

## LAND-at-Scale

### Public discourse on the re-shaping of nature through landscape restoration and conservation

Department: Human Geography and Spatial Planning

Research group: International Development Studies (IDS)

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### Project description

This project is linked to LAND-at-Scale, a program for developing countries financed by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the primary objective of strengthening land governance to contribute to social justice. Climate change and women's land rights are also important themes of the program, and this project focuses on the former. IDS is involved in the knowledge management strategy of the program, particularly contextual learning.

The effect land-use policies have on local communities strongly depends on local land tenure security and global climate change mitigation strategies, often steered by countries of the Global North, have put additional pressure on communities to secure their land. While landscape restoration and conservation are fundamental to protect the environment and the world's biodiversity, some of these policies, such as REDD+, have also attracted criticism for their potential negative impacts such as displacement, effect on food security, or the link to inter-communal and intra-communal tensions and conflict.

Land-use policies can be sensitive, particularly in countries with unequal land distribution and high inequality. Ambivalent approaches by governments due to conflicting interests with large companies and a complicated legal and political environment often make it a slow process to counter this situation. When it comes to nature restoration, the broader public also plays an important role, as they generally perceive these interventions as positive. However, very little is known about what this support is dependent on – for example in case it involves trade-offs such as negative social consequences for local communities or less economic income for small and large-scale farmers.

So far, the team has conducted an online survey in Colombia to investigate the broader public's opinion on forest land and we conducted numerous in-depth interviews with indigenous communities in the Colombian Amazon on this topic. As a bright minds assistant you will write a literature review based on academic and non-academic sources on the public discourse and opinion on forest land-use policies driven by global but also national climate change mitigation agendas. All the activities can be conducted online, and a weekly meeting will take place on MS Teams. However, the project team is increasingly working on location so there will also be a possibility to work together on-site or to meet in person on campus.

### Job requirements

- Knowledge and interest in land-scape-based climate change mitigation policies are a prerequisite
- Excellent command of English is required, knowledge of Spanish is strongly desired