RESOURCE GRABBING IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF LAND, WATER AND OCEAN GRABBING

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis provides a comprehensive comparative analysis of different types of resource grabbing, which refers to rapidly changing patterns of resource access and control occcuring around the world. This comparative analysis aims to identify key features and areas in resource grabbing that could be addressed for the puroses of policy formulation and implementation. Resource grabbing involving land, water and ocean resources has generated new debates in academic and policy literatures. This thesis uses theoretical insights from political economy and political ecology to advance these debates by identifying various actors, motives, institutions and effects of resource grabbing. Drawing on an extensive review of the literature that includes a range of examples from areas of the Global South, the research established that resource grabbing is propelled by the interests of various political and economic actors in a context of weak institutions and institutional frameworks. A political ecology analysis reveals that resource grabbing processes have invariably had negative effects on grabbees, those actors who had prior access to or control over resources grabbed by other actors. This thesis established that natural resources are controlled from prior resource holders with a stated purpose of conservation and efficiency but with hidden purpose to actually satisfy the interests investors and the powerful in society. This control of resources subjects prior holders to marginalization and puts them at risk in sustaining themselves. In some of the cases of resource grabbing as reviewed in this thesis, changing resource control patterns have resulted in environmental conflicts and violence. The thesis proposes that states and policy makers adopt meaningful human rights approaches to natural resource management as a major pathway towards curbing land, water and ocean grabbing. The thesis proposes that a political economy analysis of actors, their interests and institutional context is key not only for developing an understanding resource grabbing as a problem but also for establishing policies aimed at protecting natural resources and marginalized peoples from grabbing.

Key words: *Resource grabbing, land, water, ocean, political economy, political ecology*

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

PGPE	Problem-Driven Governance and Political Economy Analysis
AGOA	African Growth and Opportunity Act
BRICSA	Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa
COFI	FAO's Committee on Fisheries
DFID	Department for International Development
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross Domestic Products
GHI	Global Harvest Initiative
ICSF	International Collective in Support of Fisher Workers
IEA	International Energy Agency
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFIs	International Financial Institutions
IIED	International Institution for Environment and Development
IPC	International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty
ITQ	Transferable Quota
KIA	Kachin Independence Army

MCA	Millennium Challenge Account
MPA	Marine Protected Areas
NRC	National Research Council
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PEA	Political Economy Analysis
RBF	Right-based Fishing
TFCs	Transferable Fishing Concessions
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNTCAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
US	United States
WFF	World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fish Workers
WFFP	World Forum of Fisher Peoples

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Globally, nation-states have the authority to manage resources within their territorial boundaries including access, control and use of such resources. This authority has been re-enforced by international agreements that assume that states have the capacities and means to manage and protect their natural resources. However, many so-called developing and Third World countries have limited financial and physical capacities to protect natural resources with 'global' value (Peluso, 1993).

Resource allocation, control and use in most developing countries have been characterized by power struggles between the state and society, particularly resources owners and users (Tietenberg and Lewis, 2000). The result of these power struggles is what has given rise to the concept of "resource grabbing" in academic literature and research (Tietenberg and Lewis, 2000). This thesis provides a comprehensive comparative analysis of different types of resource grabbing by conducting a critical review of secondary data.

Resource grabbing is an issue of concern that is broader than acquisitions of resources by foreign investors (Liversage, 2010) and without a consensus in terms of the definition (Borras *et al.,* 2012). Land grabbing for instance often involves large-scale acquisition through buying, leasing or otherwise accessing productively used or potentially arable farmland by corporate investors to produce food and non-food crops, in order either to boost supply for domestic and/or world markets or obtain a favorable financial return on

an investment (Akram-Lodhi, 2012:125). Even if there were consensus on the definition of resource grabbing, and effects associated with it, large-scale deals in resources, particularly, lands, are typically shrouded in secrecy and no one really knows exactly how much land has been acquired (Ben White *et al*., 2012).

However, evidence suggests that the occurrence of resource grabbing has been very rampant in the Global South. For instance, between 2005 and 2009, it is estimated that about 20 million hectares of land have been grabbed from small-scale landowners; about 40-80 million people displaced due to water grabbing in 2012; and loss of several billions of dollars within the fishery sector due to ocean grabbing. All these estimated figures were recorded in the Global South (von Braun and Meinzen-Dick, 2009; Kay and Franco 2012; Witbooi, 2015).

Over the last few years, there have been several studies in academic literatures which focused on different types of resource grabbing, including land (GRAIN *et al*., 2014, 2008; Hall, 2013, 2011; Boras *et al.,* 2012), water (Franco *et al.,* 2013; Sosa and Zwarteveen, 2012; Kay & Franco, 2012) and the ocean (Bennett *et al.,* 2015, Franco *et al.,* 2014). The convergence of global crises in food, energy, and the environment has driven a dramatic re-evaluation of access to and ownership of land, water, marine and other resources needed to overcome these crises (Wood, 2012). Furthermore, land, water and more recently ocean resources are increasingly perceived as sources of resource and energy production (primarily biofuels), food (crops and fishes), mineral deposits, and reservoirs of environmental services to meet growing global industrial and consumer demands (Borras

et al., 2011). The enormous resource imperatives of contemporary capitalist markets therefore facilitate a growing interest in securing access to resources (GRAIN et *al.*, 2014).

Even though resource grabbing involving land, water and oceans has gained wider currency in recent times, what defines land, water and ocean grabbing is still contested in the literature. While some literature defines resource grabbing as the acquisition of natural resources, such as land, by actors dominated by foreigners (e.g., Rulli *et al.*, 2013), there are others (see Liversage, 2010) who argue that such acquisitions involve both local and foreign investors. The issues of actors, their motives, institutions and institutional frameworks of resources acquisitions have also become a subject of contest in the definition of resource grabbing (Gomez, 2011; Boras *et al.*, 2012). This has created challenges of fighting resource grabbing in terms of policy formulation and implementation.

Apart from the debates involving the definition of resource grabbing, actors and their interests, there are different views about the implications of resource grabbing from the perspectives of researchers and environmentalists involving effects of resources grabbing (GRAIN *et al.*, 2014; Oya, 2013). For instance, while those who argue in favor of resource grabbing are of the view that grabbing provides the means to bring investments and efficiency in the use of natural resources, opponents share different views. Opponents believe that resource grabbing has negative implications on those whose resources are taken and therefore call for effective policy measures to deal with resource grabbing (GRAIN et al., 2014, Hall, 2013). There are even those who believe that in general, there

is still insufficient information on the impacts of resource grabbing, particularly with reference to land grabbing (Liversage, 2010; Oya, 2013).

Most studies have examined dimensions of resource grabbing such as the definition, actors involved and their interests, interactions of institutional frameworks and effects of resource grabbing. However, there are similarities that exist in these resource grabbing debates and this thesis will examine these similarities as well as differences. The concept of different types of resource grabbing has been compared and discussed using political economy analysis, which emphasize actors, motives (interests), institutions and effects on prior resource users and on the resources. This approach is aimed at identifying the interplay of actors, their interests and institutional frameworks and associated effects on small-scale resources holders and natural resources.

1.2 Research Objectives

The main objective of the thesis is to complete a comparative analysis of the various forms of resources grabbing. This was achieved through a critical review of literature from secondary sources. The specific objectives include:

- To explain the concept of resource grabbing within the context of:
    - Land grabbing;
    - Water grabbing; and
    - Ocean grabbing.
- To compare land, water and ocean grabbing using political economy and political ecology analysis; and

- ❖ To identify effects of different forms of resource grabbing in the Global South with a view to proposing a common approach towards curbing land, water and grabbing.

1.3 Scope and Justification of the Research

The Global South has been chosen for the research due to the rampant occurrence of resource grabbing where such resources are perceived to be 'unused' and 'underutilized' (Franco *et al*, 2013; Levisage, 2010) coupled with the availability of cheap labor. Available figures in the literature reveal that land, water and ocean grabbing have been occurring more rapidly and on a larger scale in the Global South. For instance, between 2005 and 2009, about 20 million hectares of land have been taken from small-scale landowners; 40-80 million displaced due to water grabbing in 2012; and loss of several billions of dollars within the fishery sector due to ocean grabbing in the Global South (Kay and Franco 2012; von Braun and Meinzen-Dick, 2009; Witbooi, 2015). These figures are potentially higher than reported and have been projected to increase in the coming years if not checked (Liversage, 2010).

The thesis contributes to unraveling the debates that surround land, water and ocean grabbing in the areas of what constitutes resource grabbing, actors involved, motives (interest), institutions and effects associated with it. The findings give an enhanced understanding of resources grabbing in terms of the conceptual and analytical frameworks within the tenets of political ecology and economy by comparing land, water and ocean grabbing.

Finally, this research serves to impart knowledge and support future research and policy formulation within the context of resource grabbing The thesis also serves to provide new knowledge to improve understanding of the subject matter and to provide a basis for future research.

1.4 Methods

1.4.1 Research Approach

The thesis employed critical review of secondary literature to elicit the required data to meet the objectives of the thesis. This involves an extensive literature review and drawing inferences primarily from secondary sources. A desktop study was mainly used in reviewing these literatures. This was done by identify key journal articles and other manuscripts and writing annotated bibliographies of sources that cover the topics of land, water and ocean grabbing, particularly literature on those that provided information to meet the research objectives.

1.4.2 Literature Requirements and Sources

Data for the thesis were gathered from secondary sources, which include academic and grey literature on land, water and ocean grabbing. The data were obtained from books, published reports, bulletins, periodicals, newspapers and journals, conference papers, and published and unpublished theses. Most of these data were obtained from online using the Google Scholar search engine. The search was done by using key words that related to the concepts of land, water and ocean grabbing, the actors involved and their interests,

institutional frameworks and effects associated with these concepts of resource grabbing. The analytical framework of political ecology was mainly based on books by Paul Robbins obtained from the university library.

Table 1.1Categories and Source of Data

Research Objective	**Data Required**	**Data Source**	**Method of Acquisition**
To explain the concept of resource grabbing within the context of: -Land grabbing -Water grabbing and -Ocean grabbing	- Definitions of land, water and ocean resources - Definitions of land, water and ocean grabbing - Key features of land, water and ocean grabbing - Effects of land grabbing	Books, journal articles, reports, newspapers, periodicals, thesis reports	Desk study
To analyze and compare land, water and ocean grabbing; and	-Political ecology and economy frameworks -Robbins' Five thesis of political ecology -Hudson and Leftwich framework for political economy analysis	Books, Journals	Desk study
To suggest policy recommendations towards curbing land, water and ocean grabbing	-Human rights approaches to ocean land grabbing -Human rights approaches to water -Human right approaches to the ocean	Journals, articles, reports, online news articles	Desk study

Source: Authors' Construct, 2016

These data from the secondary sources provided information on the conceptual and analytical frameworks most appropriate for the research objectives.

About 90 percent of the literature used backdated to within the last 10 years of publications. However, the remaining 10 percent, which goes beyond 10 years, provided empirical

information that was critical to the achievement of the research objectives. The research is dated back within the last 10 years because the issue of resource grabbing gained global recognition around 2007/08.

Conflicting data on figures from most of the academic literature, particularly on the sizes of land grabbed in the South, limited heavy reliance on figures for the research. However, the figures used in support of the arguments in this research came from grey literature such as GRAIN et *al.,* 2014.

1.4.3 Analysis

The three cases of land, water and ocean grabbing form the basis of the comparative analysis. The comparison involves an analysis of the interplay of actors, their interests, institutional frameworks and the effects access the cases of land, water and ocean grabbing. This analysis has been aided through the engagement of conceptual frameworks within the tenets of political ecology and political economy.

Conceptual frameworks, in general, according to Miles and Huberman (1994) describe what relationships may exist between and among concepts based on logic, theory and/or experience. This analysis focused on providing theoretical explanations of resource grabbing (land, water and ocean) in the Global South. The analysis uses a theoretical framework that is built on political ecology and political economy to identify the interplay between actors, interest, institutions and effects of resource grabbing.

The analysis of resource grabbing was developed within the context of the five themes or theses of political ecology identified by Robbins (2012). The first involves the degradation and marginalization thesis, which focuses on the over-exploitation of resources in the Global South as a result of development intervention or to meet market demand (e.g., land grabbing for biofuel or food production). The second thesis focuses on the conservation and control of resources, mainly from resource owners to achieve sustainability of parks and protected areas. This is in line with where resources are grabbed with the stated reason that such resources are under-utilized and that there is the need to increase efficiency in the use of such resources.

Robbins identified environmental conflict and exclusion as the third thesis. Robbins reveals that with this thesis, environmental problems become "socialized" when groups such as state authorities, private firms, or social elites secure control of collective resources at the expense of others by leveraging management interventions by development authorities, state agents, or private firms (Robins, 2012). Environmental subjects and identity constitutes the fourth thesis, which basically involves the emergence of social or political movements that, within the context of this research, emerge in response to resource grabbing. The fifth and the final thesis identify political objects and actors.

These five theses identified by Robbins also shed light on structures, institutions, actors/stakeholders, and politics. The research will, therefore, employ Hudson and Leftwich (2014) framework of political economy analysis to identify structures, institutions, and stakeholders (actors) involving resource grabbing. The political economy analysis by Hudson and Leftwich sheds light on the interplay of actors and their interest

and institutional frameworks while Robbins' five theses helps uncover political ecology themes such as struggles associated with resource access, social marginalization and ecological degradation.

1.5 Organization of the Thesis

The research is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter introduced the research by providing a background and objectives of the study. It also introduces the scope and justification of the research as well as the methods employed in carrying out the research.

Chapter two focuses on the theoretical frameworks that was used for analyzing and conceptualizing resource grabbing by looking at the theoretical approaches in the fields of political ecology and political economy. The chapter provides a preliminary framework within which the research questions around resource grabbing are analyzed. Chapters three, four and five provide a critical literature review on the concepts of land, water and ocean grabbing, including actors involved and their interests, institutions and institutional frameworks and effects associated with land, water and ocean grabbing respectively. These chapters argue that an understanding of resource grabbing can be enhanced by specifying the actors, interests (motives), and institutions across the cases.

Chapter six provides answers to the research questions by providing an explanation of what constitutes resource grabbing and a comparative analysis involving land, water and ocean grabbing. The chapter also provides a political ecology synthesis of resource grabbing. The chapter ends by summarizing recommendations for natural resource management in the

Global South. The final chapter briefly provides a summary and conclusion of the research and proposes areas for future research.

1.6 Limitations of the Thesis

The thesis has several limitations. The first limitation is the large volume of literature on land and water grabbing relative to ocean grabbing. The extensive literature review determined that there is substantially more research on both land and water grabbing than on ocean grabbing. That literature contained different figures and revelations from different sources which made it difficult to ascertain the authenticity of some of the facts presented in some of the research works. The research, however, overcame that by reducing the use of quantitative data associated with especially land grabbing. Related, the lack of secondary sources on ocean grabbing made it more difficulty to make strong conclusions about the patterns of resource grabbing in that sector.

Secondly, much effort was spent in making sense of large volumes of secondary data to meet the objectives of the research. There were instances where the original sources of some of the revelations in the literature could not be traced. Thus, the author ended up omitting some potentially important information which could not be verified.

Finally, proposing policy recommendations for land, water and ocean grabbing faced the challenge of how to analyze many different natural resources policies in some very different countries and contexts, particularly in the Global South. A future research project called "Cases of Land, Water and Ocean Policies and their Implications for Resource

Grabbing in the Global South" is proposed to identify the influence of land, water and ocean policies on resource grabbing in the Global South.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

2.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces theoretical frameworks that form the basis of analysis of the thesis. The chapter engages specific approaches of political ecology and political economy and assesses their utility for understanding resource grabbing debates. Robbins' theses of political ecology are engaged in order to integrate social and ecological effects of resource grabbing that political economy analyses tend to miss. The political economy analysis, however, helps identify how the interests of the various actors influence institutions and institutional frameworks implicated in resource grabbing.

2.2 Political Ecology

The term political ecology is a generic term that encompasses a range of definitions (Robbins, 2012). Over the past three decades, political ecology has evolved from an inherently structuralist mode of class analysis involving a series of analyses between the exploited poor in a given locality and the normally distant exploiters (Blaikie and Brookfield, 1987) towards what has been described as 'progressive contextualization' (Bryant, 2001). Political ecology has focused on environmental changes between the causal agents and those who are most affected by these changes.

This research takes the definitions of political ecology as defined by scholars such as Zimmerer, Bryant, Escoba and Blaikie, and Brookfield. Zimmerer (2000, cited in Forsyth,

2004) defines political ecology as the social and political conditions surrounding the causes, experiences, and management of environmental problems. These environmental conditions are established analytically by studying the relationships between society and nature in contexts of power, particularly from the perspective of political economy (Escoba, 1996). Bryant (1992: 13 cited in Forsyth, 2004), describes political ecology as an inquiry into "the political forces, conditions, and ramifications of environmental change". According to Forsyth (2004), this may include studies of environmental impacts from different sources; location-specific aspects of ecological change; and the effects of environmental change on socio-economic and political relationships.

Much debate on political ecology has focused on the social justice dimensions of environmental disputes and resource struggles in developing countries (e.g. Escobar, 1995; Robbins, 2004, 2012; Watts, 2000). This is because such environmental conflicts involve the interaction of a variety of actors from state, society, and industry in locations considered to be of global environmental significance. Political ecology in the developing world has reflected the belief that injustices are being committed against both local people and environmental resources that may be of value to these people or to the world at large (Peet and Watts, 1996). It is within this context that recent literature (GRAIN *et al.*, 2014; Hall, 2013) describes resource grabbing in the Global South.

Political ecologist Paul Robbins (2012) developed five theses of political ecology (see Table 2.1) as far as human interactions with natural resources are concerned. The first thesis involves degradation and marginalization and focuses on the over-exploitation of resource in the Global South as a result of development intervention or to meet market demand (e.g.,

land grabbing for biofuel or food production). This leads to poverty and/or other forms of social marginalization on the part of those whose resources have been exploited. The categories of actors include peasant farmers (exploited through land and water grabbing), artisanal fishers (exploited through ocean) and local communities. As a result, access to important resources needed for food, medicinal and cultural purposes are limited.

The first thesis also emphasizes the possibility of sustainable communities potentially becoming unsustainable as a result of state bureaucrats or foreign control of common properties such as

Table 2.1: Robbin's Five Thesis of Political Ecology

Theses of Political Ecology	**Explanations**
Marginalization and Degradation	• Resource exploitation • Resource degradation • Poverty on affected groups • Affects community sustainability
Conservation and Control	• Resource control from minority groups • Interests of bureaucrats are protected in the name of environmental protection • Local systems and livelihoods are disabled • Draws upon four fundamental theoretical foundations
Environmental Conflict and Exclusion	• Socialization of environmental problems • Rooted in three fundamental lessons drawn from feminist theory, property research, and critical development studies
Environmental Subjects and Identity	• Emergence of social or political movements • Emergence of new kinds of people • Emergence of new understandings of the world, ecological ideologies and behaviors • Lack of trust on the part of local resource holders
Political Objects and Actors	• Management of resources is a political activity • Transformation of actors as a result of interactions between resources and humans • Emergence of resistance from traditional, local groups or progressive human/non-human alliances

Source: Contracted from Paul Robbins Five Theses of Political Ecology

ocean-based fisheries. Chapman (1989), for example, reveals that the current changing relationship between common property and private resources in the Amazon profoundly affects the degree of exploitation that is experienced by the region's fisheries. This according to Chapman has important implications for the survival of Amazonia's flood-forests which play a critical role in the region's fisheries ecology. A political ecology of the Amazon forest stresses the context within which tree-cutting occurs in the forest and the relationships between the marginalized communities and the loss of tree cover.

Using an explicit Marxist, materialist interpretation towards the struggle for control of the forest between powerful groups, Schmink and Wood (1987, 1992), state that as class stratification increase under conditions of market expansion, an increasingly hierarchical arrangement of groups will struggle over the ‘surplus’ that comes out of the forest leading to over-exploitation of forest resources. As the indigenous groups and the peasant farmers are drawn into market economies, the result is that indigenous groups are pushed aside for investors who have the capital to invest in such resources. This is further compounded when the state is involved as it may result in the interest of solely the elites being served and also encourages further resource exploitation. This process of capitalist enclosure and modernization results in degradation of forest resources and marginalization of indigenous resource users.

The second thesis focuses on the conservation and control of resources, mainly from resource owners, to achieve sustainability. This involves taking over the control of resources usually from the minority groups, (associated with class, gender, or ethnicity), such as peasant farmers, small-scale fishers, and local communities. This process has

manifested by disabling local systems of livelihood production and socio-political organizations by state bureaucrats and protecting global interests in the name of environmental protection. This is in line with resource grabbing, particularly relating to ocean resources, where certain restrictions are introduced by state officials with the reason of environmental protections and with an often hidden aim of control of such resources (Robbins, 2012). A typical instance is the institutionalization of Marine Protected Areas (MPA), which places restrictions or bans in certain marine areas previously occupied for the purpose of marine protection and conservation. MPAs are one of the major mechanisms through which ocean grabbing occurs as identified by Franco *et al*. (2014).

The conservation and control thesis of political ecology does not suggest opposition to the defense of ambient ecological systems, biodiversity or protection of environmental systems, but focuses on the extent to which such practices have failed in achieving its common aim, have negative social effects, or are driven by other interests. The failure is a result of the instruments of conservation, which have disenfranchised traditional land managers and served the goals, desires, and interests of powerful actors in society who hold little or no investment in the ecosystem resources (Robbins, 2012).

Robbins (2012) identifies environmental conflict and exclusion as the third thesis. Robbins reveals that with this thesis, environmental problems become ‘socialized’ when groups such as states, investors and elites secure control of collective resources at the expense of others by leveraging management interventions. This results in exclusion of prior resource users. The end result is an attempt to protect and secure their resources, sometimes leading to conflicts and violence.

The argument of environmental conflict and exclusion is rooted in three fundamental lessons which are drawn from feminist theory, property research, and critical development studies. The first argument posits that social systems are structured around divisions of labor and power that differentially distribute access and responsibility for natural goods and systems. This system of division of labor includes issues of power such as who controls what; who is allowed to decide on what; and who is expected to do what tasks. Struggles and conflicts arise when the interests of others are enhanced at the expense of others, such as a minority group based on ethnicity, class and gender (Robbins, 2004:174).

The second argument reflects an understanding of property systems as complex bundles of rights that are politically partial and historically contingent. In this argument, the ownership of resources tends to be divided into an array of rights that may be exclusive to an individual or shared with a group. This includes the separate rights to possess, use, manage, and control income from use and control of capital. Privatization of such rights without following due process commonly results in conflicts, production losses and increasing inequality. The final argument draws on the historical experience of development activities that show them to be rooted in specific assumptions about class, race, and gender participation in the development process, often resulting in poorly formed policy and uneven results (Robbins, 2004).

Environmental subjects and identity constitute the fourth thesis, which basically involves the emergence of social or political movements. Such movements and local political associations have emerged due to institutionalized and power-laden environmental

management regimes which have led to the emergence of new kinds of identities, with their own emerging self - definitions, understandings of the world, and ecological ideologies and behaviors. This came partly as a result of lack of trust on the part of local resource holders in politicians who have been mandated to protect them and their resources (Robins, 2004).

The last thesis identifies political objects and actors involved in resources management. According to the thesis, the non-human nature of resources and human interactions and the quest to control such resources have made resource management a political activity. The thesis further notes that these characteristics and agents (politicians, bureaucrats, and private firms) assume new roles and take on new importance since they are also transformed by these interactions between resources and humans. These transformations have resulted in a certain level of power and influence in controlling the access and use of resources with its unintended consequences and pernicious results. In the process, resistance emerges from traditional, local environmental groups or progressive human/non-human alliances by people marginalized and exploited by such efforts (especially along lines of class, ethnicity, and gender); hence the rampant manifestation of violence and environmental securities associated with resource grabbing (Robbins, 2012).

These five theses by Paul Robbins were not proposed within the tenets of resource grabbing per say but are situation to explain land, water and ocean grabbing. The analysis of this thesis takes into consideration the five theses of political ecology and points out how these theses can help us understand and compare different forms of resource grabbing. A political economy analysis, moreover, helps identify particular actors, interests, and institutions so

as to provide further analytical and explanatory strength to both the political ecology theses and the comparative analysis.

2.3 Political Economy Analysis

In terms of resource grabbing debates, political economy analysis involves "how power and resources are distributed and contested in different contexts and provides insights into underlying interests, incentives, rules and institutions" (Haider and Rao, 2010: 4). Political economy analysis, according to DFID (2009: 4),

> *Pays particular attention to politics, understood in terms of contestation and bargaining between interest groups with competing claims to rights and resources. However, it is equally concerned with the economic processes that generate wealth, and that influence how political choices are made. In reality, these processes are closely inter-related and form part of a unified set of dynamics which influence development outcomes.*

The aim is to analyze, in detail, how political systems function in countries including control, access and utilization of resources and to draw implications for assistance strategies and aid delivery (Landell-Mills *et al*., 2007).

Hudson and Leftwich (2014) explain that political economy is also a matter of managing the distributional consequences of institutional change. This change is influenced by social, political, economic and environmental choices that are guided by the interests of individuals and organizations; for them, political economy presents a framework for conducting empirical analysis on how existing political institutions and actors actually work in terms of this choice making.

Hudson and Leftwich (2014) also suggest that political economy analysis evolved through three main approaches with the first generation starting from the early 1990s. The "first generation" mainly addressed issues of 'governance' particularly with an emphasis on the reasons for the absence of "good governance". This is largely from a technical, administrative, managerial, capacity-building and subsequently, public sector management perspective. However, the first generation was criticized for being unsatisfactory in addressing the deeper processes of history and politics that shaped development prospects and outcomes. This resulted in developing the second generation approach that responded to the weakness of the first generation (Hudson and Leftwich, 2014).

The second generation came out with tools that were crucial in more explicitly bringing in the role of political actors, institutions, and structures in order to map out the context for development interventions. The development of these tools was driven by a desire to understand where political support, and political will, lies in a country or sector. Typical of such tools include the DFID's Drivers of Change, Sida's Power Analysis, and the Dutch SGACA work (Strategic Governance and Corruption Analysis). The approach is much credited with bringing politics back in, by means of greater emphasis on historical, structural, institutional and political elements that shaped the context within which actors worked. Even though these tools were considered as political economy analysis, Hudson and Leftwich, however, argue that they were too general to provide operationally relevant insights, and tended to suffer from analytical and methodological incoherence; they therefore suggest the second generation is not fit to be considered as a fully holistic political economy approach (Hudson and Leftwich, 2014).

The response to the concerns raised in the second generation was the emergence of a new political economy approach, developed within assumptions and methodological tools of economics. The "third generation" emphasizes the way in which institutional incentives shape behavior to produce positive or dysfunctional developmental outcomes. Third generation political economy analysis emphasizes that there is always a conflict between competing interests. Those who have power will seek to defend their advantage, and those who are disadvantaged will be marginalized (Hudson and Leftwich, 2014).

The third generation rests on three main core principles namely, interests, institutions and incentives. Self-interest serves as a major motivator for actions to be initiated and tends to influence behaviours and outcomes. For example, the motivation of a politician is to get elected and to stay in power so as to have an influence on how things should be governed while bureaucrats are driven by expanding their power, duties, staff and budgets. From this perspective, competition for self-interest brings about dynamics in society in terms of how changes should occur (Hudson and Leftwich, 2014).

Institutions are required to achieve meaningful interest. Institutions provide the necessary social infrastructure to harness and channel self-interest: they act as the coordination mechanism for mutually productive outcomes. Institutions provide frameworks within which peace, justice, and stability for the economy and policy function without disruption. Issues of laws, contracts, property rights and the economy are upheld by institutions. Strong institutions and instructional frameworks, therefore, form an important backbone of how resources are managed in an economy. This implies that in cases where there are

completions of achieving self-interest, solid institutions are needed to regulate changes that will be necessitated by such interests. A case of weak institutions amidst high rates of self-interest is, therefore, tantamount to antidevelopment (Hudson and Leftwich, 2014).

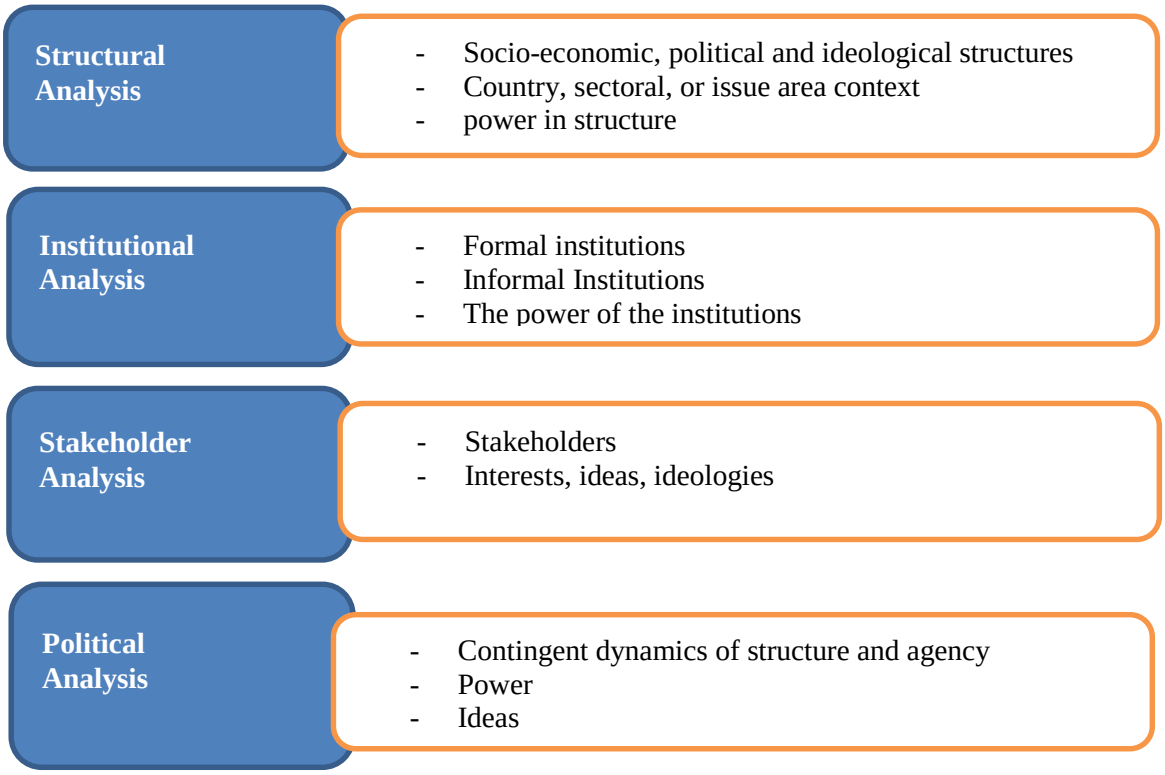
Institutions generate incentives which can have both positive and negative impacts on institutional coordination and wealth-creation. For instance, good institutions incentivize coordination and wealth-creation, whereas missing or bad institutions incentivize self-seeking and socially perverse outcomes. Incentives are the external stimuli of rewards and punishments that are related to certain types of actions (Ostrom *et al.,* 2002). Altering the institutional framework entails changing the incentive structure and has been an essential condition for the reduction in the uncertainties of the environment over time. It has been the major tool by which humans have attempted deliberately to alter their environment. This means that self-seeking interest functioning on weak institutions (altered institutions) tend to halt the developmental process. Good institutions play a crucial bridging role such as aligning incentives for individual self-interested behavior with publicly beneficial outcomes (Hudson and Leftwich, 2014).

In summary, Hudson and Leftwich (2014) believe that political economy analysis should focus on identifying the structures within a particular geographical context as well as institutions and actors/stakeholders that operate within these structures. The approach includes a focus on interests and ideologies of actors/stakeholders, which combine with both formal and informal institutions that govern behavior. In this approach, individual interests and institutional incentives interact with structures to produce pro- or anti-developmental outcomes. Hudson and Leftwich framework for political analysis

emphasizes how agency, structural and institutional context combine to produce political action and outcomes. The heart of the analysis involves how societal structures interact with institutions and actors/stakeholders to produce political outcomes. This means examining how actors'/stakeholders' interests are channeled through the institutional powers they face – that is, how both formal and informal institutional powers are able to shape the interest and ideas of actors/stakeholders to produce political outcomes.

It is therefore very important that the interests of the various actors/stakeholders in the resource grabbing debates are analyzed. It is essential to understand who the key players are in land, water and ocean grabbing, what their respective interests are, and what their capacities are for defending or challenging the status quo of institutions and structures. As examined in the remainder of this thesis, institutions, both formal and informal, play important roles as far as shaping how actors and interests emerge and evolve in resource grabbing in the Global South. Formal institutions include legal systems, property rights, tax systems, and their enforcement mechanisms while informal institutions include cultural practices and social norms. Incentives, as the rewards and benefits, such as resources, that accrue from pursuing certain courses of action, and how they are generated by the institutional rules of the game are also analyzed bel

Figure 2.1: Framework for Political Economy Analysis



Source: *Hudson and Leftwich, 2014:107*

2.4 Application of the Analytical Frameworks

The political economy analysis runs through the chapters of land, water and ocean grabbing by identifying stakeholders (actors), motives (interests), institutions and institutional frameworks (e.g., weaknesses in laws and policies) and effects of resource grabbing. The analysis explores how the interests of actors influence institutional and regulatory frameworks which results in resource grabbing.

The effects are then discussed along the first three of Robbins' theses – marginalization and degradation; conservation and control; and environmental conflicts. This is because the first three theses provide vivid descriptions of the effects of resource grabbing. This is

not to say that Paul Robbins' five theses are explicitly designed to explain the effects of resource grabbing. However, the thesis seeks to identify features of effects associated with the different types of resource grabbing by using the five theses of political ecology as analytical tools.

The discussion section employs an analysis of the key features of land, water and ocean grabbing. This is based on a comparative analysis on the different types of resource grabbing – land, water and the oceans – focusing on actors, interests, institutional frameworks and effects. To ensure that policy formulation involves the interplay of structures, institutions, stakeholders and political analysis, the political economy analysis framework of Hudson and Lefwich is used in proposing an approach for policy formulation towards curbing resource grabbing. Hence, Leftwich and Hudson's political economy analysis framework establishes the interplay of actors, their interests and how these shape institutions and institutional frameworks to bring about resource grabbing. This aids in proposing an approach towards policy formulation intended to curb resource grabbing.

CHAPTER THREE

LAND GRABBING

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of the chapter is to analyze land grabbing, which is a major phenomenon within the context of resource grabbing. Land grabbing deserves special attention and a greater deal of space in this thesis for two reasons. First, the resource grabbing concept emerged primarily from the explosion in land grabbing in the last decade. Second, and related, research on land grabbing is far more developed than research on water grabbing and ocean grabbing.

This chapter takes a critical look at the key debates surrounding land grabbing. Issues such as land as a resource, land grabbing as a concept, actors, institutions and institutional frameworks and effects of land grabbing will be discussed in this chapter. The chapter analyzes the political economy of land grabbing to identify the interplay of political structures, institutional powers, and the interests of actors/stakeholders, particularly resource grabbers. These interests, such as interests in land acquisition, is matched with the themes of political ecology developed by Robbins to better explain the effects that emanate from resource grabbing within the tenets of the five theses

3.2 Land as a Political Object

The question of ‘what is land?’ can be answered by engaging in Hall (2013)’s political economy analysis. To Hall, there is nothing more concrete and obvious in terms of the

definition of land than the ground beneath our feet. Li (2014) also sees land as a strange object. Although land is often treated as a thing and sometimes as a commodity, it is not like a mat: you cannot roll it up and take it away, indicating that land is fixed in nature. Both Hall and Li suggest that to turn it to productive use requires regimes of exclusion that distinguish legitimate from illegitimate uses and users, and the inscribing of boundaries through devices such as fences, title deeds, laws, zones, regulations, landmarks and story-lines that distinguish between ownership among individuals, institutions, and states.

There are key fundamental aspects that differentiate land from other resources, however (Hall, 2013). Land is fixed and cannot move as most resources. Land cannot be exported or even relocated to the next place or down the road even if its constituents such as the soil or the minerals could be moved. For this reason, a person who wants to make physical use of land must move to it and not otherwise. This feature of land makes it impossible to concentrate its control at one point in the 'commodity chain' unlike other resources (Hall 2013).

Secondly, land, unlike other natural resources, is extremely heterogeneous. In this feature, Hall likens land to labor and asserts that its price or value depends on the location and the quality of it. For instance, according to him, several kilometers of land elsewhere may value literally nothing compared to few square meters located in central business districts. With this, the demand of land in one part of the world will not be followed by a similar movement elsewhere (Hall, 2013).

Hall also identifies control over land as indispensable to almost all human activity as the third difference between land and other natural resources. This means that some form of control over land is extended to both (though not applicable to all resources) non-renewable resources (e.g. uranium, iron ore, and coltan) and renewable resources (e.g. water, soil and trees). This is particularly true in a terrestrial environment where land control grants control over ecosystems. By this feature, the land is largely associated with everything in space such as agriculture, industry, infrastructure, and tourism (Hall, 2013).

Land again differs from other resources by virtue of it being commonly rented. Land, unlike other resources, cannot be consumed through its use and this explains why holders of a piece of land are sometimes willing to lend such land to someone. For example, situations where a piece of land is overused, polluted or degraded does not take away the name ‘land’. The land is normally rented for a long period of time for major resource development and the normal lease periods for agriculture, forestry and mining respectively are 30, 50 and 99 years (Hall, 2013).

Finally, land differs from other resources as a result of the power and depth of the attachment people feel to it. This is true in cases of the kind of emotional attachments people have with their farmlands, family homes, range or cottage. People also hold strong ties to their place or birth or where they grew up. Such attachments are even connected to their cultural values and practice and such people will go to great lengths to protect such lands from being taken (Hall, 2013).

3.3 The Concept of Land Grabbing

Current scholarly research and policy analysis in academic and grey literatures are characterized by explicit and implicit differences over the structures, interest of stakeholders, institutions, power and implications of contemporary land deals. Among the issues contested include what to include in the definition of land grabs; how to account and measure such land deals; how to understand the process of change; and what are the range of actors involved (Edelman *et al.*, 2013).

The land grab concept stems from a longer-term agrarian crisis linking the British-centered food regime to the current process of capitalist restructuring of the corporate food regime as land grabbing takes hold (McMichael, 2013). British imperialism was marked almost from its inception by the idea that taking over land for productive purposes was an act of "improvement" (with an original intention of making a profit) that will benefit all humankind (Hall, 2013). This British land acquisition was justified by the argument that lands were not being used efficiently by the natives and, therefore, constituted wastage of nature's bounty. For instance, Deininger *et al*. (2011) report that none of the African countries is now achieving more than 30 percent of the potential yield on currently cultivated areas, reproducing colonial justifications for land restructuring.

The acquisition of land by foreign governments and foreign firms is, therefore, a centuries' old process in the world (Sassen, 2013). While this can be seen merely as a continuation of an old practice, the available evidence (Anseeuw *et al.*, 2012b; Land Matrix, 2012; Borras *et al.*, 2011; FAO, 2011; UNTCAD, 2009) points to a significant change in the

curve describing the size of overall acquisitions in the last decade. Many attempts have been made to understand land grabs from various perspectives, such as their structural and institutional origins (Zoomers, 2010), states' role in land grabbing (Basu, 2007), and the conflicts that they create between different actors/stakeholders, particularly grabbers and land occupants (Grajales, 2011).

The definition of land grabbing in these recent times has sparked considerable debates in academic and policy circles (Borras and Franco, 2011; Cotula, 2012; White *et al.,* 2012; Margulis *et al.,* 2013). Depending on the particular framing of land grabbing, and who is doing the framing, its actors (stakeholders), drivers (interests), and scope will vary significantly, and with this the breadth and depth of the regulatory interventions proposed by different actors (Künnemann and Suárez, 2013).

A study conducted by the FAO on land grabbing in Latin America and the Caribbean used the following standard definition, arguing that land deals are to be understood as land grabs when three conditions are present, namely: the scale of land deals should be large (using a commonly accepted baseline of a minimum of a thousand hectares for a single deal); there should be the direct involvement of foreign governments and institutions, and the new land investments are seen to have a negative impact on the food security of the recipient country. Of the three conditions, the most important are the second (Gomez, 2011). Borras *et al*. (2012), however, criticized the definition on the basis of being narrow and bound to miss significant aspects of the scope and extent of contemporary land grabbing and possible trajectories of agrarian change. For this reason, they believe that a food or food crisis-centered analysis of land grabbing is problematic.

Borras *et al*. also argue that defining land grabbing too broadly will miss what is distinctive in this particular wave of contemporary global land grabbing and for that matter proposed three key interlinked defining features of contemporary land grabbing. Borras *et al*. describe land grabbing as essentially 'control grabbing' as the first feature. This feature describes the power to control land and other associated resources (also see Rulli, *et al.*, 2102; Woodhouse, 2012) such as water in order to derive benefit from such control. They identified land grabs (capture of vast tracts of lands), "water grabs" (capture of water resources) and "green grabs" (similar to Robbins' conservation and control thesis), as ways in which control grabbing are manifested.

The second feature of describing contemporary land grabbing takes into consideration the scale of land grabbing. They argue that land grabbing should not be limited to the dominant view in terms of size but rather point to broadly distinct but interlinked dimensions, namely: the scale of land acquisitions and the scale of capital involved (also see Hall, 2013). The third and the final feature of land grabbing occurs basically through the dynamics of capital accumulation strategies responding to the convergence of multiple crises that occur either nationally or internationally. Such crises include food, energy/fuel, climate change and financial crises (Hall, 2013; GRAIN *et al.,* 2014).

Based on the above-mentioned interlinked features of land grabbing as identified by Borras *et al.,* the authors define contemporary land grabbing as

> *The capturing and control of relatively vast tracts of land and other natural resources through a variety of mechanisms and forms involving large-scale capital that often shifts resource use to that of extraction, whether for international or domestic purposes, as capital's response to the convergence of food, energy and*

> *financial crises, climate change mitigation, imperatives and demands for resources from newer hubs of global capital" (Borras et al., 2012:405).*

Land grabbing is defined similarly by Akram-Lodhi (2012:125), who suggests it is the "large-scale acquisition through buying, leasing or otherwise accessing productively used or potentially arable farmland by corporate investors to produce food and non-food crops, in order either to boost supply for domestic and/or world markets or obtain a favorable financial return on an investment". This definition of land grabbing refers to it as a new form of colonialism that has intensified within the past few years, initially in response to the 2007–2008 increase in food prices (Rulli *et al.*, 2013) and also shares vital features of contemporary land grabbing as identified by Borras *et al.*

GRAIN *et al.* (2014) add to the debates on the definition of land grabbing by revealing that recent studies emphasize the links between land grabbing, biomass extraction, and the interests and needs of the few members of a global class of consumers distributed across an increasingly multi-centric global food system, against the vast majority of the world's population. GRAIN *et al.* thus claim that the fight against land grabbing currently lies at the interface of four debates, namely the climate debate, food sovereignty, indigenous rights, social and environmental justice. While GRAIN *et al.* attribute the fight against land grabs to these aforementioned four debates, Anseeuw *et al.* (2012b) reveals three factors that distinguish the previous factors related to the recent rush for global farmland, including the scope and size of the land grabs; the new motivations of a bio-economy; and the new actors and their configurations involved.

From the arguments presented by the authors on debates on the definition of land grabbing, there is no doubt that land grabbing in recent times takes into consideration the key features identified in Borras *et al.* (2012), though the literature has identified a wide range of issues and factors associated with land grabbing. Synthesizing the literature, the following three key factors are arguably most important for understanding land grabbing in recent times.

Stakeholders (Actors)

The first one being the size of land grabbed and the actors involved. Such sizes (see World Bank, 2011) involve large-scale land acquisition depending on the size of land available for those who depend on that land and how much is being grabbed. In terms of the actors involved, three key actors have been identified, domestic governments, international organizations, and private investors (usually from external sources). In most cases, governments within the states (where there is a land grab) play a vital role in making lands available to domestic and foreign corporations and foreign governments (Hall, 2013).

Operations of Institutional Frameworks

Secondly, there is a control of resources (land) with a motive of making use of and gaining something either directly (i.e. putting the land into productive use) or indirectly - other resources or benefits that can be obtained from the land such as water or mineral resources. Such control is normally exercised by the actors who are usually more powerful than those whose lands are being grabbed. Institutional frameworks, including land policies, contribute to the control of land away from small-scale land holders. This is because large-scale land investments look appealing to the politicians and the bureaucrats with the power

to approve policies that either protect small-scale holders or dispossess them. These powers are sometimes influenced by personal benefits or national economic interest (Hall, 2013).

Interests

The third factor shaping land grabbing involves motives or interests, with such motives either for private benefit or to deal with national or global crisis. The private financial benefits occur where finance capital started to look for new and safer investment opportunities (McMichael, 2013). National or global crisis may be in the areas of lands for food production to meet anticipated future food crisis and biofuel energy production to reduce the heavy reliance on fossil fuels.

On the basis of key debates surrounding what land grabbing entails, Künnemann and Suárez. (2013) reveal five areas or set of cases that are behind the motives of actors towards land grabbing.

Interest in Mineral Resources

The first set of interests with an international dimension as revealed by the Künnemann and Suárez (2013) are land acquisitions related to mining by companies with headquarters in OECD countries. This was attributed to the increased global demand for raw materials which has resulted in land struggles over areas rich in mineral resources. These demands for resource-rich lands are not only attributed to states in the North as the main actors but also states and mining firms in the South.

Interest in Infrastructural Development

This relates to large-scale infrastructure development such as the construction of dams for hydropower and irrigation purposes, airports, highways, and harbors. This normally stems from industrialization and urbanization which have resulted in forced displacement and the conversion of agricultural land for developmental purposes known as urban sprawl and infrastructure development (Stanley, 2009). The main international actors involved in these cases according to the Künnemann and Suárez are the international financial institutions (IFIs), such as the World Bank, regional development banks, and international banks that provide project support. Developing countries in the South in their attempts to embrace these large-scale projects from the IFIs make large tracks of land available for the purpose of attracting these projects. More recently, the entry of state development banks and private companies from the 'BRICSA' (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) group has been identified as emerging powers of new players in the world of project finance and major infrastructure.

Interest in Agricultural Production

Interest in agricultural production has been identified to be common in recent times and usually comprises cases of foreign investors taking control of people's lands for commercial agricultural production for food, feed, and fuel. In this category, Künnemann and Suárez (2013) mentioned cases of OECD investors acquiring land in Southern countries for the production of agricultural commodities such as coffee (e.g. Mubende region in Uganda), the production of rice (e.g. Yala Swamp area in Kenya), and forest plantations (e.g. Niassa province in Mozambique). Other cases include the acquisition of

700,000 hectares of land by Saudi Arabia's Binladin Group in six West African countries; 800,000 hectares of land in Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay by Tejar (a company jointly owned by London-based hedge fund and an American private equity fund) (Hall, 2013).

According to Hall (2013), the key trigger for these cases of land was the massive spike in commodity prices that took place in 2007/8. During these years, the dramatic increase in basic food prices resulted in a reduction of access to food for millions of people as they reached the highest levels in 30 years (FAO, 2008). Prices of rice, maize, soyabeans and petroleum rose by 19, 43, 48 and 66 percent respectively between January and May 2008. This encouraged many investors to look for arable lands in order to reap profit from agricultural investments (Hall, 2013).

Interest by International Donor Institutions

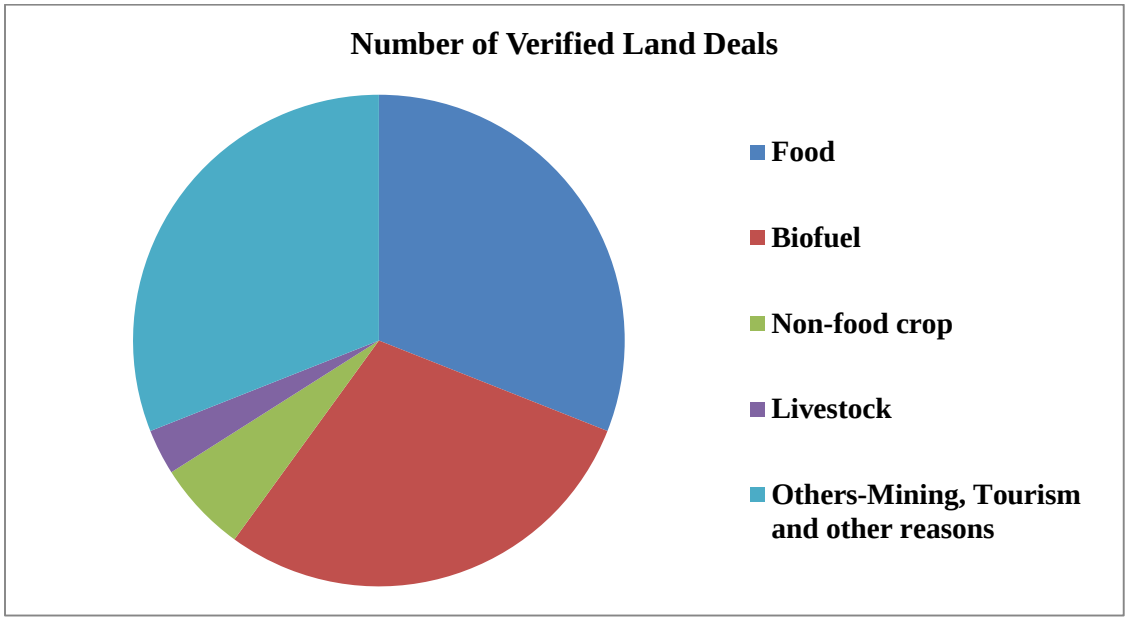
This set of cases relates to land policy reforms and services financed through official development assistance (ODA). Since the 1990s, bilateral donors and IFIs have been active in land policy reforms, sometimes as conditionality for loans. Many of the types of land policies these actors promote, and in some cases are directly involved in, have been found to have negative impacts in the enjoyment of the human right to land of the local population. The United Sates, for instance, makes a developing country eligible for the benefits of its Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) and African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) conditional on the implementation of free market reforms, including investment liberation (also see Hall, 2013).

International Institutions for Investment Protection

The last set of cases relate to the international regime for investment protection. To encourage foreign direct investments and protect investors, an array of investment and trade agreements (collectively known as the international investment protection regime) have proliferated in the past 20 years. Such agreements aim at protecting foreign investors (both corporations and individuals) from arbitrary treatment by the host government, such as expropriation or nationalization of investments (Hall, 2013). Künnemann and Suárez (2013) conclude that cases of land grabbing evolve around land acquisition for mining and agricultural activities, infrastructural, investment opportunities and protection of international investments in natural resources.

Anseeuw (2013) reveals an investment in agriculture has dominated large-scale land acquisition in recent times. Using Land Matrix (2011) as the basis of his argument, Anseeuw asserted that agricultural investment constitutes 69 percent of reported land deals with food crops accounting for 31 percent of the number of announced projects, biofuels 29 percent, other non-food crops 6 percent and livestock 3 percent. He concludes that agricultural production is indeed the primary driver behind the rush for land in recent times. He further reveals that 31 percent represents land deals involving mining, tourism and other purposes for which land will be grabbed from small-scale holders (Anseeuw, 2013).

Figure 3.1: Cases of Reported Land Investments



Source: Modified from Land Matrix, 2011

However, Hall (2011) in his comparative studies in Southeast Asia on crop booms reveals that land grabbing not only involves foreign companies and foreign and domestic states as available literature present in the five set of cases. He further indicates that it is not just large domestic capital but it is also smallholders who have tried to take or keep control over land on which to grow boom crops. According to him, smallholder-driven crop booms often involve, at the micro-level, processes that are surprisingly similar to those that characterize the land grab at the level of tens or hundreds of thousands of hectares. He suggests that attention should be paid to smallholders as potential actors and agents of land grabbing. This demonstrates the complex patterns of actors who potentially facilitate land grabbing, depending on one's definition and conceptualization of what constitutes land grabbing.

There are still debates on whether such deals actually benefit the Global South in terms of the dichotomy of outcomes ranging from investment of opportunities to depriving them of their resources and means of livelihood (McMichael, 2013; Robertson and Pinstrup-Andersen, 2010). The next section, therefore, intends to assess causes and effects of land deals in the Global South.

3.4 Actors, Institutional Frameworks and Motives (Interest) in Contemporary Land Deals

The general perception among proponents of land deals is that most of the land available for buyers in the Global South is abundant and underutilized. Recent literature has focused on foreign private companies and foreign governments/organizations as key drivers to land grabbing in the Global South with either little or no emphasis on the roles played by the central states (Borras *et al.*, 2012). It is, therefore, imperative that causes of land grabbing take into consideration roles played by states (Hall, 2013; Borras *et al.*, 2012); international organizations (Hall, 2013); and foreign investments, which is also often referred to as 'foreignization' of land (Zoomers, 2010; World Bank, 2010; Cotula, 2009).

Borras *et al.* (2012) reveals that recipient states play critical roles in promoting national land grabbing, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean. According to them, all states are engaged in systematic policy and administrative initiatives concerning land administrations. They further added that roles played by states include invention/justification; definition, reclassification and quantification; and acquisition and re-allocation/disposition of these lands. States also, for the purpose of legitimacy and administration, often create land records and titles classifying lands as either formally

privatized or state owned. This has resulted in the notion of available marginal, empty or unused lands since most indigenous settlers in the Global South have no formal titles to their lands (Hall, 2013; Seo and Rodriguez, 2012; Liversage, 2010). The roles played by states are therefore murky, since most states believe that taking a state's land cannot be described as "grabbing." This makes efforts at establish global governance over land grabbing quite complicated and difficult to frame, implement and enforce (Boras *et al*., 2012). Table 3.1 provides a summary of the actors/stakeholders involved in land grabbing and their varied interests. The table demonstrates the interplay of actors and interests in the issue of land grabbing in the Global South. The table describes the interest or roles played by the various actors who are involved in land grabbing. It also shows the influence of such actors in enhancing land grabbing, which may be positive, negative or both. Positive and negative in this context are not meant normatively. Positive influence means that their roles or interest can promote land grabbing. The negative influence on the other hand describes such roles having no impact on promoting land grabbing.

Table 3.1 Actors/Stakeholders in Land Grabbing

Actors	**Interests/Roles**	**Influence on Land Grabbing**
Domestic States	Land policies, FDIs, Personal/economic benefits	Positive (+)
Foreign States	food production for security, biofuel production, Investments	Positive/Negative (±)
Domestic Investors	Investments (mining, real estates, agriculture)	Positive/Negative (±)
Foreign Investors	Investments (mining, real estates, agriculture)	Positive/Negative (±)
International Organizations	Food production, land policies, provision of risk insurance	Positive/Negative (±)
Grabbees (Peasants, indigenous communities etc.).	Protection land, livelihoods and cultural values	Negative (-)

Source: Author, Construct, 2016 (Modified from the literature)

States' role in land grabbing is driven, in some situations, by the personal or economic benefits received by the politicians or the bureaucrats with the power to facilitate such deals (Hall, 2013). State officials, therefore, influence land grabbing by helping investors navigate their regulatory and practical challenges. Foreign land deals are also facilitated by recipient countries through favorable land and trade policies (Messerli *et al.*, 2013). Such deals have been institutionalized by weak regulatory frameworks/land governance or corrupt and non-transparent/shady deals in countries where such structures have been put in place (Woodhouse, 2012; Liversage, 2010). Typical examples include the (reversed) South Korean Daewoo case in Madagascar and the Malibya case in Mali. GRAIN *et al*. (2014) therefore concluded that land grabbing is most rampant in countries where corrupt and unaccountable decision-making exists, combined with poverty and powerlessness such as is prevalent in countries found in the South.

The most recognized form of land grabbing in the literature in recent times involves foreign investments by either transnational institutions or foreign states. This involves transnational companies or states who are seeking to secure access to land in developing countries for agricultural (food and biofuel production) and non-agricultural purposes (Messerli *et al.*, 2013, Hall, 2013). Both food and nonfood crops are important targets of investment, but 'flex crops' that can be used for both food and biofuels (such as soybean, sugarcane, and oil palm) are also considered important (Borras, *et al.*, 2012).

Wealthy but food-insecure countries worried about tightening markets are seeking to enhance their food production by leasing and buying land overseas. Such countries, as a strategy to deal with the future food security issues, tend to invest in land deals overseas,

and particularly in the sub-Saharan African countries, purposely for food production to meet their domestic demand at cheaper prices (Edelman *et al.,* 2013; Brown, 2011). According to the FAO (2009), most of the countries that are currently food-self-sufficient are in Asia (e.g., includes China and India). Cotula (2011) and GRAIN (2008) also find that food import-dependent countries, particularly Saudi Arabia, Japan and South Korea, are in search for fertile farmlands in countries in the Global South including Uganda, Madagascar, Mali, Somalia, Sudan, Mozambique, Philippines, Indonesia, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Pakistan, Burma, etc. Some of these recipient countries do welcome investors for land deals even though such countries (including Madagascar, Sudan, and Cambodia) are food-insufficient (Burley & Bebb, 2010; Zoomers, 2010).

In addition to gaining control over food production, various actors are interested controlling land to control energy production and wealth generation. The growing interest in land investments in green energy, including biofuels, is as a result of global awareness of anthropogenic climate change. Countries have therefore set targets to replace its fuel needs with agrofuel. For instance, the United States, as the largest consumer of oil, has set a target of 30 percent by 2030 while the EU directive stipulates that 10 percent of transport fuels must be supplied from 'renewable' sources by 2020 with the expectation that 80–90 percent of this target will be met from biofuels (Anseeuw *et al*., 2011). A survey of countries which have enacted legislations to promote biofuel revealed that 40 out of 50 countries have actually enacted legislations to promoted biofuel, signifying the increasing need for biofuel production (Smith 2010). The International Energy Agency (2011) has predicted global agrofuel consumption to reach 250 billion liters of gasoline equivalent per year by 2030.

Currently, land deals for biofuel production are dominant in countries such as Madagascar and Ethiopia, where jatropha, palm oil, and sugar are major crops. EU countries have already secured or requested five million hectares of land for industrial biofuels in developing countries (ActionAid, 2010).

Many researchers and environmentalists see these land investments in green energy production as a strategy for the private sector to take advantage of the emerging market of green energy. This has resulted in land competition for food and energy production with the major effects on global food production (Seo and Rodriguez, 2012). This has also resulted in financial capital being lured into land grabbing by a combination of the low cost of land, rising food prices and massive speculation in biofuels. Foreign investors see land and land-based resources as a means of shifting their capital to more 'stable' commodity sectors with the belief that land purchased in today's market will appreciate in the future and will provide the investor with a stable asset to balance the more volatile components of their overall portfolio (Daniel and Aittal, 2009; Smaller and Mann, 2009).

Governments in rich countries and international organizations such as International Financial Institutions (IFI) play key roles in facilitating foreign investments in global land grabbing (Hall, 2013). This happens through direct and indirect assistance to foreign firms seeking to invest in land deals in the Global South. Such direct assistance according to Hall includes investment in such firms and provision of risk insurance against potential and unforeseeable problems such as expropriation, breach of contract and civil war. Foreign powerful nations and agencies encourage and pressure countries in the South to open themselves up for foreign land investment as some of the major indirect assistance provided

to facilitate land deals in the Global South. This takes the form of a conditional assistance being given to countries in the South. For instance, the World Bank Group uses methods such as policy advice on liberalization investment and land access policies; technical assistance in the actual drafting of laws and regulations; maintaining indicators of investment-friendliness countries and providing help (including policy advice and funding) to get Global South states to open up to land investment for countries creating or expanding investment promotion agencies (Hall 2013).

Current inventories of large-scale land acquisitions at the national, regional, and international levels largely rely on reports by the media or by nongovernmental organizations and advocacy groups (Messerli *et al.*, 2013). While estimates of the scope of this phenomenon suggest that it is happening on a very large scale (World Bank, 2010; Grain, 2008), such estimates must be treated with caution. Several flaws were evident in much of the initial estimates from 2007 to 2012. Land grab research is complicated by the sparseness and unreliability of data (Hall, 2011). Research into land grabbing disconnects between some conclusions on outcomes or impacts and available evidence, and between declared research purposes and adopted research methodologies (Edelman *et al*., 2013). This has made it difficult to have an overall estimate in terms of global land grabs. It currently ranges between 51 and 83 million hectares depending on sources, data quality, and definitions used (Cotula, 2012; Anseeuw *et al.*, 2012). Significantly for the purposes of this thesis, 66 percent of all land grabs are in sub-Saharan Africa, although sizeable acquisitions have also been agreed in Latin America, the Ukraine, Southern Russia, Southeast Asia and Australia (Oxfam, 2012).

Land grabbing is a major issue of concern that goes beyond foreign land acquisitions. While it is important to focus on the potential negative effects of foreign land acquisitions on land rights and livelihoods of small-holder farmers, pastoralists, indigenous communities and other vulnerable groups, much attention should also be focused on the role being played by domestic elites and weaknesses in national land administration systems (Liversage, 2010). More significant according to Liversage, land grabbing in some countries is done by national and local elites and competing land users (for example, pastoralists and crop farmers). Other forms that exist include land grabs within families, typically men from women and sometimes from widows and orphans. Thus, focusing only on large-scale land acquisitions by foreigners can divert attention from more serious land grabbing in some societies and called for a response to land grabbing that looks more broadly at strengthening transparent, accountable and accessible land administration institutions that protect the rights of vulnerable people against all land grabs (Liversage, 2010).

3.5 Effects of Land Grabbing in the Global South

Debates about the effects of land grabbing have been characterized by ideological divisions. Whereas some see it as bringing agricultural investment and development opportunity to vulnerable actors in the Global South (Collier, 2008; Sender and Johnston, 2004), others believe that land grabbing results in the alienation of peasants from the land and the entrenchment of industrialized forms of farming that do little to reduce poverty, promote food security or protect the environment (Hall, 2013; Messerli *et al.,* 2013;

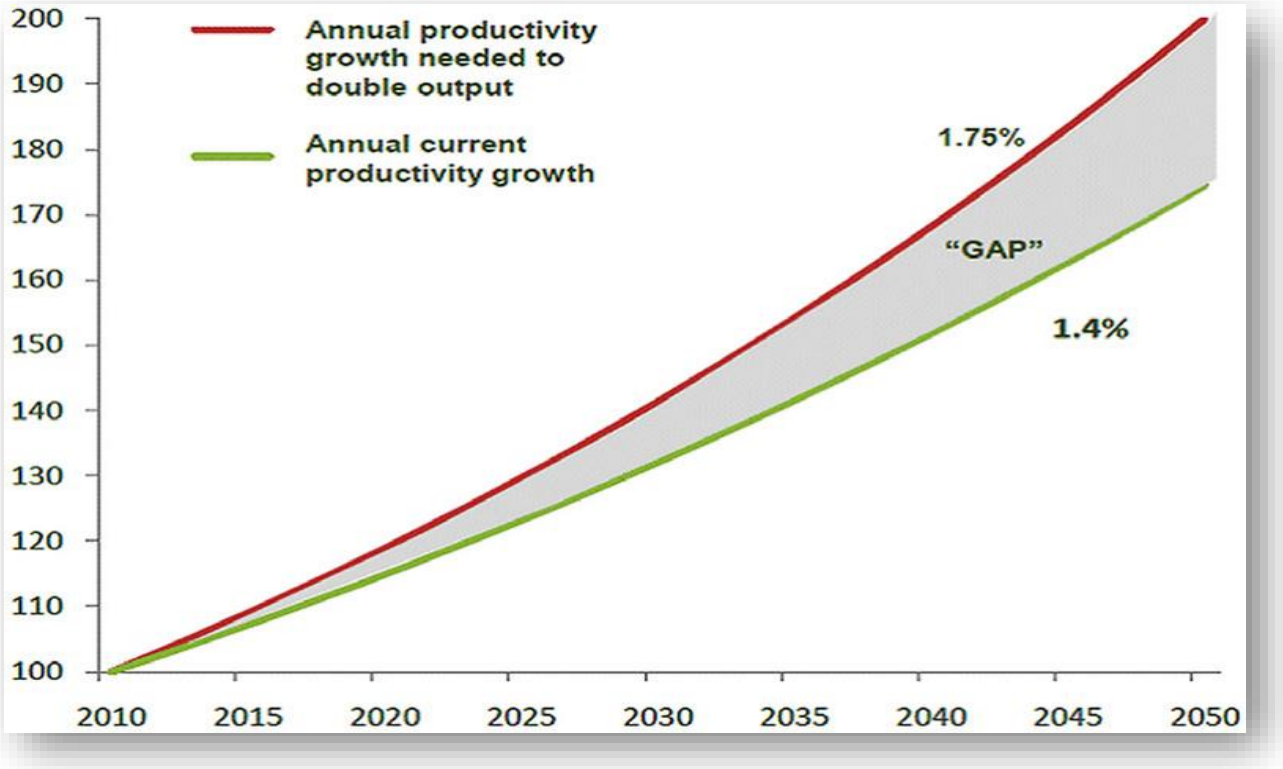
McMichael, 2012; Robertson and Pinstrup-Andersen, 2010). Yet despite these divergent positions, a consensus has arisen on the need to revisit, as researchers, the types of grabbing and how they affect the interests and livelihoods of the small-scale holders in different ways (Cotula *et al.*, 2009; World Bank, 2011).

Liversage (2010) believes that in general, there is still insufficient information on the impacts that realized land deals have had on the livelihoods of rural communities in the affected countries – either negative or positive. Many land deals contain certain premises of benefits including employment, income, technology and financial transfer but despite these possible positive benefits, there is scant evidence as to whether these have been fulfilled or not. Liversage waded into the debates with the assertion that while some literature suggests that at least some large-scale acquisitions have not met expectations and, instead, have had a negative impact, others (Collier, 2008; Sender and Johnston, 2004) argue some of the large-scale foreign investment in agriculture are having a positive impact. Liversage, therefore, proposes that more well-documented research on effects, both positive and negative, is needed. This means that land grabbing does not only constitute negative effects as some literature suggests but has certain positive sides that benefit the recipient states or the affected people. This section analyzes the debates surrounding the effects of land grabbing. It assesses the definition of both positive and negative effects of land grabbing and conditions under which the effects are considered negative.

Those who argue in favor of large-scale land deals (including Collier, 2008; Sender and Johnston, 2004; World Bank, 2008) argue that such investments hold the promise of substantial benefits to the local people and the environment. Such arguments are always

based on the assertion that arable lands in the South remain 'under-utilized' or 'unused' which could be efficiently utilized not to only benefit the local people but to improve future global food security. None of the African countries of most interest to investors', according to a report by the World Bank, are now achieving more than 30 percent of the potential yield on currently cultivated areas (Deininger *et al*.,2011; LI, 2011). The World Bank is calling for the need to make 'good' use of such arable lands. The arguments further noted that the poverty of the huge numbers of people who farm on 'under-utilized' land is both as a result and cause of the 'yield gap' between current yields per hectare and those that will be achieved if the best existing practices were used. The Global Harvest Initiative (GHI) embraces the same 'yield gap' arguments and in their argument presented the global yield gap in a graphical form (as Shown in Figure 3.2). GHI's GAP Index quantified the difference between the present rate of agricultural productivity and the pace required to meet future needs. Their argument is replete with 'hard facts' (as shown in the graph) that makes a convincing case for more large-scale commercial farming to increase global food supply to meet the projected global population of nine billion people by 2030 (Nally, 2014). This initiative calls for small-scale inefficient farmers to abandon their lands for large-scale efficient ones and take wage employment to boost food production.

Figure 3.2: Visualizing the Yield Gap



Source: GHI, 2010

Large-scale agricultural (both domestic and international) investments, the argument goes, hold out the promise of ameliorating this situation by bringing together corporate capital, technology, managerial know-how, infrastructure and distribution networks with the under-capitalized agricultural land and labour to the South (Hall, 2013). Large-scale investments, therefore, play a significant role in supporting economic growth both in developed and developing countries. For supporters, they have the potential to increase the amount of capital in the host economy, raise labour productivity, income, and employment, with mostly positive impacts in terms of economic development (OECD, 2002).

Large-scale land acquisition is presented in a specific way from the perspectives of those in favor of such deals. However, proponents sometimes admit that such deals may go wrong and suggest that land deals should be transparent, respecting the rights of the holders and making information accessible when the need arises. Proponents also mention the importance of strengthening government frameworks (Akram-Lodhi, 2008). They believe that large-scale land investments in the South, when done right, benefits not just investors but host governments, landholders and communities, and can contribute, ultimately, to the goal of feeding the world (Hall, 2013).

However, opponents of land grabbing have a different argument. Their first argument stems from the assertion that there is nothing like 'unused' arable land as proponents make us believe. They argue that supposedly 'unused' or 'vacant' lands are in fact often full of farmers at the time that the recipient states are negotiating with investors (Borras *et al.*, 2011; Liversage, 2010; Seo and Rodriguez, 2012; von Braun, Meinzen-Dick, 2009). For instance, in the Philippines, a large tract of land was allocated for large-scale investment on the basis that such land was 'unused' but a report by Borras *et al.* (2012) reveals that land was significantly populated and being used for productive agriculture. For this reason, opponents further argue that the fact that land is not being currently farmed does not mean such lands are 'unused' or 'vacant'. Such lands are usually used for some purpose, including fallow for swidden agriculture, grazing land for cattle, a source of wood and other forest products. Critics, therefore, believe that global land grabbing essentially involves the seizure of land from small-scale holders in the South who do not have secure property rights or the required political power to resist such seizure. They believe that land

grabbing takes place in areas where lands could be taken without too much difficulty (Hall, 2013, 2011; World Bank, 2010).

Attempts by state and corporate actors to seize control of large tracts of land while denying the claims of the people living on that land have been met with highly contentious and visible struggles (Hall, 2011). In some cases, coercion and violence have accompanied the state's effort promoting large-scale private investment in land deals, as in the case of present Colombia (Grajales, 2011) and in many countries in Latin America and the Caribbean during recent decades (Kay, 2001). Land grabbing, according to the critics, also has negative consequences on human rights, food security, climate change, and employment and income.

Using Mozambique as a case study, Künnemann and Suárez (2013:113-114) highlight the effects of land grabbing on human rights. According to the authors, around 35 percent of Mozambican households are chronically food insecure and 46 percent of all children below five years are malnourished. 80 percent of the population lives in rural areas and depends on subsistence agriculture and the use of natural resources for their livelihoods. The government of Mozambique, in an attempt to boost development, has nevertheless been promoting large-scale land investment with a target of 1.3 million hectares in the next 20 years in the country. This has resulted in the allocation of about 55,000 ha of land to six companies for plantations, creating significant negative effects for local peoples (Künnemann and Suárez 2013).

This land allocation in Mozambique has translated to most peasants losing access to their farmlands previously used for food production. This has resulted in loss of livelihood by these peasants who heavily rely on farming as their main source of livelihood. In addition to the issues of farmland loss, local people have also lost access to native forests including forest product for medicinal purposes, home construction, and energy, as well as an additional source of income. Although such lands were taken with a condition to provide jobs as alternative sources of livelihood, the authors reveal few jobs have been created and most of the jobs are temporary in nature and poorly paid. These jobs in no way compensate the local people for their loss of land and forest. The authors further reiterated that given an experience from somewhere, the projects for which those lands in the country were acquired will lead to water shortage and negative environmental impacts, including water contamination, destruction of ecosystems to loss of biodiversity and soil degradation Künnemann and Suárez (2013).

Künnemann and Suárez believe that the large-scale land acquisition for plantation purposes from these peasant farmers have considerable impacts on the fundamental human rights of these landholders. According to them, loss of access to land for food production and water amounts to infringement of their rights to food and water. They believe that since a relatively small part of the areas dedicated to tree plantations are in operation so far, the human rights impacts are likely to increase during the coming years as these projects scale upwards (Künnemann and Suárez 2013). Seo and Rodriguez (2012) and GRAINS *et al.* (2014) added that in developing countries, land deals, in most cases, result in displacement, dispossession, and disenfranchisement of local communities and rural poor in the South

which affect their basic rights to the shelter without proper compensation. Furthermore, women who constitute about 70 percent of farmers in developing countries are the most vulnerable to the land grab and resulting human rights abuses as they may not be able to protect their own land tenure claims in court due to local laws.

Large-scale land deals also lead to local food insecurity, specifically in terms of availability, access, and utilization of food. This is because locally produced agricultural products are mainly exported by investors, which compel farmers to purchase agricultural goods for trade to elsewhere as opposed to benefiting from the harvest of their own lands (GRAINS, 2008; Seo and Rodriguez, 2012). Land grabbing involves 'exporting food insecurity' because they are about producing food for export markets, creating food insecurity for the producers (GRAINS *et al*., 2014). Land grabbing is about answering some peoples' needs for food and biofuel by taking food from others. The global land grab is thus worsening food security with or without 'principles' and 'guidelines'. It pushes an agriculture based on large-scale monocultures, chemicals, fossil fuels, and slave-like labour with the primary aim of making a profit and not to boost food security. For example, Ethiopia since 1984 has been known for food shortages due to large-scale land deals (GRAINS *et al*., 2014). The detrimental effects of these land deals were evident during the 2008 famine in which food instability levels increased among the population while the food was being exported. This food shortage resulted in the Ethiopian government seeking for external food aid in 2010 and 2011 (Dominguez, 2011).

Although there has been an assurance by the government in Ethiopia to boost food production within the next few years, this came at a time when the government was still

closing land deals with private investors (about 10% of entire agricultural are to foreign investors) at the expense of the citizens (Cochrane, 2011; GRAIN, 2008). Such practices were heavily criticized by institutions including the USAID. The USAID, in particular, argues that the key measure to boost food production in Ethiopia is by guaranteeing the complete ownership of land by its citizens and to stimulate local consumption (USAID Ethiopia, 2010 cited in Seo and Rodriguez, 2012). Despite these policy suggestions, the country continues to simultaneously rely on food aid and practice large-scale land deals for food production purposely for export.

GRAINS *et al.* (2014) point out that there are many examples of how people who just want to grow food and make a living from the land are being expelled, criminalized, and sometimes killed, to make room for the production of food and biomass to the benefit of someone else's wealth. GRAINS *et al.* conceded that local landholders sometimes easily opt out for lands with good deals in infrastructure and services provision. However, they maintained that whatever be the reason, one cannot run away from the fact that a number of cases have been put on record where the process of displacement ranges from coercion to forced eviction and killings. Their assertion was buttressed with a statement that hardly a day goes by without media reports of the assassination of an environmentalist or peasant in the struggle over land conflicts particularly in countries such as China, Peru, Indiana, and Brazil. GRAINS *et al.* concluded that land grabbing has succeeded in turning farmers and landholders into refugees in their own lands.

Hall (2013) highlights other problems of land grabbing beyond dispossession. These include limited job-creation prospects due to plantation style (e.g. one foreign-owned farm

in the cerrado has 40,000 ha of land with just 180 workers); exportation of foods produced from the practices creating food insecurity situation in the recipient countries; competition of water between local peasant farmers and large-scale investors; and social and environmental damage often associated with large-scale land investment. Apart from the human rights implications for those that are already living on the brink of hunger, land grabbing potentially also has tremendous environmental implications: soil erosion, water depletion, increased pesticides use, more emissions of climate change gasses, and the loss of biodiversity. Large-scale land investments provide an easy entry and permanent control (through sale or long-term leases) of large vast of lands in return for minimal payments or sometimes nothing in return (Hall, 2013; 2011).

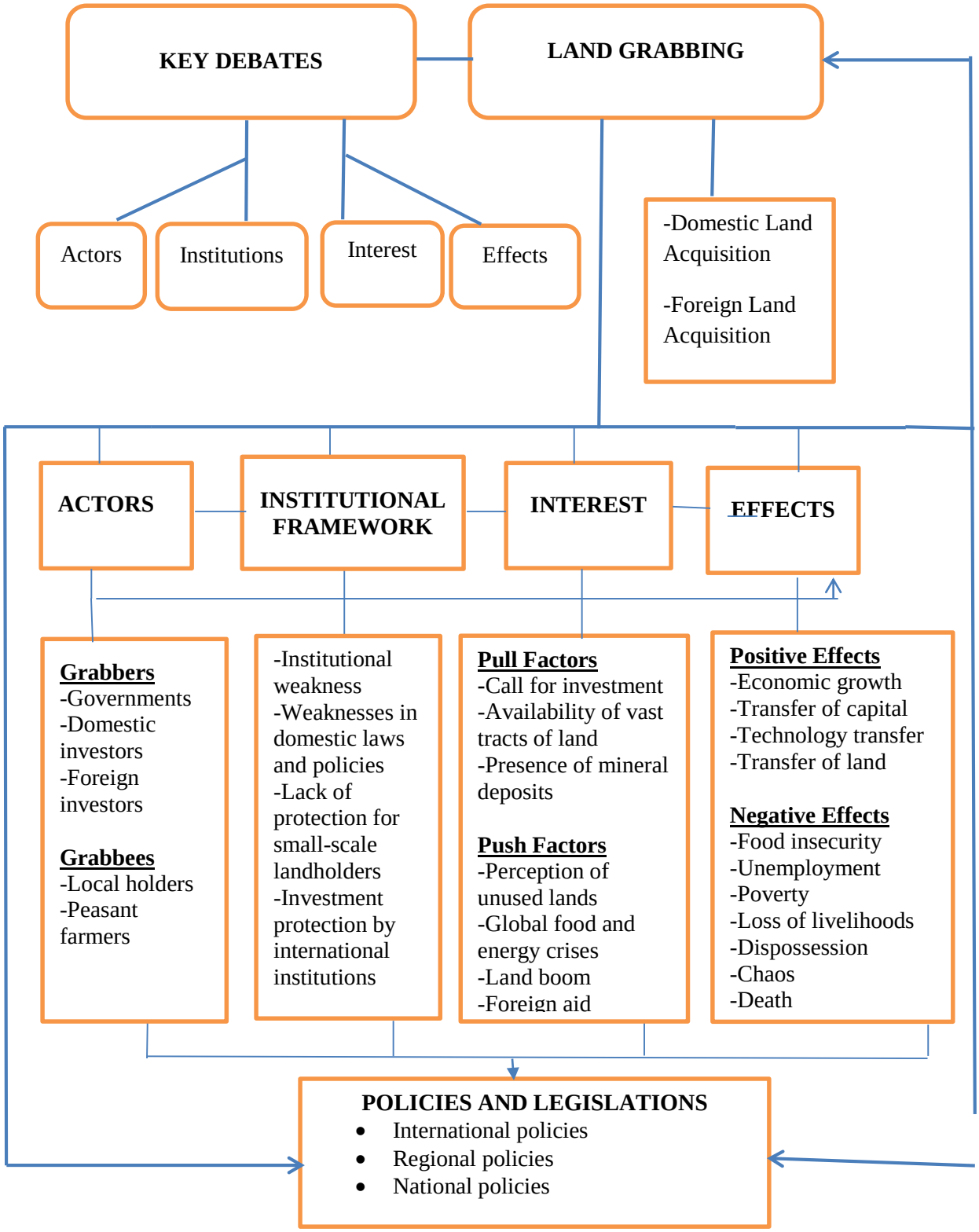
Critics of land grabbing believe that the win-win approach to global land grabbing to solve food and energy crises is not realistic as large-scale investments, irrespective of the purposes for which such lands are acquired, have negative implications that outweigh their benefits. For instance, according to GRAIN *et al.* (2014), the win-win proponents mention transparent and good governance involving respecting the rights of local communities when indeed evidence shows something contradictory by their own governments. GRAIN *et al.* further argue that the win-win proponents are not even certain on how such practices could be handled to cater to food security challenges in recipients' countries, making a strong case against large-scale land investments, particularly by foreigners.

3.6 Political Economy Framework for Land Grabbing

It is clear from the literature that key debates in political economy involving land grabbing focuses on actors and institutions, their interests and the effects of the phenomenon. These are discussed in this section using the conceptual framework as shown in Figure 3.3.

Even though there is no accurate figure concerning precisely how much land that have been grabbed in the South, there is no question that a rapidly growing amount have been grabbed either domestically or by foreign investors in the last decade (Borras *et al.*, 2012; GRAIN et *al.*, 2014; Liversage; 2010; Seo and Rodrguez, 2012). Most of these lands are found in rural areas where such lands are occupied by indigenous or rural poor people whose lives and livelihoods depend on those lands. Evidence in the literature reveals that there are numerous foreign land investments involving agriculture, mining, and real estate development. This implies that irrespective of the debates involving how much lands are being grabbed and for which specific purposes, three things are in common in the phenomenon of land grabbing in these recent times: 1) evidence of large-scale land acquisitions (either domestically or by foreign investors); 2) evidence of most of such acquisitions occurring on productive agriculture lands; and 3) evidence of the use of such lands for the purpose for which it was grabbed.

Figure 3.3: Political Economy Analytical Framework for Land Grabbing



Source: Author's Construct, 2016 (Conceived from literature)

It is also clear from the literature that land grabbing involves a variety actor, some more powerful, active, common and influential than others. Most basically, the actors can be classified into two main categories namely, 'grabbers' and 'grabbees'. The 'grabbers' involve governments (in both foreign and recipient states), including ministries, state-owned enterprises, sovereign wealth funds and government institutions (Sindayigaya, 2011). Another important component of the grabbers is that private investors are very prevalent. Both domestic and foreign investors have been identified as significant agents of land grabbing, though land grabbing patterns are often dominated by the latter. These private investors include banks, investment houses, private equity, pension and hedge funds.

The 'grabbees' constitute those who are at the receiving end of the practice of large-scale land investments. These include weak states, small-holder or peasant farmers, and local or indigenous communities who are mostly rural poor who depend on their lands as their basic means of livelihood. This draws attention to the problem of the most powerful actors (grabbers) exploiting weaker actors (grabbees), making the fight against the negative effects of land grabbing a difficult one. In addition, land grabbing also typically involves the weakest, mostly people without proper legitimate titles to their lands, fighting against powerful people with legal and other institutional machinery advantages to serve their interests.

These actors do not just engage themselves in the practice of land grabbing as there are interests that are associated with their involvement in land grabbing. This has been categorized into pull and push factors. The pull factors involve what attracts (on the basis

of factors in the recipient countries) particularly foreign land investments and include the call for foreign investment by recipient countries, weak landholders, and corrupt leaders and politicians in most recipient countries in the South. The push factors, on the other hand, involve the driving force for land investment from the perspective of grabbers. These include the perception of 'unused' or 'vacant' productive lands in the South; the recent need for increased food and biofuel production; the recent boom in land investments; direct assistance from foreign institutions; and the promises and expectations of a significant return on investment (profit).

Another important debate that surrounds the concept of land grabbing involves the effects of the phenomenon. This chapter has identified conflicting evidence on whether land grabbing benefits 'grabbees' and their countries positively or negatively. Land grabbing has both positive and negative effects within specific contexts, with evidence to buttress both claims. Overall, however, the body of evidence suggests that land grabbing remains a very problematic phenomenon with largely negative consequences in the Global South. It is within the concept of these debates that there will continue to be the development of new policies and reformulation of existing policies aimed at ensuring that land management, policy, and administration benefits those who are marginalized and vulnerable.

3.7 Political Ecology of Land Grabbing

This section looks at the interrelated social and environmental changes that have occurred as a result of land grabbing. The discussion focuses on evidence of how people have been marginalized by land grabbing and how the phenomenon has degraded land as a resource.

The political ecology of land grabbing also sheds light on how land is controlled and resource conflict associated with land grabbing.

3.7.1 Marginalization and Degradation in Land Grabbing.

Marginalization occurs when specific groups of people are relegated to the lower or outer edge of society. Land grabbing often pushes people to the margin of society economically, politically, culturally and socially following the policy of exclusion associated with it. Most importantly, land grabbing denies small-scale holders, peasants and indigenous communities access to productive land resources (GRAIN *et al.,* 2014; Hall, 2013; Borras *et al.,* 2012).

Economically, many marginalized groups of people have lost their farm land, which serves as their main source of livelihood in terms of employment, income and food to feed themselves and that of their families (Hall, 2013; GRAIN, 2008). In those sitautions, lands that were previously relied upon by farmers for food production have been converted either for producing food for exports at the expense of previous landholders or for other activities outside food production (Seo and Rodriguez, 2012; Borras *et al.,* 2012). This has had the tendency of increasing food insecurities for people and communities that have had their lands taken away from them. Land grabbing is therefore largely about satisfying the needs of some by denying others access to food, hence, relegating those whose lands have been taken to the background. Mozambique and Ethiopia are notable examples of countries where marginalized peoples have had their food production affected by land grabbing (Künnemann and Suárez, 2013).

Socially, people are also marginalized when they lose their main source of habitat. This happens when people are dispossessed from their lands due to land grabbing and therefore end up losing their place of habitat (GRAINS *et al.,* 2014; Hall, 2013; 2011; GRAINS, 2008). Land grabbing cases in the Global South have resulted in dispossession and displacement of prior landholders (Borras *et al.*, 2012). There have even been cases where people were not adequately compensated when they lost accees to their place of abode, further illustrating how people have been marginalized due to land grabbing. Landholders do not only lose their social way of life but also the cultural aspect of their lives ((GRAINS *et al.,* 2014).

The result is that those affected by the prevalent menacing side of land grabbing have been subjected to poverty, misery, low or no wages, and livelihood and food insecurity. This process of relegation associated with land grabbing denies people equal access to formal power structure and participation in the decision-making processes, leading to their subordination to and dependence on the economically and politically dominant groups of society (GRAIN *et al.*, 2014; Hall, 2013; Künnemann and Suárez, 2013; Grajales, 2011)

Land degradation, on the other hand, involves the deterioration in the quality of land, its topsoil, vegetation, and/or water resources caused usually by excessive or inappropriate exploitation. Large-scale land investment does not necessarily have a direct relationship with land degradation. This means that land grabbing does not necessarily mean that the lands involved will be subjected to degradation. However, evidence reveals that land grabbing has resulted in environmental degradation (Hall, 2013). Environmental issues

such as soil erosion, water depletion, the loss of biodiversity and subjecting lands to harmful chemicals, have been associated with land grabbing.

The marginalization of prior landholders and the degradation of land have the potential of making the places subjected to land grabbing unsustainable. Thus, land grabbing makes grabbees politically, economically, socially and culturally vulnerable, a situation which does not give them the full capacity to sustain themselves in the present. Besides, what will be left for the future generation if the current land resources are subjected to degradation?

3.7.2 Conservation and Control in Land Grabbing

Land conservation attempts to combat land degradation through preservation, restoration, remediation, and mitigation. It is not just about returning a degraded land to its previous state but also about protecting lands from over-exploitation with the aim of achieving ecological and social sustainability. Land conservation in an ideal situation should meet the interests of environmental protection and not that of bureaucrats or investors. However, land grabbing subjects lands to degradation rather than conservation. Which category of people suffers from land grabbing made in the name of conservation? Are the rich and powerful in society the only beneficiaries? Are there issues of class, gender, and ethnicity in grabbing? The answers to these questions are what constitute conservation and control thesis in political ecology of land grabbing.

Land grabbing has manifested in environmental protection discourses and practices mechanisms, which aim at protecting nature for ‘green’ purposes of biodiversity conservation. These mechanisms justify and even legitimate the dispossession of local

community members, including indigenous people and peasants. A typical instance involves the conservation of Tayrona National Natural Park in Columbia, which resulted in the grabbing of resources from prior users. Such conservation was done in the name of tourism development entrusted to a private entity by the state with significant effects on local community members' livelihood strategies. The result was the criminalization, relocation and expulsion of workers and park residents who not only lost the source of their livelihoods but also their place of abode (Ojeda, 2012: 363-365).

3.7.3 Conflict and Exclusion in Land Grabbing

Land conflicts manifest themselves as political, social, economic, ethnic, religious or territorial conflicts, or conflicts over land as a resource. They are traditional conflicts induced by exclusion from land and land degradation (Libiszewski, 1991). Environmental conflict often results from the exclusion of grabbees from land resources and land degradation association with land grabbing. The effects of land grabbing that result in conflicts include a decrease in food and generally, agricultural production, general economic decline, population displacements, and disruption of cultural activities and social relations (Hall, 2011).

There have been several cases of land grabbing in the Global South that have resulted in bloody clashes between grabbees and grabbers. Since land grabbing often involves exclusion of grabbees from their habitats and the main source of livelihoods, the thesis of control of resources is manifested and eventually results in the marginalization of grabbees and land degradation. There have been cases of coercion and violence accompanied by

states' efforts to promote large-scale private investment in land deals. People in attempts to protect their lands have been abused, a situation which has resulted in armed-conflicts in some of the cases of land grabbing in the Global South. Insurgencies in the context of relative deprivation of lower-status groups from their lands are one particularly violent type of environmental conflicts associated with land grabbing (Hall, 2013; Grajales, 2011; Kay, 2001).

3.8 Summary of Chapter Three

This chapter provides a comprehensive analysis of the issue of land grabbing. The political economy analysis reveals that land grabbing occurs through the interplay of actors, motives, and institutions. The chapter further demonstrates that the interests of actors are influenced by the ideological belief that large vast of 'unused' and underutilized lands exist in the Global South, weaknesses in land policies and regulatory institutions, the real and imagined imperatives to increase global food production and, more recently, a shift in the production and use of biofuel by most developed countries.

Land grabbing was also revealed to occur under the disguise of conservation, which tends to control and dispossess lands from small-scale holders. The results are social marginalization, including dispossession, local food insecurity, and loss of employment and income. It also results in degradation of land and its resources and possible resource violence and conflicts.

CHAPTER FOUR

WATER GRABBING

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on water grabbing and builds on the previous chapter of land grabbing. The concept of water grabbing in the resource grabbing debates and reasons for which water may be grabbed are revealed in this chapter. The chapter also gives prominence to the relationship between land and water grabbing since both phenomena have been revealed to occur simultaneously. A political ecology and political economy analysis for water grabbing reveals these links with and the similarities between water grabbing and land grabbing. Since land and water grabbing sometimes occur simultaneously, the social economic structures, institutions, actors and interests that promote water grabbing are often similar to those promoting land grabbing.

4.2 Water as a Political Object

Water is essential for human survival and well-being and important to many sectors of the economy. The world contains an estimated 1400 million cubic km of water, which covers about three-quarters (70%) of Earth's surface (FAO, 2008). About 97.5 percent of the water coverage on earth is made up of sea water. Fresh water constitutes 2.5 percent of the figure with only 0.5 percent of the fresh water available for human use. This 0.5 percent of available freshwater exists in aquifers including rainfall, natural lakes, reservoirs and rivers (Fry, 2005). The world's water exists naturally in different forms and locations including in the air, on the surface, below the ground, and in the oceans (Cosgrove, 2012).

Water, like other natural resources, is very important for economic growth and development. Freshwater availability and use, as well as the conservation of aquatic resources, are key to human well-being. Water resources serve as a catalyst for agricultural and industrial development in the areas of irrigation, hydro-electricity production and for domestic human use. Moreover, the food security across the world depends largely on water availability and thus water serves to reduce extreme poverty and hunger particularly in rural areas (FAO, 2008).

Generally, developed nations in the North have more water resources than many countries in the South, particularly in Africa and the Middle East. However, some countries in the South with good water endowments are subject to "water stress" from developed countries for the purposes of agricultural and electric power production. The expansion of agriculture, damming, diversion, overuse, and pollution threaten water resources in many parts of the world (Gleick & Ajami, 2014). Agricultural production, for instance, accounts for about 70 percent of all water withdrawals and 95 percent in developing countries (FAO, 2008), demonstrating the link between water and land resources.

Water resources on earth, including rivers, lakes, oceans, and underground aquifers, are therefore under stress in many regions in the world. The continuous stress of water resources has cast doubt on the sustainability of the available fresh water in meeting future population increases (FAO, 2008). Human well-being and ecosystem health in many places are being seriously affected by the water stress, which has resulted in changes in the global water cycle (Gleick & Ajami, 2014). International water policy is currently placing

emphasis on the need to improve governance as it relates to water resources management (WWAP, 2006). It is in this context that researchers and activists have identified water grabbing as a growing problem.

4.3 Water Grabbing

The contestation over and misuse of water is not new, but there is a renewed interest in a water perspective on resource grabs recently. Like land grabbing, instances of water grabbing appear to be resulting from a convergence of changing global dynamics around food, climate, energy and finance (Scoones *et al.*, 2013). The persistent trend in population growth, changing climate, and a growing demand for water to satisfy the growing thirst of cities, suburbs, agriculture and industry have contributed to a more generalized interest in access to water and the environmental effects of growing water usage (Priscoli and Wolf, 2009).

Political economy and political ecology brings two general insights to the study of water grabbing. Firstly, these perspectives can help cast new light on the global land grab phenomenon itself and related issues of land governance. This means increasing attention to water has the potential to also bring land grabbing into the attention of policy-makers. Secondly, these perspectives open up new spaces for old questions of political control, social justice and environmental sustainability with regards to the use and management of water (Franco *et al.*, 2013).

Water grabbing, unlike land grabbing, has received little attention in terms of media debates and research. Yet water and land are interlinked resources (William *et al.*, 2012;

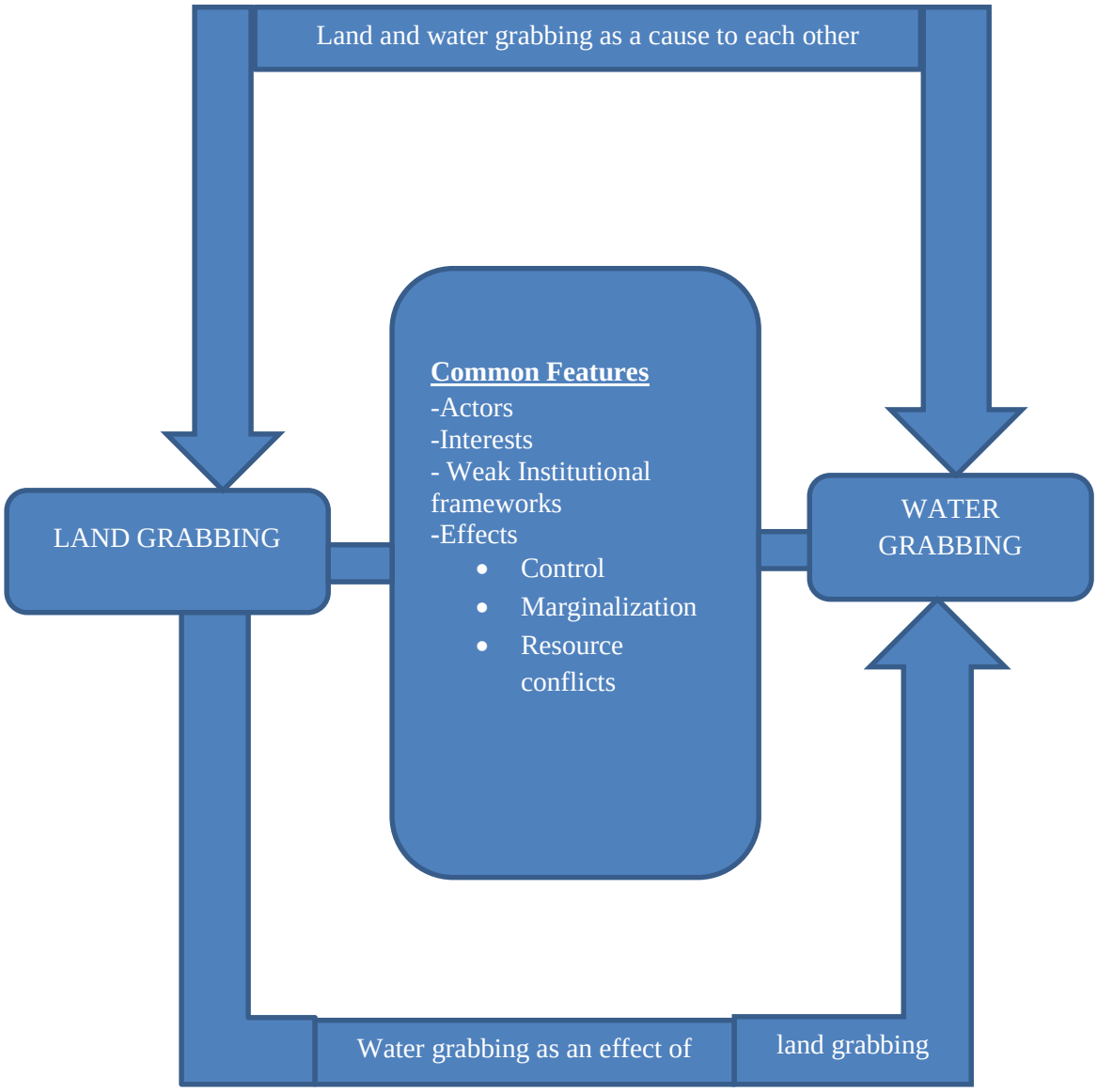
Woodhouse, 2012; Franco *et al.,* 2013). Because water grabbing has not received significant attention, there are fewer debates concerning concept of water grabbing than there are about land grabbing. However, water grabbing as a phenomenon is infused with land grabbing. For Franco *et al.* (2012), water grabbing is described as the process by which powerful actors (states and investors) are able to take control of, or reallocate to their own benefit, water resources used by local communities or which feed aquatic ecosystems on which their livelihoods are based. In line with the definition proposed by Borras and Franco (2012) for land grabbing, Saso and Zwateveen (2012:362) define water grabbing "as involving both changes in water use, and (perhaps more importantly) also involving (irreversible) changes in water tenure relations". According to Saso and Zwateveen, this process of water grabbing (just like land grabbing) involves the enclosure of commons by corporations and investors (both foreign and local) and government agencies, dispossession of peasants and indigenous people, and altering the environment. It also involves relocating agricultural and industrial water demands to foreign lands perceived to have abundant water resources. This means the investor is buying virtual-water directly instead of trading for products produced by that country (Zerrouk, 2013). A key feature of this phenomenon is that underlying business deals are large scale, most visible in terms of land area and the capital involved. Water, unlike land, is not fixed and grabbing of such resources could also involve relocation, implying that the effect of such phenomenon goes beyond where the resource is located.

Water grabbing, by definition, also involves control of resources (water). Control over water establishes a strong relationship with land grabbing and also buttresses the argument

that land may be grabbed not for the land itself but for the resources found or around on the land. This control of water, like land, often occurs in countries that have weak institutional frameworks and where rights regimes over water and land are unclear (Zerrouk, 2013). The control in water grabbing, like land, is often not just about controlling the water itself, but is also about consolidating the power to decide how this resource will be used, by whom, when, for how long and for what purposes in order to control the benefits of use.

Reminiscent of the ideas and discourses justifying land grabbing, water resources targeted for commercial use are often described as being 'unused' in order to legitimize the transfer of water into the hands of investors (Kay and Franco, 2012). The use of the term 'water grabbing' therefore emanated from the undue, unfair, and undemocratic manner of water control and transfers away from, as well as their disastrous effects on, the livelihoods of small cultivators and other sections of the rural population relying directly and indirectly on agriculture. These features are very similar to those identified in the analysis of land grabbing (Franco *et al*., 2014).

Figure 4.1: Land and Water Grabbing



Source: Author's Construct, 2016 (Conceived from literature)

Water can even be considered as 'grabbed,' in a broader sense, if it has been polluted beyond the point of being safely/easily used for the purposes it was put to previously. This means that if a development leads to water being non-potable, to it being unsuitable for

agriculture purposes, or even to the build-up of contaminants in an ecosystem, then this water has effectively been 'removed' from the cycle of use in that basin. For some, this result falls into the category of water grabbing (Franco *et al*., 2014).

Water may be the context of a grab, it may be the object of a grab, or it may be both at the same time (Franco *et al*., 2013). Water in the context of land grabbing plays a crucial role in agriculture-driven land grabbing. It often determines lands which are desirable or most coveted by investors, with those having some irrigation potential as highly prized and valued. In other cases, water itself is the primary object of the grabbing, resulting in reallocations of formal and informal water rights and their benefits of use. This, for example, includes situations where water is needed for the generation of hydroelectric power. Indeed, the available literature reveals that water grabbing may be influenced by two main motives of grabbers—for agriculture production and for the purpose of the hydroelectric dam—even though other factors may be a strong influence for such grabbing (Wagle *et al.,* 2012; Kay and Franco, 2012; Zerrouk, 2013).

4.3.1 Interest of Grabbers in Water Acquisition for Agricultural Investment

Water grabbing for agricultural purposes is often influenced by agricultural land investment and forms a major part of the recent debate on land grabbing for food and biofuel production. The way land is put to use has a major impact on both the quantity and quality of water resources. Water grabbing is both an important cause and effect of the large-scale land acquisition in the sense that land may be acquired not for its use but for investor interest in water resources. In recent years, various studies presented strong

evidence for understanding land grabbing for agriculture (for food, feed, fuel and raw material for industrial use) as having important water dimensions (Franco, *et al.,* 2013; Kay and Franco, 2012, Woodhouse, 2012). This evidence in the literature is buttressed by the fact that sub-Saharan Africa experiences highly erratic rainfall rates, which makes it essential to secure access to a reliable source of water in land investment for agriculture.

Indeed, securing access to water has been cited as one of the underlying causes for large-scale acquisitions of land by states such as Gulf countries, where renewable water resources are acutely limited (Woertz *et al.,* 2008) and by rapidly growing emerging economies, such as China and India, where local water scarcity is beginning to emerge (de Fraiture *et al.,* 2008). The options available in remedying this challenge include improving the efficiency of water use. Examples include improved irrigation, safe reuse of wastewater and investing in expanding supply methods (inter-basin transfers, desalination, etc.). However, evidence reveals that these options are very expensive, particularly in the short term, which makes it economically more efficient to invest in areas with vast and cheap agricultural lands coupled with available water resources to support large-scale irrigational agriculture (Mann and Smaller, 2010). In some regions, there is no possibility of irrigation without access to water, and thus, land investors would face high risks in drought periods. Thus, water plays a central role in these land deals (Smaller and Mann, 2009; Woodhouse and Ganho, 2011).

According to Franco *et al.,* (2012), most agricultural production relies on rainwater that has infiltrated the soil (also known as green water) but evidence suggests that diverted water (also called blue water) is far more reliable for production than green water. From the perspective of investors, this has formed a strong justification on why ‘unused and

underutilized' land and water resources should be tapped and exploited; the idea includes the promotion of a "blue revolution" in Africa and the rest of the Southern countries. Even when irrigational water is not a requisite for production, experience shows that additional water may be needed for crops to do well, particularly during water scarce periods signifying the need for water resources in large-scale land investment for agriculture production. For the production of agrofuels like maize, cassava, and sugar cane, water is essential and therefore on high demand. This is because an increase in the use of crops for fuel requires more water resources to be re-directed for their growth, processing and use. This has serious implications for land and water considering the 20 percent projection of global arable lands targeted be used for biofuel production by 2050 (White and Dasgupta, 2010)

The availability of adequate moisture is, therefore, a fundamental requirement for agricultural production and the use of land for such purposes. Lands designated for agricultural purpose provide an exclusive right to 'green' water (rainfall and plant transpiration) but in many contexts, it also implies a demand on 'blue' water resources (rivers, lakes and aquifers) since agriculture typically accounts for 70-80 percent of such water pumped, stored or diverted in less industrialized economies such the Global South (UNDP, 2006).

In Ethiopia for example, water plays an instrumental role in land grabbing. Agriculture in Ethiopia contributed to approximately 43 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2008/2009, 86 percent of foreign currency earnings, and 85 percent of rural employment (Bues and Theesfeld, 2012:269). Ethiopia, which has agriculture as the main source of

livelihood and the main pillar of the country's economy, has now become a hot deal for large-scale foreign land investment (Bues and Theesfeld 2012; Cotula *et al.* 2009; Deininger and Byerlee 2011). The estimated total land under the foreign land investment for agriculture varies from 500,000 hectares (ha) between 2009 and 2010 to 2.3 million ha between 1991 and 2010. These agricultural land investments constitute 32 percent of the overall inflow of FDI to Ethiopia, with most of the investors coming from the European Union (EU), India, Israel, Saudi Arabia and the United States (US). Two factors make Ethiopia favorable for commercial investors in horticulture. First, only 30 percent of the country's arable potential is presently under use for crop cultivation. Secondly, the abundance of arable lands, coupled with the availability of water resources on these lands, serves as pull factors for irrigational agriculture investment in Ethiopia (Bues and Theesfeld, 2012:269). The scale of investor interest in land and agriculture, therefore, increases the scale of potential water grabbing.

It is clear that water scarcity plays an instrumental role (often serves as a pull factor) in the phenomenon of global land grabbing. This, Woodhouse (2012) notes, is not just because there is water scarcity globally; it is, rather, because of the local scarcity of water for agriculture production in emerging economies such in India and China and in countries where water renewal is non-existent, or is a challenge, such as in the Gulf countries.

4.3.2 Interest of Water Acquisition for Hydroelectric Dams

The preceding section revealed that agricultural land investment has an influence on water demand for agricultural projects. This implies that the increase in the phenomenon of land

grabbing for agricultural purposes will have a positive effect on interest in water and, therefore, will contribute significantly to water grabbing.

Global climate change debates have identified hydroelectric power as a low-carbon alternative source of energy. The growth of the biofuel agro-industry has changed the dynamics of land use in producing countries while a resurgence in hydro-power development is buoyed by the world's need for 'green energy' (Zerrouk, 2013). Water grabbing for hydro-power production, unlike that of agriculture occurs mainly for the water resource and not for the surrounding land as a resource. In the case of hydropower development, water is the primary target of grabbing.

The main motive behind water grabbing for hydropower production is to ensure a cheap, reliable and an alternative energy supply for local consumption and for exports (Zerrouk 2013). Also, lack of consultation with the general public or the consent of the locals in the construction areas dam projects often leads to water grabbing. The result is inequity, in terms of benefits sharing and compensation. These hydro-projects tend to have adverse effects on the affected communities instead of benefiting them. For instance, the planned hydropower projects on the upstream and downstream Salween River (in Southeast Asia) threatened delicate ecosystems and the livelihoods of millions, the majority of whom are from ethnic minority groups. This is because the river basin supports over 10 million people who belong to more than thirteen different ethnicities. The river is also known as a source of irrigation, fishing as well as other traditional activities and contains various important religious and cultural sites (Zerrouk 2013).

Water grabbing situations in some regions have resulted in armed conflicts in ethnic minority lands. The Salween River dams, for example, have often been characterized by violence and civil conflicts of the Eastern Border States. These projects, based on their locations, risk exacerbating the insecurities of the local population in terms of safety, livelihoods, water, and food, and jeopardize fragile ceasefire agreements. Another instance involves the internationally infamous Myitsone Dam project in Southeast Asia. This project led to the displacement of about 12,000 people. The project, which was suspended, escalated tensions between local armed resistance groups (e.g. the Kachin Independence Army) and the central government (Zerrouk, 2013).

Beyond agriculture and energy, water grabbing extends into the water, climate and mineral domains in ways that highlight the distinct material character of water. Gold mines, for instance, require a large amount of water to 'wash' the soil containing gold minerals (Budds, 2010). In addition, mining sites are often located in the catchment areas of water sources and rivers (Bebbington and Williams, 2008). This means that mining operations affect, and often alter, hydrological regimes and the quantity and quality of downstream water flows. Mines also contaminate water through leaching and dumping of tailings. This happens through chemical use and discharge during and after mining operations.

Mining operations entail profound material modifications in water flows. In the case of mining in Cajamarca, Peru, the mining operations have impacted local communities in terms of appropriation of resources (land and water) compromising livelihoods and environments (Sosa and Zwateveen, 2012). Large mining operations in rural areas are also accompanied with profound and often irreversible changes in how water is controlled and

managed. These reconfigurations of waterscapes caused by mining operations can be understood as a form of water grabbing (Sosa and Zwateveen, 2012). Mining company strategies to acquire control over water in this case revealed that appropriation of water by the mining company happens through long-winding and often somewhat shady processes of negotiation and struggle between the company, the surrounding communities and different government agencies (Sosa and Zwateveen, 2012). These processes parallel cases in land grabbing and reinforce a core argument of this thesis that institutional factors can play an important role in facilitating resource grabbing.

4.4 Summary of Chapter Four

The chapter examined the emerging phenomenon of water grabbing, arguing that there is often a close relationship between land grabbing and water grabbing. Land and water grabbing occurs simultaneously in many situations in the sense that land may be grabbed for the purposes of water availability on that land and vice versa. The chapter also found that the interest of grabbers in water for agricultural purposes and for hydropower generation is the main cause of water grabbing situations. Water grabbing for agricultural purposes is meant to produce food cheaply for water-deficient countries. On the other hand, water grabbed for hydropower production is meant to help reduce energy-related impacts on climate change since hydropower is recognized as a low-carbon source of energy.

While land and water grabbing share similarities based on the purpose for which these resources may be grabbed, the chapter also establishes that similar actors—states, investors and institutional frameworks laws, policies—are also featured in both land and water

grabbing. Finally, on the basis of the political ecology analysis, the chapter reveals that water grabbing, like land grabbing, involves control of water resources and often results in social dispossession, marginalization and environmental conflict.

CHAPTER FIVE

OCEAN GRABBING

5.1 Introduction

The chapter examines the concept of ocean grabbing. It begins by assessing what constitutes the ocean and discussing the significance of the ocean and ocean resources in the lives of those who depend on them. It further describes activities, actions, and reforms that can be classified as ocean grabbing. Like the chapters on other resources within the thesis, political economy analytical variables, including institutions, actors, their interests, and effects of ocean grabbing, are also assessed in this chapter. This analyzed the concept of ocean grabbing within the tenets of these variables with the aimed of contextualizing ocean grabbing with land and water grabbing.

5.2 The Ocean as a Political Object

The ocean covers more than 72 percent of the earth's surface and constitutes 90 percent of all the space on Earth capable of sustaining life (Wilson, 2014). The oceans constitute part of the essential structure of human culture, linking global economies through trade and shipping and providing food and resources for humans around the world. The economic impact of the ocean is enormous, providing about $3 trillion in goods and services each year. More than three billion people live within one hundred miles of the ocean, where the economy and the environment are dominated by marine influence (Wilson, 2014).

Oceans also contribute to food security by making food available through fisheries. Fisheries contribute to food security directly by providing fish for people, especially low-

income consumers, to eat, thereby improving both food availability and the adequacy of diets; and indirectly, by generating income from the fisheries sector (De Schutter, 2012). The total contribution of fisheries to food consumption has grown substantially over the past 50 years, averaging an increase of more than three percent annually. Global per capita fish consumption stands at some 18.4 kg per annum (FAO, 2012).

On the global scale, fish forms 15 percent of all animal protein for human consumption with the figure being higher in low-income countries, including 20 - 23 percent in Asia and half of animal protein in West and Central Africa such as Congo, Gabon, Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana (FAO, 2008). There are about 30 countries, of which 22 are in the low-income food deficit countries, with fish forming two-thirds of their animal protein (FAO, 2008). This demonstrates the significance of the ocean in enhancing food security, particularly for the poor and low-income earners.

In addition to playing a fundamental role in global food security, the oceans also contribute to the livelihoods of those who depend on the ocean and its resources. This occurs through the generation of employment and income. For instance, fisheries and aquaculture directly employ 54.8 million people worldwide, and another 150 million people indirectly (UN, 2012). In developing countries, where most fishing-related employments reside, small-scale fishing serves as a major source of employment for millions of people and provides a greater distribution of benefits than industrial methods (Paul, 2007). For instance, industrial boats employ some 200 people for every 1,000 tons of fish caught, while small-scale fishing methods (used by 90 to 95 percent of people in the fisheries sector) employ some 2,400 people for the same amount of fish (FAO and WorldFish Center, 2008).

Women, moreover, constitute about 50 percent of the fisheries workforce and are typically engaged in the pre-harvest and postharvest sector (Mills *et al.,* 2011). The ocean is, therefore, a very important source of livelihood globally and in the Global South in particular, providing employment and income to millions of people.

The oceans have been explored and exploited by humans for centuries, resulting in an immeasurable wealth of knowledge and scientific and technological innovation. Despite these years of advancements, scientists estimate that less than five percent of the ocean has been explored. It is estimated that there are at least a million species of multicellular marine organisms and that there may be tens or hundreds of millions of marine microbes, the vast majority of which remain unknown to science. Those who argue in favor of ocean explorations are of the view that the increasing importance of the ocean and ocean resources provide enough ground for a continuous study and research about oceanic life and ecology (Wilson, 2014). The astounding lack of knowledge about the oceans highlights the importance of studying not just ocean resource but also the concept and practices of ocean grabbing.

5.3 Ocean Grabbing

The continuous exploitation of the oceans and oceanic resources in the twenty-first century has become critical for the survival of oceans, yet human activities continue to increasingly facilitate the degradation of the marine environment to the extent that many of the world's oceanic ecosystems are on the brink of collapse. There is increasing concern over access and usage of the ocean as a result of a number of factors such as climate change,

overfishing, oceanic acidification, pollution, and other human-induced activities which threaten both oceanic life and the continuation of human society (Barry *et al.,* 2003). The tensions concerning rights of access, usage, and possession of the ocean and their associated obligations pertaining thereto are similar to those pertaining to land and water. The emergence of land and water grabbing has fueled recent debates in the literature on ocean grabbing, which is a relatively new term that is increasingly applied to a wide variety of development, conservation, and fisheries management initiatives and transactions (Bennett *et al.,* 2015).

Bennett *et al*. (2015) define ocean grabbing by posing the following questions, "what defines an initiative, policy or action as ocean grabbing? What forms might it take? What is being grabbed and driven by what? Who is doing the grabbing? Who is being impacted and how? Who is benefiting? And how or what are the processes and actions through which ocean grabbing is occurring?" Based on these questions, the authors define ocean grabbing as:

> *dispossession or appropriation of use, control or access to oceans space or resources from prior resource users, rights holders or inhabitants. Ocean grabbing occurs through inappropriate governance processes and might employ acts that undermine the human security or livelihoods or produce impacts that impair social–ecological well-being. Ocean grabbing can be perpetrated by public institutions or private interests (Bennett et al., 2015:63).*

This definition reveals two physical entities that are being grabbed, namely resources and space and it occurs through means such as the illegal harvest of (marine) resources, dispossession of land for tourism, the encroachment of actors into an area for resource extraction; relocation and dispossession of communities after natural disasters.

In terms of resources, Bennett *et al*. (2015) classified ocean resources into living (fisher and other species) and non-living (including rocks or substrate minerals and hydrocarbons) resources; historically, ocean grabbing was first limited to the capturing of fishing stock. Marine and coastal spaces, on the other hand, include zones of the surface of the sea, the sea floor, the water column, beaches, coastal dunes or bluffs, lagoons, coral reefs, mangrove forests or seagrass meadows. These physical spaces can be associated with economic activities, historical importance as areas with spiritual or cultural significance, and resources that are deeply interconnected with customary practices or long-standing governance institutions (Bennett *et al*. 2015). Ocean resources, therefore, have multi-faceted significance that go beyond economic and instrumental values.

The concept of ocean grabbing, according to Franco *et al*. (2014), seeks to cast new light on important processes and dynamics that are negatively affecting those particularly local communities and individuals whose way of life, cultural identity, and livelihoods depend solely on their involvement in small-scale fishing and closely related activities. Franco *et al.* thus see ocean grabbing as the taking of control by powerful economic actors in charge of making crucial decisions involving fisheries, such as the power to decide how and for what purposes ocean resources are used, conserved and managed now and in the future. As a result, these powerful actors, whose major aim is a profit motive, are increasingly gaining control of both fisheries resources and the benefits of their use to the detriment of small-scale fishers.

Ocean grabbing has been identified to occur through shady access agreements that harm small-scale fishers, unreported catch, incursions into protected waters, and the diversion of resources away from local populations. This can be as serious a threat as land and water grabbing (UNO, 2012) as the process leads not only to a reduction of control by small-scale fishers over these resources but also, in most cases, to their ecological destruction and very disappearance (Franco *et al.*, 2014). Indigenous communities and sustainable fishing are continuously threatened by long-distance, industrial-scale trawling through ocean grabbing. Ocean grabbing, like other forms of resource grabbing, also occurs through policies, laws, and practices that are redefining and reallocating access, use and control of fisheries resources away from small-scale fishers and their communities, and often with little concern for the adverse environmental consequences (UNO, 2012).

There has been a long history of attempts to acquire and formalize exclusive and restrictive rights to particular areas of the ocean and its resources by means of proclamations, laws, treaties and naval force. Claims, disputes, laws and treaties over navigation, fishing and trading can be traced back through the histories of various European nations (Guy, 2000). Developments in the international law of the sea have also encouraged nations to extend their areas of sovereignty in order to protect, manage and exploit the ocean environment and resources. In some cases, this involves a substantial area. For instance, New Zealand's exclusive economic zone (EEZ) amounts to more than 20 times that country's land area (Robertson *et al.*, 1999). The emergence of the United Nations sanctioned EEZs as part of the Law of the Sea conventions constitute a form of ocean enclosure and property making

(Foley, Mather, and Neis, 2015) that can be considered a form of comprehensive ocean grabbing by nation states.

There is increasing concern over access and usage of the oceans as a result of a number of factors such as technological advances in mining and fishing. Many harmful environmental impacts associated with these activities are also concerning with the major impacts being felt by the small-scale fishers whose livelihoods depend on them. Continual incidents of pollution, poaching and overfishing have endangered certain biological species, which are being exploited commercially, even though there is an insufficient scientific knowledge to estimate what are sustainable levels of exploitation (Barry *et al*., 2003).

Not all conservation or development actions involving reallocation of space or ocean resources constitute ocean grabbing. Drawing lessons from the literature debates on land grabbing, Bennett *et al*. (2015) proposed three overreaching considerations that provide a solid basis to determine whether or not an initiative constitutes ocean grabbing – the quality of governance; the presence of actions that undermine human security and livelihoods; and impacts that negatively affect social–ecological well-being. Each of these initiatives provides criteria that serve as a framework for evaluating policies, initiatives, and actions. This framework is explained in below.

The quality of governance is the first fundamental consideration in assessing what constitutes ocean grabbing. Governance involves the structures, institutions and processes by which decisions are made and actions are taken and the quality of such structures, institutions, and processes play a vital role in resources management and allocations.

Quality governance takes into considerations and employs pre-existing national and local laws, governance arrangements and management processes to determine whether an initiative aligned with local and national aspirations and priorities. Good governance is also participatory and transparent. One main issue associated with grabbing is a lack of consultations with affected groups and shady deals involving such processes. Participatory governance ensures that proper processes and structures are put in place for decision-making, including building the capacities of affected groups, access to information and adequate resources to participate while transparency enhances the absences of fugitive corrupting forces (e.g., influential figures) that act on governing in invisible ways; or the normalization of corrupt behaviors in natural resources dealings.

Respect for human rights and accountability are also associated with good and quality governance. Respect for human rights takes into recognition the rule of law and the right to seek legal redress; historical tenure, rights and ownership and ensures that outstanding issues are well resolved. By accountability, promoters, governors, and managers are held responsible for the process of implementation and impacts of the initiatives and actions, which serve as checks on corruption, coercion or embezzlement. Quality governance is, therefore, a normative social contract between the state, the private sector, and civil society about the way that actors should perform and actions should occur. Such governance ensures that actions that undermine democratic institutions, local customs, and rules or pre-existing governance arrangements or policies (particularly involving natural resources) that marginalize vulnerable groups are not acceptable and, therefore, should not transpire. Therefore, any policies, actions or initiatives concerning usage, privatization and allocation

of oceans and ocean resources that do not recognize these basic features of quality governance constitute ocean grabbing (Bennett, *et al*., 2015).

A second consideration according to Bennett *et al.* (2015) is to assess whether actions guarantee or undermines livelihood and human security of those affected, particularly vulnerable groups. According to the authors, human security involves a state of safety from harm or feeling of freedom from existential dangers or threats to a referent object. Human security takes into account the safety, survival, well-being, livelihoods and dignity of the individual and guarantees freedom from wants, fears or harms, and liberty to pursue one's aspirations. An initiative is therefore considered as ocean grabbing when such initiative through the enclosure of public space or privatization of common-pool resources takes away the livelihoods and undermines food security of the affected groups (Bennett *et al.* (2015).

Such initiatives also threaten the security of both individuals and the affected communities. Community security is at risk when the initiative results in physical displacement; threatens the existence, cohesiveness or cultural identity of a community or an ethnic group; and facilitates the destruction of cultural resources or undermine traditional activities or governance processes. For personal security, the initiative should serve as a threat to personal safety; lead to violence being perpetrated against individuals and lack of respect for and protection of human rights. Taking the seven delineated aspects of human security (economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political) developed by the 1994 UNDP Human Development Report as their point of departure, the authors believe the categories of livelihoods and food security, personal and political security and

community security are most useful for understanding what constitutes ocean grabbing (Bennett, *et al*., 2015).

The final consideration is whether the policy, initiative or action produces negative ecological outcomes or direct impacts that affect the well-being of proximal communities or vulnerable groups. The term 'social–ecological well- being' as used by the authors recognizes the linked character of well-being within the coastal social–ecological systems impacted by ocean grabbing. This means that in terms of ecological impacts, the policy, initiative or action is seen as ocean grabbing if it produces undesirable ecological outcomes for resource users, rights holders or inhabitants and leads to adverse outcomes for ecosystem services (e.g., sustainability of the resource, fish catches) that local people rely on. If such initiatives also result in the pollution of the marine resources and negatively impact the health of the environment, including resources that are harvested, then the activities can be considered ocean grabbing (Bennett, *et al*., 2015). Socially, ocean grabbing occurs when the ecological impacts of an initiative lead to adverse social outcomes (e.g., on health, livelihoods, food security, poverty/wealth, social and cultural factors, institutions, overall well-being) for local people, particularly the affected group. These actions or initiatives have negative impacts on social-ecological relationships and feedbacks and the social costs far exceed that of social benefits.

Bennett *et al.* (2015) believe that the development of coastal areas and the well-being of occupants depend on the health of the environment, the abundance of resources and the intactness and productivity of habitats. Development initiatives, including the allocation of ocean space and resources, may have negative impacts on the ocean resources that serve

as a major source of livelihood for millions of local communities. These include pollution of water bodies for drinking and overfishing by commercial and distant water fleets. But the simple act of reallocation does not determine whether an initiative is an instance of ocean grabbing precisely because actions that involve the reallocation of space and resources are always occurring, be they for environmental management, conservation or economic development purposes. An aquaculture or marine scheme could be called ocean grabbing if the processes are in line with the three considerations discussed and the reverse is true for policies, actions or initiatives that are implemented in a respectful manner; that support local livelihoods and do not undermine human security, and that produce favorable social– ecological outcomes.

5.4 Political Economy of Ocean Grabbing

Ocean grabbing, according to the limited research that exists on the topic, occurs in different ways in a different social, economic and political settings. One common feature (as observed in literature) is the control of marine resources and exclusion of small-scale fishers from their main sources of livelihood through formulation and reformulation of laws, regulations and policies pertaining to ocean governance. These processes occur through the actions of actors and their interests, and interactions of institutional frameworks.

Ocean grabbing is shaped by political economic forces in many instances. The key driving force underpinning specific mechanisms of ocean grabbing today are the underlying logic of the current economic system, where capital accumulation is linked to increasing

corporate control over access to and 'conservation' of natural resources. Numerous factors and actors can be seen facilitating this trend. Governments, regional and international governmental institutions, international environmental organizations, large-scale corporate companies, and philanthropic foundations are among the key actors that are involved in market-based reforms and policies that ultimately allow for ocean grabbing to take place (Franco *et al*., 2014).

Table 5.1 Actors/Stakeholders in Ocean Grabbing

Actors	**Interests/Roles**	**Influence on Ocean Grabbing**
Domestic States	Ocean policies, personal/economic benefits, Marine Protected Areas	Positive (±)
Foreign States	food production for security, Investments in fisheries	Positive/Negative (±)
Large-scale corporate fishing/ Transnational corporations	Investments (large-scale fishing, conversion of coastal areas)	Positive/Negative (+)
International Environmental Organizations	Ocean policies, provision of advocacy service	Positive/Negative (-)
Small-scale fishers	Protection of livelihoods and cultural values	Negative (-)

Source: Author, Construct, March, 2016

States' involvements in ocean grabbing include an introduction, reformulation, and justification of fishery reforms such as the RBF (Franco *et al*. 2014); definition, mapping and quantification of marine resources and fish stock; and affirmation of state sovereignty and authority over territorial waters. Such authority of marine territories gives states the power to decide how, for what purposes and by whom, ocean and marine resources could be used including policies and reforms that guide the management of these resources (Foley, *et al.,* 2015). Such authorities in areas such as land control are associated with the use of force by states' security apparatus to achieving compliance. Beyond states, both

domestic and international actors including transnational corporations are involved in ocean grabbing. Such transnational corporations include (eco)tourism, agribusinesses and the extractive industries, who often are able to exert influence on policies and economic agreements geared towards access and control of oceans and ocean resources.

Apart from these actors are the interests that influence the actions of these actors towards ocean grabbing. Franco *et al.* (2014) reveal three main driving factors that promote ocean grabbing. The authors attribute the first factor to the emergence of a complex corporate (sea)food regime reconfiguring production chains, with an ongoing vertical and horizontal integration that concentrates control over fish access, processing, and retailing activities into the hands of a few powerful players and elites. According to them, the corporate sea regime has influenced an increase in demand for certain types of fishery products in both the Global North and South. This has resulted in industrial interest in decision-making power in the model of fish production resulting in the expansion of industrial models of exploitation of fish resources and practices that is detrimental to small-scale fishing communities and marine ecosystems. This usually happens when there is a heavy industrial reliance on large-scale fishing to meet the increasing demand for fish with the results that policies and decisions involving fisheries are skewed towards large-scale fishing at the expense of small-scale fishing.

The second factor is attributed to lucrativeness, which is associated with the permanent physical conversion and privatization of lands and sea into profit-making ventures such as for industrial, recreational and varieties of activities. These conversions and privatizations include private real estate developments on coastlines; ecotourism zones around marine

hotspots, extractive industry in inland, offshore and sea-bed areas; agro-industrial plantations in river deltas and watershed areas. These forms of conversions affect the operations and management of coastal areas as well as marine resources with major negative impacts mostly felt by small-scale fishers as far as their activities are concerned (Franco *et al.*, 2014).

The third and the final factor involves financialization of natural resources, which is also associated with land and water grabbing (Fairbain, 2014). This involves the extended reach of financial capital into control of natural resources such as the ocean fisheries. For instance, the commodification of the right to fish with individual transferable quota markets enabled a British investment firm to acquire quotas in the US catch-share system amounting to a quarter of all US clam-based products. Financialization of ocean resources is also currently being manifested by attempts by the World Bank to transfer part of its $15 billion 'green bonds' (loans for 'sustainable projects') to oceans as 'Blue Bonds', arguing that private large-scale financial capital is essential to achieve better marine protection and governance. This has major detrimental effects on the operations of small-scale fishers (Franco *et al.*, 2014).

5.5 Effects of Ocean Grabbing

Ocean grabbing, like both land and water grabbing, negatively affects prior resource users, rights holders or inhabitants. The categories of those affected include marginalized and vulnerable coastal communities and groups, such as small-scale fishers, traditional land-owners, historical tenure holders, indigenous groups, and women. It is important to give

adequate gender considerations in discussing ocean grabbing since women fishers may access and use different areas and resources than men (Bennett *et al*., 2015). Ocean grabbing exposes small-scale fishers who mostly rely on artisanal modes of fishing to a stiffer competition from large fleets (FAO, 2012). People are also often excluded from trading and processing the catches because of the concentration of supply-chain activities into relatively few selected large-scale facilities that are increasingly oriented toward export markets (Franco *et al*, 2014).

Ocean grabbing threatens the sustainability of oceans. For instance, there has been tremendous growth in fishing capacity worldwide since 1950 with the number and power of fishing vessels increasing dramatically. Between 1970 and 1990, global fish harvesting capacity grew eight times faster than the rate of growth in landings and this threatens the survival of ocean resources (De Shutter, 2012). It has been projected that because of overcapacity and technology creep, the capacity of the global aggregate fishing fleet is, at least, double that which is needed to exploit the oceans sustainably due to ocean grabbing (Garcia and Gainger, 2005).

Ocean grabbing also exacerbates serious social, economic and cultural dispossession, destruction and depletion, as linked to a variety of large-scale economic activities, ranging from large-scale industrial fishing to extractive industries and infrastructure development projects (Franco, *et al.,* 2014). People and communities are dispossessed of their long-established customary rights to access fishing grounds and water bodies, and the associated coastal lands that border these. By enclosing or destroying marine and aquatic environment of fishers and occupants of coastal areas, the impacts of ocean grabbing is a disruption of

their means of livelihoods, subsistence, culture, traditions and social cohesion. This is an absolute threat to the lives of those affected, including their ways of living and knowledge gained over generations.

5.6 Political Ecology of Ocean Grabbing

5.6.1 Conservation and Control

Conservation occurs in ocean management when fishers are restricted from fishing in certain marine areas or when Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are instituted, which places restrictions or bans in certain areas previously occupied for the purpose of marine protection and conservation. Marine conservation does affect small-scale fishers more than the large-scale fishers and tends to strict them from their main source of livelihoods (Franco *et al.,* 2014).

Apart from conservation, which tends to dispossess small-scale fishers, ocean, and marine resources are controlled by states through laws and policies; the definition, mapping and quantification of marine resources and fish stock often occurs through state policies (De Shutter, 2012). States' authority over coastal ocean zones allow states to make decisions concerning how the ocean and its resources should be managed which are usually detrimental to small-scale fishers and indigenous communities whose livelihoods depend on these resources. The ocean and its resources are also increasingly taken either by states or by private investors away from small-scale users or fishers. This occurs primarily through the privatization of resources for profit-making ventures such as for industrial,

recreational and varieties of activities (Bennett *et al*., 2015). Such control impacts marine areas negatively and also takes away the access to the ocean for other actors.

5.6.2 Marginalization and Degradation

Ocean grabbing, like other resource grabbing, does put grabbees at a disadvantage in terms of their access and use of resources. Small-scale fishers, traditional land-owners, historical tenure holders, indigenous groups, and women are those who are typically made worse off and therefore relegated to the background by the activities and actions that constitute ocean grabbing. People and communities are marginalized through a dispossession of their long-established customary rights to access fishing grounds and water bodies, and the associated coastal land. Ocean grabbing also brings about related social, economic and cultural marginalization. (Bennett *et al*., 2015).

Ocean grabbing creates stiffer competition for small-scale fishers by promoting the activities of large-scale investments. Through the concentration of supply-chain activities into relatively few selected large-scale facilities, small-scale fishers are often excluded from trading and processing of catches involved in the fishery. Ocean grabbing, therefore, marginalizes those affected in the areas of livelihood, subsistence, culture, traditions and social cohesions (Franco *et al*., 2014).

Ocean grabbing does not only marginalize the present generation but also puts the sustainability of marine resources at risk, which has negative impacts on the future generation. Permanent physical conversion of coastal areas, coupled with over-fishing by larger fleets, tends to affect the sustainability of coastal areas and ocean resources. With

the capacities of larger fleets projected to double, the survival of the ocean and those who depend on it will be affected and also threaten to also marginalize future generations (Franco *et al*., 2014).

5.7 Summary of Chapter Five

Although research on ocean grabbing is just beginning, the synthesis of the literature provided in this thesis points to several tentative lessons. Ocean grabbing is different from land and water grabbing in terms of the nature of the resource; however, ocean grabbing, like land and water grabbing, tends to occur through the actions of state and corporate actors to serve corporate interests within specific institutional frameworks. Like land and water grabbing, ocean grabbing also negatively effects of small-scale producers in the Global South. It also involves control of ocean resources from small-scale holders, which results in marginalization of these holders as well as the degradation of ocean resources and sometimes conflicts between small-scale fishers and investors.

CHAPTER SIX

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a comparative analysis of the various resource grabbing forms and debates – land, water and the ocean. The chapter analyzes and compares resource grabbing within the tenets of political ecology and political economy. The chapter also proposes an approach for policy frameworks by identifying how political economy analysis could aid in policy formulation towards curbing resource grabbing.

6.2 What Constitutes Resource Grabbing?

There is no single definition of resource grabbing for the various resources (land, water and ocean) within the resource grabbing debates. Definitions of what is resource grabbing depend on the prevailing causal factors, the spatial and socio-economic settings, how the resources are used or exploited, the effects and sometimes the size of the resources acquired.

The Food and Agricultural Organization, for instance, in defining land grabbing reveals that land deals are to be understood as land grabs when three conditions are present, namely: the scale of land deals should be large; there should be the direct involvement of foreign governments and institutions; and the new land investments are seen to have a negative impact on the food security of the recipient country. Other definitions identified earlier in the thesis take into consideration the power to control resources, the scale of land,

and capital accumulation as a major influence in contemporary land grabbing. This signifies a lack of a standard definition for the term, land grabbing.

Taking a closer look raises questions including; what might be a standard scale of land to be considered as land grabbing? Can we describe land acquisition within a family, where women are dispossessed of land for example, as land grabbing, even though those whose lands are grabbed experience similar effects? While the land grab literature focuses largely on foreign companies and foreign and domestic states, work on crop booms goes further by showing how not just domestic capital but also smallholders have tried to take or keep control over land on which to grow boom crops (Hall 2011; Hall 2013). While wading into the debate of land grabbing, it is clear that small-scale acquisitions affect small-scale farmers and land users in similar ways as large-scale land acquisitions. These and much more of such related questions cast new light on the problem of defining criteria for what constitutes land grabbing. Apart from these questions, evidence from the literature also reveals there is no agreement and reliable data as to the global scale of actual land acquisition, which makes it difficult to understand the nature of large scale land acquisitions.

The definition of water grabbing has not stemmed much controversy as compared to land grabbing in terms of media debates and research. This has been attributed to the positive relationship between land and water grabbing as many kinds of literature suggest that land may be grabbed not for the land itself but for water resources and the opposite could be true for water grabbing. The definition of water grabbing, however, takes into consideration certain aspects of land grabbing as provided in the literature, including control of resources

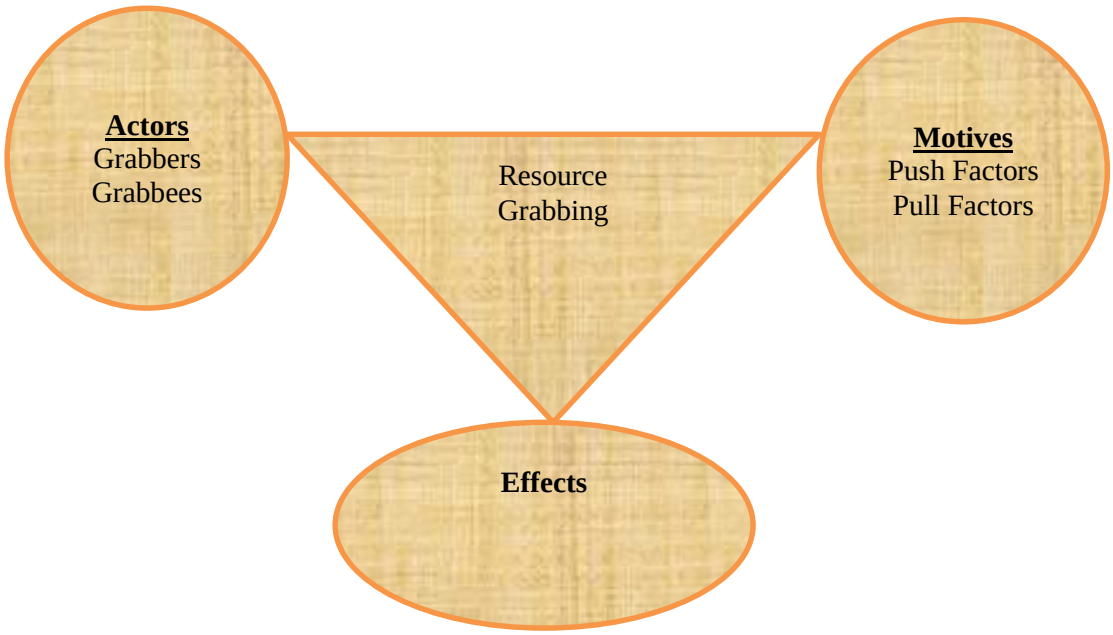
from prior resource users by a powerful person or actor with its associated effects similar to the effects of land grabbing.

The definition of ocean grabbing also takes into consideration most of the elements of land and water grabbing, including access and control of resources, dispossession and deprivation of livelihood (particularly on the parts of powerless resource owners and users). The definition of ocean grabbing goes beyond just access and control to include competition for marine resources (mainly fishery resources) between artisanal fishermen (small-scale fishers) and large-scale actors and interests with the former being at a disadvantage in terms of policies, decisions and initiatives and even available resources (technology) to compete in the Global South.

Despite the slight differences and criticisms that exist in the definition of resource grabbing debates, three main factors exist in all the definitions. These factors provide a means of analyzing resource grabbing, irrespective of the usual factors considered, such as size and quantity of resources, and spatial and socio-economic settings. The first factor involves actors. Resource grabbing involves beneficiaries (grabbers) and losers (grabbees) and sometimes decision-makers who more or less also benefit from the outcomes of the resources that have been grabbed. All the definitions of resource grabbing take into consideration individuals or actors (whether within a family, a community, a country or a globally) who benefit (including access and control) from the resources belonging to another individual or actor, often with less power and means of protecting their resources. The actors also include those who are seen as facilitators of resource grabbing. These include governments and decision-makers (could be politicians, bureaucrats, chiefs,

community leaders, and elders within a family) who influence such acquisitions through processes and procedures in favor of those who are grabbing the resources.

Figure 6.1: What Constitutes Resource Grabbing?



Source: Author's Construct

All types of resource grabbing have causes or causal factors, which are influenced by motives/interests and made possible by institutions and institutional frameworks. Preceding discussions, for instance, identifies interests in expanding agriculture and food production to meet increasingly demands for food or future needs of food insecure countries as a major cause of land and water grabbing. This factor is similar to a major cause of ocean grabbing: the heavy industrial reliance on large-scale fishing to meet the increasing demand for fish with the result that policies and decisions involving fisheries are skewed towards large-scale fishing at the expense of small-scale fishing.

This implies that all resource grabbing, being land, water and ocean grabbing have both pull and push factors that influence the decision to grab such resources. The pull factors involve what attracts grabbers and include the increase in demand for food, biofuel and fish production; weak and shady regulatory frameworks involving resource management; weak and powerless resource holders; and corrupt leaders and politicians entrusted with or at the helm of control resources. The push factors, on the other hand, involve the driving force for land investment from the perspective of grabbers. These include the perception of 'unused' or 'vacant' productive resources in the Global South; the recent need for increases in food and biofuel production; the recent boom in investment interest in natural resources; and direct assistance from foreign institutions for development purposes.

Finally, the evidence presented in the chapters above suggest that resource grabbing for land, water and ocean have both positive and negative effects with the negatives mostly felt by those whose resources are being taken or grabbed (grabbees). On the positive side, many land deals involving resource acquisition contain certain premises of benefits including increases in food production, employment, income, technology and financial transfer associated with large-scale land and water investment as well as some large-scale fishery developments. However, scant evidence exists with regards to whether these benefits have been received or not, particularly in land grabbing.

On the negative side, all forms of resource grabbing have been associated with dispossession and displacement of social, economic, and culture lives of 'grabbees'. Resource grabbing has resulted in local food insecurity, loss of employment and major

sources of livelihoods. These effects contribute immensely in infringing upon the fundamental human rights of resource user and owners.

Not only are negative effects felt by those whose resources are being taken but the effects also experienced by the resource which is exploited. Evidence in the literature reveals that land grabbing in parts of Global South has had negative effects on water bodies and major environmental resources, including soil erosion, water depletion, increased pesticide use, more emissions of climate change gasses, and the loss of biodiversity. Ocean grabbing also threatens the sustainability of oceans, particularly due to overfishing.

This thesis suggests that resource grabbing as a concept has no single clear definition and key debates associated with the definitions of land, water and ocean will continue. The three analytical factors described above, however, can be used in assessing the concept and practices of resources grabbing. The factors, moreover, provide a basis for comparing resource grabbing in different contexts within and across sectors or resources.

6.3 Comparative Analysis

Land, water and ocean grabbing appear to exist in isolation in terms of the purpose for which these resources are grabbed but there are important similarities in terms of the actors, motives (interest), institutional frameworks and effects. Such comparative political economy analysis provides a means of comparing and better understanding relationships between land, water and ocean grabbing. The following discussion focuses on these dimensions of analysis and insight.

6.3.1 Actors and their Interests

The first similarity involves access and control of resources by grabbers with similar interest/motives. Land grabbing, for instance, involves control of resources (land) with a motive of making use of and gaining something either directly (i.e. putting the land into productive use for food production or commodity production) or indirectly (other resources or benefits that can be obtained indirectly from controlling the land (i.e. rent, investment and profit). Such control is normally exercised by the actors who are usually more powerful than those whose lands are being grabbed. Water grabbing also, is a process in which powerful actors (e.g. states and investors) are able to take control of, or reallocate to their own benefit water resources used by local communities or which feed aquatic ecosystems on which their livelihoods are based. Control is also introduced in ocean grabbing, which involves control or access to ocean space or resources from prior resource users, rights holders or inhabitants. Resource grabbing, therefore, involves access and control of resources from prior resource owners, right holders, inhabitants or users.

6.3.2 Institutions and Institutional Frameworks

Actors including states, international organizations, and foreign investors (governments of other countries or international corporations) play important roles in cases of land, water and ocean grabbing. Recipient states play critical roles in promoting resource grabbing through favorable policies, laws, and practices that are (re)defining and (re)allocating access, use and control of resources away rightful owners and their communities. These policies, laws and practices are often weak and shaped by corrupt practice and leaders (e.g.

politicians, traditional leaders), which tend to formalize exclusive and restrictive rights to particular resources away from their rightful holders or inhabitants by means of these weak or questionably designed regulatory and legal frameworks.

Domestic states' role in resource grabbing is sometimes driven by the personal or economic benefits received by the politicians or the bureaucrats with the power to facilitate such deals. One main issue associated with resource grabbing is a lack of consultations with affected groups and shady deals involving such processes. State officials, therefore, influence resource grabbing by helping investors to get around their regulatory and practical challenges through these shady/non-transparent deals. It is therefore believed that resource grabbing is usually found to a greater degree in countries where corrupt and unaccountable decision-making exists, combined with poverty and powerlessness, and most of these countries have been identified to be located in the Global South.

International corporations and foreign states also play active roles in the processes involved in the grabbing of various resources. This has been attributed to the financialization of natural resources involving the introduction of financial resources into the access and control of resources including land, water and the oceans. Transnational companies or states seek to secure access and control of natural resources (land, water and ocean) in developing countries (mostly in the Global South) for agricultural (food and biofuel production) and non-agricultural purposes. This is sought to take advantage of the booming markets and increase in food and fish prices as well as lucrative investments in biofuel production.

Quite apart from these involvements of foreign corporations, states and institutions is the existence of international laws and policies that promote resource grabbing. Bilateral donors and IFIs have been active in natural resource policy reforms, sometimes as a conditionality for loans. The World Bank Group, for instance, uses methods such as policy advice on liberalization investment and land access policies; technical assistance in the actual drafting of laws and regulations; maintaining indicators of investment-friendliness countries and providing help such as policy advice and funding, to get states in the Global South to open up to land investment for countries. International involvement in resource grabbing also includes the formulation of the international law of the sea to encourage nations to extend their areas of sovereignty in order to protect, manage and exploit the ocean environment and resources. A typical example is the introduction of the exclusive economic zone (EEZ), which consolidates states control over coastal fisheries and oceans resources. These policies have been followed, in many states, by a large-scale privatization of fisheries resources.

6.3.3 Effects

Finally, land, water and ocean grabbing have similar effects, particularly with regards to the negative impacts on those whose resources are being taken. These negative effects are categorized into two forms: 1) on the rightful resource holders and 2) on the actual resources and other environmental conditions associated with that particular resource. In terms of effects on original resource holders, four areas have been common in all the resource grabbing debates: issues of 1) dispossession, 2) livelihood, 3) food security, and 4) human rights.

Dispossession and Displacements

On the issues of dispossession, as discussed in previous chapters, there have been several instances where land deals in the Global South have resulted in displacement, dispossession, and disenfranchisement of local communities and rural poor which affect their basic rights to shelter without proper compensation. Governments have long dispossessed rural people, particularly indigenous groups, of their land and resources to create conservation projects or in the name of sustainable resource management. Globally, between 40-80 million people have been displaced by dams built on their land. A typical instance involves the internationally infamous Myitsone Dam project. Recall that this project led to displacement thousands (about 12,000) of people.

Table 6.1 Common Effects of Resource Grabbing

Category	Areas Affected	Causes	Examples
On Prior Resource Holders	Livelihood	-Loss of Land, water and ocean -Loss of employment and income -Disruption of sacred places and places of cultural importance	-Allocation of million hectares of arable lands and water resources to private investors in Mozambique, Ethiopia, India, Ghana etc. -Allocation of large quota to large-scale fleets in South Africa
	Dispossession	- Creation of conservation projects -Resource management -Privatization	-Displacement of about 12000 people by Myitsone Dam project -Allocation of coastal concessions to private interests in Honduras - privatization of mangrove forests in Bangladesh
	Food Security	-Dispossession of peasant farmers and fishermen -Food exportation	-Food security issues in Ethiopia
	Human Rights	-Loss of livelihood -Dispossession -Loss of food security -Resource conflict	-Violence and civil conflicts associated with Salween River dams in South East Asia -Instances of abuse of women in most developing countries
On Environmental Resources		-Overfishing -Chemical discharge -Overuse of technology	-Depletion of fishing stock -Soil erosion -Water depletion -Emissions of climate change gasses -Loss of biodiversity

Source: Author's Construct, 2016

Small-scale fishers, through ocean grabbing, have also been displaced and dispossessed from their fishing ports and communities through the privatization of coastal areas to large local or foreign companies for the purpose of urban development and improvement in direct foreign investment. The processes of displacement and dispossession are often associated with coercion, forced eviction and sometimes killings. Land grabbing, for example, has succeeded in turning farmers and landholders into refugees in their own lands.

Dispossession and displacements have major impacts on livelihoods. This is because displacements and dispossession result in loss of the means of social, economic, cultural and other basic elements important to the sustenance of life of resource owners, inhabitants, and users. Resource grabbing is seen as a major threat to the lives and livelihoods of the rural poor. Loss of land, water and ocean resources also means a loss of a basic source of employment and income, which contributes to escalating poverty among small-scale resource holders.

Loss of Livelihoods

Land grabbing results in the loss of livelihoods for thousands of peasants who mainly depend on their lands as a source of livelihood. For instance, as noted above, many peasants lost their livelihoods in Mozambique due to the allocation of about 1.3 million hectares of land to six companies by the government for plantations. In addition to the issues of farmland loss, local people have also lost access to native forests including forest products for medicinal purposes, home construction, and energy, as well as an additional source of income. Also, through stiff competition from large-scale fishers and by enclosing or destroying marine and aquatic environment of small-scale fishers and occupants of coastal areas, the impacts of ocean grabbing is a disruption of their means of livelihoods, subsistence, culture, traditions and social cohesions.

Furthermore, resource grabbing involving land, water and oceans have negative effects on the food security of those affected. These large-scale deals in natural resources (land, water and the oceans) have been identified to have led to local food insecurity including

availability, access and utilization of food. This was caused by dispossessing peasants or small-scale fishers from their main source of livelihood and food supply. The worst outcomes happen when food produced by investors is exported with the result that the locals whose land and fish have been taken look elsewhere for alternative food supplies rather than benefiting from local food production. Resource grabbing involves "exporting food insecurity" because investors and state supporters are interested in producing food for export markets, creating food insecurity for the producers.

Human Rights Abuses

Dispossession and displacement, loss of livelihoods and food security associated with resource grabbing, have combined to result in the infringements of fundamental human rights of small-scale resource holders and users. For example, loss of access to land (1.3 million hectares) for food production and water by peasants in Mozambique amounted to an infringement of rights of prior holders to food and water. The human rights impacts are likely to increase during the coming years as the scale of these projects increases and if measures are not put in place to protect right resource holders. Ocean grabbing also affects the human rights of marginalized and vulnerable coastal communities and groups, such as small-scale fishers, traditional land-owners, historical tenure holders, indigenous groups and women by taking away access to their main source of livelihood directly and indirectly.

Aside from physical dispossession, loss of livelihood and food security, resource grabbing is also often associated with armed violence and social conflict between resource owners and states or investors involved in the resource deals. This has resulted in casualties and

sometimes deaths of innocent citizens. For instance, the Salween River dams in South East Asia have often been characterized by violence and civil conflicts of the Eastern Border States. These projects, based on their locations, have been predicted to compromise the security of the local population in terms of safety, livelihoods, water, and food. There are many more examples of how people who just want to grow food and make a living from their own resources are being expelled, criminalized, and sometimes killed, to make room for the production of food and biomass to the benefit of someone else's wealth. As noted above, women, who constitute about 70 percent of farmers in developing countries, are the most vulnerable to the resource grab human rights abuses as they may not be able to protect their own land tenure claims in court due to local laws.

Effects on Natural Resources

The second category of effects of resource grabbing focuses on its effects on land, water and the ocean resources and other environmental conditions associated with the use of such resources. Land and water grabbing in parts of Global South have resulted in soil erosion, water depletion, increased pesticides use, more emissions of climate change gasses, and the loss of biodiversity. Land and water grabbing for mining purposes also contaminate water through leaching and dumping of tailings. This happens through chemical use and discharge during and after mining operations. Finally, ocean grabbing threatens the sustainability of oceans, particularly through overfishing by larger fleets using modern technologies beyond the capacities of the oceans.

6.4 Resource Grabbing and Political Ecology

The concept of resource grabbing as explained in section 2.2 focuses more on environmental problems relating to land, water and ocean resource acquisition, control and management, usually from the hands of the weak and powerless to the hands of the powerful. Political ecology within resource grabbing involves the socio-economic and political conditions involved in the acquisition, control and use of resources. The political ecology of resource grabbing enhances understanding about the acquisition, use and control of resources by studying the relationships between society and nature in contexts of power, particularly from the perspective of political economy. For the purposes of this thesis, resource grabbing has been discussed within the tenets of the five theses of political ecology as defined by Paul Robbins.

The degradation and marginalization thesis focuses on the over-exploitation of resource in the Global South as a result of development intervention or to meet market demand. Most of the instances of resource grabbing have been a result of an increase in production of food, biofuel and fishery to meet increasing global demands for such products.

For instance, the literature reveals that the recent surge of land grabbing cases in the Global South is partly a result of the economic interests in addressing and capitalizing on the need to meet the future increased demand for food in some countries. Another instance is the increase in demand for certain fish types, which has been influenced by the corporate sea regime. The end results of such grabbing include marginalization of prior resources holders and users, including peasant farmers, small-scale fishers, and indigenous groups who not only lose access to their means of livelihood but also permanently lose access to their

resources. This is because resource grabbing ends up degrading the very resource which was grabbed due to persisting over-exploitation of resources associated with most incidents of resource grabbing in the Global South.

The marginalization and degradation thesis also emphasizes the possibility of sustainable communities becoming potentially unsustainable due to state bureaucrats or foreign control of common property, such as oceans and water. Pollution of water bodies which, serve as a source of drinking water for a particular community, has the potential of making such community unsustainability. This, for instance, has effects on their water needs for domestic and agricultural purposes, which in turn have negative implications on livelihoods.

Competition over and control of resources among powerful and weak groups have the tendency of increasing class stratification under conditions of market expansion. This creates struggles over limited resources, usually at the expense of the marginalized in society in contexts of weak institutional protections. The result is that indigenous groups, peasants and small-scale fishers are pushed aside for investors who have the capital to invest in such resources. This is even worse where the state is involved, because such results in the interest of the elites being served and also encourages further resource exploitation.

Land, water and ocean grabbing are often associated with displacement and dispossession, loss of livelihood, food insecurity, poverty and insecurity as far as the lives and security of prior resources holders are concerned. This also has the potential of making the

communities of such holders unsustainable due to these effects associated with resource grabbing. Evidence of such happenings has already been detailed in the previous discussions.

Control of resources is very common in the recent occurrences of land, water and ocean grabbing. Control of resources is often exerted with the belief that most natural resources in the Global South are either unused or inefficient in use and, therefore, the demands to put such resources in a more efficient utilization to enhance global benefits as well as resource conservation. Such control is usually exerted over minority groups (associated with class, gender, or ethnicity). An example of such control and conservation in the resource grabbing debate is the institutionalization of Marine Protected Areas (MPA), which place restrictions or bans in certain marine areas previously occupied for the purpose of marine protection and conservation. Another instance is the development of national parks in the name of land conservation associated with land grabbing.

The environmental conflict and exclusion thesis argues that environmental problems become struggled over with actors such as state authorities, private firms, or social elites competing to control collective resources at the expense of others. This thesis has been commonly manifested in resource grabbing in the Global South where owners and occupiers (grabbees) of such resources mostly have no means of securing their resources other than to fight to protect them. Examples of resource conflicts described above include both social and political conflict as well as violent conflict such as situations with casualties of death and injuries and several manifestations of insecurity as a result of access and control of resources (land, water and ocean) in the Global South.

The environmental subjects and identity thesis involves the emergence of social or political identities and movements in response to marginalization and degradation thesis. The environmental subject and identity thesis is the reverse image of the degradation and marginalization thesis, where exploitation leads to the simultaneous destruction of productive environmental resources and of local producers. It also happens when conservation and governance of nature draw together otherwise disparate communities and interests into collective action and so into collective awareness. Under this thesis, communities assert their identity through the way they make a living and vice versa and are able to develop and exercise the capacity to govern the environment by setting the terms of self-governance, ownership, and responsibility.

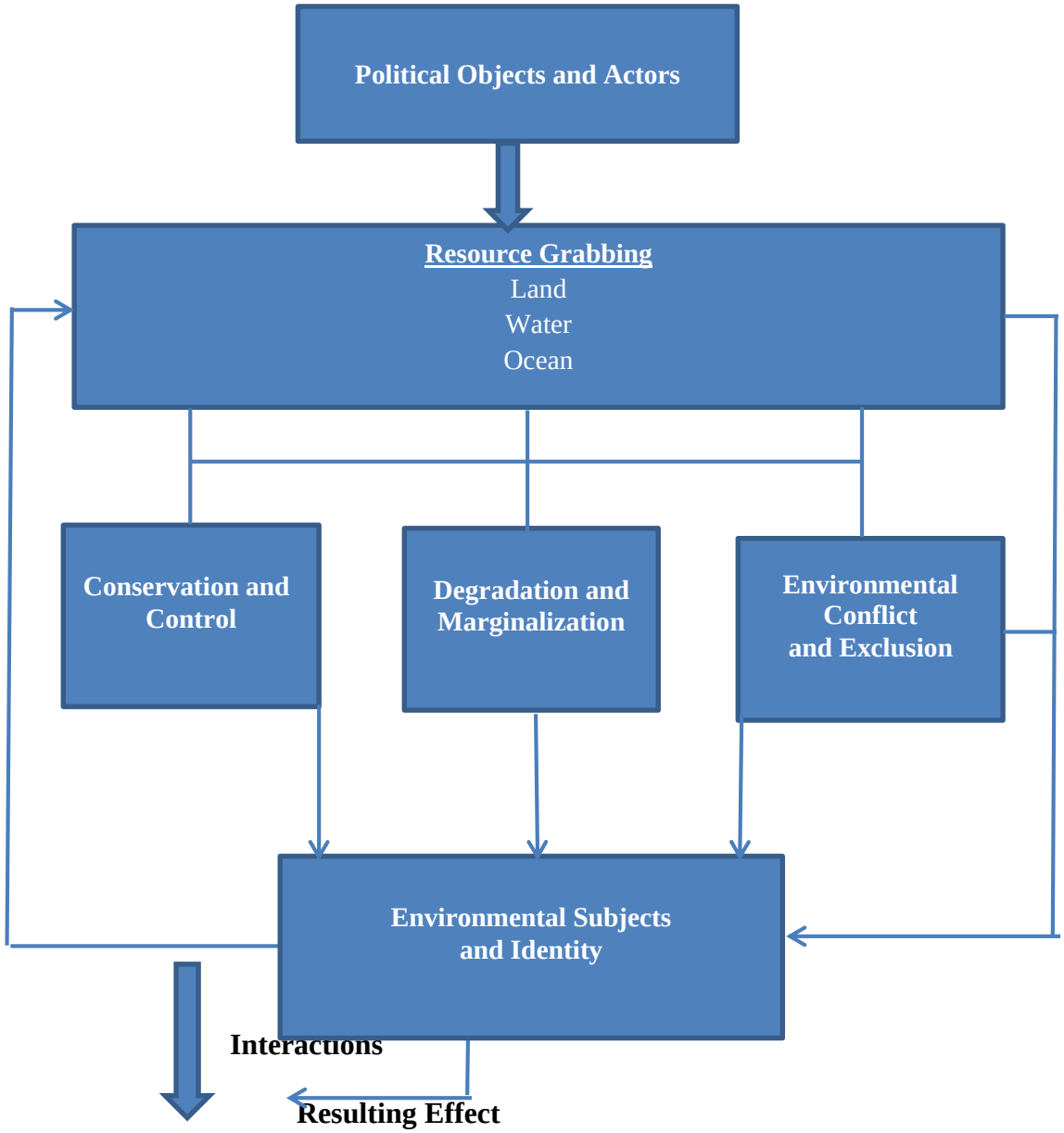
Finally, the objects and actors' thesis identifies both human and non-human actors in resources grabbing. The human actors include politicians, both foreign and domestic investors, peasants, small-scale fishers and other individuals who have stakes in land, water and ocean resources. The non-human resources include land, water and oceans together with all the resources that could be found in and/or around the resources, including, for example, fishery and mineral resources.

According to the thesis, non-human resources and humans' interaction and the quest of control over such resources have made resource management a political activity. Politicians, bureaucrats, and private firms, therefore, assume new roles since they are also transformed by these interactions between resources and humans. These transformations have resulted in a certain level of power and influence to control the access to and use of

non-human objects (resources, including land, water and ocean) with unintended consequences and the pernicious effects of resource grabbing. In the process, resistance emerges from traditional, local or transnational alliances against marginalization and exploitation. The result is sometimes a rampant manifestation of violence and environmental insecurities associated with resource grabbing.

The political objects and actors' thesis identifies the interactions among the various individuals and institutions that result in resource grabbing. These interactions involve different levels of power and influence among bureaucrats, politicians and managers of natural resources in controlling such resources, as well as other non-state and non-human actors and agents.

Figure 6.2: Political Ecology and Resource Grabbing



Source: Author's Construct, 2016

The first, second and third theses help explain what defines the nature of resource grabbing. The control thesis changes access, ownership and use of resources away from the prior resources users (with ethnicity, class and gender dimensions). Such control dispossesses these resource holders from their means of procuring livelihoods with adverse effects on

income and food security, resulting in abject poverty and loss of human rights. The effects of such controls are manifested by the first and third theses. The process whereby new actors gain control of natural resources from their prior owners and users marginalizes their own resources and they are often faced with the possibilities of being left with unsustainable communities with respect to their main sources of livelihoods.

Aside from resource holders being marginalized and having their means of livelihoods degraded, the rise of such holders in defense of their resource has been characterized by social and political conflict, as well as armed conflicts, violence, and insecurities. Such has been a feature of resource grabbing where conflicts associated with grabbing have resulted in causalities relating to serious injuries and sometimes death over what has been described as the environmental conflict and exclusion in political ecology. The fourth thesis tends to focus on management of environmental problems associated with resource grabbing where social and political identities and objects emerge to fight against the common enemy of resource grabbing. This is often associated with collective actions aimed at developing and exercising the capacities to govern the environment by setting the terms of self-governance, rights, ownership, and responsibility.

6.5 Policies for Resource Grabbing

There is either no, insufficient or unclear domestic law concerning land rights, water rights, and pollution controls for natural resources in many developing countries of the Global South (Smaller and Mann, 2009). An integrated and holistic approach towards the governance of natural resources is lacking in most developing countries (Franco *et al.,*

2013). Quite apart from that is the existence of international law frameworks, which, on the other hand, provide hard rights for foreign investors resulting in a layering of international laws and policies over domestic laws (Smaller and Mann, 2009). Therefore, economic rights of investors are protected in international treaties such as the World Trade Organization, while the social and cultural rights of marginalized groups are weakly protected or not protected at all.

This section reflects on the policies relating to land, water and ocean protection. There have, to be sure, numerous laws and policies in developing countries formulated to protect the exploitation of natural resources. Overall, however, existing frameworks and weaknesses in institutions hinder a successful fight against resource grabbing. It must be noted that there are several policy recommendations that support a fight against land, water and ocean grabbing and the purpose of this section is to look at the policy areas which could be upheld and strengthened towards stopping resource grabbing in the Global South.

On the issue of land grabbing, many governance instruments tend to neglect addressing the underlying economic and political drivers of land dispossession. The focus of many of these international policy responses to land grabbing is on land deals themselves, that is, their features and the procedural standards that should be observed during their negotiation (CFS, 2012; De Schutter, 2009; World Bank et *al.*, 2010). However, land grabbing is a complex phenomenon that cuts across both domestic and international dimensions. This means that there is no single policy that is capable of providing solutions to the complexities involved in land grabbing (Künnemann and Suárez, 2013).

The predominant global policy response to land acquisition has been framed by the World Bank's report in 2010, which gave rise to a set of global consultations in 2010 and 2011 on the principles for responsible agricultural investment (RAI). In 2012, the FAO announced that 100 countries and civil society representatives had completed negotiations on its Voluntary Guidelines (VG) for the responsible governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests in the context of national food security, which it argued was consistent with both the Millennium Development Goals (now replaced by the Global Goals) and international human rights obligations (FAO, 2012; World Bank, 2010). In an attempt to achieve possible win–win scenarios, while giving a due recognition that large-scale private investment has a potential to generate "monopolistic abuse" (World Bank 2010), the FAO proposed that responsible agriculture investment should be governed by a set of seven principles. The seven principles proposed by the FAO to guide land acquisition include:

- Respecting local land and resource rights;
- Ensuring and strengthening food security;
- Ensuring transparency, good governance, and an enabling environment;
- Consulting those involved and enforcing agreements;
- Respecting the law, following best practice and being economically viable;
- Ensuring social sustainability; and
- Minimizing and mitigating any negative environmental impacts (World Bank, 2011).

The growing concerns of water grabbing, just like that of land, have also triggered numerous and competing responses from the global community. However, there are three

setbacks as far as the framework for global responses to water grabbing is concerned (Franco *et al.*, 2013). The first issue has to do with lack of an integrated and holistic institutional approach towards the governance of natural resources, which was also identified as a major challenge to the policies of land grabbing. For instance, most global policy responses to land grabbing tend to neglect water grabbing, even though the two issues are interconnected as described earlier. Water governance is still often done on a local or regional scale despite the global nature of water grabbing. The processes put in place to manage and control, access, use, and distribution of water are therefore fragmented, lack global coherence and offer a limited concrete solution to addressing water grabbing.

Secondly, the current global bodies that shape the debates, processes and policies of water governance regime using Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) approaches are under increasing corporate pressure and have largely promoted a pro-water privatization agenda, promulgating the concept of water as an economic good. These bodies include the Commission on Dams (WCD), the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID), the International Water Resources Associations (IWRA), the World Water Council (WWC), the Global Water Partnership (GWP), and the Global Water Operators' Partnership Alliance (GWOPA). Such bodies are also supported by the multilateral institutions, including the World Bank, the IMF and other large donor organizations where development aid is sometimes linked to the privatization of water resources. The third reason for the limited institutional capacity to protect against water grabbing involves limited impacts by the frameworks intended to defend water as a human

right. The scope of most frameworks focus on the domestic use of water at the expenses of productive uses such as mining, agriculture, energy, hydropower and other capital-intensive activities that are amongst the key drivers of water grabbing.

In terms of ocean grabbing, quite apart from the lack of a coherent and holistic global natural resource policy, the blame also lies mainly with "license and access agreements" by which countries allow long-distance large-scale and industrial trawlers to scoop up fish from regions of the Global South. Many of these agreements are granted by weak governments and even lack proper enforcement in terms of what has been stipulated in the agreements. Many of these agreements fail to scrutinize illegal or unreported catch, turn a blind eye to labour exploitation, abuse the fishery's sustainability limits and ignore the interests of and facilitate the marginalization of small-scale local fishers (UN, 2012). For instance, FAO guidelines support responsible fisheries and sustainable social and economic development for the benefit of current and future generations, with an emphasis on small-scale fishers and fish workers and related activities. However, the guiding principles from this global institution are voluntary and not binding on countries (Kurien, 2015).

There are a lot of policy recommendations on effective natural resource governance aimed at tackling resource grabbing. It would be unwise to rely on a single policy to deal with land, water and ocean grabbing. What is needed is a holistic and integrated approach that cuts across both domestic and international agendas in protecting small-scale natural resource holders. One such, and arguably most important, approach that has been noted is the consideration of land, water and ocean as a matter of a human right for their holders

and users. The United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals are focused on ending poverty, fight inequality and injustice, and tackle climate change by 2030. The targets of these goals are bound to ensuring and enhancing the rights and well-beings of humankind globally and are connected with the environment with goals six (Clean Water and Sanitation), 14 (Life below Water) and 15 (Life on land). These are directly related to protection against resource grabbing. This thus clearly shows how land, water and ocean are very important in achieving the basic rights of mankind and why the issue of human rights will be an important approach to solving resource grabbing.

Land, water and ocean grabbing result in the destruction of the peasantry, small-scale fishers, pastoralists, and forest dwellers and their communities, which are the backbone of local food producing systems. This in turn deepens existing patterns of inequality, discrimination, and structural violence against women. The social fabric, stability, and peace of many rural societies are also at severe risk as are the rights and well-being of grabbees. This problem, therefore, calls for the need to fight resource grabbing on the ground of human rights and protection of well–beings of the poor, vulnerable and minority groups whose lives depend on the existence, access to, and use of natural resources.

It is very remarkable to note that in the current global debate on land, water and ocean-grabbing, the recognition of access to these resources as issues of human rights has gone uncontested and therefore widely accepted by various actors across the domestic and international divides (Franco *et al*., 2013; Künnemann and Suárez, 2013; UN, 2012). International human rights law, for instance, recognizes the human right to food by embedding access to land as part of the 'right to feed oneself'. The FAO's 2004 guidelines

also support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food through access to land (FAO, 2004). International human rights advocacy and practice have therefore taken a move to recognize that the enjoyment of various fundamental human rights, such as the right to food, the right to housing, the right to an adequate standard of living, the right to culture and the right to work, has an indispensable relationship with the right to land. Besides, rights to land ensures the right to self-determination and rural women's rights (De Schutter, 2009; Gelbspan and Nagaraj, 2012; Kothari, 2007). Yet the problem of resource grabbing persists despite this wide recognition.

There are some emerging notions about how to better integrate a human rights approach into addressing resource grabbing problems. For example, Künnemann and Suárez (2013:132) define the human right to land as "the right of every human being to access—individually or as a community—local natural resources in order to feed themselves sustainably, to house themselves, and to live their culture". They argue that applying the right to land as a human right provides a solid backing for the already significant grassroots mobilization of the numerous rural and urban groups to defend their lands or demand access to, and fair utilization of, land. They argue further that the human right in land has the potential to contribute to the empowerment of oppressed groups to stand up for their rights, decreasing violence in land conflicts, changing the way conflicts over resources are framed, opening up space for policy dialogue centered on people's lives, and fighting against agrarian legislation biased in favor of corporate interests and formulating alternative legal frameworks. Künnemann and Suárez (2013), however, also admit that despite an increased awareness about the explicit relationship between land and several

human rights, a clear human rights approach specific to land issues has not been articulated under the existing international human rights framework. The current international human rights treaty framework only focuses on the right to land by indigenous groups. This implies that those outside that bracket are in a vulnerable position in terms of protecting their lands. They, therefore, argue that the time has come to establish the human right to land under international law, framework and in the practice of global governance. This progressive development in international human rights would be invaluable as a tool for global social justice and, in particular, to curb the global land grab.

Others have proposed apply similar approaches to water grabbing. For example, Franco *et al.* (2013) believe that the emerging, state-of-the-art proposal for a "right to land" by advocacy groups provides a solid foundation for achieving the very objective of the right to water. According to Franco *et al.*, human rights perspective on water remains vitally important in curbing water grabbing despite the shortfalls of the UN Right to Water approach to the issue. They regard the right to water as the best approach to ensuring access, use, and control of water resources against water grabbing. The human right to water and sanitation is a significant historical achievement and it is not surprising that it lies on the 6th agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals (Global Goals). The main potential of rights is how it serves as a political tool to empower grassroots organizations to hold multinationals and States accountable in terms of water access, allocation, and uses. The right to water approach also serves an advocacy tool for resolving conflicts between the community and commercial water by prioritizing people's needs over commercial interests.

Moreover, the challenge is to institutionalize the idea of human rights to water beyond voluntary guidelines and pronouncements into hard policy and legal frameworks. Franco *et al.* call for steps to push for legal interpretations and development on rights to water that strengthens dimensions such as the productive uses of water for people's livelihoods in agriculture, fishing, livestock keeping and forest-based livelihoods as well as aligning it with the principle/right of people's self-determination. The right to water has provided the basis for indigenous groups to use the legal means and global frameworks available them to protect their land and water resources. South Africa, Ecuador, Bolivia, Gambia, Tanzania, Uruguay, and others countries have recognized the human right to water, thereby committing to respect, protect and fulfill the right of access to safe and affordable domestic water services (Franco *et al.* 2013). This combination of legal frameworks, social mobilization, and advocacy can be a powerful tool and a driving force for establishing an alternative framework for water governance towards curbing water grabbing.

On the issue of ocean grabbing, the FAO Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests brought about the Tenure and Fisheries Guidelines. These are the first international instruments dedicated to promoting and protecting the special needs and interests of small-scale fisheries and applying a human rights-based approach to the governance of oceans and fisheries. These Guidelines came about in June 2014, after member states of the FAO's Committee on Fisheries (COFI) adopted the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Alleviation (Franco *et al.*, 2014, 2013). The Fisheries Guidelines also engaged the platform of civil society groups, including the World Forum

of Fisher Peoples (WFFP), the World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fish Workers (WFF), the International Collective in Support of Fisher Workers (ICSF) and the International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC).

The Guidelines serve as a useful mechanism for deciding the rightful ownership of, and access to, fishery resources, for what purposes and who ought to decide from a pro-poor perspective when dealing with fisheries governance. This new institutional framework intends to protect the interests and rights of small-scale fishers; hence a useful institutional tool for fighting ocean grabbing. The Guidelines offer a useful tool for facilitating knowledge and information about fishery governance. Access to this knowledge and information is very useful for empowering fishery movements and fishers to tackle issues that affect their operations. It also provides a basis for nation state to incorporate the principles and framework within domestic policy frameworks.

A human rights based approach is therefore very useful in addressing the problem of resources grabbing. The approach cuts across land, water and ocean grabbing, which helps to resolve the complexities involved in developing policies aimed at curbing the three phenomena of resource grabbing. The emergence of a human right approach to solving land grabbing could be used as a major tool for promoting the already existing right to water and right to ocean resources. This emergence of the right to land is based on the premise that the land is indispensable to the enjoyment of the right to food. This brought about the Tenure Guidelines that stress the importance of equitable and secure access and control over land and natural resources as a prerequisite for the right to food by vulnerable and marginalized groups (McKeon, 2013; McMichael, 2013).

The right to land approach provides a complex and normative framework for curbing water and ocean grabbing. For example, the right to food requires the resources of individuals, particularly the poor and the vulnerable, to be protected. Most rural residents and peasant landholders depend mainly on their lands for food production not only to feed themselves but for others who do not engage in mainstream food production or food markets. Water is essential both for agricultural food production and for its consumption as a source for human life. Likewise, small-fishers also require access to ocean fisheries, which serve as major food source for individuals to feed themselves across the Global South.

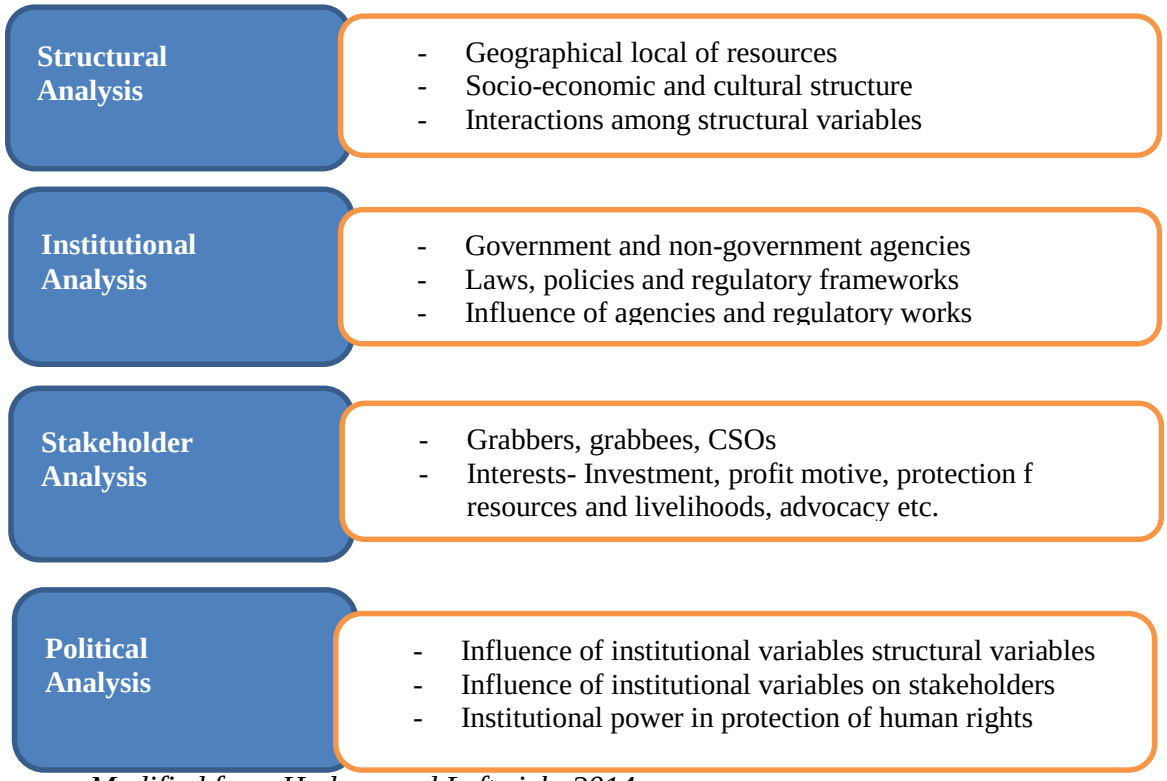
The human right to land contributes to challenging this increasing inclination by states, IFIs and investors to treat land and related natural resources as commodities ruled by distant market signals and to concentrate the control of vital resources in the hands of a few. States must thus ensure policy environments that allow people to make sustainable use of land, water and ocean to feed themselves and to decide in a self-determined way how to develop their natural resources taking into account the right to these resources by future generations. In this sense, the sustainable use of natural resources, and conservation of such resources and biodiversity, are also important components of the right to these natural resources.

To ensure an effective human rights approach to resource grabbing policy is a matter of domestic laws. International laws generally do not give foreign investors rights to invest in land, water and ocean in another state. Foreigners are able to secure access to these natural resources through the assistance of domestic laws unless there is an international

commitment made by a particular state. This means that international laws and policies that respond to access to natural resources as an issue of human right should use the bottom-up approach. The human rights approach is meant to ensure that states respect the rights of individuals and groups to the resources that provide their means of livelihood, just like other basic rights.

Per the Framework for Political Economy Analysis, active participation by the various actors is very important in formulating such policies. The participation process should be able to identify who the key players are in land, water and ocean grabbing, and their respective interests and ideas, and the sources of their capacities and power for defending or challenging the status quo. The participation process should actively include grabbees who are mostly affected by resource grabbing, civil society groups as well as agents of states. The purpose of the actors'/stakeholders' identification and participation is to facilitate information and knowledge action concerning the resource patterns and their rights to such natural resources. This serves as an important tool to defend their resources against grabbers mainly on the basis of human rights. Besides, grabbees are able to practice self-monitoring and reporting on their resources even when such resources have been allocated.

Figure 6.3: Framework for Political Economy Analysis



Source: Modified from Hudson and Leftwich, 2014

The Framework for Political Economy Analysis also suggests identification of structural variables in developing policies that affect natural resources. These include the concentration of such resources, that is, whether at the rural or urban setting, the poverty situation of resource users, cultural values of such resources, the contribution of such resources to the livelihood and local economy, and other structural variables that ensure interactions between such resources and their users.

Strong institutions are necessary if any policy is going to work effectively. Institutions refer to the norms, political systems, legal frameworks, and bureaucratic frameworks mandated to protect and implemented specific laws and policies. A human rights approach to resource

grabbing policy should be backed by domestic laws, such as other human rights and all stakeholders of such laws should be well informed. Such institutional structures should not just keep stakeholders informed but also have the means to seek redress when they feel their rights to natural resources have been abused.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

7.1 Summary

The thesis sought to provide a comparative analysis on the concept of resource grabbing for three key resources—land, water and the oceans. It did so through the theoretical and analytical frameworks of political ecology and political economy. The analysis on of land, water and ocean grabbing establishes that resource grabbing occurs within the interplay of stakeholders (actors), motives (interest), institutions and institutional frameworks and also has effects.

The thesis categorized actors into grabbers and grabbees. The grabbers are those whose actions result in control of resources from their prior holders and users. These include domestic states, foreign states, investors/transnational corporations, and combinations of those actors. The grabbees, on the other hand, primarily involve prior resource holders and those users are normally at a disadvantage as far as resource grabbing is a concerned. These include peasants, small-scale fishers and indigenous groups, and rural settlers more generally. The grabbers are driven by motives that are either based on the interests of individuals or organization interests of corporations, investors, and states. Individual interests include profits made by investors from land investment particularly for food and biofuel productions. Instances of the organizational interests are usually framed as collective interests, including interests in meeting food production to meet global food

requirements, global demands on certain types of fish and biofuel production to supplement global energy requirements and a reduction in climate change.

Some of the motives of grabbers (actors) are manifested through institutions and institutional and regulatory frameworks. These include the influence of both domestic and international laws and policies on land, water and ocean grabbing. There are some international laws and policies that protect grabbers while weaknesses on the part of most domestic laws and policies help facilitate resource grabbing. Resource grabbing therefore involves the influence of institutional and regulatory frameworks on the motives of actors (grabbers), whose actions put other actors (grabbees) in a deprived position.

The effects of resource control by grabbers include the marginalization of grabbees and degradation of land, water and ocean resources. This has the potential of creating unsustainable environments on the part of grabbees with possible violence and environmental conflicts associated with resource grabbing.

Since the idea of a human right to food and water has been given some recognition in the current literature, the thesis proposes that a rights-based approach should be used to fight resource grabbing. It also suggests that it is important that effective analysis is done on the various stakeholders (actors), motives (interests) and the interplay of institutional frameworks to enhance effective policy formulation and implementation towards curbing resource grabbing.

7.2 Conclusion

The controversies and global debates associated with resource grabbing in the name of land, water and ocean grabbing is something that seems to have no end. This is because day in, day out, new issues relating to land, water and ocean grabbing emerge and, depending on the circumstances and factors that account for such issues, authors and researchers of different backgrounds will always often have divergent views in analyzing and reporting such issues. It is therefore not new that the issue of resource grabbing has generated debates in the literature relating to the actors, motives, institutions and the effects of its occurrence.

The rate at which resource (land, water and ocean) grabbing emerges and its reported effects have caught the attention of some international media and policy agendas; hence much research interest and debates that surround the phenomenon have been rapidly growing in recent years, though the research on land grabbing is far more extensive than the research on water and ocean grabbing. This rush in research works on resource grabbing has had effects not only on how the issue is described and presented but some of the facts and figures of their occurrences from the places reported are problematic. For instance, the quality and reliability of international databases on land deals constitutes a significant issue for the global land debate but most of these figures found in the literature are marred by inconsistencies, inaccuracies, reporting biases and 'killer facts' and have no means of verifications. What most of these research works failed to establish, despite these global debates on resources grabbing, is a comparative analysis on land, water and ocean grabbing, particularly with the frameworks of political ecology and economy analysis. This comparative perspective is also a key to formulating policies aimed to protect grabbees

from the various negative effects of grabbing. The comparative analysis above reveals certain areas that could be targeted for policy formulation and implementation. This thesis, therefore, sought to focus not on the specific details of certain claims about the quantitative scope and nature of resource grabbing. Instead, it focused on advancing an analytical and comparative understanding of the phenomenon by applying political economy and political ecological frameworks to three areas of resource grabbing, with a view to using these insights to develop policy responses at global and local levels.

Another important revelation in this research stems from a lack of an integrated and a holistic policy to deal with land, water and ocean grabbing. This is due in part to the complexities associated with the phenomena in terms of their occurrences. This research, however, could not provide a single solution for the policy gap but instead suggested a general human rights approach, which can be used as a driving force towards the development of a broader set of policies that can tackle and manage resource grabbing.

Indeed, the objective of providing a comparative analysis on resource grabbing within the contexts of land, water and ocean grabbing has been achieved. In terms of policy formulation, the research did not necessarily suggest specific policy recommendations for each of the resources within the resource grabbing debates but, rather, suggested a human rights approach through which the issues of resource grabbing can be resolved. This is because policies involving land, water and ocean management are very complex and may require far more research to unravel the specifics. In view of that, a future research project in the area is proposed assess *cases of land, water and ocean policies and their implications for resource grabbing in the Global South.* Such a research project is proposed to identify

the contributions of land, water and ocean policies that tend to influence resource grabbing in selected countries in the Global South. This is expected to identify weaknesses within these policy frameworks and suggest ways to address such weaknesses with the ultimate aim of resolving the social and environmental problems of resource grabbing.

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