

5-1-2015

Gold, Water, and Governance: the Stakes in the Santurbán Páramo Debate

Amanda Hooker

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/ltam_etds



Part of the [Latin American Languages and Societies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Hooker, Amanda. "Gold, Water, and Governance: the Stakes in the Santurbán Páramo Debate." (2015).
https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/ltam_etds/12

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Electronic Theses and Dissertations at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Latin American Studies ETDs by an authorized administrator of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact disc@unm.edu.

Amanda Hooker

Candidate

Community and Regional Planning / Latin American Studies

Department

This thesis is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication:

Approved by the Thesis Committee:

Claudia Isaac, Chairperson

Les Field

Caroline Scruggs

**WATER, GOLD, AND GOVERNANCE:
THE STAKES IN THE SANTURBÁN PÁRAMO DEBATE**

BY

AMANDA HOOKER

**BACHELORS IN ENGLISH,
UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO**

THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

**Masters of Community and Regional Planning
Masters of Arts in Latin American Studies**

The University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico

May 2015

**WATER, GOLD, AND GOVERNANCE:
THE STAKES IN THE SANTURBÁN PÁRAMO DEBATE**

**BY
AMANDA HOOKER**

**B.A., English, University of New Mexico, 2003
M.A., COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL PLANNING, UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO,
2015
M.A., LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO, 2015**

ABSTRACT

Currently in Santander, Colombia, a contentious debate over the demarcation of a protective boundary of the Santurbán Páramo is underway. For the approximately 9000 páramo residents, the collateral effects of the outcome could result in dispossession of lands and livelihoods. This paper will argue that status quo Colombian territorial zoning, at the service of Canadian mining interests cast domestically as the principal “*locomotora*” (driving force) of national development, allows different expressions of state and civil society actors to either bypass or use environmental protections as means of personal gain and/or capitalist expansion. Mobilizing under a discourse of conservation, down-stream urban residents have made important advances toward water sovereignty while livelihoods of rural upstream residents become more precarious. The central research question of this paper asks: What are feasible development alternatives to large-scale mining for páramo residents and by whom are they being authored? Using field participant interviews and field research to analyze the actors involved and overarching discourses evoked in the debate, I consider the ways that environmentalism collaborates with private capital. In this light, I then question how the ambiguous role of the state may not only limit, but also open opportunities for better outcomes for

Santurbán Páramo residents. By examining the entry of the Canadian company X Oro into the páramo, this paper considers how the resultant protests by urban residents downstream have stigmatized rural residents near the mine operation. Using a cultural political economy approach, I will analyze the points at which state, civil society, and capital are colliding, reinforcing, and collaborating. I propose that a more productive way of understanding eventual outcomes and possibilities for Páramo residents considers that the central issues in the Santurbán Páramo debate not be viewed only as an arena for environmental *protection*, but rather a framework for environmental *justice* that takes full account of the socio-economic equity and access to opportunities for the people most affected. By using Jessop's Framework for transnational economic and social processes, I consider how different forms of private capital interact with state and civil society through social mobilization and environmentalism. My findings suggest ways that land-use planning driven by local actors and grounded in situated knowledge and regional/national land-equality movements could inform the process of participatory development authorship for páramo residents.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I sincerely thank the activists, community members, and professionals in Santander that shared their time and stories with me. I especially thank the organizers and organizations from the Comité and the Mesa de Trabajo who helped me arrange much of this study. While I critique some aspects of their respective organizations, it is clear that they are deeply committed to environmental protection and collaborative governance. I also thank the Bucaramanga-based human rights lawyer who took time away from his valuable work representing victims of military violence to introduce me to his friends and clients in Santurbán. I give a special thanks to M for orienting my trips in the páramo and acknowledge her courage and continued work for justice in the extrajudicial killing of a family member.

I would also like to thank my committee, professors Claudia Isaac, Les Field, and Caroline Scruggs. Each member provided support and valuable insights that have challenged me and helped me grow.

I also express very deep gratitude to my family for their support and love, and to my dear friends who have, in many ways, made this journey with me.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION.....	2
Methodology	7
Grounded Theory and Research Chronology.....	10
Thesis Organization.....	13
CHAPTER 2 THEORY AND BACKGROUND.....	15
Review of Literature.....	15
General Background.....	20
CHAPTER 3 ACTORS.....	27
Central Debate and Affected Groups.....	27
Research Limitations as Findings.....	31
Analysis of Actors.....	36
CHAPTER 4 CRITIQUE OF PROPOSED ALTERNATIVES.....	54
Payments for Ecological Services.....	56
Feasibility Study “Hoja de Rutas”	63
CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	73
REFERENCES.....	86

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1. Summary of Interviews conducted in 2013 and 2014.....	11
Figure 1. Páramo Ecosystems in Santander and Norte de Santander.	1
Figure 2. Flow of Water Through Páramo.....	22
Figure 3. Actors: Páramo Residents.....	36
Figure 4. Actors: International/National.....	38
Figure 5. Actors: Comité.....	41
Figure 6. Actors: Mesa de Trabajo (Working Group).....	49

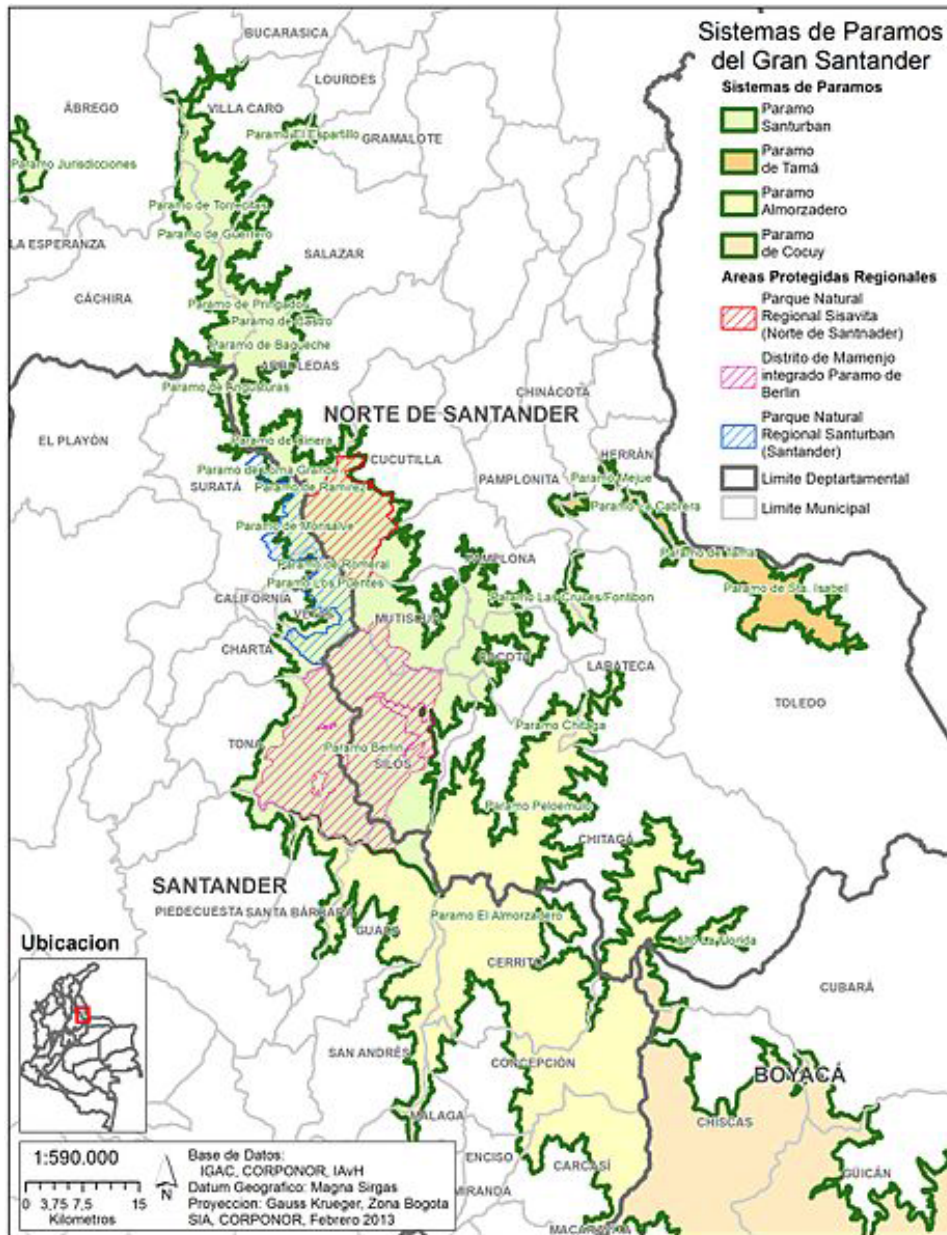


Figure 1. Páramo Ecosystems in Santander and Norte de Santander

Instituto Geográfico Agustín Codazzi (2013) IGAC, Corporación Autónoma Regional de la Frontera Nororiental

Chapter 1: Introduction

“There is no template for mining management in Colombia. There is no template for Páramo delimitation.”

The above quote by environmental economist and community planner Juan Cardenas may seem obvious and applicable to all community-based planning approaches in that every community’s needs are place-based and specific to the environmental, social, and cultural contexts in which they are situated. The second sentence of Dr. Cardenas’ quote, however, is far more problematic and speaks to the complex overlay of ecology and politics at play in Santurbán Páramo. Such official designations or park statuses have often proven permeable and unenforced. Although there truly *is* a template for demarcation that is supposedly informed by biological determinants, legislation and enforcement is highly influenced by political considerations, ones channeled less in response to the needs of local communities and more with the flow of capital. This case study asks what meaningful options will be feasible for communities when the state’s regulatory responsibility is preempted by its role as broker for transnational capital.

My research takes as its point of departure that large-scale mining inevitably has overall negative environmental and social impacts on local communities and little sustainable and equitable yield for local economies. I developed my principal research questions, “What are the development alternatives to large scale mining in Santurbán Páramo and by whom are they being authored?” with the overarching goal of showing how the international capitalist economy affects a specific ecosystem and the population that depends on it. On that basis, an inquiry into possible and viable preservation options that account for the social and economic vitality of local communities could follow. My initial intent was to raise awareness about local visions of development (specifically from

rural residents) that might contest economic globalization. My presumption was that community visions of both land preservation and productive activities would contest the National Development Plan, which bolsters transnational, large-scale mining as a main driving force of the national economy¹. My interest in the impacts of transnational mining came from earlier professional experiences in Colombia working in international advocacy for the protection of threatened communities and human rights defenders, as well as the monitoring of and educating about the adverse effects of U.S. military and economic policy in Colombia. In these roles I repeatedly witnessed the causal link between economic, and many times multinational, interests, and the complex territorial conflict that results in human and collective rights abuses. My intention to spend time interviewing residents in páramo villages was intended to give some counterweight to the visible and often vocalized urban perspective by elaborating a more nuanced and in-depth understanding of impacts and alternatives for rural residents closest to mine operations.

Currently in Santander, where the protective boundary of the Santurbán Páramo should be drawn is being ardently debated. The Santurbán Páramo, a delicate high mountain moorland, provides water for about 2 million urban inhabitants that primarily live in the city of Bucaramanga. The Canadian gold company X Oro², with exploratory but still not extractive rights, insists in an industry-funded report that its proposed area of operations is “associated with...Andean and High-Andean Forest [not] high moor [i.e. páramo] ecosystem³” (ECODES 2014). However, environmental experts and advocates

¹ *El Locomotora Minero-Energetico* named a principal economic activity in President Juan Manuel Santos’ National Development Plan, which made explicit the economic policy of his predecessor Alvaro Uribe to attract foreign, particularly, mining investment.

² The name of the of Company has been changed to protect the interest of those involved in the study

³ The report was developed by Ecodes Engineering Ltd with the support of the Colombian Chamber of Mines, Asomineros ANDI and the Association for Large-Scale Mining, SMGE.

strongly disagree. After 20 years of presence at the site, and \$200 million in investment, the company argues that the Colombian Government should allow it to stay and begin extraction. Though still in limbo, the company maintains operations to reassure stockholders of their eventual ability to fully access one of the largest gold veins in Latin America.

There are two groups of Colombian citizens flanking the delimitation debate—the urban-based Committee for the Defense of Water and Santurbán Páramo (Comité) in Bucaramanga, and a local group of rural residents of Santurbán Páramo. This second group represents around 9000 inhabitants and consists of small-scale miners and farmers who live in these mountains near the mine site. The voices claiming to speak for this group contend that their traditions and history, lifestyles and economies are not being sufficiently considered in land use management. They continue to demand their rights to decent livelihoods.

Downstream and on the opposite side of the debate, the Comité pulls together large groups from a vast spectrum of civil society actors from the departmental capital and largest city, Bucaramanga. In 2010, the Committee began formally organizing against the mine to protect their water source from cyanide and mercury contamination. So far, this group has been effective in pressuring the state not to grant extractive rights to X Oro. But X Oro, calmed by the favorable national atmosphere for large-scale mining, is not budging. This case study asks what alternatives to mining may be feasible to communities when the state's regulatory responsibility is preempted by its role as broker for transnational capital.

In trying to paint a clear picture of alternative development options, I first had to understand the nature of decision-making power, implementation and enforcement in Santander, Colombia. Pervasive political corruption and a protracted civil war frequently magnify the gap between *de jure* rights protections and *de facto* practices in Colombia. The state approach to land use and territorial planning undertaken in the backdrop of armed conflict and periods of state decentralization consists largely of making territories governable in order to expand global trade and attract foreign capital. Numerous historical and current examples reveal the local effects and costs, in both human and environmental terms, of global economy(ies) of violence. The issue of hidden interests and ulterior motives was frequently indicated or alluded to by those I interviewed, and the multifaceted frustrations that various actors faced when trying to mobilize meaningful action within these parameters hinged on questions of class, social-economic position and access to power.

In the course of field research, the following key findings of this study began to emerge:

-In the case of transnational mining in Santurbán páramo, social protest, though effective in helping protect a threatened ecosystem, has exacerbated a divide between urban and rural residents. The hegemonic/counter hegemonic tension at play in the public debate eclipses the needs of the páramo residents most subordinated. Instead of opening a region-wide participatory space that accounts for multiple conceptions of environmental subjects and identities, the urban-based environmental coalition focuses on reformist/regulatory political pressure.

-As it is evoked both by the urban-based environmental coalition, and by state/NGO led responses, environmentalism tends to align with private capital

-Responses to that pressure are giving rise to new state mechanisms along with new configurations of capital in the region, the outcomes of which result in both opportunities and obstacles for páramo residents and their sovereignty and well-being.

These findings and the obstacles I faced to my own initial research plan (to be discussed below) led me to a second research question: “How might the ambiguous role of the state not only limit, but also open opportunities for better outcomes for Páramo residents?” This second question will be discussed by analyzing the implicit and explicit development possibilities presented by 1) the Comité’s organizing points and 2) the State/NGO/UN- led *Mesa de Trabajo*. This feasibility study will hinge largely on a mix between state interventions/subsidies and environmental capitalism in the form of Payments for Ecological Services to Páramo Residents as presented by the *Mesa de Trabajo*.

This thesis represents findings from fieldwork conducted during the summers of 2013 and 2014 and considers secondary data during a historic frame until the end of November 2014. Many uncertainties remain for the future of Santurbán Páramo. At the time of writing, it is still uncertain where the protective boundary will be drawn and how it will be enforced – i.e., if indeed X Oro will have to halt operations and if and to what extent mining jobs will disappear from the area. The approximately 9000 residents who make these lands home however, do not all work for transnational mines: many are small-scale farmers/ livestock workers or artisanal miners and do not directly benefit from the mining company. As the main source of water for over 2 million inhabitants in the department of Santander (not even considering the water it supplies to the department of Norte de Santander as well) the Páramo in many ways *is* the future of public health and vitality for all residents in the region.

All stakeholders involved in the debate can agree to the central importance of protecting water. But this study will wade into the difficult question of whether by

making water a commodity, through payments through ecosystem services nature can be compelled to pay for itself in order to *save* itself, and how such a process would affect the rural residents most immediately involved. Given all the negative externalities for communities and nature that are part and parcel of globalized extractive economies, what would it take for governments to resolve to leave resources in the ground? For companies to desist? Given the stakes of the neoliberalized economy as they are, answering the questions of corporate and citizen responsibility—of who, in the end, should pay for such decisions—implicates an ever expanding web far beyond the upstream/downstream populations most immediately impacted by the mine site.

While I critique certain aspects of the social movement and governance systems involved, first and foremost, I commend the organizing efforts of the Comité in contesting the imminent threat that large-scale mining poses to the well-being of the residents of Santander. Likewise, I acknowledge the important efforts of the actors involved in the Mesa de Trabajo who are looking for creative solutions to protect land and water while still protecting feasible livelihoods for páramo residents. Based on the interviews I conducted and secondary research, I offer these reflections as constructive criticisms; an invitation for the actors involved to consider additional implications of the way discourses are framed and possible manners of making the movement and governance systems more inclusive.

1.1 Methodology

In this study, I observed that the state and civil society (as represented by the Comité) though ostensibly at odds, were in effect mutually reinforcing each other's power, and in so doing, eclipsing the voices of rural páramo residents. I chose Santurbán Páramo and

Canadian gold mining company X Oro (formerly Zstar) as an arena of investigation to re-think possibilities for recasting environmental regulation as participatory planning in areas of territorial conflict driven by transnational capital. As a response to a weak state regulatory role, my research inquiry focused on Canada's role in writing mining legislation in Colombia, civil society's response through mass protest, and the resultant frictions between urban and rural residents.

1.1a Limitations of research in conflict zones and implications as findings

I chose this area not only because of its investigative merit inherent in the urgent threat to the delicate páramo ecosystem and prime water source for 2 million inhabitants, but also for a more practical reason. It is a rural zone in Colombia that, since 2005, has been largely free of guerilla and paramilitary presences, and public order is therefore by and large secure. For the purpose of my study, then, I believed it to be an area where neither my own nor my participants' safety would be compromised. Though this sense was confirmed during my initial, exploratory field study in 2013, several conversations with rural residents in 2014 lead me to a different conclusion. I believe these security and access limitations not only constitute findings in themselves regarding the question of feasibility of participatory planning in conflict zones, but also represent an important reminder of the methodological and ethical considerations for outsiders. By opening questions of subject position, this study considers the role of expert vs. situated knowledge in community planning.

1.1b Barriers: Power-mapping vacuum

By interviewing urban environmentalist/activists, NGO project officials, and the community members most closely affected, along with evaluating demographic and other

materials, I sought to delineate the stakeholders and decision making power structures, and in this way to suggest alternatives to large-scale mining, specifically highlighting local *campesino* and small-scale miner's positions. Yet mistrust of outsiders (specifically environmentalists from nearby Bucaramanga, the largest metropolitan center in Santander), resultant fatigue from multiple community diagnostic studies with no immediate results, along with aforementioned security concerns, limited participant scope from the rural groups. It was much easier to interview a larger, more comprehensive contingent of people from the urban area. The only group I encountered from the city undertaking preliminary steps to break down this urban/rural divide was still in the process of formulating a roadmap ("*hoja de rutas*") for development alternatives for residents of Páramo towns, and was being commissioned to do so by the departmental government.

My initial research design sought to triangulate quantitative data in the form of demographic indicators and land use maps with qualitative data obtained through participant-observer interviews. However as I got further into the research, I found it necessary to employ a grounded theory approach. This method calls on the researcher to be self-reflexive and responsively modify hypotheses and methods according to an unfolding research narrative (Glaser and Strauss 1973). This approach was most useful to me in order to adapt to limitations.

While reflecting on the barriers I encountered in attempting to access accounts from rural residents themselves about viable preservation, economic and social options, it became evident that the voice of residents did not carry the same weight as that of the state and civil society in Bucaramanga. Part of my initial research design included an

analysis of official base-line indicators and demographic information from the Colombian National Department of Statistics, DANE. Early in the interview process, however, I realized that DANE does not undertake a National Census in communities that lie above 3000ft. with the justification that they are too marginal (Personal interview Instituto Humboldt). With grounded theory informing my approach, this apparent obstacle became a finding in itself regarding state demographic methods and discourses, which ultimately render certain sectors of the population invisible.

These doubts regarding local agency translated into a deeper need to understand the forces at work behind and the goals pursued by the authors of alternative development. The findings regarding this question of agency are discussed in Analysis of Actors in Chapter 3.

1.2 Grounded theory and research chronology

My research design included two research trips. During the summer of 2013, I spent two weeks in Colombia as an ‘exploratory trip.’ I interviewed several dozen people, both formally and informally, in Bogota and Bucaramanga, to understand the context of transnational mining in Colombia, legal frameworks and mechanisms, and growing national and regional social movements opposed to large-scale mining, or specifically, transnational mining. I also made a trip to the Santurbán Páramo.

True to my grounded theory approach, my focus shifted based on discoveries made during exploratory fieldwork. During my return trip during the summer of 2014, I planned to spend at least one to two weeks on the Páramo itself, interviewing the residents of towns most immediately affected. The limitations I encountered to setting up extensive interviews or focus

	2013	2014	Totals
Interviews- Bogotá			
Civil Society Bogota -Mining/Environment	14	4	18
Environmental law organization	1	1	
Small scale mining advocates	3		
Environmental/Water Protection NGO	1		
National Biodiversity/Páramo expert	1	1	
Book Presentation, Comptroller General			
Editor- Economist/Geologists	4		
Economist- Social Movement leader	1		
Film makers - about Santurban	2		
International Human Rights NGO	1	1	
Economist -Political economy of Páramos		1	
2013 Bucaramanga - Comité members	19	8	27
Environmental NGO	1	1	
Alternatives discussion group - stakeholders/experts/paramo mayors	6		
Business person/Comité organizer	1		
Hydrologist	1		
Human Rights Lawyers collective	1	1	
Comité meeting	5	5	
Social/Environmental/Legal NGO	1		
Environmental Chemist	1		
Environmental advocate	1	1	
Hydro-engineer	1		
Mesa De Trabajo		1	
Local Environmental Authority		1	1
Other Urban Residents	2	1	3
Paramo civil rights investigator	1		
Community economist		1	
Journalist/Professor	1		
Páramo Residents	3	6	9
Mining union representative	1		
Vetas- small-scale miner	1		
Surata farmers		4	
California-miners	1	2	
Mining Multinational	1	2	3
Head of Biodiversity	1	1	
President		1	
Department Senators		2	2
Totals	39	24	63

Table 1: Summary of Interviews conducted in 2013 and 2014

groups in the Páramo towns will be discussed in the following sub-section. However, the process of interviewing local environmental authorities, environmentalists, and activists in Bucaramanga for research as well as trying to set up logistics for travel, was illuminating. It allowed me to articulate a clearer understanding of the divide on the issue. I was able to observe urban coalition meetings, review documents, and interview Bucaramanga residents directly and indirectly. Additionally, during time spent in Bogota, I collected information from the National Geographical Institute, the Environmental Ministry, the Ministry of Mines and Energy and the Alexander Van Humboldt Institute (a

semi-private, semi-public entity whose mission is the protection of Colombian biodiversity and which has been tasked with advising the national government regarding biodiversity and strategic ecosystems, including nation-wide páramo delimitation/protection).

These “on-site” findings which led me to my final research question, allowed me to understand which actors were involved in authoring alternative, non-mining development options for páramo residents and which options had become tenable. The relevant actors included:

1. Comité por la Defensa del Agua y Páramo de Santurbán (Comité) – The urban-based civic movement that brings together social and human rights organizations, professors, power-brokers (Director of the Water Authority, local politicians, etc.) including key legislators. This group is calling for the government to resolve the problem.
2. Mesa de Alternativas – An environmental NGO, split off from the Comité forged an alliance with the United Nations Development Programme as a way to look for direct alternatives for Páramo residents. Eventually this effort was taken up by the Santander Governor’s office. Along with members of the academic community, this group is elaborating a roadmap (*hojas de rutas*) to put forth alternative development projects and is attempting to gain the trust of the mayors of the páramo towns.

1.2 Explanation of analytical framework and thesis organization:

1.2a State, civil society, private capital in the Global Political Economy

In trying to answer the research question regarding possible development alternatives to large-scale mining and their authorship, I had to develop an understanding of authority, jurisdiction and implementation mechanisms, stakeholder interests and ways decision-making power functions. Instead of testing a hypothesis about how decision-making happens, participant responses and my observations guided my analysis. As findings began to unfold, I found I needed to situate state, civil society and transnational

stakeholders against the backdrop of the Colombian Mining Code of 2001—pivotal legislation that both increased state power over resources and opened up the domestic extractive industry to foreign investment. The authorship of this legislation was highly influenced by the Canadian state. In the case of Santurbán, however, the power of private capital was not only evident in the activities of the Canadian mining company X Oro, but in other forms of local private capital and political influence. In both the data collection and analysis phase, I began to see the importance and complexity of how governance (and its absence) was driving the local environmental debate and its social consequences. Therefore, in order to situate actors within the multiple political, geographic and economic scales at play I deployed Bob Jessop’s discussion of the complexities of local governance embedded in a global political economy. Jessop’s theory and its relevance to this study will be introduced in the review of literature (Chapter 2).

1.2b Thesis Organization:

The review of literature (Chapter 2) will briefly introduce the relevant theory used in the context of this study. The theory will be applied throughout, especially in order to gain a more nuanced understanding of the stakeholders. After an overview of general background/context, I frame the central debate by locating the two groups most affected by situating each group in relation to the reformed mining code of 2001 and definitions of sustainability. Following that, in the Analysis of Actors section, I apply the theory introduced in the literature review to explain how power works, through what mechanisms, and toward what ends. Building on that, the feasibility of alternatives considers the two bodies of development alternatives that now exist, and considers the opportunities and obstacles that characterize each alternative path. Finally, the concluding

section gives my recommendations regarding participatory decision-making that includes páramo residents.

Chapter 2: Theory and Background

2.1 Review of Literature

In order to try to understand the specific problems of coordination, resource sharing, and concerted action, I turned to sociologist Jessop's consideration of governance systems within a global political economy. Jessop is a leading scholar in the "cultural political economy" research paradigm who has built his work on the social theory of Antonio Gramsci and Nicos Poulantzas. Jessop is a leading scholar in the "cultural political economy" research paradigm. His approach develops Gramsci's insight that the state is more than simply a governing body, but instead a social relation that runs through society in multiple manifestations, all of which are driven by certain class interests. Taking this as a premise, Jessop considers the contemporary state not just as an instrument of a particular national class, but one that is embedded in power hierarchies on a global scale. This interpretation of the global political economy is concerned with ways in which political forces (states, institutions, and individual actors) shape systems of economic exchange and the political and social affects of those exchanges. Jessop argues that the result has been a dramatic intensification of societal complexity (Jessop 2003). Considering not only economic and political, but also cultural forces, his paradigm approaches the interrelations among "semiosis, imaginaries, political economy [...] and issues of governance, government, and governmentality." (Jessop 2009) The ensuing problems that occur in economic, political, and social life, according to Jessop, cannot be managed readily through either "top-down state planning or market-mediated anarchy" (Jessop 2003, 7), but rather by a third way: governance. For Jessop, the concept and study

of governance allows the requisite flexibility to manage growing institutional interconnectedness and a dramatic increase in societal complexity (2003, 6).

The cultural political economy research paradigm is expansive and many of its expressions lie well beyond the scope of my study. However, I use it here especially to understand the ways transnational companies can succeed in mobilizing local actors at various scales. For Jessop, this happens at different tiers among a plurality of states and economic actors. The dominance of certain states on the international arena does not imply the rise of a world state, but rather a “conditional delegation” of political and economic functions in order to improve economic policy coordination across different states and scales. It is never purely a one-way, top-down or bottom-up process, but rather “multi-tiered.” (Jessop 2002, 197). For this reason, “interstate politics on a global scale [are] often marked by the international hegemony of a national state that seeks to develop a hegemonic political[/economic] strategy for the global system” (Jessop 2002, 197). Both Canada and the United States have free trade agreements with the Colombian state and a “complex articulation of governmental powers and other forms of governance” that intersect with the Colombian state (Jessop 2002, 197). Such political and economic policies and ideologies go against the overall political interests of Colombia. For example, under the terms of free trade agreements, international companies may be able to sue the Colombian state for environmental regulations that stand in the way of profit. But read as an international hegemony, the Colombian state embraces and perpetuates neoliberal ideologies and policies that are, arguably, against its best interests.

To illustrate how this example works in Santurbán, we can look at the way Canadian institutions shaped the drafting of Colombian mining legislation that favored

Canadian investment. This was buttressed by military funding from the United States that allowed the Colombian military to offer on-site protections for transnational mining operations. At the local level, the mining company itself paid for infrastructure projects in the towns of Vetás and California and bought small-scale miners titles at low prices before sellers could consider the overarching ramifications of selling their lands. Under the banner of corporate social responsibility, the companies offered social programs and economic development where state presence has been miniscule. They invested in schools, held “ferias” and installed statues, museums, and other symbolic infrastructure and cultural activities that underscored the importance of mining as part of rural residents’ *identity*. “The relative success of global actors (such as global institutions or transnational companies) in securing global governance depends on their mobilization of actors from other sites and scales” (Jessop 2006). Jessop speaks of a diffusion of discourses and actions at local levels as a “sub-hegemony” in which actors and intermediaries speak the intended hegemonic language. This is seen in Santurbán in the local mayor in California who supports the company’s presence. Additionally, the local mining union leader, and other local leaders receive material and symbolic rewards to translate neoliberal ‘language’ into local context through every day practices that align the history of mining in the region and their cultural traditions with support for X Oro (Jessop 2006). “Sub-hegemonic centers of power [...] reverberate back to the hegemonic sites [to be] absorbed into the hegemonic codes” (Jessop 2006). Therefore, local mayors, the union president, and townspeople are more willing to ignore the negative environmental externalities of business operations and defend the mine’s presence and the concept that mining, even transnational large-scale mining, is an integral part of their

identity. This is a clear example of a hegemonic irony: though many páramo residents previously owned or operated small-scale mines, many of them were duped into selling their mines to companies. Yet even though this meant the loss of financial autonomy and increased dependency on uncertain employment offered by multinationals, those miners now support and defend multinational presence. It reveals X Oro's effectiveness and influence over sub-hegemonic power nodes to perpetuate a favorable discourse, and establish allies in local governance.

Departmental regional elites from Bucaramanga, however, had little to gain from the international hegemony that favors large-scale mining, and therefore resisted that international hegemonic discourse. As will be elaborated throughout this paper, urban elites were able to mobilize a massive and diverse urban base around the material and symbolic importance of water. The effort of activating this new political community became a counter-hegemonic project at odds with the large-scale mining agenda as promoted by the National Development Plan.

My case study, then, presents an example of the complexity that arises in the fissures between the regulatory obligation of the state to its citizens and its ever-growing role as broker for private capital: in Jessop's words, the "complex dialectic of de-territorialization and re-territorialization as the taken-for-grantedness of the national sovereign state continues to erode" (2003, 7). Another element of complexity arises from juxtapositions in the temporal dimension: from "split-second timing (computer-driven trading) to growing awareness of the acceleration of [...] social and environmental change" (2003,7). The urgency of this tension can be seen in Santurbán: As global gold prices began to rise in 2000, mineral deposits that were once seen as too costly by

investors to pursue became lucrative. Not only did this include deposits that were harder to get to or further from shipping centers, it also included deposits located in ecologically fragile areas such as páramos. Furthermore, these areas are already noted to require extensive environmental management costs because they are believed to be shrinking as a result of the rise in global temperatures.

Jessop discusses governance as the “art of complexity” to be handled with requisite flexibility. In doing so, he emphasizes the importance of a Foucauldian interest in the role of power and knowledge in shaping social agents. Institutional fixes tend to orient toward *objects* to be managed, rather than *subjects* that participate, act and are represented. In the case of Santurbán, for example, this would raise questions not only of institutional compatibility, but also of the class and cultural barriers across which power and access, both individual and collective, are distributed.

Jessop uses the term “metagovernance” to characterize efforts that organize the conditions for governance and involve managing the complexity, plurality, and tangled hierarchies found in prevailing coordination systems. He notes that it must involve the “judicious mixing of market, hierarchy, and networks to achieve the best possible outcomes.” (2003, 15) But these outcomes are always structurally inscribed and cannot help but manifest entrenched bias and asymmetrical privileging. In following chapters, I will describe the efforts of the Mesa de Trabajo as an effort in metagovernance: one, that like every such practice, is prone to failure.

Jessop suggests that given that there is no manner in which actors involved in metagovernance can ever transcend their own subjectivity, those involved must assume a type of “public romantic irony” (2003, 19) for some semblance of equity and success to

be possible. This implies a high level of self-reflexivity in which those involved with metagovernance acknowledge the likelihood of failure and incompleteness, but proceed anyway. Jessop rebuts the notion that this form of irony is fatalism. It is, rather, the ability of those involved in governance to recognize their position as both observer and participant. Along with this, actors should be able and willing to acknowledge their own limitations to full comprehension about what is being observed. As such, they must make contingency plans for unexpected eventualities (2003, 17). Complexity calls for flexibility—i.e. a commitment to participatory forms of governance and embedded mechanisms of accountability. In complex public debates such as Santurbán, which involves a wide mix of actors with differing degrees of clout and voice, and varying points of convergence and divergence of interests, a self-reflexive form of metagovernance may be the only opportunity to open spaces for those traditionally excluded from policymaking to have some power over the decisions that affect their day-to-day lives. In this way, and perhaps with enough support, local actors could interrupt the manifestations of global hegemony at work in Santurbán Páramo.

2.2 General Background

2.2.1 Angostura mine site: Environmental impact and management

The Angostura mining concession solicited by Zstar⁴ Ltd (now X Oro), a Canadian mining company lies deep in the eastern Colombian Andes. Zstar sought permission from the Colombian Government to mine for gold and silver in the mountain system known as Santurbán, specifically near the stream of Angostura, from which the mining project takes its name. The unique biology of the “*páramo*” ecosystem supplies water not only to the surrounding rural mountain inhabitants, but to 2.2 million

⁴ The name of the company has been changed

inhabitants of Bucaramanga and Cucuta and nearly 20 nearby municipalities. Páramos are important and unique bio-systems found at an altitude of 3,000 to 5,000 meters and in the case of Santurbán, cover nearly 83,000 hectares. Because of their biological composition, including volcanic soils and specially adapted flora, páramos are considered natural “factories” of potable water (Maldonado and Urrea 2011). The integrity of the páramo system has major implications for the public health of the inhabitants of the entire department of Santander.

The plan that Zstar presented to the Colombian government sought to use an open-pit method to excavate more than 2,700 acres and construct two piles of tailings and a dump at an altitude of 8,500 to 13,450 feet. Cyanide is used to extract pure gold from mineral ore, and among the most harmful consequences of Zstar’s operation for the residents of Santander would be long-term exposure to the cyanide that would leach into the waters. Cyanide itself is extremely lethal, and some of the byproducts of the degradation process it produces, such as nitrates, may contaminate groundwater. A bigger issue is that the use of cyanide allows mining companies to go after very low-grade ore, which means they end up digging up more earth to produce the same amount of gold. This produces a huge amounts of tailings. Gold tailing ponds and piles are full of contaminants such as arsenic, antimony, residual cyanide, and mercury, and so must be carefully managed to avoid generating runoff or coming into contact with wildlife. These tailings can stay toxic for centuries (Rastogi 2010). As downstream residents were informed of the threats to water sources, outrage and fear began to grow.

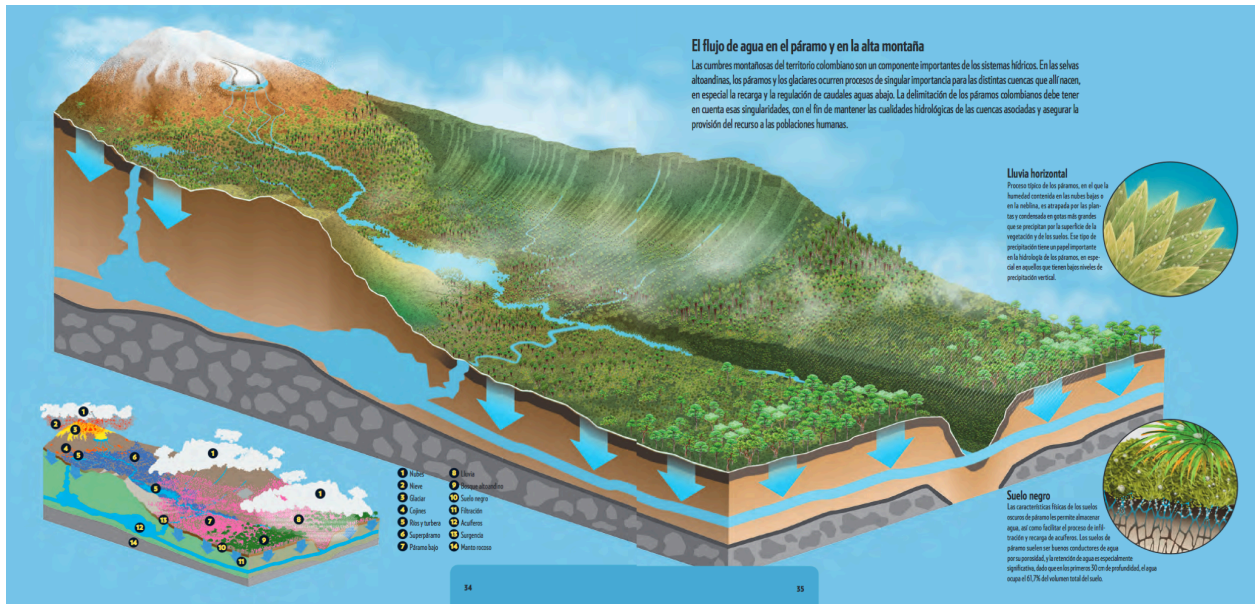


Figure 2. Flow of Water Through Páramo

Instituto Humboldt (2011) *Guía Divulgativa de criterios para la delimitación de páramos de Colombia*.

2.2.2 Civil Society Responds in Protest

In 2010, the Colombian Government approved Law 1382. It amended the Mining Code to formalize the implicit environmental protections mandated by the Constitution of 1991. The new law increased the areas protected from mine concessions, including páramo and wetland ecosystems. The companies with pending concessions panicked and pressured the government: “In the eight months between the approval and ratification of the law, the area licensed for mining increased by approximately 80%” (“Mining at what cost” 2011). Using the environmental protections of Law 1382, an urban movement began formally organizing against the mine. The Committee for the Defense of the Páramo of Santurbán pulled together large groups from a vast spectrum of civil society actors in Bucaramanga and Cucutá (both cities that would have been directly impacted by mining tailings of the Angostura project) as well as in Bogotá and Cartagena. The committee coordinated collective protest actions and most importantly generated public

outrage against the project through print and electronic media (Aranguren 2010). The organizing culminated in several mobilizations of hundreds of thousands of people in the streets of Bucaramanga, demanding that their rights to safe, cyanide-free water be protected by the state (Aranguren 2010).

Given the government's hesitation to grant the mining license because of the protests, Zstar withdrew its original project plan for an open pit, heap leach gold mine. Zstar was forced to admit the environmental damage the project would have caused to the delicate páramo ecosystem. However, in a period of a few months, Zstar changed its name to X Oro, replaced its board of directors, and recast its project as an underground, rather than an open pit mine, which would utilize a process free of any contaminating chemicals that could endanger water sources and urban protesters. Environmentalists and páramo experts contend, however, that tunneling underground into páramo wetlands over the long term will have affects similar to those of open pit mining: because the special soils are so porous, tunneling under them will simply leach and drain water away, destroying vegetal cover and soils.

Currently, X Oro remains in the area in an "exploratory" phase awaiting the national government's determination of the protective boundary around the Natural Park that, at the time of this writing, has not yet been demarcated. According to the Chief of Operations of X Oro, it has been worth waiting out the eighteen years of the pre-extractive exploratory phase. Given that their concession sits on what's been called one of largest gold deposits in Latin America, it is obviously worth the wait.

2.2.3 Páramo residents and Land

The pressures from urban protesters forced the regional environmental authority, the Corporación Autónoma Regional de la Defensa de la Meseta de Bucaramanga (CDMB) to demarcate a line that protected the Santurbán páramo from extractive and other productive activities in the Páramo. That line also calls into question the rights to decent livelihood of the residents of the ten villages in Santurbán, comprised of approximately 9000 people. Such demarcations would affect not only the two communities closest to Angostura mine site—California and Vetás—that have directly relied on jobs from X Oro and other large mining companies in the area, but would also affect the other low lying communities that consist of small-scale miners who have historically mined in cooperatives, as well as the farmers and small-scale ranchers who cultivate primarily onions and other subsistence crops.

It should be emphasized that environmental law in Colombia prohibits both mining *and* farming in páramos (Bautista 2014). From a conservation stance, the head of Instituto von Humboldt agrees that to create plans that consider the long-term protection of páramo lands, neither mining *nor* farming should be allowed, and instead PES should be prioritized.

2.2.4 Mining in Colombia, Violence, and Santurbán in Context

It is impossible to discuss mining in Colombia without situating it in the context of human rights violations. According to numerous international NGOs such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, Colombia has the worst human rights records in the western hemisphere because of, on the one hand, ongoing extrajudicial killings by the Colombian Armed Forces, and, on the other, the second highest rate of forced displacement in the world after South Sudan. According to the Colombian Comptroller

General's Office at least 80% of human rights violations that occur in Colombia happen in fossil fuel extraction and mining towns (35% of the national total towns); 87% of forced displacement happens in towns that receive royalties for mining and energy production, and 78% of crimes against unionists, 89% against indigenous and 90% against Afro-Colombians happen in mining and energy regions (Garay 2013). The case of Santurbán illustrates what Aparicio and Blaser call the "subordination of non-modern worlds by violent means" (64). Santurbán has not been a site of military campaign since late early 2000s during Operación Berlín, when the Colombian armed forces eliminated the guerrilla presence and installed two high mountain military battalions. The current situation in this area is therefore not one of state repression through military or paramilitary use of force. A more nuanced kind of violence characterizes the relations of power: the imposition of expert knowledge over the situated knowledge of the local communities. The environmental conflict has raised the possibility of restrictions on their productive activities and possible "forced displacement from 'unproductive' lands" (Aparicio and Blaser 64). The dispute between a powerful urban coalition, transnational capital, and the state produced an incongruous situation for small scale farmers: it called into question not just their livelihoods but their traditional relationship to the land.

In response to the urban protests, X Oro organized a group of its workers from California and Vetás into the so-called "Comité por la Defensa del Territorio" as a counterbalance to the urban coalition in Bucaramanga stridently pressuring for the company to leave. The other, principally farming communities of the páramo began speaking out to regional authorities, defending their rights over their land and denouncing the lack of options under prohibitive environmental demarcations. However, the

intersection of jurisdictions, and lack of clarity about the corresponding coordinating and regulatory authority (between the local environmental authority, national ministry of environment, Ministry of Mines and Energy) has thwarted residents' pursuit of their productive activities, land use planning ("Delimitación del páramo..." 2014) and ultimately, obfuscated their position in relation to the nation-state.

The debate over the protective delimitation of the Santurbán Páramo in Santander, Colombia, has become an emblematic example of civil society's attempts to conserve a fragile ecosystem from state led development investments. However, a contentious debate over the demarcation of the protective boundary of the Santurbán Páramo continues. For the approximately 9000 páramo residents, the collateral effects of the outcome could result in dispossession of lands and livelihoods.

Meanwhile, X Oro, with exploratory but still not extractive rights within the páramo, insists that its proposed area of operations are outside of what may be scientifically considered the páramo ecosystem. They argue that the Colombian Government should not, then, deny the company's environmental license.

Chapter 3: Actors

3.1 Central debate and affected groups: contested definitions of sustainability

Flanking the debate are two groups of Colombian citizens—the urban-based Committee for the Defense of Water and Santurbán Páramo (Comité) in Bucaramanga, on the one hand, against a local group that represents the interests of inhabitants of Santurbán Páramo, on the other. In this section, I will present the way the debate is being publically framed by the media, institutions and government. I will do so primarily through a discursive analysis since plans and positions are still evolving and contingent upon final decisions regarding the protective boundary. Additionally, by using a discursive analysis, I intend to avoid making claims about who is ‘right,’ and rather focus on the explicit and implicit assumptions that make each option possible, and thereby consider what opportunities and obstacles may lie in the implementation of each. This approach considers how each group is defining the concept of sustainability. Finally, I will explore the implications of the liberalized 2001 mining code through the lens of these contested definitions of sustainability. This will foreground a more in depth consideration of the actors who are authoring development alternatives in “Analysis of Actors” later in this chapter.

3.1.1 Urban Coalition: Comité por la Defensa del Agua y el Páramo de Santurbán

The civil society-based environmental movement in the city of Bucaramanga mixes activism against mining multinationals with the defense of water for present and future generations—water that seems to be insufficient to guarantee economic competitiveness or the entire regions’ ability to adapt to climate change. For this faction, the protective boundary of the páramo should be drawn considering the worst possible future

environmental scenario. Their demands, Bautista (2013) argues, have been formulated “without evidencing a clear understanding of all the implications at the local level [for Páramo residents] nor of the required transfer of responsibility.”

It was not difficult to discern the composition of the Comité. As James Haynes, a scholar of social movements notes, the ability to “build a relatively wide-ranging coalition of groups and organizations, large and representative enough to take on the state and its allies, such as large landowners, senior military figures or important business interests” is a key characteristic of successful environmental movements, especially in the developing world. (Haynes 239). The key players in the Comité come from the middle to upper ruling classes with access to resources and state power structures. The main actors include university professors, departmental legislators, NGO lawyers and activists, successful entrepreneurs and local politicians.

Using the environmental protections of Law 99 and 1382, the Committee for the Defense of Water and the Santurbán Páramo began formally organizing against the mine in 2010. As civil coalitions began to form against the mining concession in Santander, it was not just physical contamination that was important, but the *idea* of contamination that elicited cross-sector, widespread public indignation. Water’s importance, both materially and discursively, became key in mobilizing a critical mass of citizens to protest the mine. Santander residents viewed the threat the Canadian company posed to their water supply as an affront, not only to public health and natural patrimony, but also to the very terms of their citizenship. The Comité had sufficient power and capacity to contest the state and the terms of the 2001 Mining Code that claimed to protect the environment and the public health of urban citizens.

3.1.2 Comité and definition of sustainability

It was evident from my numerous interviews of members of the Comité that their definition of sustainability is firmly rooted in an environmental conservation ethic that seeks to protect the páramo and its watershed above all else. The leading members of the Comité who has initiated research about the páramo and its watershed included academics and experts in geochemistry, hydrogeology, and environmental science. Numerous entities including the Red Cross, Green Peace, and the Humboldt Institute have shown that effects of climate change are already accelerating the shrinkage of Páramo wetland areas. A study undertaken by the Colombian Ministry of the Environment determined that as much as 56 percent of the lands could be gone due to rising temperatures by the year 2050. (MAVDT 2001)

I repeatedly heard from experts on páramo biology that Colombian páramo lands are unique and some of the youngest in the world and that only certain areas in Peru may be similar. Therefore, no one is really certain how the páramo would react if it were perforated by large tunnels. For this reason, the Comité has based itself legally in the principle of precaution. Considered one of the fundamental pillars of sustainable development and the duty to protect the environment, the principle of precaution was established in Law 99 of 1993, and based on the reformed Constitution of 1991. The Law states that social and economic development of the country should be based on universal principles of sustainable development according to the Declaration of Rio de Janeiro of June 1992 regarding the Environment and Development. The law goes on say that environmental policies shall be based on scientific investigation. Further, environmental authorities and private entities will

apply the principle of precaution when there is a risk of serious, irreversible damage.

In such case, the lack of scientific certainty should not be used as a reason to postpone the adoption of effective measures to impede environmental degradation (Lora 2011).

3.2 Páramo Residents:

According to the Humboldt Institute, the Santander páramo is primarily organized by a 'local bloc' consisting of all the mayors of the provinces of Soto Norte, their municipal councils, civic representatives of small-holder mining and the farming and livestock community that are demanding their right to work. This group has proposed that the protective boundary of the Páramo correspond with that which delimits the regional park of Santurbán, which was declared in 2013 by the departmental environmental authority, CDMB, amidst great controversy. For this group, their history, lifestyle, and livelihoods are not being sufficiently considered in environmental management decisions. They are willing to be held accountable for their own environmental security and that of the city of Bucaramanga, but within certain limits. Their proposals imply an agreed upon transition that defines their commitment to contribute to the common good based on long, complex discussions and collective learning (Bautista 2013).

To the extent that the discourse of the Comité claimed to speak for all of Santander but was dominated by local power-holders, I found multiple examples of an absence of voice and representation of the páramo residents themselves. If anything, their interests were voiced through large-scale mining companies or the regional authorities that claimed to represent their opinions, abilities and/or best interests.

3.2.1 Research limitations as findings:

Specifically because of the limitations I mentioned in the Methodology section, I was not able to offer as comprehensive a portrayal of the community members and their perspectives as I had intended and stated in my initial research goal. However, those obstacles may be seen as a significant finding in themselves. Therefore, to illustrate the aforementioned absence, it is worth detailing several of the significant limitations I encountered which made it difficult to interview rural residents.

3.2.1a Pre-electoral political moment: When I arrived in June of 2014, the decision about the demarcation and terms of the Páramo boundaries that had been promised months earlier had been postponed. Many participants speculated that it was political maneuvering on the part of the incumbent candidate that did not want to alienate any voting blocs with a decision.

3.2.1b Security: After interviewing several participants in the Páramo, I learned of the possible presence of guerilla groups in the area. Though it was unlikely that they were acting in an overt manner, given the proximity to the exposed gold vein, there was high probability such actors were keeping the area under surveillance. Though it was also unlikely that they would have caused any problems for me, given the potential difficulty it could have caused possible participants, I decided not to continue with my planned interviews.

3.2.1c Paranoia: Given the difficulties of gathering first hand interviews, I contacted a local social scientist who had been contracted by a mining multinational in the area. She was supposed to interview páramo residents to use in the social analysis that must be included in the Environmental Assessment report companies file with the Ministry of the

Environment in order to undertake exploratory activities. Because she lived in another city in Colombia, she agreed to talk to me on the phone. However, after a short time and given the nature of the questions I was asking her, she became resistant to answering the questions, noting her fear that her phone line could be intercepted.

3.2.1d Base line demographics: As mentioned in the Methodologies section, my initial interviews with a project official from the Humboldt Institute revealed that the Colombian National Statistics Department (DANE) does not gather official census data for communities about 3000ft. The justification, according to the Humboldt interview is that the state considers such communities “too marginal.”

3.2.1e Unclear agendas: As I spoke with one group of four farmers from the region, they told me that their communal council had drawn up their own development plans. One farmer told me that they had contracted an environmental/social foundation from the city to do a community study and survey. Based on this, they proposed a plan to the regional environmental authority for voluntary relocation if the government would pay a fair price for their properties.

Though I was a little surprised by the apparent readiness to relocate from their home lands, the news seemed hopeful to me as an example of a completely locally-driven effort. I asked another person I met from another nearby community about the foundation contracted to do the study. He indicated that it was a company that the gold company had hired. When I was back in Bogota, I contacted the foundation directly and asked for a meeting to discuss the general context of Santurbán, never mentioning the specific work or connections they had to the region. After many unanswered emails, phone calls, and unfruitful trips to their office, the office director finally responded that

she was unable to discuss the case with me as the work they had done had been contracted by a third party and contained a confidentiality clause. When I mentioned the story to a contact from an organization in Bucaramanga they said that it aligned with information they were receiving that the gold company was trying to buy properties in other areas of the páramo to access sub-soil or even water rights. There was no way for us to verify the story in the short amount of time that I was there. However, accounts from various sources suggested that it could have been part of the company's contingency plan should environmental regulation result in obstructed access to mine certain areas: their strategy in such a case would be to get the government to pay for the relocation of families so the company could then buy up their land, and in this way maintain their presence close to that expansive gold vein.

Based on the few conversations I was able to have with those that live in Santurbán, whether they were farmers, small-scale miners, or employed by a multinational mining company, the páramo residents seemed most immediately concerned about their economic stability and employment, and their ability to continue living in region. Representatives from California and Vetás cite the fact that their hundreds year old economic and social history have made mining an integral part of their identity. Residents of other towns such as Matanza and Surata, are traditionally small scale farmers and livestock owners. They have benefited little from mining but depending on where environmentally protective boundaries are drawn, and how they are enforced, their residence and livelihoods could become as equally uncertain as those of the miners.

3.2.2 Páramo residents and definition of sustainability

I believe the aforementioned limitations speak to the lack of cohesive representation and substantive characterizations of Páramo residents' opinions and desires. Therefore, it is impossible for me to adequately answer *how* Páramo residents may be defining sustainability. Under current territorial and economic governance, as objects of management rather than actors with voices, their definitions of sustainability are foregrounded by other, more powerful actors.

Currently, Páramo residents are unsure of how protective demarcation will be drawn and how policy and administrative decisions will affect their lives. This limbo in some way mirrors and arises from the internal incoherency of public policy. For example, the Mining Code of 2001 established mining as an activity of “public goods,” while resolution 1015 of 2011, which denied Zstar the environmental license on the precept of sustainable development, acknowledges páramos as “public goods” to be protected as such. This contradiction highlights how sustainable development discourse allows for the “commoditization of nature” making it “vulnerable to the volatility of markets and corporate profitability” (Rivera-Sotelo 2012).

The United Nations Convention on Environment and Development was ratified in Stockholm in 1972. This agreement was expanded in the Brundtland Report, a report by the United Nations Commission on Environment and Development in 1987. These documents enshrine “development that meets the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs” (World Commission...2001). In his recent book-length analysis of mining policy in Colombia, Julio Fierro considers how policies of the United Nations Sustainable Development Commission actually belie the rationality of sustainability. The United Nation

recommends that the ‘international community’ help the Global South to reap the maximum benefit of their mineral resources and mitigate environmental and social harms through proper management. Fierro suggests that the UN’s discourse around sustainable extractive activities is logically erroneous—that by definition, the extraction of non-renewable natural resources can never be sustainable (Fierro 2012).

Under Colombia’s current National Development Plan that supersedes locally-driven land zoning (*Ordenamiento Territorial*) the national government is able to impose its large-scale mining agenda upon the decisions of local communities. So under this legal framework, community understandings and definitions of what is or is not sustainable will continue to be subsumed into dominant discourses that facilitate powerful economic interests.

The Humboldt Institute describes the public framing of the central debate as one between grassroots urban-based, environmental activists colliding with transnational capital in the form of a Canadian gold company. In this understanding, environmental concerns are that of the many (urban area) vs. that of the few (páramo). This utilitarian argument also underpins the Comité’s justifications and demands for environmental protections. In the following section, I argue that a more nuanced understanding is needed of the complex interplay between power, obligation and agency that are framing the debate and authoring alternatives. The state is not a monolithic entity at the service of private capital, but one that is fragmented, influenced by and at the service of competing interests. Similarly, environmental protection, as it is proposed by both civil society and state entities, does not always and only negate the interests of private capital (even in the case of the Comité), but in multiple instances collaborates with it.

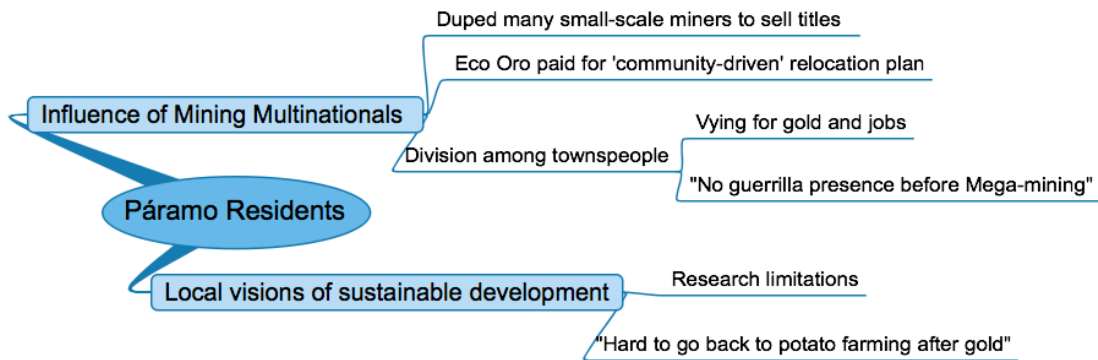


Figure 3. Actors: Páramo Residents

3.3 Analysis of Actors:

In this section I argue that it may be more useful to analyze eventual outcomes and possibilities for Páramo residents by considering that the central issue in the delimitation debate not only as ecosystem preservation, but instead as a question of governance. As introduced in the review of literature, governance presents a realm in which a consideration of environmental justice that seeks equitable outcomes and access for those most affected could be considered. Framing the debate as simply the needs of the many verses the needs of the few, eclipses the underlying class interests. Jessop's discussion of transnational economic and social processes suggests that it is more useful to understand the way different forms of private capital interact with and may ultimately orient actions of institutions and citizen groups at different scales. This is an illuminating departure point for understanding the overlay of actors in Santurbán and how they converge and diverge. As such, transnational mining in Colombia can be considered as an imbedded accumulation regime. In his discussion of globalization, Jessop acknowledges that such regimes are not necessarily monolithic entities or unilateral processes, but rather are articulated through a hugely extended network of locations and actors. Therefore

development occurs unevenly over space and time (Jessop 2002, 114). This however, is not to say that powerful interests do not align and converge – on the contrary.

Strategically, globalization refers to various actors' attempts to globally coordinate their activities in different functional subsystems. Jessop refers to such strategic coordination as “metasteering” (2002, 115). As discussed in the Review of Literature, the large-scale Mining agenda in Colombia represents an international economic hegemony. Even though the net economic, social and environmental impacts of large-scale transnational mining are arguably negative to Colombia, it favors the industry in ways that don't seem ideological but rather a common move toward progress and modernization. In his discussion of globalization, Jessop notes that implementation of international hegemonic projects is articulated through a hugely extended network of laws, agreements locations and actors, not monolithic entities or unilateral processes.

3.3.1 International/National Mining Agenda

Powerful interests and agendas are able to globally coordinate their activities in different levels of governance and subsystems. Jessop refers to such strategic coordination as “metasteering.” This kind of macro-level coordination has established large-scale mining as the hegemonic order. The example of the Canadian mining operation and its influence over the Colombian state is an example of such macro-level coordination. I believe it can be seen in the following: the role the United Nations has played in determining mining as a means of sustainable development (Fierro 2012), International Finance Corporation (the World Bank's private lending arm) in financing X Oro; the United States in heavily financing the Colombian military, which offers military accompaniment to transnational mining operations, the Canadian International Development Agency, which participated

heavily in influencing reforms that led to the 2001 liberalized Colombian mining code, and the Colombian presidential administration along with associated ministries that favor mining as means of national development and modernization. Jessop suggests that these shifts are also associated with the blurring of the state's boundaries and its growing involvement in decentralized societal guidance strategies rather than centralized overbearing coordination (Jessop 1993).

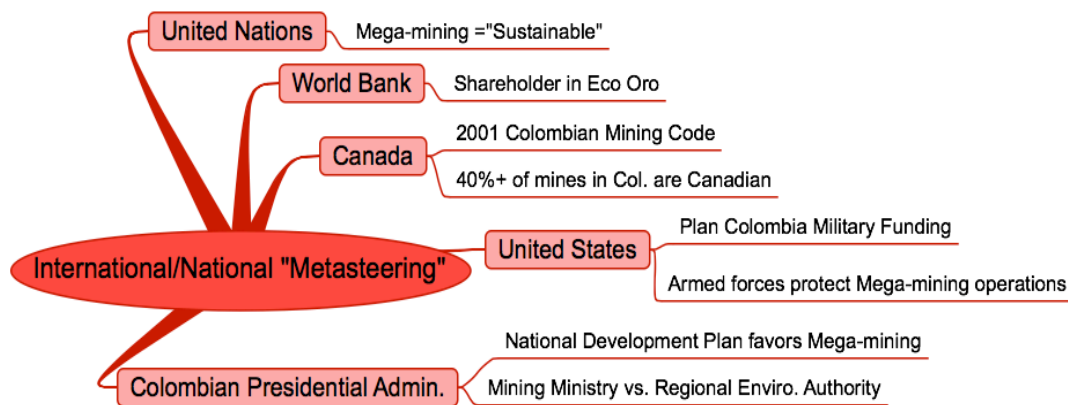


Figure 4. Actors: International/ National

On this point, I think it may be even more useful to view the state's role not specifically as societal guidance but one that is in a constant process of negotiation between capital and citizens. For instance, the 2001 Mining Code designates *in situ* mineral rights as the property of the "state" and not the "nation" of Colombia (O'Connor and Montoya 101). Before 2001, as citizens (i.e. members of the "nation") small-scale miners were allowed to mine on public lands. But the reformed mining code made the state the sole arbiter and broker of private appropriation of minerals. This left small scale miners more vulnerable to expropriation by paramilitary groups that specifically target unlicensed miners (O'Connor and Montoya 2010) or through the legalization of

concessions that were usually sold to multinational mining firms (O'Connor and Montoya 2010). The end result of this had dramatic impact on the social property relations of production in Colombia's gold fields by subordinating small-scale mining to the interests of large firms. As Jessop notes, one association of the open-ended dynamic of economic growth in a capitalist state is the need for reconfigurations when the trajectory of accumulation encounters resistance, and is marked by "waves of territorialization, deterritorialization and reterritorialization" as prevailing fixes or modes of governance begin to decompose (Jessop 2002, 19). Understood in this light, the ongoing confusion and vacillation that has marked the Colombian state's effort to delineate the boundary and terms of protection in Santurbán seem proportionate. The State must still attempt (or at least *appear* to attempt) to rectify a variegated set of interests: urban and rural citizens' well-being, nature, private capital and trade relations with Canada.

In the case of Santurbán, globalization is not only at play in the aforementioned 'metaframework' but also displays how its processes occur on various spatial scales and involve complex and "tangled causal hierarchies" (Jessop 2002, 114) rather than a simple, unilinear, bottom-up or top-down arrangements. An example of this complex "nesting" of different scales of social organization is the way in which Canadian company X Oro operates in Santander. Under the banner of "corporate social responsibility," X Oro invests in infrastructure and social improvement projects in the towns where it operates. These private investments substitute for obligations from the state, making those towns more desirable and in some cases economically and socially stable than surrounding towns. This outcome allows the company to build a case for social improvements that the company claims offset other negative environmental and

social externalities their operations cause to the entire region. These effects are ‘nested’ at the micro level of California and Vetás and the macro level through the National Mining Ministry and compliant regional environmental authority.

While such shifts sometimes emerge as products of short-term crisis management or displacement strategies, they also correspond to long-term structural changes in the global economy. At stake is not just a series of formal or tactical shifts but also the practical re-articulation of political capacities. To the extent that the process of decentralization and reformed land use zoning opened a space for more local participation in land use planning, the reformed mining code of 2001 recalibrated the Colombian state’s regulatory role in mandating environmental protection in order to broker transnational capital. The National Development Plan that promotes large-scale mining still has precedence over community-driven land-use zoning law (*Ordenamiento Territorial*).⁵

This apparent vacuum of state power to which the Comité responded, pressured the centralized state to challenge the departmental environmental authority (CMDDB) on its lax protective demarcation. However, this back and forth between the state and the

⁵ On paper, the lofty goals of the Ley Organica de Ordenamiento Terretorial would appear to empower municipalities and local communities with more say in how their lands are used. This process is meant to give more power to local entities to guide and shape which resources are made available for development. The Colombian government has started to define a process to identify areas necessary to maintain “strategic ecosystems” for the well-being of the entire country. It does so by seeking to protect the minimum area needed to maintain biodiversity and ecosystem services (Saenz et al 2013).

However, such efforts are at major odds with Article 37 of the Mining Code, which considers it impossible that regional authorities, sectional or local offices be allowed to establish areas of the national territory where mining cannot be undertaken (“Municipios no podran decider...2013). Decree 0934 of May 2013 that revised article 37 of the mining code, established that mining planning is not part of territorial planning, and as such, cannot be regulated by territorial entities. So this is to say, that as much as a municipality is opposed to mining activity, it cannot do anything to prevent the National Government gives over the mining titles in those areas. The National Development Plan (Law 1450 of 2011) establishes mining authorities in charge of writing and issuing the Mining Plan (Plan de ordenamiento Minero). The Minister of Mining also insists that the decree should not come as any surprise to mayors since it is already established in the revised Mining Code of 2011” (“Municipios no podran decider...2013).

social movement had the net effect of eclipsing rural residents most immediately affected by decisions.

3.3.2 Comité:

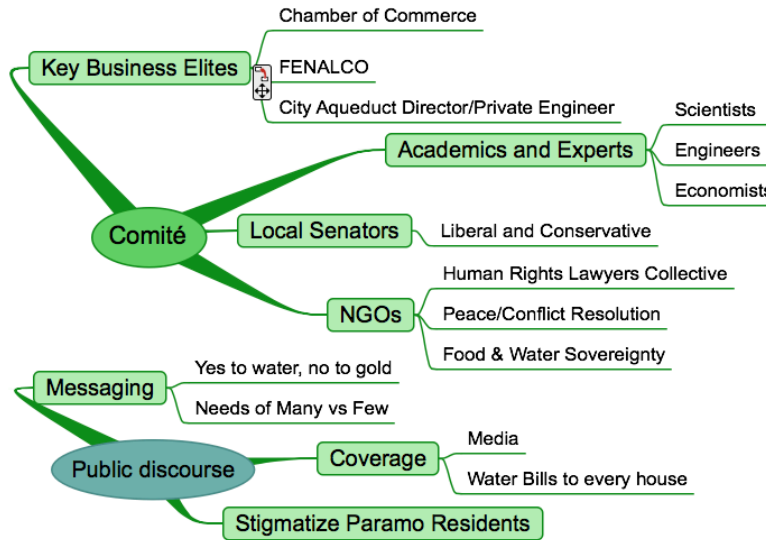


Figure 5. Actors: Comité

When the urban movement of Bucaramanga learned of the CDMB’s declaration of the Natural Regional Park it countered with the following assessment:

The 11.700 hectáreas of the Natural Regional Park of Santurbán only protects 18% of the páramo; it leaves out el sub-páramo, high Andean forest, lake systems, peatlands and aquifers at a height of 3,400 meters above the elevation established for moorland in the eastern range (3,000 m); protecting the interests of multinational mining companies, especially X Oro (Grey Star); does not protect groundwater, leaving 82% of the free territory for underground mining or as desired by multinationals. This little park does not guarantee the conservation and preservation of water that the people of the Metropolitan Area of Bucaramanga and surrounding areas need. (Communiqué, January 2013)

The Communiqué goes on to assess that “Those most affected by the Natural Regional Park decision, *besides the residents of the Bucaramanga Metropolitan Area*, are also artisanal miners and campesinos that have settled inside the National Regional Park and those that are close to the large scale mines that would have to abandon their lands.”

The assessment of the CDMB's "deception and manipulation" (Communiqué, January 2013) over the inadequacy of the protective designation concludes by calling on civil society in Santander to act on four points. These points become the central organizing points around which the Comité works:

- Demand the immediate suspension of all multinational mining activity in Santurbán and Almorzadero páramos, productive ecosystems which provide water for human consumption.
- Demand that the pertinent regional, state, and national regulatory bodies comply with their duty to protect the environment and defend ecosystems that provide water and life, and demand accountability for having ceded this water source to mining multinationals.
- Demand that the Governor of Santander, Richard Aguilar Villa, invest in social programs and infrastructure in the Soto Norte province and not transfer that responsibility to international companies.
- Publicly demonstrate to the national government and environmental authorities the societal rejection of the plans multinational mining exploitation have developed in areas that provide water and life for Northeast Colombia.

Both the symbolic and material importance of water provided the impetus to unite usually divergent factions against the corrosive, imperialistic Canadian extractive projects. As I interviewed members of the Comité, biases against fellow members on opposite extremes of the political spectrum became apparent. Overall, however, members worked together to unify the region. For example, the President of the Water Authority, a wealthy, local business owner worked closely with the Water Authority Union and agreed to use water bills as canvassing tools—one of, if not the most, effective means to distributing their message about the imminent threat that mining in the Páramos would accelerate water contamination and scarcity in the city. The Comité was also able to garner support from two vocal and respected members of the Santander Legislature who stridently worked to make the encroachment of Canadian capital on the Santurbán

páramo a departmental issue (personal communication with Departmental Senator Esmelbac). As previously mentioned, I was able to speak with several páramo residents before I decided to abandon the plan of interviewing more (see Methodology). A common thread among Páramo residents I was able to interview was an experience of stigmatization during visits to Bucaramanga --such as taxis refusing to stop for them, doctor's offices refusing to wait on them —which occurred when a Bucaramanga citizen learned they were from the páramo, and therefore assumed that they were complicit with large-scale mining. It can be said, then, that the Comité as a type of counter-hegemonic bloc proved itself capable of exercising political and intellectual resistance against the international economic hegemony that bolsters large-scale mining. Implied in the Comité's demands on the Colombian Government (which will be discussed in the following section) is an alternative economic strategy and state project that derails neoliberal decentralization and demands the removal of the multinational mining companies from the region. Their alternative calls upon the Governor to directly invest in the towns of the Páramo through a selective intervention.

The core group of organizers from the Comité are environmentalists and intellectuals, mainly from private universities, that proposed an alternative to the hegemonic project of globalized mining in their department. The initial organizers of the movement were a smaller group of members of the larger social movement in Santander. As information spread and the imminent danger to the water supply became more apparent, members with more political sway began to join. Previously, these actors did not necessarily identify with a larger social or environmental movement, but instead included members of the business class, such as the president of the Bucaramanga

Chamber of Commerce, the president of the Water Authority and other members of Santander society. As Jessop notes, “extra-economic” themes are frequent means for social mobilization that side-step class and institutional orders. As such an example, the Comité is a movement with its own politics of identity, with its own modes of domination and exclusion, and their own politics of identity and difference. Represented in this way, it ostensibly has no class belonging. Rather, their political sway and power to mobilize relies on a contextually-determined and thus hard to calculate, “provisional- class relevance.” (Jessop 2002, 32). Since members of this elite class did not have large tracts of land for productive projects in the Páramo area under debate, it was in their best interests to save the integrity of water for the city with little regard for the implications that environmental protections and restrictions could have for rural residents’ productive and life projects, while bolstering their own positions of power within Municipal and Departmental politics. In fact, one of the most vocal protestors was the president of the National Federation of Businesspeople (FENALCO) and former chair of the Chamber of Commerce, who parlayed his successes by making visible and eventually halting open-pit mining as a platform to run for departmental legislator. FENALCO’s main goal is to “speak on behalf of commerce, defend private initiatives and freedom of the market [...] with the overall goal of modernization ... and internationalization of the Colombian economy” (Fenalco 2014). Additionally, this businessperson formed a spur group of the Comité called the Civic Movement of Citizen Consciousness. Using the language of ‘civic engagement,’ this movement’s ostensible aim is reaching out to “apathetic blocks of voters and grass roots leaders that have been deceived by traditional populist politics” (“Nace el Movimiento Civico...” 2011). The group holds meetings and leads actions in

conjunction with the Comité to educate about public health and natural resource issues in the city. They have received wide local and national media coverage, and formed alliances with other business elites and local legislators. Though the Comité is a counter-hegemonic movement, it is one that is led by local business elites. The Comité organizer and leader of FENALCO is advancing his political campaign on environmental grounds, also embraces and furthers a neoliberal ideology. As such, he is able to conflate issues of public health and environmentalism, yet still further private capital interests. As such, his efforts appear “extra-economic” (non-class), while he is also, I would argue, shaping local social/civic influence and discourse, while still decrying ‘imperialistic capitalist’ mining operations in the department. The Colombian state had little option but to respond to the Comité’s pressure and at least oppose X Oro’s extractive license.

As Jessop notes, resistance movements to capitalism “often involve conflicts over the very principle of accumulation itself *rather than over class interests within capitalism*”(2002, 32). The very motto of the Comité, “Water, not gold,” is an example of how the Comité calls into question what, under the Mining Code of 2001, amounts to Global North/South exploitation and the accumulation of gold, clearly a luxury item, in an industry that pays minimal royalties and produces little value-added income for Colombian industry. This movement, however, has enabled individuals of the urban elite to consolidate influence. Additionally, it has been a project under which urban-based NGOs that are funded by European foundations have been able to justify budget increases for Comité campaign work. Furthermore, the hegemony/counter hegemony tension at play in the delimitation debate, does not address larger issues of class

inequality or the vulnerability of rural citizens as do numerous other social organizations and movements, both nationally and in the department of Santander.

The most central players of the Comité, considered in light of “class relevance,” evoke an environmentalism defined by urban scholars and market technocrats. As such, they give primacy to expert knowledge over local knowledge (Aparicio and Blaser 2008). The question then arises: Beyond, counter-hegemony, what kind of social movement *is* the Comité? Though a vast literature exists on social movements, for the purposes of this paper, I use Arturo Escobar’s definition of ecologically based movements that explicitly constructs a political strategy for the defense of territory. In Escobar’s view, social movements that struggle for environmental protection, land-rights, etc. must bring an awareness that “culture and identity are linked to particular places and territories” (Escobar 1998, 60).

Escobar’s analysis is useful in interrogating the political space the Comité has delineated in the regional and national debate over environmental protection. In Escobar’s discussion of locally based environmental movements, actors coalesce around the idea that ‘biodiversity’ is a hegemonic construct. Activists in these movements acknowledge that such discourse may commoditize nature, but can open a space for culturally based forms of development. Such locally-based projects could counteract ethnocentric and extractivist tendencies (Escobar 1998). In these terms, the Comité has done much against extractivist tendencies but not against the ethnocentrism that critically interrogates cultural forces and subject positions. The Comité has been a struggle to consolidate a counter-hegemonic project that prioritizes environmental/public health values over the logic of extractive capitalism. But as a whole, it has not challenged

permanent capitalist expansion. Even though it is firmly anti-extractivist, it is based on what political ecologist Paul Robinson calls a “conservation and control” rationale. Using such arguments, control of resources has been taken from local producers by implementing efforts to preserve an Edenic “nature.” In this process state and global interests that typically seek to preserve the “environment” disable local systems of livelihood, and socio-political organization (Robinson 180). That is to say, the Comité does not consider the embedded class and cultural differences that condition their access to decision-making power in the region, a power that may come at the cost of the interests of Páramo residents.

The Comité’s priorities, so firmly grounded in urban well-being and state driven solutions, do not contemplate local, culturally-based forms of development in the Páramo to counteract the extractive projects. By simply calling on the state to invest in infrastructure and social programs in the Páramo, they elide discussion of class. As a reformist movement, they attempt to elevate the role of the state to act in line with their own values. In this manner, the Comité was able to rally support from all sectors of the city. However, to the extent that the Comité is driven by and furthers elite class interests, the Comité could be said to constitute a kind of hegemonic bloc. When they contest the regional environmental authority’s declaration of the park line that protected Angostura mine site, they are calling on the Colombian state for social protections inscribed within a Keynesian welfare state.

In the neoliberal era, on points of human and environmental rights, states concede to enter into negotiation with ‘civil society,’ both of which use liberal, rights-based discourse. By focusing on the obligations of states, the contemporary human rights

establishment largely leaves out the responsibilities private and transnational agents to protect human rights. Human rights discourses stress economic liberty, which in practice results in individual appropriation of and control over economic resources at the expense of equality of access and wellbeing. (Charvet and Kaczynska-Nay 11). The Comité, implicitly calls upon the state to recognize that land and water are not commodities, but are collective holdings. However, by essentially eliding class issues from their actions and strident discourse against the state's extractive development agenda in Santander, the Comité does not go as far as it might to consider the voices and relevance of the Páramo residents that are most immediately affected, and may even play a role in stigmatizing residents as non-moderns.

My aim is not to negate the important role the Comité has played in countering the globally coordinated Mega-mining economic hegemony in Santander. However, using Fraser's (1995) distinction, I argue that responses to social injustice that only *affirm* a group's status or entitlements within an existing order must be distinguished from remedies that *transform* society in ways that abolish underlying generative mechanisms of injustice. Comité members were also opposed to joining the Mesa de Trabajo on ideological grounds, citing a refusal to be coopted by the governor's office. However the Comité's counter-hegemonic actions may be, ironically and in some ways, establishing a class hegemony in the department.

A final and important point to note about the Comité, is that though it is led by a unified group of actors with the means to mobilize a large group of citizens, amass political capital, and influence political clout, it would be untrue to depict it as a uniform entity composed of members with homogeneous ideologies, subject positions, and

agendas. In the interview process, I did hear several accounts from people from member organizations that were critical in one way or the other of how the Comité was operating. Several I spoke with were indeed disturbed by the process of stigmatization urban residents projected on rural residents. I even spoke with Comité members who grew up in the páramos and came from small-scale mining families, later to become Páramo defenders. These people, though always critical of X Oro's presence and the government's lack of will to change mining policies at a national level, perceived a need for a better process of dialogue between the Comité and Páramo residents – unmitigated by the multinationals in the region, or other powerbrokers such as local mayors.

3.3.3 Mesa de Trabajo:

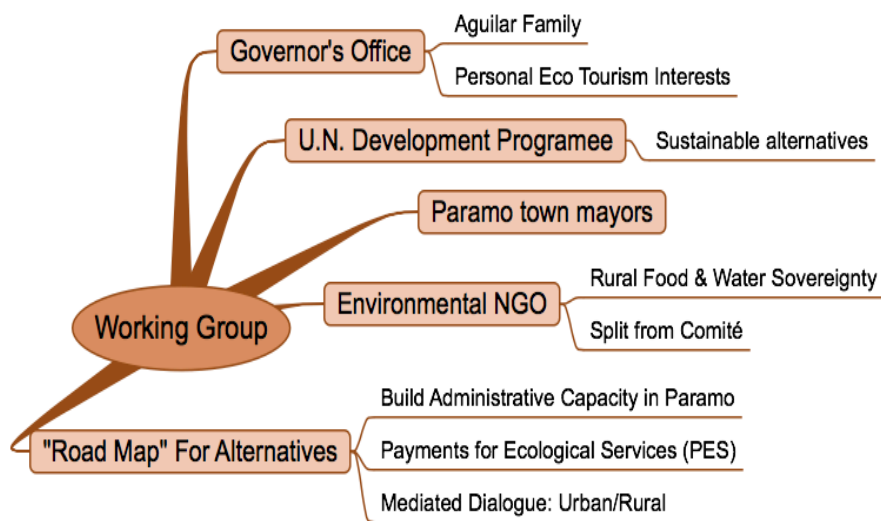


Figure 6. Actors: Mesa de Trabajo (Working Group)

As described above, the Mesa is comprised of national, local, and regional state representatives, along with the United Nations Development Program, local environmental NGOs, and professors with the goal of designing and executing sustainable “life options” for the resident of the Páramos. The Hoja de Ruta, or roadmap of alternative economic options is being developed specifically in conjunction with the

Santander Governor's Office. As will be discussed in the following section, the plan in its current form hinges on promoting a "culture of sustainability" among páramo residents through education, environmental service payments, and other productive alternatives to mining and farming like ecotourism" ("Hoja de Ruta" 2014). Payments for Ecological services – or payments for watershed services- is a managed scenario in which the downstream water users who benefit from a clean and regular supply pay upstream landowners to adopt more environmentally-friendly land use practices.

The Specific objectives of the Hoja de Rutas are composed of the following:

- Strengthen, articulate and develop institutionalization toward "Sustainable Local Management" of the municipalities influenced by the delimitation of Santurbán
- Consolidate the area of rural sustainable development for the páramo of Santurbán and its area of influence
- Design and execute sustainable life projects for the families involved in the area of influence of the Santurbán páramo
- Consolidate populations in clusters with a sustainable focus
- Design new meeting spaces for understanding and interaction between the rural communities of the páramo and the urban beneficiaries of payments for ecological services provided by the páramo of Santurbán

Tasked with finding ways to preserve the páramo, the mandate of the Mesa is to work toward the 'general economic interest' of those who live there. However, as explained in the following paragraph, concealed and vested economic interests in ecotourism and green capitalism opportunities could be embedded in and to some extent, driving such proposed institutionalization. Such questions raise speculation about the inception of what Jessop calls an "economic hegemony:" a given "accumulation strategy is the basis for an institutionalized compromise between opposed social forces for

coordinating, governing or guiding activities within and across different institutional orders around the pursuit of a particular economic trajectory” (Jessop 30). Read as an economic hegemony, the work of the Mesa would be guided by specific notions about which identities and interests can be combined within a general interest as well as setting the spatial and temporal horizons.

This ‘general interest,’ seeks to create more “institutionality toward local sustainable development” (Hoja de Rutas) and payments for environmental services (to be discussed in the following section). Though it is not made explicit in the document, there have been rumors about ecotourism development in the area as well. Recently an “alternative plan for development” was drafted by several of the mayors of the páramo towns with backing from the National Tourism Office. It sought to set-up several private businesses to create a theme-park, offering visitors the opportunity to “Be a miner for a day”(“Mineria y turismo” 2014). It is worth noting, however, the current governor of Santander has strong ties to tourism interests in the department (“Los Aguilar y los lazos del turismo en Santander” Sept 2014). Though I found no first-hand evidence, several people from social and environmental organizations mentioned that it was possible that Governor Aguilar and his family had interests in such projects in the Páramo. The extent that the institutional order created around the Mesa’s efforts “colonize the lifeworld” (Jessop 2002) of the Páramo, depends on the outcome of “political and ideological struggles around political projects and hegemonic visions as well as on the ecological dominance of the circuit of capital” (Jessop 2002, 30). That is to say, that to the extent that Governor Aguilar’s political stronghold and the ‘general economic interests’ of regional tourism are mutually reinforcing (“Los Aguilar y los lazos del turismo en

Santander” Sept 2014) asymmetrical accumulation and regulation could easily go hand in hand.

“Accumulation strategies involve efforts to resolve conflicts between the needs of capital in general and particular capitals by constructing an imagined ‘general economic interest’ that will always and necessarily marginalize some capitalist interests” (Jessop 30). It is difficult to quantify the extent to which private economic interests may be a motivating force behind the Governor’s management efforts in alternative economic projects in Santurbán Páramo. As noted previously, the pre-electoral political context that motivates the Santos administration to neither alienate the small farmer voting block nor the environmentalists set the effort in motion on the part of the National Ministry of the Environment. The possible regional economic interests at play may diverge from Santos’ overall discourse and ‘general economic interest,’ which names mining a benefit to the nation as a whole. The Comité’s pressure, may indeed leave little option for the National Government than to designate the Páramo as protected and conceivably deny X Oro its environmental license—space enough for the governor’s office to define the ‘general economic interest’ of the region as alternative, eco-friendly development. However, if not situated in an democratic space of governance that allow adequate levels of transparency and oversight, the Governor’s development interests could easily overshadow possibilities for real environmentally sustainable economic development possibilities for the páramo.

3.3.4 Conclusion:

Under neoliberal structuring, the Colombian state recalibrated its regulatory role in order to broker transnational capital. In the case of Santurbán, this created a vacuum to

which the Comité was prompted to respond. As a counter-hegemonic movement the Comité has succeeded in holding the state accountable for its protection over the environment. However, the tension produced in the hegemony/counter hegemony struggle has also eclipsed the needs and agency of rural residents most immediately affected by decisions. Furthermore, in the case of transnational mining in Santurbán páramo, social protest, though effective in helping protect a threatened ecosystem, has exacerbated a divide between urban and rural residents. Instead of opening a region-wide participatory space that accounts for multiple conceptions of environmental subjects and identities, the urban-based environmental coalition focuses on reformist/regulatory political pressure.

Civil society's interactions with the state in this case are itself a tangled hierarchy at work in both the Comité and the Mesa. Just as the state is in a constant negotiation with the interests of capital and its citizens, so too is civil society rife with ambiguity. As Jessop notes, it is both the site where colonizing forces seek to integrate into an institutional order, and *also* the site of struggles to resist and roll back such attempts in defense of interests such as the environment (Jessop 32). The way that environmentalism is evoked and at work in both the Comité and the Mesa—be it through advancement of political class and local business positions or ecotourism and other forms of green capitalism and international financing—can be seen to collaborate with private capital to the same extent it may be seen to oppose it.

The following chapter considers the following question about this dynamic: How might these ambiguities both limit and open opportunities for Páramo residents?

Chapter 4: Critique of Proposed Alternatives

Based on the prior analysis of actors, in this section I will compare and contrast the Comité's organizing points and the Mesa de Trabajo' proposed Hoja de Rutas. I will consider the implicit and explicit alternative development models being proposed to evaluate their feasibility and assess and propose possible outcomes for Páramo residents. Though development and sustainability are defined differently and contested in manifold ways by each actor, the central debate coalesces around the possibility of Payments for Ecological Services (PES) to Páramo residents. PES programs seek to capture part of the benefits derived from environmental services (such as clean water) and channel them to natural resource managers. Since these managers are usually the local residents who generate these services, the aim is to increase their incentive toward conservation. (Pagiola 2005). In many cases, managers suffer opportunity costs by not undertaking conservation. In Santurbán, this may be true for small-scale farmers, but PES would have to be exceptionally high to generate opportunity costs for those with access to gold to forego mining.

4.1 Mesa de Trabajo- chronology and background of Hoja de Rutas

Months before the presidential election of June 2014, the National Ministry of the Environment and Agriculture as well as the Colombian Institute of Rural Development (INCODER), created a "working group" along with Santander Departmental government and the mayors of the town in Soto Norte and towns affected in the department of Norte de Santander. The new working group was a response to the outcry by a large group of onion farmers in Norte de Santander, in the adjacent Páramo of Berlin who will also be affected by the delimitation debate. Its purpose was to facilitate the national government

offices' work with state and local governments in order to jointly develop guidelines for territorial zoning (i.e. delimitation) of the páramo. The stated purpose of the work group is to “guide the development of productive projects, family farming and restructuring (read “modernizing”) to gradually phase out productive activities that generate high impact to the ecosystem.” (Ministeros de Agricultura y ...” August 4, 2014).

The United Nations Development Department along with Bucaramanga-based environmental organization, joined the process and formally began writing a guiding document with the title: “Road map for the formulation of a strategy that guides the implementation of sustainably oriented life options for the communities involved in the delimitation of the Santurbán Páramo.” It includes a promise to devise a strategy for ecological service payments for the páramo residents (dubbed “planters of the páramo,” a play on “planters of peace”).

Driven primarily by national, departmental, and regional state officials, the Mesa also incorporates the United Nations, Bogotá and Bucaramanga based academics and NGOs. Their primary goal as stated in the “hoja de rutas” is to “strengthen, articulate and develop the institutionality of the municipal areas of Santurbán toward ‘Local Sustainable Management’ (*Gestión Local Sostenible*). The contents and implications of the ‘hoja de rutas’ will be discussed in depth in the following section. The mix of actors involved and potentially involved in the Mesa, though generally connected to government, make it more challenging to characterize from the perspective of one institutional order. However, the efforts undertaken can easily be said to represent an effort of metagovernance (see Review of Literature).

Dr. Cardenas was asked by the National Environmental Minister to facilitate a workshop among various stakeholders, from campesinos to mining company representatives in a “mesa de dialogo,” in an attempt to resolve the social and economic conflicts involved in the páramo delimitation debate. The workshop included an activity predicated on the idea that if everyone put all their game pieces in play, everyone would double their winnings, whereas, if people reserved pieces for themselves, everyone loses. The pivotal point, as Dr. Cardenas explained to me, around which everyone could agree was around the importance of protecting water. This point of (at least theoretical) consensus was no doubt vital to stress to all actors involved. Dr. Cardenas also told me that his discussion with the Environmental Minister regarding how the páramo delimitation line is drawn and protection enforcement pursued hinged on benefiting the needs of the many over the needs of the few. So that could mean that the farmers protesting in the Páramo de Berlin (also affected by delimitation), because they comprised a larger population, would be considered with more weight. This also came at a moment before the National Presidential election, when the threat of continued protest by onion farmers in the Páramo de Berlin, backed by the agricultural movement, represented a risk for the incumbent presidential candidate Juan Manuel Santos.

4.2 Payments for Ecological Services:

PES is a market-based approach to conservation financing based on the twin principles that, on the one hand, those who benefit from environmental services should pay for them, and, on the other, that those who contribute to generating these services should be compensated for providing them (Pagiola et al., 2005). For example, users of clean water should pay upstream land users. The approach aims at implementing

mechanisms to facilitate transactions between service users and service providers that are in both parties' interests, "internalizing what would otherwise be an externality" (Pagiola 2007). In other words, through PES the invisible hand ostensibly turns the tragedy of the commons toward conservation. Institutions such as the World Bank have encouraged the PES approach because of its presumed ability to generate new financing for conservation, it is likely to be sustainable since it depends on the mutual self-interest of service users and providers and not on the "whims of government or donor financing," and it is likely to be efficient, in that it conserves services whose benefits exceed the cost of providing them, and does not conserve services when the opposite is true (Pagiola 2007).

The economical and geographical dynamic in the Santurbán environmental dispute are not unique to the case. In Andean region watersheds, vulnerable groups tend to be located higher up in the mountains, where land is usually less productive and more prone to suffer erosion. However, these rural communities are often providers of environmental services benefiting other groups with a better socioeconomic situation (i.e. located in downstream urban areas). Hence, PES schemes are also expected to contribute to wealth redistribution and poverty alleviation that attempts to compel nature to pay for itself (Kosoy et al.) or at least to balance things out, where from a micro-view less productive land can be considered from a macro-view more productive.

Others, however, have noted that PES is one example of a mode of 'accumulation by conservation' that "seeks ways to turn the non-material use of nature into capital that can simultaneously 'save' the environment and establish long-term modes of capital accumulation" (Büscher and Fletcher 2015). Market-driven PES proponents view watershed services as one of the best emerging markets.

4.2a Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and PES

A 2006 report prepared for the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) claimed that “hydrological watershed services are “ideally suited to PES markets because there are direct and obvious users of water in a watershed, meaning that prospective buyers can be easily identified and targeted” (George et al.). This may seem like a contradiction: while CIDA identifies water as a great new market, it is also paving the way for Canadian mining companies that are potentially driving the need for clean water. Given that over 75 percent of the world’s exploration and mining companies are headquartered in Canada (Government of Canada 2009), wouldn’t bolstering PES and watershed services work against the interests of the mining industry? As scholars have noted, PES fits nicely into the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) approach to externalities, where mining companies *themselves* are cast as better equipped to regulate mining production and clean water, than are nearby small-scale miners.

This is certainly the case in Santurbán. Between the summer of 2013 and 2014, X Oro made a significant investment in a waste-water treatment plant. X Oro’s head of biodiversity named this as the most salient achievement of the environmental section of their CSR program. Some members of the Comité raised questions about the company’s capacity to install a large-scale answer to the environmental problem regarding the effectiveness of the treatment plant in eliminating contaminants. Overall, the Comité saw the treatment plant as a band-aid solution to the underlying problem of tunneling into the páramo. What good would short-term treatment methods serve when the proposed extractive method would still *destroy* soils and vegetal cover in the longer term? But the treatment plants are cited by the company and the Colombian government as examples of

large-scale, legal mines that are better equipped and therefore more likely to care for the environment than what small-scale miners can do in that regard. CIDA's support for watershed services are management mechanisms to deal with local peasants: (PES are typically paid to farmers to stymie erosion, not to miners). As the case of Santurbán shows, large-scale corporate mines operate outside of the PES debate, so for them, PES allows for a visible but superficial approach to environmental regulation. In the end it *benefits* large-scale mining and is an example of how sustainable development, global environmental management and neoliberalism discourses intersect and can be mapped onto existing and emergent policy approaches (Hirons 2011).

4.2b Comité and PES

The Comité rejects the commodification of water and even brought the case of the stalled delimitation before the United Nations Council on Human Rights. (“Llevar a la ONU, 2013”). For them, public health and clean accessible water is a fundamental right that should be protected by the state, rather than market mechanisms. Their posture rejects the “enclosure of value” (Büscher and Fletcher 2015) with respect to water, which is seen as public patrimony. As such, the Comité takes a moral stance against the commodification water. The issue, at least implicitly, is not whether or not the PES system would actually work to protect the water, i.e. that the market would find the right price to guarantee the water quality. Rather, the issue is whether it is ethical to place ‘value’ on water at all, simply because of its material proximity and discursive intersection with gold. If gold prices go up to \$1500/oz, do water prices go up in Bucaramanga to compensate for the opportunity cost? If water is a fundamental right, how can it be subject to the whims of the market?

As discussed in the previous section, as one of its four main organizing points, the Comité calls upon residents of Bucaramanga to “demand that the Governor of Santander, Richard Aguilar Villa, invest in social programs and infrastructure in the Soto Norte province and not transfer that responsibility to international companies” (Comité 2013). In numerous communiqués, the Comité has made its analysis of the precariousness of livelihoods in the Páramo clear. It identifies the problems as a direct result of Santos’ development plan, in line with that of his predecessor Uribe, which opened the country to multinational extractive companies. These companies needed to gain the confidence of communities of Soto Norte and did so by raising false expectations. The Comité blames multinationals for high levels of unemployment because they raised the population’s expectations for jobs without yet having the ability to fulfill them. The Comité concludes that it is “the state’s job to support technological conversion for the communities that reside in this ecosystem that is the essential water source for more than two million people” (Comunicado Aug. 27 2014). The Comité’s discursive framing subsumes the interests and agency of local inhabitants within the overall demand to protect the city’s water source. Furthermore, it calls for technocratic solutions, as if by providing alternative, eco-friendly livelihoods, Páramo residents themselves could be “technologically converted.” Along these lines, we are all ‘upstream’ from someone in some sense. So is the government responsible for preventing all environmental damage, or just that damage that affects the downstream urban centers that are home to the wealthy citizens? Beyond this, there would be a great irony if Governor Aguilar has private economic interests in the páramo region. In a way, the Comité’s pressure for this Keynesian style intervention and investment could be functioning to help consolidate the

governor's private green capitalism interests and possibly corrupt business deals in the region.

Though there were initial attempts made by the Committee in 2013 to dialogue with mayors from Páramo towns regarding alternatives to large and small scale mining in the region, the effort soon faltered. They have not delineated further options for the area. On this point, as noted by the Humboldt Institute, the Comité does not evidence a clear understanding of all the multi-layered/nuanced/complex implications at the level of the entire páramo, nor of the required transfer of responsibility.

In my discussions with members of the Comité, I raised the possibility of leveraging a tax on water in Bucaramanga to help subsidize páramo residents to not undertake productive activities on Páramo land. Members indicated that it was the State's responsibility to find and allocate such funds. Their reactions revealed opposition against the commoditization of water, noting that in Colombia it is not the water itself that is taxed, but rather the connection and drainage services. In this way, PES could fit with this mindset in that payments would be made toward the (human) infrastructure needed to get the water to the city. During interviews, several members of the Comité recollected a meeting in which departmental government representatives suggested that if water was so precious to them, then they should be willing to pay for it. The Comité frames the issue such that if governmental misuse of funds and corruption were remedied, there would be sufficient funds to invest in infrastructure improvement for páramo towns. In Colombia, utility payments are based on a sliding scale according to one's social strata based on official residency, so wealthier citizens pay more.

The strength of the Comité lies in its notable success in raising awareness at a local and national level about the importance of the specific case of Santurbán and páramo lands in Colombia in general. The pressure they leveraged to halt Grey Star's open-pit plan, advanced the national public debate about the impossibilities of expanding ecological and public health protections in the context of large-scale mining. Their success in mobilizing visible protests, leveraging local political capital, and so far halting extractive clearance for X Oro will set the national stage for páramo protection and delimitation (as the head of biodiversity of X Oro told me: "We *are* delimitation in Colombia"). Nationally and internationally, many eyes are watching.

Visibility, however, may not transfer into implementable and sustainable solutions for Páramo residents. As discussed earlier, the new ideals of social and environmental justice inherent in Ordenamiento Territorial (OT) are legally superseded by mine concession titling. Furthermore, OT's command-and-control-style natural resource management focuses on the creation of "Integrated Management Districts"(DMI) as a means of environmental conservation. DMIs were established under Law 2811 of 1974 in the National Code of Natural Renewable Resources and Environmental Protections to set up models of "rational utilization" in areas of environmental conservation and sustainable development (Torres 78). However, participants in my study and other scholars highlight the high level of general disregard and lack of management on the part of the autonomous regional environmental authorities tasked with DMI oversight (Torres 93). This points to a lack of willingness and capacity of the relevant central government institutions to effectively enforce

protected-area decrees. Many projects in conservation and sustainable renewable resource management have resulted in “paper parks.”

In addition, the Comité’s forceful position that the central government invest in the region does not consider the possibility that Santander residents as a whole should help finance, at least in a transitional phase, the payments for ecological services to Páramo residents⁶. According to Comité leadership, the central government has announced an additional tax on citizens to be used for PES programs in various regions. The Comité is against an additional tax, again citing the prevalence of corruption in government spending (personal communication). It seems the resolution they offer is that some corrupt officials should stop misappropriating funds and instead invest them in the páramo. This answer, however, assumes that there are social systems and governance structures in place in the páramos that could oversee adequate administration of such funds. This is not the case. It is still unclear what exactly the Comité believes to be a “technological conversion” of people in the páramos. It seems to assume that some kind of ‘sustainable’ mining, farming or other production on páramo lands is possible—an idea that contrasts with other discursive points about the protection of receding páramo lands and their ability to capture and provide water for the city.

4.2 Feasibility Study Hoja de Rutas:

The Hoja de Rutas proposed by the Mesa is comprehensive and ambitious in its scope and content, outlining a plan toward the objective:

Guaranty a life supply of environmental goods and services toward the sustainable development of the Bucaramanga metro area by generating “life options” for the communities involved in the delimitation of the Santurbán Páramo, a strategic ecosystem, and for the protection of biodiversity in Santander.

⁶ Other studies that have considered PES in urban-rural, downstream-upstream in Latin America conservation debates consider factors such as urban “willingness to pay” (Van Hecken et al)

The activities to be undertaken revolve primarily around developing and strengthening the institutionality in páramo towns in order to set up PES for residents. The Hoja de Rutas also aims to reorient people toward family-scale farming and small-scale mining cooperatives that could better articulate with market commodity chains. The plan also outlines social programs, health, education and utilities in which the state should invest, along with the corresponding authorities and institutions necessary to undertake execution and fundraising. As it is proposed, this approach tries to redefine the ‘resource curse’ as a ‘resource blessing’ subsidizing life as good enough to justify *not* extracting resources.

The primary organization that is taking a coordinating role in the Mesa de Trabajo, is a Bucaramanga-based NGO that focuses on environmental protection, food sovereignty, and strengthening women’s and small-producer community organizations. They are working closely with the United Nations Development Program in Bucaramanga. The NGO used to be part of the Comité. However, when its leadership started to propose working more closely with the United Nations and the Governor, the Comité adamantly refused. This NGO, then took a leading role in envisioning alternative development for the residents of Santurbán. As such it is a good example of the overall shifting paradigm among conservation groups that previously viewed business and marketization as ‘dirty concepts.’ Now such ideas as the economic valuation of ecosystems and PES fall under the discourse of sustainable development.

The NGO supports a departmental “Sustainable Development Fund” that would be financed by various sources. The main economic activities it suggests for area residents are ecotourism, a rejuvenated small mining sector, development of forest

systems, and raising livestock. It suggests a mix of governmental co-financing and appropriation, along with fundraising and donations.

4.3 Obstacles to plan implementation:

Financing the plan will be the main obstacle. The breadth and depth of the plan will require not only financing the actual environmental service payments, but also the accompanying social and infrastructure development that is proposed to be divided among at least ten national and regional agencies and entities. (“Propuesta Para el Desarrollo”...2014). It proposes that in-country financing be obtained for five agencies plus international fundraising efforts.

4.3a Environmental Fees from Local Environmental Authority and Forest

Conservation Incentive certificates (CIFc): Under a PES rubric these fees, whose coordination and oversight correspond to the regional environmental authority (CDMB), entail a complex application process as well several payers. In the case of the CIFc, for example the CDMB would have to grant an administrative act to applicants (Blanco et al. 2008). However, the distribution of these funds are at the discretion of the National Council of Economic and Social Policy (CONPES) based on its assessment of need vs. available resources, and ultimately paid for by the National Agricultural/Livestock Financing Agency (FINAGRO).

Many, if not all, of the páramo residents I spoke to mentioned mistrust of CDMB in the region. I was given several concrete examples of failed projects in the area, such as a pine tree reforestation project sponsored by the CDMB -- one respondent said it was financed by the International Development Bank-- that ended disastrously. Forest plantations, especially pine plantations are known to cause high levels of soil acidity and

are therefore especially harmful to delicate páramo vegetal cover (Hofstede et. al. 1998). It is likely that residents would be wary of and possibly unwilling to work with CDMB. Additionally, the multiple administrative channels through which money would have to flow would likely impede the viability and sustainability of this funding source. Given such a low level of people's expectation about the government, it is unlikely that the CDMB would be in a position to manage a PES scheme which would be put in place.

The proposal names the following funding sources: Bucaramanga Water Authority, private sector contributions, official funds in the form of National and Departmental royalties, and international cooperation. The case of Santurbán illustrates an example of what George et al. cite as one of the biggest challenges for watershed management and implementation of PES: “integrative frameworks for coordination and harmonization of government and local community actions.” (18) A significant amount of oversight and mechanisms for accountability would have to be established before undertaking the process.

Cognizant of obstacles that official channels could pose, the environmental NGO that works on the Mesa de Trabajo is also considering a market-based system of administering PES similar to a system in Antioquia department called banCO2. BanCO2 is a PES strategy that allows businesses, institutions and citizens to calculate and compensate their carbon footprint through a web portal. It is intended to promote conservation of natural forests in the region and improve the lives of the local residents (BanCo2 2014). Particular families would be ‘marketed’ on the web site, and users can visit profiles of selected campesinos and decide who will receive their payments. In

essence, it puts the fate of the community members in the hands of well-meaning downstream residents with no promise of consistency, continuity, or equitable distribution.

4.3b Land titling: As environmental services are the result of particular kinds of land use, payments made under PES programs are payments to land users. This makes the distribution and ownership patterns of land critical for the ability of PES programs to alleviate poverty and become self-sustaining (Pagiola et al. 2005). In many rural areas in Colombia, land ownership is not formalized. Oftentimes lands have been handed down generationally without formal titling or land occupancy is based upon informal arrangements between individuals. Colombia's longstanding civil conflict and widespread displacement has also called into question many land titles and rights.

Particular to the case of Santurbán, in recent decades the mining multinationals have entered the area and purchased lands from residents. A frequent complaint I heard was that companies had entered and purchased many lands from miners and farmers. Because of the way the transactions happened, many land owners felt like they had been tricked into selling. Additionally, due to lack of economic opportunities elsewhere, many previous land owners returned and became paid employees of multinationals. Questions over rightful, equitable landownership could present significant obstacles to formalizing PES. There is also concern that PES markets could overvalue lands in some areas, thus driving migration. This would have to be carefully monitored given that with respect to páramo lands, the overarching goal is to diminish and decrease population and production.

Landell-Mills and Porras (2002) warn that by increasing the value of currently marginal land, PES programs could increase the incentive for powerful groups to take

control of it. Therefore PES might exacerbate problems in situations where tenure is insecure.

4.3c Gold as resource curse: The nearby presence of easily accessible gold has already caused tensions between towns in the Páramo. One manifestation is a phenomenon local residents call “galafundeando,” in which people sneak into mining areas with hammers and chisels with suitcases to extract gold. It is rumored that people can earn between \$1000 and \$50,000 in a week (“La fiebre de oro...2014). Additionally, I heard rumors about multinationals in the area turning a blind eye and allowing residents from certain communities, and not others, to access their mine site for galafundeando. As long as presence of and access to gold is nearby and easy, the value of PES payments to residents will be comparatively devalued.

The other highly important factor when considering gold is that it attracts armed actors. According to a personal account I heard from a Páramo resident and documentation I reviewed of meeting minutes between the coordinating team of the Mesa de Trabajo and area mayors, the illegal extraction of gold in the area is also associated with armed groups. Public safety and security, then, must be taken into account both in terms of social control by armed groups as well as the impact of the state’s armed response to such presences on the civilian population. To the extent that armed groups may control material resource wealth in the area, security threats these actors pose must be accounted for in planning payments to residents within an eventual PES program.

4.3d Lack of cooperation: George et al. note that among the factors that have made PES implementation feasible is a significant level of pre-existing organization and effective coordination among farmers. As explained in previous sections, resource and access

control by multinationals has caused suspicion and competition among neighboring towns in páramo lands. Not only have multinationals in the area been responsible for controlling who does and does not access have access to gold and jobs, they have also provided community amenities to towns in which they operate thereby creating relationships of patronage rather than partnership. This has further blurred boundaries between state, market and civil society, which can produce a significant obstacle to community cohesion and the institutional organization necessary to administer and oversee equitable PES schemes. As noted, coordinating efforts have been easily undermined by well-funded opponents.

4.3e Uncertain financial resources: The environmental NGO has identified one of the main potential buyers of watershed services in the area to be the Bucaramanga Water Authority (Acuaducto). However, both management and the water authority union have been driving forces on the Comité and taken stances against raising taxes. In Colombia, citizens pay taxes for PES services as part of their water bill. The Comité takes the stance that the taxes citizens already pay is sufficient and with better management could and should be redistributed. They are against any increase in these taxes to directly subsidize Páramo residents.

4.3f Crops and livestock: The Mesa de Trabajo suggests working with farmers in the area to strengthen low-impact farming and livestock production. I heard competing versions from various environmentalists regarding the viability and possibility of formalizing of crop production in the Páramo as a sustainable activity, especially since it is not technically allowed. One páramo resident told me that twenty years ago, before the arrival of the multinationals in the region, many of those who now solely dedicate

themselves to mining activities - - either working for the large companies or through artisanal mining- - also grew potatoes and onions. The resident told me that there was not as much gold wealth in the area before the multinationals arrived and started the exploration phase of operations, which made large gold veins more accessible. But that taken aside, life in the area had been much “calmer” and free of armed actors. The respondent also noted how difficult it would be for residents, now used to ‘easy’ wealth and a relatively high standard of living, to revert back to primarily agricultural production.

4.4 Advantages and Opportunities:

Despite many complicating factors, the Hoja de Rutas may present a series of advantages and opportunities that together comprise a promising mechanism to improve institutional capacity and living conditions for páramo residents. Likewise, PES could offer immediate incentives for the protection of water resources, an urgent need in Santurbán.

As Dr. Cardenas noted, there seems to be consensus among stakeholders that on some level, water must be protected. Likewise, he noted that the meetings and “Mesas de Concertacion” led by the Ministry of Environment, if nothing more, are beginning to lay the groundwork for sensitizing the participating population about the value of natural resources. The next section will discuss advantages and opportunities of PES in the Páramo and the larger context of the proposed alternative development roadmap.

4.4a Build institutional capacity: Though many competing and/or converging economic interests may exist in the Páramo from gold extraction to green-capitalism, raising the profile of the area in the eyes of the state does have the potential to improve the efficiency in the allocation of natural, social and economic resources to Páramo

residents. In spite of possible ulterior motives, the process is forcing an absentee state to respond to the needs of an underserved population. According to the literature on PES implementation (George et al. 2009) the effectiveness of the response may depend largely upon the ability and degree to which community members determine and participate in decision-making. In meeting minutes in which Mesa members met with mayors of Soto Norte towns to discuss the roadmap, mayors indicated that they did not want a plan they would have to “impose” on residents, but favored a “participatory process, discussed with community members.” The notes do not offer more discussion concerning how in depth a discussion process or consensus might be. I believe the statement to come less from magnanimity than from pragmatism; the mayors know that new plans will only succeed to the degree to which residents are willing. But such pragmatism, underscores how plans will only be as successful if the rural residents opt for PES over previous productive activities (especially gold extraction), and could increase the páramo residents’ legitimacy as political/social actors in the eyes of the state.

4.4b Facilitate consensus among the involved actors: Finding land-use methods that are both beneficial to people and protect the environment is a challenge, but it also represents an opportunity for decision-making that could result in more equitable outcomes for all actors involved. It is forcing the previously absent state to respond to Páramo residents’ needs. Not all residents bring the same histories to the table: some farmers may benefit greatly from a PES program, but will those who have become used to easy money from gold be satisfied with subsidies that just meet basic needs? A conscious effort to balance voice and representative power must be developed. Dr. Cardenas mentioned that the central theme around which consensus has been forged in

the Environmental Ministry's Mesas de Concertacion, is the central importance of water to all parties involved. A consensus process offers the opportunity to introduce other key ideas that go beyond an urban-biased (in this case) deep ecology approach that conceives of pristine natural wilderness without humans. As such, páramo residents have a pertinent and important historical link not just to their livelihoods, but also to the land itself. Consequently, they have not only a right to viable livelihoods, but also an integral role in the project of conservation.

In this case, the fact that there is a direct relationship between providers and users of the service could work to the advantage of páramo residents. To the extent that plan implementation and administration be transparent and participatory and not command-and-control, the process could leverage some degree of decision-making power for páramo residents.

4.4c Generate new sources of funding for conservation: Given governmental budgetary limitations, other funding sources that do not revolve around royalties from large-scale mining operations will be necessary to help finance the alternative plan the roadmap lays out. The Mesa de Trabajo has suggested multiple funding sources and opportunities.

4.4d Transfer resources to socially and economically vulnerable sectors: A well organized and administered PES plan in Soto Norte could help distribute wealth more equally to residents who have not had the same access to gold as others have in the region.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

The delimitation debate in Santurbán Páramo raises questions about the government's responsibility to its people and its obligations to nature. In addition, it also raises concerns about how and toward what purpose environmentalism becomes institutionalized. Do governments have more responsibility to people who live in resource-rich areas and to those who have been historically stigmatized as economically backwards and outside the project of economic and social modernity? Do civil society actors in urban areas have more rights than rural inhabitants or just a greater capacity to organize and be heard? When the central government is unwilling or unable to fulfill a minimal role, who should bear the burden of funding or subsidizing economic opportunities that sufficiently preserve fragile natural environments?

Today these complications in governance are exacerbated by the presence of both multinational capital and hegemonic discourses that legitimate neoliberalism and foreign investment. The United Nations and international lending agencies depict large-scale mining as a form of economic and environmentally sustainable development (Fierro 2012) while small scale miners get cast as illegal leftist insurgents who pollute the environment.

Recommendations for change at the local level come from my final research question: "How could the ambiguous role of the state both close and open opportunities for better outcomes for Santurbán Páramo residents?" The answer to this call for meaningful collaborative management seems to hinge on the creation of governance systems where state, civil society, nature and private capital can respond meaningfully to the need to change status quo territorial and economic management. As I have shown, the

complexities of the actors involved and how their interests converge and diverge in the Santurbán debate is forcing the state at different levels and in various offices to better coordinate its own bureaucracy in ways it otherwise might not. The involvement of outside entities (PNUD, NGOs) within the Mesa could be seen as forms of globalized “metasteering” (Jessop 2002, 115) at the service of global regimes of accumulation. Similarly, the Comité’s rigidly reformist approach may circumscribe the definition of justice to mean only environmental protection and not environmental justice adequately accounts for the people most closely impacted. The Comité in its current form as a counter-hegemony must grapple with its role in and the consequence of stigmatizing rural residents. It may consider ways in which affirming participatory governance systems that strengthen local knowledges and relationships with the land could counter sub-hegemonic power nodes at work in the Paramo. Given the multifaceted actors and agendas of each of these blocks, is there a system that also serves to embed mechanisms of oversight and accountability toward and within the state instead of resulting in more political stalemate? What options are available to further enfranchise páramo residents as vital actors with a role in protecting important natural resources? Recommendations for local change are divided into two sets that address how páramo residents may be empowered and overall equity may be improved while protecting as much of the vital páramo region as possible. The first set considers short-term, more easily implementable actions, and the second set presents long-term, more difficult actions that may require dramatic societal or conceptual change.

These recommendations are based on the overarching recommendation that the National Ministry of Environment promptly sets, and completes the required

administrative act of official delimitation in a way that maximizes protected zones in páramo in compliance with Humboldt Institute's recommendations. As multiple activists and scholars have shown, not only is mining, particularly gold mining, not beneficial to the Colombian people, but is also a continuation of colonial extractive economies of dependency (i.e. extractive industry with little added value) that exacerbates situations of internal conflict, displacement, human rights violations, environmental degradation, and poverty, among others. The lack of clarity and a definitive protective line is causing community mistrust and fatigue in both rural and urban areas. As climate change worsens, the Colombian state will increasingly have to address conflict and the roots of poverty in ways that protect "strategic" lands and the populations that depend on them. This will not come by ceding lands to capital interests. Whether X Oro will have presence in the area or not, and in what capacity, must be decided and enforced with clarity by the Colombian state. Lingering multinational presence in the area is antipathetic to a participatory process of ecological service. Multinationals will likely use their clout to continue to pit communities against each other, institutional authority, and downstream residents.

Given the low rate of royalties and the paltry value-added income brought to regional and national economies, the state must wrestle with how to leave the gold in the ground. Short of relocating all Páramo residents and blocking access to the area with military units, the problem of a massive gold vein inside a delicate wetland in the context of armed conflict persists. As if this were not complex enough, it must also be considered to what extent the government may be putting this population in danger by treating them as

a kind of buffer zone between outside, potentially violent interests and the enormous, exposed gold vein.

5.1 Mesa de Trabajo members begin building relationships of trust with páramo

communities Before bringing constituents together, it is important to establish as accurate a view as possible of the base conditions extant in the communities, and to start creating spaces of interaction and trust. This step will be crucial in foreseeing potential conflict areas between groups and creating a strategy to allow everyone's voices to be heard. Each group, then, must be allowed to present its own realities and perspectives during the negotiating process. It is important to remain cognizant of power dynamics that tend to give primacy to capital investment to the detriment of traditionally secluded groups.

5.1a Identify outside facilitators to build trust. As I encountered in my research trip to the Páramo and in discussions with other researchers, logistical and security dynamics are complex. Facilitators must be ready to encounter community fatigue, reticence, and suspicion and take into account the contentious relationships between urban and rural residents, the fraught history of rural residents with the CDMB, and the protracted delimitation debate that has resulted in empty promises from politicians. Any outsiders must consider that certain risks lie in approaching the delimitation debate and alternative development solutions solely from a regulatory standpoint. By doing so, the planning process risks falling into at least two historical pitfalls – a command and control approach which results in “paper parks,” or cooptation (and possible corruption). If, however, approached with the goal of community-building among páramo residents, it is more likely that community-led solutions that are truly sustainable can be developed and implemented.

5.1b Accurate inquiry and analysis of páramo residents' development visions:

Given proper alternative options and transitional support, perhaps some residents would choose to relocate out of the páramo. It is hard to approach this issue without having a clear sense of how residents would respond given stricter control on small-scale mining, *galafundeando*, etc. Would residents be willing to commit themselves to alternative productive activities as proposed by the Mesa de Trabajo and others? How can they be assured proper training and support for implementing alternative livelihoods and lifestyles? How long can a PES scheme be sustained and what options should be put in place to help residents transition to other areas if necessary?

5.1c Power mapping municipal institutions in Soto Norte: In beginning dialogues with residents, it is important to make every possible attempt to understand how institutions, authorities, other powerful groups, and citizens interact with each other. How and to what effect those interactions influence the community should inform the process of “institutionalization” that the Mesa proposes—to the extent the Mesa is truly willing to create a participatory, rather than a top-down, process. This step will be crucial in forestalling potential conflict areas between groups and creating a strategy to allow everyone’s voices to be heard. Each group, then, must be allowed to present its own realities and perspectives during the negotiating process. It is important to remain cognizant of power dynamics that tend to give primacy to capital investment to the detriment of traditionally secluded groups. Institutional mapping may provide insights into processes of social capital formation or erosion (Goodhand 2001). Power mapping in these regions would have to consider how guerilla, paramilitary or other armed groups could threaten residents’ security, put pressure on

them to act in certain ways, or inhibit the ease with which residents can openly collaborate with institutions. To honor residents' safety, it is advisable to try to collect as much of this information in one-on-one, semi-formal interviews as opposed to mapping or questionnaires. The town mayors, who are already participating in the Mesa, can be very valuable in providing the first phase of such information. However, as Goodhand notes, information is part of the war economy and people may choose to hide some forms of information and promote others (2001). Although this applies to all research contexts, the problem is more acute in areas of conflict. Particular attention should be paid to triangulation and cross checking with a variety of sources with mindfulness of the dangers of bias.

5.2 Mesa de Trabajo: Analysis of economic factors

5.2a Address the proximity of gold vein. A perception of Páramo residents that shifts from seeing them as destroyers to protectors of the environment via a PES scheme, could facilitate the groups' social enfranchisement. Yet a fundamental problem persists—the close access to gold. What monetary sum will offset the financial disparities between those who have easy access to gold and those who do not? Are there other ways to equitably compensate residents in addition to or besides payments that could offset the opportunity cost of income from mining (in any form)? Will setting up such systems require a big initial investment, then taper off as activities fall into place? Will all residents be compensated the same regardless of whether they are miners or farmers? Should they be permitted to continue mining activities? These and other questions should be considered in order to realistically assess how much and from where PES funds will be obtained.

5.2b Devise an equitable plan for PES disbursement. It is very unlikely that the BanCo2 model, which consigns PES to the philanthropic whims of urban citizens, will be the stable and sustainable financial source needed to effectively subsidize the Mesa de Trabajo's plan in the Páramo. Yet given the negative perception of páramo residents as aligned with large-scale mining, Bucaramanga residents will likely continue to reject the imposition of more taxes, which is the current position of the Comité. As other studies of water service schemes in Latin America have suggested, downstream residents' perceptions that PES is unfair, even when offering an empirical win-win solution, can cause urban residents to reject the idea. They may in fact prefer to be taxed for infrastructure improvements or other technocratic solutions (Van Hecken et al. 2012). Urban residents have been inundated by messages against mining in the Páramo, which cast rural residents in a disparaging light.

5.2c In depth study by Humboldt institute to evaluate the environmental sustainability of the Mesa de Trabajo's recommendations with a working consideration of alternatives:

The Mesa de Trabajo's plan does not comply with the strict letter of the law because it suggests finding ways to make both mining and farming more sustainable, while the law prohibits either activity in protected areas. There does not seem to be much clarity in this regard. Institutions such as the Von Humboldt can play an important role in assessing how much and what kind of productive activities the Páramo can sustain, and advocate for clear guidelines and enforcement. There is little doubt that large-scale mining will be destructive in and to Páramo and ecotone regions. But what if the Mesa de Trabajo's multifaceted plan to seek alternative livelihoods is, in the end, missing the proverbial

forest for the trees? If biologically unsound, the Mesa's plan risks not only the destruction of the very ecosystem it is attempting to protect, but repercussions for Páramo residents in continually changing the terms of their residency and relation to the land.

5.2d Back-up plan to include relocation of residents

Short of relocating all Páramo residents and blocking access to the area with military units, the problem of a massive gold vein inside a delicate wetland in the context of armed conflict persists. With this complexity, it is important to evaluate to what extent alternative plans for productive activities that maintain people in the region may be putting the population in danger. In other words, it must be assessed to what extent maintaining residents in the area through various project makes them a kind of buffer zone between outside, potentially violent actors and the enormous, exposed gold vein.

Rights advocates have noted the sub-optimal results in relocating communities that face large-scale extractive projects on their lands. "Asking a community to choose where it wants to be relocated," said a Colombian lawyer working on collective rights vs. coal mining "is like asking a duck which sauce it prefers to be cooked in."

How deep is the injury that lies in severing communities' historic and traditional ties to land for the sake of natural resource exploitation? Can those injuries be mitigated if relocation happens with the ultimate goal of ecosystem protection? As the effects of climate change become more severe, these and related questions will have to be addressed. This is why it is crucial that historically marginalized community members' voices and visions are represented proportionately alongside more powerful social actors.

Perhaps, there was a grain of truth of truth beyond what appeared to be manipulation by the gold company, when the farmer told me that if offered reasonable

compensation, relocating out of the Páramo into a different, more fertile area would be ideal. Several social organizations mentioned that one alternative would be for the government to buy (or expropriate) the large tracts of unused land that lie outside the páramo from the landowners. It is hard to evaluate the feasibility of such an idea without knowing concretely who owns the land and how the state could find money to purchase it. This is a worthwhile point of investigation both for social organizations and the Mesa de Trabajo.

The question of community composition and cohesion of the various páramo towns will be a necessary point of investigation. I heard repeated accounts of the problems that resulted when the multinationals first entered the area and offered money for the purchase of residents' land titles. Many residents took the payments, which seemed high at the time, only to return them after finding the sum insufficient to set up a sustainable life in the city or elsewhere. How then, may the state offer transitional support for residents that might opt to relocate? Might residents be more likely to thrive if relocated as communities rather than as individuals? Are there relocation methods that would preserve preexisting communal bonds and social capital?

5.3 Transforming modes of governance

5.3a Comité undertake internal evaluation of its actions regarding Páramo

residents. As noted previously, the Comité is not a monolithic block. In many ways, it should be commended for its unity despite internal ideological and political differences. And indeed such cohesion toward single-pointed action has been necessary given the force with which mining projects are imposed on communities. However, given the Comité's own consolidation of power in the face of this dynamic, it is advisable to

reassess the overarching consequences of its own actions. As noted, because of the composition of key members of leadership, its overarching politics align with private urban capital interests. Other vocal members, however, such as human rights organizations, lawyer's collectives, student groups, etc., could take a role in helping steer the Comité's discourse from one of environmentalism to one of environmental justice: a discourse that recognizes the interconnection between urban and rural residents' outcomes not just for Bucaramanga, but for the entire province of Soto Norte.

Activists and advocates in Colombia are starting to approach the problematic intersection of environmental rights and labor sovereignty. For example, the national movement RECLAME is attempting to bring together small-scale miners *and* environmental activist in order to affect the expansion of the mining and energy industries. The juxtaposition of urban-based environmental activists along with small-scale miners from rural areas has brought the two seemingly disparate constituencies into a dialogue. With the shared goal of changing national mining policy, for example, environmental groups were forced to contend with the small-scale miner's right to work – especially given the lack of readily viable alternatives. On the other side, small-scale miners are acknowledging the harmful environmental effects of their own productive activities that involve mercury and cyanide along with degradation of shrinking Páramo lands.

National environmental organizations like CENSAT are working to recognize and institutionalize community-based water governance and raise awareness among urban residents about their very dependence on the services of rural water communities. Historically, organized rural communities that have provisioned water services have done

so without state support and against the grain of dominant development policies. Even so, these communities and their water networks have guaranteed water for rural and urban populations. It is estimated that around 120000 small service providers, many in rural zones, exist in Colombia (Urrea 2013). If urban residents could see the value in helping offer Páramo residents find viable alternatives to mining, perhaps they would be more willing to pay.

After a 2010 water referendum process in which civil society pressured the government to take an explicit stance against the privatization of water, these community providers began to formally organize. The National Congress did not pass legislation against water privatization, the referendum process generated important outcomes like the National Network of Community Aqueducts. In this community-managed model, water prices are set in community assemblies, not according to supply and demand, but under a guiding principle of solidarity and reciprocity (Urrea 2013). This model, which contrasts with private investment or transnational control, is a form of local management of territory that has worked in Colombia for 50 years. It operates under the reasoning that degraded lands don't produce enough quality water for humans. As such, the defense and care of land is a necessary condition for water management and is not just a guarantee of water for rural populations. It also safeguards the water sources for urban centers.

5.3b Alternative working group: Some members of the Comité who aren't part of the core leadership have proposed an alternative space similar to the Mesa de Trabajo in which NGOs could consult with both state officials and paramo residents. Such a body or group of individuals could play an important regulatory and oversight role in the PES administrative process *while* still protecting the interests and rights of páramo residents.

So far, the Comité has been very effective in demarcating rights of urban dwellers to clean water. As such, it could parlay its momentum and authority toward promoting a shifting consciousness that recognizes the historic role of rural communities in provisioning water for urban areas. On the one hand, the implementation of PES scheme for Páramo residents would happen via the commodification of nature—a process that some environmental and social activists oppose for multiple reasons. But the social valorization process through which Páramo residents come to be regarded as purveyors of necessary services could offer them a lucrative livelihood. The process could also elicit a shift in perception that has cast rural residents as nature destroyers toward a perception of them as guardians.

5.4 Strategic alliances of support for páramo residents from organizations and land reform movements in Bucaramanga and Santander

The previous questions highlight the relative social isolation of páramo residents. More than a century of international extractive mining presence in the region (Carreño 2011) has caused uneven development in Santurbán and social divisions in the páramo region. This, along with the remote and harsh terrain, has, to some degree, isolated Páramo residents from greater Santander society and social movements.

One of the most active and influential agrarian rights/reform organizations in Colombia works in Santander. The *Asociación Campesina del Valle del Río Cimitarra* (ACVC) is a regional organization comprised of farmers that works through community councils (*juntas de acción communal*), cooperatives, and other rural workers' groups toward the comprehensive defense of human rights and equitable land reform. The ACVC works principally in 8 regions in the Magdalena River Valley. As part of its

outreach, the organization has done important work in neighboring regions with artisanal mining cooperatives. Part of its work in this context has been to travel to remote, highland gold mining regions—for example, Sur de Bolívar—to help educate small-scale miners on land titling issues and dangers of encroaching multinationals. Yet, a vital part of such educational work, is educating and supporting small-scale miners to return to agrarian forms of labor.

Even if regional government is able to set up and administer a PES scheme for páramo residents, how far will new economic opportunities go in addressing years of stigmatization, economic instability and/or dependency on transnational capital? It is unlikely that the free market or state-administered programs will help cultivate true empowerment and resiliency for páramo residents. Incorporation into a broader movement toward equitable land distribution, however, could achieve this goal. Grassroots organizations like the ACVC are joining larger coalitions of campesinos, indigenous, and Afro-Colombians that are trying to forge spaces (through Campesino Reserve Zones and other legal frameworks) where campesinos can undertake autonomous and sustainable life projects and productive activities.

These movements most recently built critical mass and formed the National Agrarian Summit, which unified the needs of peasant, indigenous and Afro-Colombian organizations in one set of petitions. Together, they represent the economic, social, environmental, cultural and territorial political demands of these underrepresented groups. (Pliego de exigencias de la Cumbre Agraria 2014)

The first point in the list of their demands to the Colombian state is the implementation of a land management and distribution system (*Ordenamiento*

Territorial) that gives communities the power and opportunity to redefine sustainable land use and more control over their land and mineral rights. The third point (following point #2, “Local economies against the model of dispossession”) calls for a reformulation of the mining and energy sectors in light of their harmful effects on rural peoples and lands.

Underpinning these petitions is a call to be protected against the violence that so often accompanies activism by subaltern groups. In Colombia, indigenous, Afro-Colombian, and campesinos organized for the defense of land become targets of violence by the state, para-state, and guerilla groups. The ACVC is a leading organization in Santander that is part of a broadening grass-roots agrarian movement in Colombia that works toward a negotiated end to the civil war based on collective rights and community-led, equitable land reform. Grassroots organizations like the ACVC could support páramo residents to define and reclaim the vitality of their rural identities in relation to the land once (if) multinationals leave. Such connection to the larger grassroots environmental justice movement could be an important way for páramo residents to be supported in authoring their own sustainable productive and life activities and resist the possibility of empty changes from one form of dependency and exploitation (transnational capital) to another (PES subsidies/ green capitalism). A shift in consciousness could allow páramo residents to honestly evaluate their own impacts on páramo land in the pursuit of gold in any form. It could help break down suspicions and barriers in the region and forge new kinds of supportive networks.

REFERENCES

- Aparicio, J., & Blaser, M. (2008). The 'Lettered City' and the Insurrection of Subjugated Knowledges in Latin America. *Anthropological Quarterly*, (1), 59.
- Aranguren, M. M. (2010). La sociedad civil global en la gobernanza ambiental del sector agua en el mundo (Global civil society in the environmental governance of the water sector in the world). *Oasis*,15. Retrieved September 30, 2014, from http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2095228
- Bautista, B. (Jun 2013) “Transiciones ecológicas y sociales en Santurbán.” *La Republica Bogotá*. Retrieved September 15, 2013 from http://www.larepublica.co/transiciones-ecol%C3%B3gicas-y-sociales-en-santurb%C3%A1n_40830#sthash.nNkmvDIT.j3ugCNyL.dpuf
- Blanco, J.T., Wunder, S. Navarrete, F. (2008). La experiencia colombiana de pagos por servicios ambientales, In: S.C. Ortega (ed.), *Reconocimiento de los Servicios Ambientales: Una Oportunidad para la Gestión de los Recursos Naturales en Colombia*, pp.109-117.
- Büscher, B. and Fletcher R. (2015, in press). Accumulation by Conservation. *New Political Economy*. Accessed September 19, 2014 <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13563467.2014.923824#.VByKcFOfjTc>
- Carreño, J. (2011). “En Santurbán la historia se repite.” In Francia Gold and Silver Limited: Report (S. Carcamo, Trans). Bucaramanga: La Casa del Libro Total (original work published 1897).

Comité. Comunique (Jan 2013). Comunicado publico Comité De la Defensa Del Agua y el Páramo de Santurbán retrieved Nov 2014 at

http://concienciaciudadana.org/comunicado_opinon/

Comité. Comunicado (Aug. 27, 2014) Garantizar AGUA para los dos Santanderes, implica dejar el Páramo de Santurbán complete

http://concienciaciudadana.org/comunicado_opinon/

“Delimitación en Santurbán restringe actividad de diez títulos mineros” (2014, Mar 31)

El Tiempo.com. Retrieved April 31, 2014 from

http://www.eltiempo.com/colombia/oriente/ARTICULO-WEB-NEW_NOTA_INTERIOR-13758422.html

ECODES Ingenieria LTD (2014) *State of Biodiversity Conservation of Ecosystems in the Angostura region California, Santander, Colombia. Executive Summary*. Retrieved April 7 from <http://www.eco->

[oro.com/i/pdf/Reports/Ecodes_Biodiversity_Study_Executive_Summary.pdf](http://www.eco-oro.com/i/pdf/Reports/Ecodes_Biodiversity_Study_Executive_Summary.pdf)

Fierro, M. J., & Instituto Latinoamericano para una Sociedad y un Derecho Alternativos,. (2012). *Políticas mineras en Colombia*.

Fraser, N. 1995. “From Redistribution to Recognition? Dilemmas of Justice in a Post-socialist Age.” *New Left Review*, No. 212 (old series), pp. 68-93.

FENALCO (2014). *Quienes Somos* <http://www.fenalco.com.co/>

Garay, L. (2013) “Minería en Colombia: Fundamentos para superar el modelo extractivista.” Contraloria General de la Republica.

George, A., Pierret, A., Boonsaner, A., Christian, V., & Planchon, O. (2009). Potential and limitations of Payments for Environmental Services (PES) as a means to manage watershed services in mainland Southeast Asia. *International Journal Of*

- The Commons*, 3(1), 16-40.
- http://www.cifor.org/pes/publications/pdf_files/colombia_experience.pdf
- Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1973). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Chicago: Aldine Pub.
- Goodhand, J. (2001). "Research in Zones of Violent Conflict" In *Methods for Analysis of Chronic Poverty*. Accessed November 28, 2014 at http://www.chronicpoverty.org/uploads/publication_files/jgpaper.pdf
- Hirons, M. (December 01, 2011). Managing artisanal and small-scale mining in forest areas: perspectives from a poststructural political ecology. *The Geographical Journal*, 177, 4, 347-356.
- Hofstede, R. J. Lips, W. Jongsma & J. Sevink. 1998. *Geografía, Ecología y Forestación de la Sierra Alta del Ecuador. Revisión de Literatura*. Editorial Abya Yala, Ecuador. 242 p.
- Jessop, B. (1983) 'Accumulation strategies, state forms, and hegemonic projects', *Kapitalistate*, 10, 89-111.
- Jessop, B. (October 01, 2009). Cultural political economy and critical policy studies. *Critical Policy Studies*, 3, 336-356.
- Jessop, B. (2002). *The future of the capitalist state*. Cambridge, UK: Polity.
- Jessop, B. (2006). 'Towards a cultural international political economy: post-structuralism and the Italian School', (co-authored with N-L. Sum) in M. de Goede, ed., *International Political Economy and Post-Structural Politics*, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 157-76.
- Jessop, Robert. (2003) "Governance, Governance Failure, and Meta-Governance." Paper

presented at Policies, Governance and Innovation for Rural Areas, Universtia della Calabria, Arcavacata de Rende, Italy. 21 ~ 23 November. 25

Maldonado, T. R., & Urrea, D. (2011). Agua o minería: Un debate nacional. *CENSAT Agua Viva*, -. Retrieved November 24, 2012, from

<http://censat.org/publicaciones?task=view&catid=10043&id=53>

MAVDT(Colombian Ministry of the Environmnet) (2001). First National report before the United Nations Convention on Climate ChangePrimera Comunicación Nacional ante la Convención Marco de las Naciones Unidas sobre el Cambio Climático. Bogota.

Rastogi, N. S. (2010, August 21). Production of gold has many negative environmental effects. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved November 11, 2012, from

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/09/20/AR2010092004730.html>

Mining in Colombia: At what cost? (2011, November) *PBI Colombia Newsletter*, 18, 3-46. Retrieved September 15, 2012, from

http://www.peacebrigades.org/fileadmin/user_files/projects/colombia/files/colombPBIa/111203_mining_in_colombia_web.pdf

“La Fiebre de Oro pone en jaque el Soto Norte.” (20 July 2014) Vanguardia Liberal, Bucaramanga. Accessed Sept. 30 2014 at

<http://www.vanguardia.com/economia/local/270059-la-fiebre-del-oro-pone-en-jaque-a-soto-norte>

Landell-Mills, N., & Porras, I. (2002). Silver bullet or fools gold? A global review of markets for forest environmental services and their impact on the poor. London,

- UK: International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED).
- Lora, K. (2011) El principio de precaución en la legislación ambiental colombiana, *Actualidad Juridica. Edition 3 and 4*.
- “Los Aguilar y los lazos del turismo en Santander” (September 2014) *La Silla Vacía*.
Accessed Sept 30 2014 <http://lasillavacia.com/historia-invitado/41805/jpbejaranob/los-aguilar-y-los-lazos-del-turismo-en-santander>
- “Municipios no podrán decidir sobre minería” (18 Mayo 2013) *El Espectador*
<http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/medio-ambiente/municipios-no-podran-decidir-sobre-mineria-articulo-422660>
- “Ministros de Agricultura Y Ambiente asumen la reconversión productiva de Santurbán”
(2014, Aug 4) <https://www.minagricultura.gov.co/noticias/Paginas/Ministros-de-Agricultura-y-Ambiente-asumen-la-reconversion-productiva-de-Santurbán.aspx>
- “Nace el Movimiento Conciencia Ciudadana.” (2011, July)
<http://www.vanguardia.com/historico/113656-nace-el-movimiento-conciencia-ciudadana>
- O'Connor, D., & Bohórquez Montoya, J. P. (2010). Neoliberal Transformation in Colombia's goldfields: Development strategy or capitalist imperialism? *Labor, Capital, and Society*, 43(2), 86-118. Retrieved October 3, 2012, from http://www.lcs-tcs.com/PDFs/43_2/O'Connor_Montoya.pdf
- Pagiola, S., Arcenas, A., & Platais, G. (January, 2005). Can Payments for Environmental Services Help Reduce Poverty? An Exploration of the Issues and the Evidence to Date from Latin America. *World Development*, 33, 2, 237-253.
- Propuesta para el desarrollo alternativo complejo de Paramo SANTURBÁN –

Almorzadero Corambiente, 2013. Powerpoint.

“Pliego de exigencias de la Cumbre Agraria.” (11 April, 2014) *Presna Rural*. Retrieved 26 November 2014 at <http://prensarural.org/spip/spip.php?article13670>

Torres, M. A. C., Ospina, M. L. Z., & Páez, H. S. (2003). Caracterización de los distritos de manejo integrado de los recursos naturales renovables, formulación y ensayo de una metodología para la evaluación de la efectividad en el manejo. *Colombia Forestal*, 8(16), 77-94.

Urrea, D. (2013) *Agua y Justicia Economica*. Amigos de la Tierra Internacional.

Van Hecken. G., Bastiaensen, J., & Vásquez, W. F. (February 01, 2012). The viability of local payments for watershed services: Empirical evidence from Matiguás, Nicaragua. *Ecological Economics*, 74, 169-176.

World Commission on Environment and Development. (1987). *Our common future*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.