses are in absolute conflict with each other however. Rather, they seem to largely talk past one another, which was revealed by looking at the silences identified in each discourse.

A cross cutting silence in the discourse on rights and local communities is the pressures outside of the communities and their lands that are causing deforestation and threatening their rights in the first place – something which was the main problem definition tying together the other discourse. Similarly, while the solutions of the rights and local communities discourse are very clear about who should be granted more agency and power to be able to halt deforestation, the drivers of deforestation discourse was much more elusive on where should power be shifted and who should be given more agency to face the systemic problems highlighted by the discourse.

This phenomenon of talking past each other is likely to give ample space for these two discourses to co-exist, even in the same policy arenas, without necessarily being on a crash course with each other. However, they might still be competing for attention and their spot in the limelight as the most dominant discourse.

This comparison of the two discourses has laid out relevant themes for further discussion in the following chapter. The next chapter discusses further what the two discourses add to earlier discourse analysis literature on forest governance and global environmental change (including deforestation) as well as to literature on some of the key concepts debated in academic literature on deforestation and rights of IPCLs.

6. Discussion

This thesis has described and analysed in detail two current and prominent public discourses on halting global deforestation; discourse on rights and local communities and the discourse on drivers of deforestation. The following sections of this chapter first take a look at how the discourse analysis of this thesis contributes to earlier academic literature on global policy discourses on forests and deforestation.

The analysis carried out shows that the two discourses on deforestation identified form a continuation to some the earlier described, prevailing discourses in the field but also point to an evolution of these discourses. The drivers of deforestation discourse of this thesis confirms the broadening scope of discourses on sustainable development and global environmental change to cover also the broader and deeper dynamics of global economics and markets of supply and demand. The rights and local communities discourse on the other hand confirms the deepening connections of forest discourses to discourses on rights-based approaches and development.

Finally, the chapter takes a closer look at new, societally relevant, insights emerging from this analysis into the main topics of these discourses, such as forest governance, environmental change and rights based approaches to development. Specific insights emerged on how the focus on direct vs. indirect drivers of deforestation also shapes the possible solutions offered to the problem, on additional ways neoliberalism is penetrating discourse and potential policies on communities and nature conservation, and on geographical blind spots of the discourses and their implications.

6.1 Evolution of discourses

In the light of earlier literature on discourses around global forest governance, environmental change and development (see 1.3) these two discourses can been seen forming a continuation and an evolution of some the earlier described, most prevailing discourses.

According to Arts et al. (2010) the deforestation discourse that emerged in the 1980s emerged at the same time as the broader environmental meta-discourse on ecological modernisation, and from there started to quickly merge with the broader meta-discourse on sustainable development. The analysis of the drivers of deforestation discourse in this thesisconfirms the broadening scope of the deforestation discourse in line with the meta-discourses to cover ever deeper dynamics of global economics beyond environmental issues.

The ecological modernisation meta-discourse also has commonalities with the “global environmental management” discourse identified by Adger et al. (2001) in global environmental politics, including in deforestation. Interestingly however, the drivers of deforestation discourse of this thesis didn’t anymore include local and rural communities as culprits of forest clearing due to incontrollable global phenomena like population growth. Rather the discourse puts the focus firmly on external socio-economic factors beyond the communities, showing a potential evolution from these earlier discourses.

While growing its dominance across different fields of environmental policy (e.g. Bäckstrand and Lövbrand, 2019; DiGregorio et al., 2017), the ecological modernisation discourse has also mounted growing criticism. Scholars have identified that weaker forms of this hegemonic discourse, that increasingly focus on technological solutions to environmental issues, have prevailed the most (Bäckstrand and Lövbrand, 2019; Leipold et al., 2019). In particular, several case studies have criticized the ecological modernisation discourse for its lack of engagement with

the deeper socio-economic layers of environmental problems, such as democratization or the imperative of economic growth (Bidone, 2022; Leipold et al., 2019).

The discourse on drivers of deforestation described in this thesis nevertheless shows that at least parts of this discourse have evolved to discuss also the underlying drivers, from markets to power balances. This finding is in line with the results of Mammadova et al. (2020) which identified three different discourses on leather supply chains and deforestation in Brazil. While one of these discourses (order and progress) was well rooted in the earlier ecological modernisation discourse, another, additional discourse (zero deforestation) was more focused on global market demand of commodities.

Similarly building on the review of Arts et al. (2010) this thesis confirms the deepening connections of forest discourses to discourses on rights-based approaches and development – aspects which have not yet been fully integrated in the earlier reviews of global forest governance discourses (e.g. Pülzl et al., 2014).

The discourse on rights and local communities also has many similarities with the 'populist' global environmental discourse in deforestation described by Adger et al. (2001) which also represents indigenous and local people rather as the heroes of the story, and forest and agricultural companies as the villains. At the time, these authors criticised that the major global environmental discourses avoided topics that were more critical to deforestation like economic security of locals and their access to rights. In the light of the discourses identified in this study, it once again seems that these topics have more firmly integrated into the current discourses.

The discourse on rights and local communities of this thesis could also be seen as an evolution of the forest discourse on traditional knowledge of indigenous and local communities emerging in the mid 1990s, as described by Arts et al. (2010). A predecessor of the rights discourse of this thesis can also be seen in the civic environmentalism discourse of Bäckstrand and Lövbrand (2006). However, at the time the focus of the discourse was more on participation and involvement of IPCLs in decision making over forests without explicit references to rights of these groups that go much beyond participation.

This thesis thus confirms the trend picked up in the follow up study of Bäckstrand and Lövbrand (2019) that observed that the civic environmentalism discourse had strengthened and at the same time evolved into a climate justice discourse with more emphasis on sovereignty and agency of IPCLs – similarly to the rights and local communities discourse of this study.

Corson et al. (2020) argued that the rights-based approach to conservation has granted the causes of IPLCs more legitimacy, allowing these groups to lean on several UN conventions and declarations on human rights. This is also reflected in the discourse on rights and local communities of this thesis, especially in its fundamental rights narrative which argues IPLCs to have rights to decide over forest and land areas irrespective of whether this results in instrumental benefits to the rest of the society, or not.

Rights based approaches linking to climate and environmental justice also echo arguments of historical responsibility over environmental damage and the 'common but differentiated responsibilities' language of the global climate convention, which have a central part of the argumentation of Global South representatives (Schlosberg & Collings, 2014).

in ways they could not with participatory discourses. Using it, they have brought attention to biodiversity as a basic human right and to the struggle to use, access, and own it as a human rights struggle.

Countries of the Global South have been gaining more influence in global affairs in the past decades, especially in the field of environmental policy (Allan and Dauvergne, 2013; Hurri, 2023) While governments and institutions of the Global South aren't direct voice bearers of the rights and local communities discourse of this thesis, the shared echoes between their arguments and the discourse might very well have provided more political space for the rights and local communities discourse.

Finally, looking at the six different narratives across the two discourses, some of them were more dominant than the others, meaning they appeared the most often and were used by a broad range of stakeholders. The most dominant narratives were the instrumental rights narrative and rational economics narrative, as well as improved governance narrative which was used by a varied range of stakeholders. They all built on the existing economic systems and markets, even if aiming to redirect them, highlighting the instrumental benefits of the actions promoted and could be described as the least disruptive narratives in the changes advocated.

Both of these narratives were also most focusing on the instrumental benefits of tackling deforestation, associating it for example with ideas of development, economic growth and stability or increased productivity. Tackling deforestation in its own right didn't seem convincing enough in these two popular narratives. The narratives that more clearly named and challenged power structures, resource ownership and called for power shifts (the new property regime narrative and power and vested interests narrative) were the most marginal ones within the respective discourse.

In line with earlier literature on global environmental policy discourses (Adger et al., 2001; Bäckstrand and Lövbrand, 2007), the more dominant narratives of these discourses could be characterised as more 'reformist' or 'managerial' and the less dominant ones as more 'radical' ones. This and further earlier literature (Di Gregorio et al., 2017; Nielsen, 2014) has similarly identified the more reformist or managerial discourses or narratives to be more likely the dominant ones.

6.2 New insights

The detailed description and analysis of the two discourses in this thesis not only shows the evolution of the discourses on forests, deforestation and global environmental politics, but also allows new insights into topics discussed in earlier literature on forest governance, environmental change and rights-based approaches to development.

This section looks at the contribution of this thesis to the academic literature on global forest discourses on three critical issues previously debated in the field: 1) silences around the indirect socio-economic drivers of deforestation, 2) evolving penetration of neoliberalism in discourses on global environmental conservation, communities and rights, and 3) geographical blind spots of the discourses.

6.2.1 Out of discourse, out of sight?

As outlined in the introduction of this thesis(1.1) academic literature especially in the fields of environmental sciences and economics differentiate between direct and indirect drivers of deforestation (e.g. Angelsen and Kaimowitz, 1999; Lambin et al., 2001). While earlier literature as well as policy efforts to combat deforestation focused much on the direct drivers such as fuel wood gathering by local communities, the discourse analysis carried out here shows that most of the emphasis in the discourse on drivers of deforestation today is rather on indirect and underlying drivers, such as reduced consumption of certain commodities globally.

Many of the direct drivers of deforestation on the other hand, especially those putting the blame on local communities, were mostly dismissed as misleading or less relevant in the interviews and other data of this thesis and didn't play a prominent role in these discourses as had been the case earlier (Adger et al., 2001).

Interestingly however, the solutions put forward in the discourse on rights and local communities put the focus back to factors on the land in question or in its direct proximity, like control over specific areas of land and forests through recognised tenure rights. Even if these are not exactly the same factors the lack of which is usually named as direct drivers of deforestation (e.g. lack of livelihood opportunities, resource availability or local forest management practices) they are still closely related to the immediate use and decision making by locals and communities in proximity of the forest areas in question.

This focus on direct and proximate solutions of building barricades around a specific threatened area in question, is emphasized by the silences of the drivers of deforestation discourse which most prominently includes the drivers behind the growing pressure on land and forests from which communities need to protect themselves. Those responsible for carrying out deforestation such as forest and agricultural companies, ranchers or even governments might appear in the discourse but they were not tackled in its solutions.

The focus of this discourse on proximate and local solutions, such as granting specific communities the rights to manage forest territories, is intriguing. Several studies evaluating the actual effectiveness of projects aiming to tackle deforestation on the ground either through community and rights based conservation approaches (Arts and de Koning, 2017; Chambers et al., 2019; Hajjar et al., 2016) or as part of REDD+ policies (Henders et al., 2018; Hjort 2020; Weatherley-Singh and Gupta, 2015) have raised the failure to consider the broader economic drivers of deforestation as one of the key factors explaining why such projects or policies often fail to reach their desired outcomes.

This resonates with other critical discourse analyses on communities, rights and deforestation in the literature which have argued that the focus on local forest users, farmers and communities can direct the attention away from global demand driving deforestation (Hjort, 2020; Mammadova et al., 2020). In addition, this might even put a "disproportionate burden" on the local actors in the face of global phenomena like deforestation (Hjort, 2020). Other critical literature has suggested that focus on communities and rights can leave global political economics and powers linked to them unchallenged in conservation, and environmental and development politics beyond deforestation (Corson et al., 2020; Murray Li, 2020).

What a discourse leaves silenced, is also easily presented as unproblematic within the discourse as well (see 3.3) and limits the kinds of solutions that are imagined and discussed, the scope of the changes needed and where and by whom should power be exercised for the changes to happen. This raises the question whether discourse on rights and local communities and its silences as observed in this thesisis also contributing to lack of political action and desired outcomes on deforestation when it comes to tackling the broader socio-economic drivers of deforestation.

6.2.2 Evolving penetration of neoliberalism into conservation and rights discourses

Previous academic literature on discourses concerning nature, natural resource management and development have extensively covered how today's dominant socio-economic systems like capitalism, neoliberalism and the following commodification of nature have proliferated also in global discourses on environmental protection and environmental policy (e.g. Fletcher, 2010; Humphreys, 2009;). Of the economic and governance meta-discourses underpinning global forest

discourses (Arts et al., 2010) the neoliberalism discourse has been suggested to be the most dominant one (Pülzl et al., 2014). This is also apparent in the two deforestation discourses of this thesis which repeat some of the familiar forms of neoliberalism and economic liberalism but also reveal a new, less explored form of neoliberalism.

One way, that has been described in earlier literature, in which neoliberalism shows in the discourses of this study, is the portrayal of people and communities as first and foremost economically rational actors. This is a key assumption of neoliberal discourse (Fletcher, 2010) and forms the starting point of "neoliberal nature conservation" that includes incentives such as payments for ecosystem services (e.g. Büscher and Fletcher, 2015; Dressler et al., 2010; Igoe and Brockington, 2007). Economical rationality was an assumption across the narratives in the discourse on drivers of deforestation in this thesis as well as the in narrative on instrumental rights of the other discourse.

Another way in which neoliberalism shows in the discourses of this thesis which is equally discussed in literature, are arguments to decentralise power, and reduction of state power and control which are common components of community based approaches to land or forest management (Büscher and Fletcher 2015, Dressler et al. 2010). These aspects were also key components across the discourse on rights and local communities, and appear also in the narrative of improved governance of the drivers of deforestation discourse of this study.

In addition to these neoliberal tendencies, privatisation and individual property rights are also a key element of the neoliberal ideology as means to increased efficiency and productivity (Fletcher, 2010). Similar argumentation was especially part of the most dominant narrative of the rights and local communities discourse, the instrumental rights narrative, where secure tenure rights of IPLCs were, among other benefits, seen as ways to make these areas more productive. Emergence of different forest carbon and ecosystem service payment schemes that in a neoliberal spirit aim to commodify and monetize the benefits of forests are also putting more pressure to clarify and secure property rights (Buixer et al., 2014; Pistorius et al., 2014).

Furthermore, even if the starting point of the discourse on rights and local communities is grounded in rights and justice, the regularly stated aims of this discourse are closely linked to recognising and drawing boundaries to IPLC territories and having clearly defined tenure or ownership of land, which often translates into specific ownership arrangements. Even if these new ownership and tenure arrangements were assigned to a specific community, rather than individuals or companies, these calls still closely resemble the ideas of "privatization" of resource management rather than relying on the state, public authorities or on communal decision making. Such emphasis on the efficiency and benefits of private ownership is part of not only neoliberalism but has its roots already in liberal economic theories from more than a century ago.

This thesis thus suggests that in addition to the neoliberal proliferation of environmental conservation discourses already identified in earlier literature such as decentralisation of power and viewing people solely as economically rational actors, the increasing role of rights to land, control over its resources and thus the concept of property might also open the door to further proliferation of the neoliberal ideology.

6.2.3 Geographical blind spots

The two discourses analysed in this research both have an intense focus on tropical deforestation in the global South, often taking place in areas that have been or still are under some level of colonial rule. This is also the geographic arena of most of the examples and stories appearing throughout the data.

At the same time, neither of the discourses seems to imply that they would be mostly valid only for specific regions or contexts. Rather, their tone is universal; rights of local people need to be recognised and respected across the globe, economic drivers have impacts on all corners of the planet. Still, both discourses provide little or no reflection on their implications in areas outside of the deforestation frontiers of the global South e.g. in Europe or North America where may of the advocates of both of these discourses are based.

The findings of limited geographical application of these discourses resonate with the earlier findings of Winkel (2012) who points out that discourse and policy analysis (using Foucauldian techniques) are mostly applied to studying discourses on forests in developing countries with a colonial past and colonial forestry, rather than on discourses in the Western world countries where the universities of most authors were located. When analysing the politics of tackling illegal forest logging across several countries, Leipold et al. (2016) noted that it is exactly the focus on forest protection in the “Third World” while mostly focusing the market impacts in the “First World”, that allowed the formulation of successful coalitions and discourses to support the passing of new legislation.

It has to be of course acknowledged that, by choosing discourses centred around key words like ‘deforestation’ and ‘rights based’, and by carrying out the research only in English, the data collection of this thesis as well is already prone for geographical bias. This is partly due to the FAO (2018) definition of deforestation that has narrowed the term to mostly capture forest loss and land clearing for farming in the global South, rather than tree cover loss due to intensive logging in the global North. Therefore, this thesis as well can be found guilty of not managing to develop a more comparative approaches between discourses in North and South, as Winkel (2012) had recommended.

Despite the limitations in data gathering, the North-South divide in the application (or not) of the discourses identified still merits to be acknowledged. Evolution of forest governance and deforestation discourses can be expected to follow similar paths as discourses on global climate governance, where new discourses frame climate policy as “inseparable from the political economy and larger north–south issues of poverty, trade, justice and debt” (Bäckstrand and Lövbrand, 2019). This could be predicted to mean the geographical blind spots of deforestation or rights discourses will likely increasingly get challenged. For example, further analysis of the implications of the discourses of this thesis in forests policy and governance in countries of the global North might reveal interesting insights into what granting rights to IPLCs might mean in geographies of stronger land ownership and tenure governance. Similarly, while the rights and local communities discourse is also practiced by indigenous activists from the western world like Canada, Nordic countries or New Zealand (participant observation, 22 - 23 June 2019), especially the notion of ‘rights of local communities’ in the Global North did not appear in any of the data gathered for this study.

Even if the deforestation discourses of this thesiswere often presented and perceived as global discourses, the acknowledgement of this geographical blind spot implies that use and impact of these discourses in the Global North still remains to be seen but hopefully also provides inspiration to start bridging the North-South divide in global forest policy as well as in other environmental policy research.

7. Conclusions

This thesis has looked at discourses and narratives on halting deforestation centred around two contemporary key thematics that underpin much of today's policy debates on fighting deforestation; the socio-economic, indirect drivers of deforestation and role and rights of indigenous people and local communities. Discourse analysis was used as a critical tool to dissect these discourses, each made of 3 different narratives, with a different combination of problem definitions, solutions and matters left silent.

The discourses clearly diverged in their problem definitions and solutions, as well as in where they put their focus. On the edges of the discourses however, some overlaps and linkages could also be found can also provide new indication on where broader alliances (and perhaps impact) across the discourses can be had. Such linkages were found around the problem of unclear, non-existent or wrong kinds of land tenure and governance rules and arrangements, present in the narrative on instrumental rights in the rights and local communities discourse, and in the improved governance narrative in the drivers of deforestation discourse. Both narratives framed the problem as governance to be improved or rules to be clarified, situating them on the reformist or managerial range of the discourse and thus with susceptibility to grow their dominance.

What the discourses left silent, was often the main emphasis of the other discourse – socio-economic drivers behind threatened land rights or where would the agency for the needed changes be found. In addition to the shared objective of halting deforestation, these mutually exclusive silences could be supporting their co-existence in same policy arenas, and maybe to some extent avoiding major clashes between them. However, a discourse could also lead to unforeseen or unpredicted outcomes when applied to policy or practice, which is why careful analysis is warranted. Emphasis on specific problems and solutions by a discourse can also direct attention away from other angles and options to tackle deforestation.

The in-depth analysis of these discourses and especially their silences led to 4 different insights that would merit attention in further research as well as in policy making in the field.

First, issues of power in relation to problems and solutions of the discourses, especially linked to property and land ownership, are still only timidly or marginally addressed topics in the deforestation discourses analysed in this study, potentially also in environmental discourses on other issues. This was revealed by both the dominance of certain narratives over others, as well as by the silences especially in the drivers of deforestation discourse that otherwise discussed socio-economic factors behind deforestation. As this thesis identified different narrative variations within the same discourse, it raises the question on whether the more likely dominant and reformist narratives of the discourse would also open up space for the more radical narratives, also addressing questions of power and who holds it, or whether with time the dominant narratives just 'take over' the whole discourse.

Second, the strong focus on granting rights to IPLCs to protect and manage land and forests threatened by deforestation can risk shifting the political attention further away from the socio-economic drivers of deforestation, outside of the IPLC territories. The rights and local communities discourse left notably silent how to address drivers like global trade and growing demand of agri-commodities behind deforestation. This risks shifting the political attention further away from addressing these drivers, which are already often neglected in policy making on deforestation, and

could place unreasonable expectations on IPLCs. The strong focus of the discourse on IPLC rights as the solution should be carefully balanced with other measures stemming from the research that is increasingly emphasising the role of indirect and often global drivers of deforestation.

Third, in addition to the many neoliberal tendencies that have already penetrated forest and environmental policy discourses, property rights and privatisation seem to be a strengthening key element of the neoliberal ideology emerging at least in the deforestation discourses. Earlier literature has pointed at issues like decentralisation of power from states to communities, efficiency of market-based mechanisms and reliance on economic incentives as hallmarks of neoliberalism within global environmental policy discourses so far. The discourses and narratives of this thesis also often frame recognition of land rights of IPLCs as matters of efficiency, productivity, investment security, and as a way to avoid the “tragedy of commons” through clear property rules and perhaps even privatisation. Thus, the policy discourses on rights, local communities and other land rights related topics could benefit from more critical analysis of the kind of property ownership systems, land ownership arrangements and their implications that the discourse promotes beyond specific IPLC territories.

Fourth, even if the deforestation discourses of this thesis were often presented as global discourses, their focus was mostly on tropical forests in the Global South. Their application and impacts in the Global North were hardly at all debated. A discourse on the rights of indigenous people, and especially on local communities, in countries of the Global North and areas with more fixated existing land governance systems and high shares of private property, might lead to very different outcomes than in the Global South. Similarly, discourses on the socio-economic drivers of deforestation (or other forest loss and degradation) might have very different implications in the Global North, where many countries are both high level consumers and producers, and might redirect the attention of today’s environmental policy making in those countries.

Of course, the above insights come with the caveats arising from the research methodology as well as the limited amount of the data gathered and analysed that might allow the inclination of the data to a particular direction, or certain biases. A small amount of interviewees and events for participant observation, as well as literature searches only in English all provide possibilities for limited or even biased snapshots of the discourses practiced. In addition both snowball sampling of interviewees as well as reliance on Google searches for publicly available grey literature are methods vulnerable for biases. It should also be noted that the methodological liberties of discourse analysis can emphasise these caveats. Nevertheless, this thesis provided a thorough analysis of contemporary forest policy discourses on deforestation that built a continuum on earlier global forest governance and environmental policy discourses and shows and reaffirms certain evolutions in them.

The analysis of the drivers of deforestation discourse in this thesis shows a broadening scope of the deforestation discourse to increasingly reach out beyond the direct, local drivers surrounding the areas in question. The discourse is increasingly covering ever deeper dynamics of global economics and governance systems, even at times hinting at power relations behind them. this thesis also confirms the deepening connections of deforestation, and therefore global forest policy discourses, to discourses on rights-based approaches, justice and de-colonial movements – aspects which have not yet been fully integrated in the earlier reviews of global forest governance discourses.

These evolutions in the discourses indicate that the global discourses on deforestation have even more clearly grown out of the silos of forest policy discourses, and ever more clearly reflect other societal meta-discourses. While this thesis has been a very modest attempt to take a look at the contemporary formats of deforestation discourses, it shows that a broader overall mapping of such discourses, beyond specific geographies or specific policy contexts like the UN climate negotiations (REDD+), would be warranted.

Understanding the likely impacts, power interests and possible outcomes of these discourses are becoming increasingly relevant as governments are looking into adoption and enforcement of new regulations to tackle deforestation, such as the new EU Regulation on Deforestation-free products (2023), and as rights based approaches are increasingly recognised also in global biodiversity policy making, such as in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (2022). The identified silences of the discourses can also indicate where any policy making following the rationale of one discourse or the other should should put special attention to in order to avoid any unwanted pitfalls.

Finally, despite the differing problem definitions and solutions of each discourse, they still share a common aim and call for stronger efforts to fight global deforestation and thus can hopefully become more closely integrated to cover for the blind spots of each discourse, leading to the most effective ways to tackle the major global challenge of deforestation.

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ANNEX I. Detailed overview of data sources

1. Participant observation in two conferences discussing rights of local communities and / or deforestation

LANDac Annual International Conference 2019

- 4-5 July 2019, Utrecht, The Netherlands
- Conference theme and title: LAND GOVERNANCE IN TRANSITION: How to support transformations that work for people and nature?
- Data gathered and analysed in the format of conference programme and booklet, notes from sessions and Twitter conversations with the given #landac2019 hashtag during the conference, conference report produced by the organisers after the event

Global Landscapes Forum Annual Conference

- 22 – 23 June 2019, Bonn, Germany
- Conference theme and title: Rights in the Landscape
- Data gathered and analysed in the format of conference programme, notes from sessions and Twitter conversations with the given #glfbonn2019 hashtag during the conference, and final conference outcome statement published after the event

2. Grey literature publicly available online (publications, reports, website texts)

Organisation	Type of organisation	Name of publication	Retrieved from
BothENDs and Forest Peoples Programme (2018)	Non-profit environmental and human rights organisation	Supply chain solutions for people and forests	https://www.bothends.org/uploaded_files/document/Supply_chain_solutions_for_people_and_forests_ENG.pdf
ClientEarth (2019)	Non-profit environmental organisation	Communities at the heart of forest management: How can the law make a difference?	https://www.documents.clientearth.org/library/download-info/communities-at-the-heart-of-forest-management/
Conservation International (2016)	Non-profit environmental organisation	What on Earth is 'land tenure'?	https://www.conservation.org/blog/what-on-earth-is-land-tenure

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) (2019)	Governmental agency	Secure Land Tenure Rights for all: a Key Condition for Sustainable Development	https://www.giz.de/de/downloads/giz2019_eng_Policy_brief_Secure_Tenure_Rights_for_all.pdf
European Commission (2008)	Governmental, public body	Science for Environment Policy. DG Environment News Alert Service. Special Issue: Deforestation	https://ec.europa.eu/environment/integration/research/newsalert/pdf/5si_en.pdf
Ethical Tea Partnership (accessed April 2020)	Private company	Tackling climate change and deforestation in tea communities	https://www.ethicalteapartnership.org/tackling-climate-change-and-deforestation-in-tea-communities/
FAO (2018)	Intergovernmental organisation	The State of the World's Forests 2018 - Forest pathways to sustainable development	http://www.fao.org/3/I9535EN/i9535en.pdf
Fern (2015)	Non-profit environmental organisation	Protecting Forests, Respecting Rights	https://www.fern.org/news-resources/protecting-forests-respecting-rights-options-for-eu-action-on-deforestation-and-forest-degradation-518/
Forest Peoples Programme (2018)	Non-profit environmental and human rights organisation	Closing the Gap: Rights-based solutions for tackling deforestation	https://rightsanddeforestation.org/policy-paper/closing-the-gap-online.pdf
Global Environment Facility (2014)	Multi-stakeholder financial institution	Taking Tropical Deforestation out of Commodity Supply Chains	https://www.thegef.org/publications/taking-tropical-deforestation-out-commodity-supply-chains
Greenpeace US (2009)	Non-profit environmental organisation	Slaughtering the Amazon	https://www.greenpeace.org/usa/wp-content/uploads/legacy/Global/usa/planet3/PDFs/slaughtering-the-amazon-part-1.pdf
International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) and Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact	Non-profit human rights organisation	Drivers of Deforestation? Facts to be considered regarding the impact of shifting cultivation in Asia	https://www.iwgia.org/images/publications/0576_Drivers_of_deforestation.pdf

(AIPP) (2012)			
International Institute for Environment and Development with Forest Peoples Programme (2019)	Non-profit research organisation	Securing customary rights is key to sustainable community forestry	https://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/17724IIED.pdf
Kissinger et al. (2012) for CIFOR	Non-profit research organisation	Drivers of deforestation and forest degradation: A synthesis report for REDD+ policymakers	https://www.cifor.org/knowledge/publication/5167/
Larson et al. (2016) for International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN)	Multi-stakeholder organisation	Recognition and Respect for Tenure Rights	https://www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/content/documents/tenure_rights_final.pdf
RECOFTC – The Center for People and Forests (2018)	Non-profit research organisation	Community forestry and forest landscape restoration: Attracting sustainable investments for restoring degraded land in Southeast Asia	https://www.recoftc.org/sites/default/files/public/publications/resources/recoftc-0000313-0001-en.pdf
Rights and Resources Initiative (2014)	Non-profit human rights organisation	RECOGNIZING INDIGENOUS AND COMMUNITY RIGHTS: Priority Steps to Advance Development and Mitigate Climate Change	http://rightsandresources.org/wp-content/uploads/Securing-Indigenous-and-Communtiy-Lands_Final_Formatted.pdf
The Tenure Facility (2017)	Multi-stakeholder financial institution	Indigenous Peoples, Communities Advance Their Rights Over Almost 2 Million Hectares of Forest in Six Countries	https://thetenurefacility.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Tenure-Facility-Release-Launch.pdf
United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (2013)	Government agency	LAND TENURE AND PROPERTY RIGHTS MATRIX: TREES AND FORESTS OVERLAY	https://www.land-links.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/USAID_Land_Tenure_Trees_and_Forests_Overlay.pdf
Warnholtz et al. (2017) for the World Bank	International financial institution	Securing Forest Tenure Rights for Rural Development: Lessons from Six Countries in Latin America.	http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/729241490214325301/pdf/113657-PUB-PUBLIC-PROFOR-ForestTenure-low.pdf

World Rainforest Movement (2019)	Non-profit environmental organisation	Hiding deforestation: new trends and resistances, WRM Bulletin 243	https://wrm.org.uy/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Bolet%C3%ADn-243_EN.pdf
World Resource Institute (2014)	Non-profit research organisation	Securing Rights, Combating Climate Change	https://www.wri.org/publication/securing-rights-combating-climate-change
WWF (2018)	Non-profit environmental organisation	Forests And Sustainable Development: The Role Of SDG 15 In Delivering The 2030 Agenda	https://d2ouvy59p0dg6k.cloudfront.net/downloads/wwf_forest_practice_report_hlpf_2018__forests_and_sustainable_development___the_role_of_.pdf

3. Semi structured interviews with representatives of organisations identified as central in building the discourses in question

Name	Name of organisation	Type of organisation
Anseeuw, Ward	International Land Coalition	Multi-stakeholder land rights' organisation
Duminicioiu, Ramona	La Via Campesina	Non-profit farmer's organisation
Faure, Nathalie	ClientEarth	Non-profit environmental organisation
Henriot, Clotilde		
Kusters, Koen	Tropenbos International	Non-profit research organisation
Millenaar, Iris	Rainforest Alliance	Multi-stakeholder organisation and certification program
Nilsson, Margareta	The Land Tenure Facility	Multi-stakeholder financial mechanism
Ozinga, Saskia	Fern	Non-profit environmental & human rights organisation
Polsterer, Nicole	Fern	Non-profit environmental & human rights organisation

Rice, Michael	BothENDS	Non-profit environmental & development organisation
Stam, Nienke	IDH Sustainable Trade Initiative	Multi-stakeholder private-public initiative
Younger, Tom	Forest People's Program	Non-profit environmental organisation

ANNEX II. The interview guide

Research questions

- How does the discourse on rights of local communities to land and forests articulate the role of these communities in tackling or causing deforestation?
- How does the discourse on global drivers of deforestation articulate the role of these drivers, particularly agri-commodities, in tackling or causing deforestation?
- How do these two discourses come together, or diverge, in the efforts to tackle deforestation and forest degradation?

Discourse on rights and communities

1. How are more secure land rights reasoned to fight against forest degradation or deforestation? Are interventions from outside of the communities needed to secure this?
2. What are the major obstacles for communities to have these rights, or to have them implemented? Against whom is the fight and who has the power?
3. What if communities after receiving 'rights' want to sell of their land to a company, convert it into cropland or otherwise degrade the forest?
4. What if they decide to exhaust the forests and other resources?
5. How do you see the role market access, trade and export opportunities in the 'success' of community tenure and ownership of forests?
6. What kind of rights e.g. management, ownerships, alienation, should communities have to their forests? How would ideal rights of communities be in relation to Northern private property rights?
7. Secure tenure rights are said to be needed so that there will be "investments" in the land and forest? Do you agree with this and what are those investments?
8. Do you have good examples of where the influence communities (good or bad) has been evident?

Discourse on drivers of deforestation

9. What in your understanding / area of work are the main drivers of forest destruction? Proximate and underlaying drivers?
10. Against what or whom or what do the communities need to guard the forests?
11. Are the communities themselves responsible of any kind of forest degradation or deforestation?
12. Who is responsible for stopping the different global drivers of deforestation?
13. Do you have good examples of where the influence of drivers has been evident?

Linking the two sets of discourses

14. Are more secure land rights to communities the main piece of the puzzle needed to stop deforestation, or just a small piece among many?
15. Which one do you think is politically more feasible to talk about; community rights or stopping the drivers (agro-commodities)? Is there a difference between Global South and North?
16. Why are the communities better equipped to protect the forests than any other groups, people, organisations, particularly state?
17. What do you think of the overlap or lack of it between the two narratives – communities as guardians and drivers of deforestation?
18. Would such strong advocacy on rights be needed if there were no drivers to threaten them?
19. How do you think the calls for zero deforestation in supply chains etc. affect communities, if at all?