

Cultural and Political Ecology Specialty Group of the
Association of American Geographers
Cultural and Political Ecology Newsletter
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Announcements

The CPESG Listserv (AAG-CESG-L) is for general exchange of information, news, views, debate, questions and answers by the members of the specialty group. All current CPESG members have been subscribed to the list. Go to <http://lists.psu.edu/archives/aag-cesg-l.html>, select the link to join the list, and follow the instructions. Thereafter, you can manage your subscription and access the archives through the same interface. For all queries, email mstein@usm.maine.edu. Only list members (CPESG members) can post messages. To do so, send your message to the list address: AAG-CESG-L@LISTS.PSU.EDU. Everyone on the list will receive your message so please ensure that the subject line is informative, and the content is appropriate. Contributions sent to this list are automatically archived for posterity.

Notes from the Chair - Fall 2002

Name change

As reported in CPEN #39, in mid 2002 the name of the Cultural Ecology Specialty Group was amended to the Cultural and Political Ecology Specialty Group (CAPE), with a new mission statement as follows:

"To promote scholarly activities on the cultural, demographic, economic, and political dimensions of resource use and ecological change, focusing on these issues and their linkages at and across multiple spatial and temporal scales."

A motion to this effect was passed by 36 votes to 2. This publication therefore changes its name - undramatically and without interruption - to the Cultural and Political Ecology Newsletter. - Ed.(Simon Batterbury)

Calls; conferences, meetings, publications

Introducing PLECserv

PLECserv is a free electronic list managed by Harold Brookfield and Helen Parsons of the Department of Anthropology, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University (ANU), and of the United Nations University (UNU) Project on People, Land Management and Ecosystem Conservation (UNU/PLEC). Its objective is to inform the scientific and professional community concerned with rural development and conservation in smallholder farming regions of the developing world, by calling attention to recent publications, new research methodology, and developments in agrobiodiversity, in the study of farmer innovation and farmers' technical knowledge, and in development practice and thinking generally. Although UNU and ANU sponsor the list, the content of the messages sent out reflects only the views of the authors of the original research and the list managers. They are not the official views of UNU or ANU as institutions. We will send out about two messages per month. Each message includes a summary in about 400-600 words of some recent research or other document, with information on how to obtain the document and/or contact its author. We do not post announcements about meetings, job opportunities, or institutional issues. We try to maintain a balance with regard to topic and geographical region covered. This is not a discussion list. It is a channel to help keep you informed about research relevant to work among the small farmers in the developing world. Interesting dialogues may develop between list members and the authors of the documents discussed, but we do not post these dialogues. We wish to get your feedback about the list serve itself, and your suggestions with regard to

documents that we should promote. Please send them to the listmanagers (Harold Brookfield at hbrook@coombs.anu.edu.au and Helen Parsons at hpar@coombs.anu.edu.au). Anyone wishing to subscribe to the list who receives this message within an e-mail should send an email to liang@hq.unu.edu containing the message: SUBSCRIBE PLECserv.. If this message comes as an attachment, please go to the subscription page. If you would like to terminate your subscription, either send an e-mail to liang@hq.unu.edu. containing the message: UNSUBSCRIBE PLECserv, or go to the un-subscription page.

For further information on the UNU/PLEC project, please visit the project home page at <http://www.unu.edu/env/plec/>. All issues of the project periodical, PLEC News and Views (half-yearly since 1993), can be accessed through this page. For further information on the Department of Anthropology, RSPAS, ANU, please visit the Department home page at <http://rspas.anu.edu.au/anthropology/>

Political Ecology at Home - Conference Announcement.

Sponsored by the Graduate Program in Geography Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, New Brunswick, New Jersey, USA, a meeting on March 29, 2003. The Rutgers Graduate Program in Geography invites participation in a one-day conference devoted to the theme: "Political Ecology at Home." This is the first of two events organized under the rubric: "Political Ecology at Home/Environmental Justice Abroad" (the second to be held in 2004). Recent efforts to apply the key concepts of so-called third world political ecology to core industrialized countries and parallel moves to extend environmental justice analysis to resource management conflicts on the periphery represent some of the most exciting new developments in the field. It is this rich confluence of interests that the conferences are being organized to explore.

Scholars interested in participating in the March 2003 conference should submit a 200-word abstract of a proposed paper topic and two-page curriculum vitae to Kevin St. Martin by January 15, 2003. Organizers will respond with formal invitations, including additional details on the conference format, by January 31st to facilitate post-AAG travel planning. General inquiries about the conference may be directed to any of the organizers listed below. Pending receipt of sufficient funding, as many as a dozen scholars may be invited to attend, with one or two slots reserved for advanced graduate students. Guest scholars will have all travel expenses covered by the conference and will receive a small honorarium. Conference proceedings will be featured on the Rutgers Geography Program website in order to provide access to those who cannot attend in person.

The field of political ecology has conventionally applied the tools of political economy and human ecology to the study of environmental problems in the third world. A number of recent contributions to the field, however, have argued that key political ecological concepts are as applicable to research in advanced industrialized countries as they are to underdeveloped nations. At the same time, while the First World/Third World regional binary is deemed generally untenable, many political ecologists working in this genre have sought to identify meso-scale forces that give particular regions – e.g. the “American West” or Canada’s “Maritime Provinces” – their distinctive character, arguing in effect that these forces retain considerable explanatory power in research on society and natural resources. Still others eschew regional analysis altogether, focusing instead on social relations embedded in industrialized production regimes or the unique political ecological problems of sub/urban settings. Conference organizers invite participation by critical human geographers whose work makes an original contribution to this growing field of inquiry, perhaps by addressing one or more of the following themes:

- Bounded regions and/or sub-regions
- Peripheries in the core
- Communal and local management
- Indigeneity and sovereignty
- Moral economy, justice and natural resources
- Land tenure and resource access
- Private/public property disputes
- Urban/suburban/rural divides
- Scientific narratives and ‘buried’ epistemologies
- Industrialized production regimes
- Poverty, marginality, and natural resource dependence
- Strategic uses of history and place-based social identity
- Protection interventions
- Ecological restoration
- Eminent domain and resource extraction
- Resource-specific conflicts (fisheries, forestry, range management, wetlands, etc.)
- The roles of environmental ‘experts’ and ‘professionals’
- Regulation and resistance
- Production/consumption landscapes
- Socially constructed values: economic development, aesthetic amenities and ecological services

Conference organizers: Richard Schroeder, Associate Professor and Graduate Director, 732/445-4019; rschroed@rci.rutgers.edu. Kevin St. Martin, Assistant Professor Ph: 732/445-7394; kstmarti@rci.rutgers.edu. Katherine E. Albert, PhD

Candidate Ph: 732/445-7035: kalbert@rci.rutgers.edu. Departmental fax: 732/445-0006

Conservation Ecology journal - new issue

Publication of Volume 6, Issue 2 of Conservation Ecology, a journal founded by CS Holling and others: go to <http://www.consecol.org/Journal/vol6/iss2/index.html>. Editors Lance Gunderson and Carl Folke say this issue contains "...diverse set of contributions that range from those dominated by a strongly ecologic flavor to those that explore the human dimensions of environmental problems". Includes an editorial, "In Memory of Mavericks" by Lance Gunderson, Carl Folke, Michelle Lee and C. S. Holling.

Ethnopedology - special journal issue

Edited by A. M. G. A. WinklerPrins (Geography, Michigan State) and J. A. Sandor (Iowa). Special issue of *Geoderma*: an international journal of soil science Volume 111 (3-4): 165-538 (February 2003) <http://www.sciencedirect.com>

1. A. M. G. A. WinklerPrins and J. A. Sandor Local soil knowledge: insights, applications, and challenges, Pages 165-170. 2. N. Barrera-Bassols and J. A. Zinck Ethnopedology: a worldwide view on the soil knowledge of local people, Pages 171-195. 3. Pavel V. Krasilnikov and Joe A. Tabor Perspectives on utilitarian ethnopedology, Pages 197-215. 4. E. Barrios and M. T. Trejo. Implications of local soil knowledge for integrated soil management in Latin America, Pages 217-231. 5. P. J. Ericksen and M. Ardan. Similarities and differences between farmer and scientist views on soil quality issues in central Honduras, Pages 233-248. 6. Juan S. Pulido and Gerardo Bocco. The traditional farming system of a Mexican indigenous community: the case of Nuevo San Juan Parangaricutiro, Michoacan, Mexico, Pages 249-265. 7. J. M. Grossman. Exploring farmer knowledge of soil processes in organic coffee systems of Chiapas, Mexico, Pages 267-287. 8. Roy Ryder. Local soil knowledge and site suitability evaluation in the Dominican Republic, Pages 289-305. 9. Laura A. German. Historical contingencies in the coevolution of environment and livelihood: contributions to the debate on Amazonian Black Earth, Pages 307-331. 10. Abu Muhammad Shajaat Ali. Farmers' knowledge of soils and the sustainability of agriculture in a saline water ecosystem in Southwestern Bangladesh, Pages 333-353. 11. R. W. Payton, J. J. F. Barr, A. Martin, P. Sillitoe, J. F. Deckers, J. W. Gowing, N. Hatibu, S. B. Naseem, M. Tenywa and M. I. Zuberi. Contrasting approaches to integrating indigenous knowledge about soils and scientific soil survey in East Africa and Bangladesh, Pages 355-386. 12. Nicoliene Oudwater and Adrienne Martin. Methods and issues in exploring local knowledge of soils, Pages 387-401. 13. David

Niemeijer and Valentina Mazzucato. Moving beyond indigenous soil taxonomies: local theories of soils for sustainable development, Pages 403-424. 14. Leslie C. Gray and Philippe Morant. Reconciling indigenous knowledge with scientific assessment of soil fertility changes in southwestern Burkina Faso, Pages 425-437. 15. Andrew Warren, Henny Osbahr, Simon Batterbury and Adrian Chappell. Indigenous views of soil erosion at Fandou Beri, southwestern Niger, Pages 439-456. 16. Henny Osbahr and Christie Allan. Indigenous knowledge of soil fertility management in southwest Niger, Pages 457-479. 17. Deirdre M. Birmingham. Local knowledge of soils: the case of contrast in Cote d'Ivoire, Pages 481-502. 18. S. Engel-Di Mauro. Disaggregating local knowledge: the effects of gendered farming practices on soil fertility and soil reaction in SW Hungary, Pages 503-520. 19. W. Siderius and H. de Bakker. Toponymy and soil nomenclature in the Netherlands, Pages 521-536.

Jobs/scholarships (see below)

Members' (or those who should be..) News

Tom Bassett (Illinois) has been promoted to Professor of Geography.

Kirsten Dow (associate professor, University of South Carolina) is on secondment to the Stockholm Environmental Institute in Sweden for 2002-4 to work on SEI's Poverty and Vulnerability research project.

Prof. Michael Williams, University of Oxford, retired at the end of September 2002.

Hires

Karen Bakker (junior research fellow, Jesus College, Oxford; PhD Oxford) has been appointed Assistant Professor, University of British Columbia, Canada from Aug 2002.

Philippe le Billon (research assistant, Overseas Development Institute; PhD Oxford) has been appointed Assistant Professor, University of British Columbia from Aug 2002.

Dan Brockington (post-doc, Cambridge; PhD UCL) has been appointed lecturer, University of Oxford, UK from Sept. 2002.

Alec Brownlow (abd, Clark) has been appointed assistant professor, Temple University, from Aug. 2002.

Ed Carr (PhDs, Kentucky & Syracuse) is a visiting assistant professor in the Dept. of Social Sciences and Humanities at the Madrid campus of Saint Louis University.

Robert Dull (PhD student, Berkeley) has been appointed assistant professor, Texas A&M University from Aug. 2002.

Tim Forsyth (lecturer, Geography & Environment, LSE) has shifted to a lectureship in the Development Studies Institute, London School of Economics, UK from Sept. 2002.

Craig Johnson (research assistant, Overseas Development Institute; PhD LSE) has been appointed assistant professor in political science, University of Guelph, Canada from August 2002.

Tara Maddock (PhD student, Ohio State University) began a two year post-doc at the University of Kentucky in 2001.

Andrea Nightingale (research fellow, University of Aberdeen; PhD Minnesota) has been appointed lecturer in geography, University of Edinburgh, from Aug 2002.

HariPriya Rangan (lecturer, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology) was appointed lecturer, Monash University, Australia, in 1999 and senior lecturer in 2002.

Sarah Turner (lecturer, University of Otago, New Zealand) has been appointed assistant professor, McGill University, Canada from August 2002.

Glyn Williams (lecturer, Keele University) has been appointed lecturer, King's College, University of London, UK from Jan 2003.

Book reviews & book announcements

All CPESG members, and others, are invited to submit reviews of books that would be of interest to our Specialty Group. Publishers are invited to send books to the Editor, and willing reviewers are sought.

Paul Kerkhof. 2000. Local forest management in the Sahel: towards a new social contract. London: SOS Sahel International, UK. 83 pp., maps, diagrams, photos, annexes, references. ISBN: 1 901459 28 4.

Reviewed by Daniel Klooster and Shrinidhi Ambinakudige. Department of Geography, Florida State University, Tallahassee.

This short and clearly-written book provides a broad overview of forest management in the Sahel and it makes a compelling argument for the need to promote greater community participation in forest use and management. The strongest case studies in this comparative analysis of forest management projects are from Mali, Sudan and Niger, with additional data from Chad and Burkina Faso.

This book consists of seven chapters, two annexes, a glossary, and a map showing the general locations of the nine forestry projects mentioned in the text. First, the authors describe the current practice of community forest management in fairly rich anecdotal detail, describing the varying Sahelian practices of forest ownership and usufruct rights, forest protection practices by local people, rules for protecting forest resources, enforcement, informal management plans, and organizational arrangements. Second, they sketch the region's colonial and early national history of centralized and oppressive forest bureaucracies, which routinely blamed local people for forest degradation and have seriously eroded the ability of communities to manage their forest resources. Third, they address the inadequate ecological conceptualizations behind the conventional forest management practices imported from Europe and they clarify the overwhelming importance of multi-year climate fluctuations in driving vegetation change. Fourth, they assess the importance of forests in household livelihoods, concluding that income from forest-based activities is nearly always secondary to agriculture and livestock. Finally, they discuss the current political context of decentralization and the ambiguous spaces for community participation. Glossary, currency and local measurement conversion rates, and abbreviations are provided in the beginning of the report and make it easier to read. The book avoids an academic citation style, but does provide a short list of selected references. Overall, the report is a very useful introduction to local forest management in the Sahelian region.

It is also an interesting contribution to the burgeoning community forestry literature more generally. Many of the report's observations and arguments are exact parallels of developments in this literature elsewhere: Centralized forest management inherited from the colonial period continues under national governments; forest services blame irresponsible rural people for degrading forest ecosystem without just cause; harassment of local people by ineffective and underpaid forest guards undermines the role of local people in conserving forests; forestry bureaucrats fail to understand local needs and local living patterns and are blind to potential conservation/development synergies; the best chance for reversing patterns of forest degradation lies in reversing

practices of alienating forests from the people who live in them. In addition, annexes contribute information on several techniques for participatory forest monitoring that could be useful for other experiments in community forestry.

More importantly, Kerkhof points out the need for community forestry policies to take better consideration of the role of nonresident people with competing, legitimate, claims to forest landscapes. The forest management experiences surveyed create conflicts with nomadic pastoralists who periodically graze their livestock in the forests and fields of permanent villages. Unfortunately, pastoralist's usufruct rights on the common lands are often ignored because their dependency is only seasonal. Similarly, most of the common property literature focuses on rights and rule-making among the residents of settlements, too often ignoring interactions with nomadic pastoralists. When there are two communities depending on the same common lands, however, ignoring ones' rights may result in mis-managed land resources and rural violence. This is an important contribution to the literature on community forestry.

Kerkhof's report is a good effort by an NGO -- SOS Sahel, funded by the Department for International Development (DfID), UK -- to evaluate its own activities. Although the report demonstrates an uncommon awareness of the historical evolution of their approach to forest management, it makes little attempt to evaluate the NGO's own role in that evolution. Similarly, the role of local, national and international politics in the projects described is not always clear. Like most community forestry literature, the report provides little empirical data demonstrating the effectiveness of community forestry in forest conservation. Instead, Kerkhoff implies that wood and other forest products do not generate enough value to compete with agriculture and livestock. This observation would appear to undermine the incentive structures expected to lead communities to conserve forest lands, but this theme is not developed. Nevertheless, the report makes a good case defending the capacity of local communities to manage their own forests, and it identifies a plethora of practices they already use in this task. Future efforts to improve Sahelian forest management must strengthen this local capacity, instead of undermining it like the centralized approaches of the past. This is an important message, and considering the current processes of decentralization underway in many parts of the region, it is highly opportune.

Janice Harper. 2002. *Endangered Species: Health, Illness and Death Among Madagascar's People of the Forest*. Carolina Academic Press. 273 pp. ISBN 0-89089-238-5 \$30.00 (Contents and introduction)

Reviewed by Mike Skladany, Aquaculture Project, Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, Minneapolis, MN, USA.

In *Endangered Species: Health, Illness and Death Among Madagascar's People of the Forest*, medical anthropologist Janice Harper (University of Houston) applies a political ecology of health to the lives and deaths of villagers living under the aegis of the Ranomafana National Park Project in southeast Madagascar (1). Throughout this richly textured ethnographic account, Harper raises a number of compelling questions, pursues meaning, provides interpretative analysis and provokes us in a manner that draws a sharp critical focus on some of the most compelling professional and personal dilemmas encountered by all internationally-oriented social scientists, development specialists, environmental and human rights activists.

Written in a fluid narrative style, *Endangered Species* tells a story. This story's appeal rests on the author's ability to situate the village of "Ranotsara" within a larger environmental, political, economic and historical setting - captured in her advance of a political ecology of health framework in Chapter 1. In Chapters 2-6, Harper draws multifaceted connections between the local environment, rice farming, health, and illness. From these social relations, she situates the villager's history, lineage, class, gender, age, land, labor, occupational stratification and the perpetuation of inequality within the colonial and more recently the globalization projects. Noteworthy in this regard is that *Endangered Species* crosses the terrain of limited disciplinary boundaries and geographical area specialties in a highly readable interdisciplinary and prescient manner.

The overarching backdrop of the text and its most measured criticisms are directed at a USAID biodiversity conservation project. Established in 1990, the Ranomafana National Park Project, similar to other conservation projects throughout the world, seeks to preserve non-human biodiversity by providing Western economic development incentives to 26 "pilot" project villages in and about the rainforest reserve. Ranotsara is one such village. Expatriate advisors perceived a need to halt destructive "slash and burn" rice production practices and replace this environmentally harmful to the rainforest and non-human species biodiversity with irrigated rice production and other modern income generating activities including access to health care. The project rationalizes an ascribing of fixed "ethnic" identities derived from a notion of "culture" based in agricultural modes of production. The "Tanala" are swidden (tavy) rice growers and are operationalized in project thinking as "traditional" and less amenable to modern developmental change. In contrast, the "Betsileo" are viewed as more willing to adapt to the new global biodiversity conservation regime. As Harper puts it "associating cultural practices with agricultural systems, the project conflated culture with ethnicity" (p.230). She exposes this rigid authoritative construct by illustrating that ethnic identity is fluid, circumstantial,

constructed and situated within broad historical, social, economic and political currents.

The effect of these reified ethnic-cultural divisions coupled with project dictates enforces pronounced social inequality, unequal access to land and unequal access to forest and pharmaceutical medicinal resources. In stark terms, Harper describes a number of futile attempts at healing common illnesses in Ranotsara. Over Chapters 7-8, she documents village level efforts at healing that reveals a split and multiple interpretations between and among villager's use of indigenous and western medicinal knowledge and health. Most riveting are experiences of an extraordinary high number of deaths - preventable deaths if access to better health care and medicines including western pharmaceuticals as promised by the Project were available (2). Throughout the text, expatriate park administrators are portrayed in terms of the Other, "others who seek not to harm, but to help, and in so 'helping' they have intensified the unequal divisions of land and labor that have enabled some to rise, and others to fall" (p. 3).

In Chapter 9, the culmination of Harper's presence and her study of health and the environment clashed with that of expatriate project administrators and led her to being put under surveillance, inquiries, and summoned to a meeting-cum-interrogation with expatriate park administrators that resulted in her forced leaving the village (3). More broadly, Harper's concluding arguments counter notions that forest conservation development policies leads to modern economic benefits. In pointed contrast, she argues that "because the project viewed environmental change as something that is fundamentally wrong and its social impacts uniformly experienced, it was unable to explore the ways in which local residents used their environments to maintain their health and standard of living, and ? how the social structure in which residents lived differentially influenced how they would use the local environment. " (p.230). Harper also argues that ethnicity is not a fixed and unchanging entity as assumed by project policy, "but is instead more closely associated with one's lineage, education and social status, as well as access to land and labor. Moreover, policies which presume that health and environmental perceptions have ethnic origins are potentially harmful" (p. 215). Lastly, by "removing history" from conservation projects and forcing modernization onto villagers, "the history of southeastern forests of Madagascar as sites of resistance and rebellion has been replaced by a history of primatology and soil erosion" (p. 234).

In conclusion, *Endangered Species* is a compelling and highly provocative read. There is no doubt that this volume will engage internationally-oriented anthropologists, sociologists, conservation biologists, development specialists, environmentalists, human rights activists and investigative journalists. *Endangered Species* clearly deserves a broad audience and would serve any number of advanced undergraduate

and graduate formats pertaining to African studies, development, political ecology/economy, race and ethnicity, social stratification, environmental studies, and medical anthropology/sociology. Overall, one has to acknowledge the author's tenacity in delivering this text. At the same time, the final word here remains an open-ended question. *Endangered Species* deserves to be read, thought about, debated, and especially acted upon. This reviewer anticipates a concerted and forthright response from those accountable --- and that includes all of us who enter into, and struggle with these profoundly human endeavors and affairs.

Endnotes

- (1) This project has been the focus of a number of studies. See for example Hanson 1997; Peters D., 1994; Peters W., 1999.
- (2) Harper accounts for 15 deaths amounting to almost 10 percent of the total village population during her one-year stay.
- (3) Another social scientist experienced a similar series of events prior to those encountered by the author.
- (4) See Stills (2002: 123-154).

References

- Hanson, Paul. 1997. "The Politics of Need Interpretation in Madagascar's Ranomafana National Park. Ph.D Dissertation, Department of Folklore and Folklife. University of Pennsylvania.
- Peters, D. 1994. "Social Impact Assessment of the Ranomafana National Park Project of Madagascar. Paper presented at the International Association of Impact Assessment Conference in Quebec City, Canada, 14-17 July 1994.
- Peters, W.J. 1999. "Transforming the Integrated Conservation and Development Project (ICDP) Approach: Observations from the Ranomafana National Park, Madagascar. *Agriculture and Human Values*. 16(1): 65-74.
- Stills, Alexander. 2002. "Saving Species in Madagascar," In *The Future of the Past*. New York: Farrar Strauss. Pp. 123-154.

New Books:

Martinez-Alier, Joan . 2002. *The Environmentalism of the Poor - a Study of Ecological Conflicts and Valuation*. Chichester: Edward Elgar. 1843764865 £25.00/\$ related report

Merges the concerns of a political ecology inspired by social justice with a critical look at environmental economic analysis. The book analyses several manifestations of

the growing 'environmental justice movement', and also of 'popular environmentalism' and the 'environmentalism of the poor', which will be seen in the coming decades as driving forces in the process to achieve an ecologically sustainable society. The author studies, in detail, many ecological distribution conflicts in history and at present, in urban and rural settings, showing how poor people often favour resource conservation. The environment is thus not so much a luxury of the rich as a necessity of the poor. It concludes with the fundamental questions: who has the right to impose a language of valuation and who has the power to simplify complexity? 1. Currents in the Environmental Movement 2. Ecological Economics: Taking Nature into Account 3. Indices of (Un) Sustainability, and Neo-Malthusianism 4. Political Ecology: The Study of Ecological Distribution Conflicts 5. Mangroves vs. Shrimps 6. The Environmentalism of the Poor: Gold, Oil, Forests, Rivers, Biopiracy 7. Indicators of Urban Unsustainability as Indicators of Social Conflicts 8. Environmental Justice in the United States and South Africa 9. The State and Other Actors 10. The Ecological Debt 11. On the Relations between Political Ecology and Ecological Economics

Forsyth, Tim J. 2002. *Critical political ecology: the politics of environmental science*. London: Routledge. 0415185637 £20.99/\$31.95

As political controversies multiply over the science underlying environmental debates, there is an increasing need to understand the relationship between environmental science and politics. In this volume, Tim Forsyth provides innovative approaches to applying political analysis to ecology, and shows how more politicised approaches to science can be used in environmental decision making. The book examines how social and political factors frame environmental science, and how science in turn shapes politics; how new thinking in philosophy and sociology of science can provide fresh insights into the biophysical causes and impacts of environmental problems; and how policy and decision makers can acknowledge the political influences on science and achieve more effective public participation and governance. The book focuses on a variety of global environmental problems at local and global scales, including climate change, deforestation, GMOs, desertification and pollution. It also probes activities of environmental social movements and international organizations such as the World Bank. The book offers insights into blending social and natural science approaches to environmental problems, and for merging 'political ecology' with 'science studies'. Chapter 1. Political ecology and environmental realism. Chapter 2. Environmental science and myths. Chapter 3. Environmental 'laws' and generalizations. Chapter 4. Social framings of environmental science . Chapter 5. The co-production of environmental science and political activism. Chapter 6. The globalization of environmental risk. Chapter 7. Enforcing and contesting boundaries: Boundary organizations and social movements. Chapter 8. Democratizing Biophysical

environmental science. Chapter 9. Democratizing environmental framings and priorities. Chapter 10. Conclusion: Political ecology and environmental science.

Bassett, Thomas J. & Crummey, Donald (Eds.) 2003 African savannas: global narratives & local knowledge of environmental change in Africa. Oxford: James Currey Publishers. Portsmouth NH: Heinemann. 085255429X HB, 0852554249 £45.00/£16.95

This is an interdisciplinary collection on the major savannah regions which stretch across Africa. It shows how African farmers and herders modify landscapes in subtle and unexpected ways, and outlines the importance of local knowledge for understanding environmental change. 1. Thomas J. Bassett and Donald Crummey. African savannas - contested images, contested realities - environment & society in African savannas, 2. Martin Williams changing land use & environmental fluctuations in the African savanna, . 3. Thomas J. Bassett, Zueli Koli Bi & Tiona Ouattara Fire in the savanna - environmental change & land tenure reform in northern Cote d'Ivoire, 4. Leslie Gray. Investing in soil quality - farmer responses to land scarcity in southwestern Burkina Faso, 5. Donald Crummey & Alex Winter-Nelson Farmer tree planting in Wallo, 1937-97, 6 Mahir Saul, Jean-Marie Ouadba & Quetian Bognounou. The wild vegetation cover of western Burkina Faso - colonial policy & post-colonial developments . 7. Peter D. Little. Rethinking interdisciplinary paradigms & the political ecology of pastoralism in East Africa. 8. Jean Boutrais. Pastoralism & highland savannas - grassfields (Cameroon) & Ngorongoro (Tanzania),

Rangan, H. 2000. Of myths and movements: rewriting Chipko into Himalayan history. London: Verso, and India: Oxford University Press (2001).

Much of the information from earlier CENs and CPEN issues is no longer relevant or accurate -- readers are urged to check the latest issues of the Newsletter for updated information on the listserv, officers, and calls for papers.