

Passionate natures: The material and symbolic conflictive connection between *glocal* forests at the Iberian Peninsula and Chile.



Reclaiming Baldios governance at Vilarinho (Portugal). Source: SCRAM project.

Defending Panul Forest at Santiago de Chile. Source: Red por la Defensa de la Precordillera.

Condemning impacts of *Eucalyptus* Plantations at Chiloé, Chile. Source: www.mapuexpress.net

"Plantations are not forests". Source: World Rainforest Movement

BACKGROUND

- **Industrial tree plantations** in the Global South (Gerber, 2011), mainly dedicated for exportation, imply environmental problems and conflicts which European forestry system externalizes.
- **Mediterranean forests**, specially in Spain and Portugal, face environmental problems such as loss of biodiversity and forest fires. These are associated to a loss of local ecological knowledge in forests due to their trend towards abandonment and urbanization of the landscapes.
- Together to their material and economic benefits, forests can be defended under an **incommensurability** of values: livelihood, sacredness, aesthetic and cultural values, etc (Funtowicz and Ravetz, 1994; Martínez-Alier, 2009).

GAP IN THE LITERATURE?

- Nightingale (2011) proposes a "**debate to think about the role of subjectivity and emotion in creating durable cooperative agreements**". This dissertation follows this proposal.
- Although political ecologists consider in their analysis the inclusion of non-material or non-rational values to nature, the emotional values to resources are usually referred only to concrete communities like indigenous peoples (literature review in progress)
- **Feminist political ecologists** have tried to fill in this gap: "Such analyses enables (feminist) political ecology to further explain and illuminate the ways that resources struggles and politics are not only economic, social, or rational choice issues, **but also emotive realities that have direct bearing on how resources are accessed, used, and fought over.**" (Sultana, 2011: 163)

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What are the **material, discursive and political** connections between "abandoned" Mediterranean forests and "extractive" Global Southern ones?
- **Which (and whose) knowledges** have framed Iberian and Chilean forests?
- How are individual and shared **perceptions to nature** constructed, and how these **influence the diverse ways of defending or taking care of forests**?
- How **non-rational values to nature are politically expressed?**; (how) are emotional processes from environmentalists, foresters, citizens, peasants and indigenous peoples expressed when defending a forest or maintaining its communitarian management?

AIMS

- Understand how **European policies** promote the imports from forest products from Global South plantations.
- Explore **environmental conflicts**, due to the global forestry market, in both Iberian and Chilean forests.
- Identify which **knowledges** of forests are states and institutions framing, either for the promotion of conservation or for their exploitation.
- Study the *everyday* impacts in the **cultural and emotional languages** of the neighbouring populations to tree plantations in Chile.

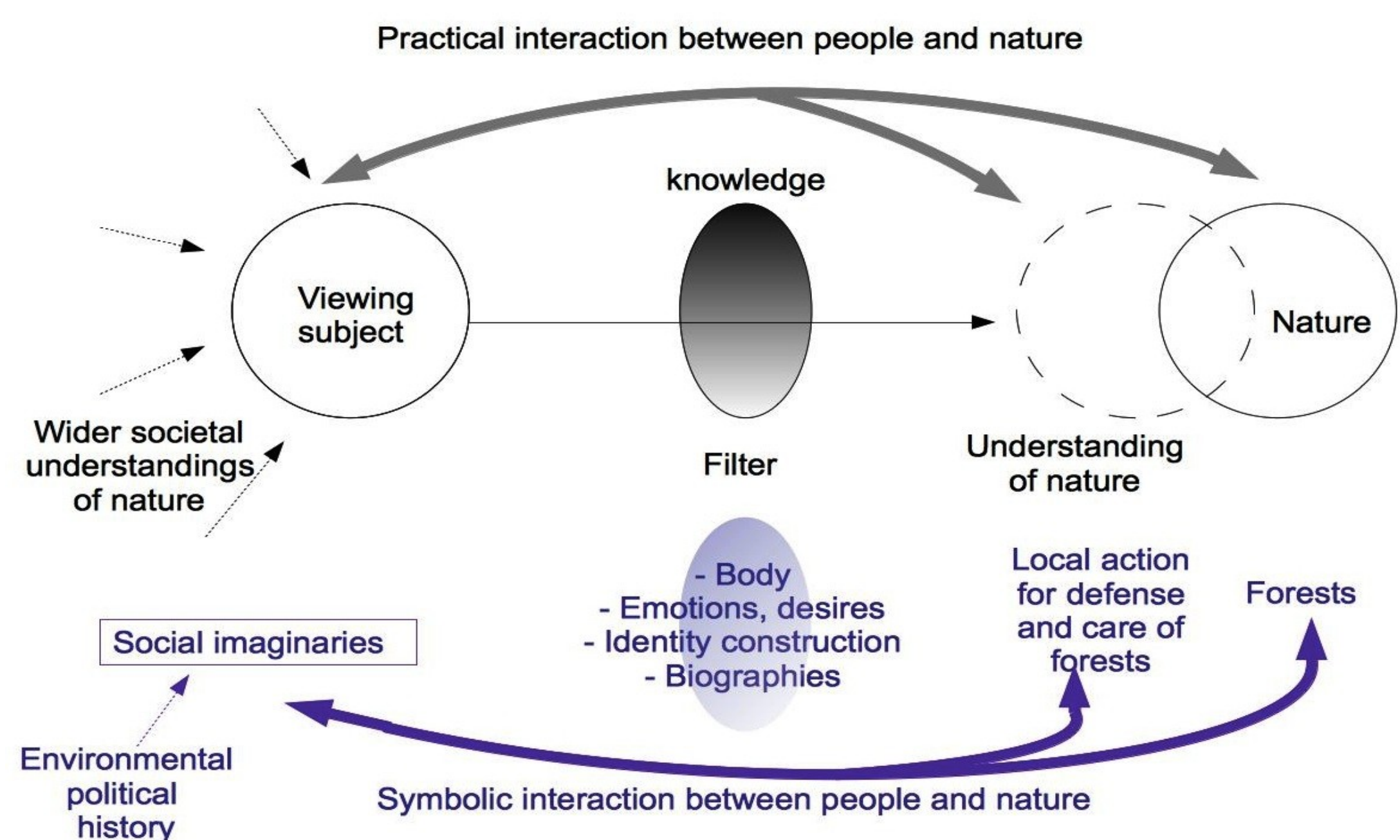


Figure 1: *Knowledges as a filter structuring our understanding of nature* (adapted from Castree, 2005: xviii)

CASE STUDIES and METHODOLOGY

- Analysis of the **social metabolism** of forest imports from Chile to Spain. Material Flow Account and identification of the European policies that enhance imports from Southern plantations.
- **Case study** in Catalonia and Portugal. Analysis of the diverse ways communities re-act after forest fires, and how these are related to diverse conceptions of nature. Discourse analysis as analytical tool.
- **Participative Action Research** in the resistance to plantations in Southern Chile.

REFERENCES. Castree N, 2005, *Nature*, Routledge, London and New York; Funtowicz SO and Ravetz JR, 1994, "The worth of a songbird: ecological economics as a post-normal science" *Ecological Economics* 10, 197-207; Gerber, J. 2010. Conflicts over industrial tree plantations in the south: who, how and why?. *Global Environmental Change*, 2 165-176. Martínez-Alier J, 2009, "Social Metabolism, Ecological Distribution Conflicts, and Languages of Valuation" *Capitalism Nature Socialism* 20 58-87; Nightingale AJ, 2011, "Beyond Design Principles: Subjectivity, Emotion, and the (Ir)Rational Commons" *Society & Natural Resources* 24 119-132; Sultana F, 2011, "Suffering for water, suffering from water: Emotional geographies of resource access, control and conflict"