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The extractive embrace: shifting expectations of conservation and extraction in the Guiana Shield

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ABSTRACT
This paper demonstrates what the Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD+) initiative *would have to do* to satisfy the expectations of its diverse, local stakeholders. It connects the unmet expectations of REDD+ with a deepening reliance on extractive activity in the Guiana Shield. In it, I argue that extractive activity, which has always been the most significant driver of deforestation in the ecoregion, is further overtaking REDD+'s capacity for meeting expectations and development aspirations due to the combined failure of REDD+ to deliver vast amounts of promised funding to alter unsustainable development paths and the subsequent announcements of major oil discoveries in the territorial waters of the Guiana Shield. These arguments are based on data collected in the early phases of REDD+ readiness through a multi-sited ethnography, analyzed through a combination of Foucauldian discourse analysis and governmentality. I use critical discourse analysis to represent REDD+'s regional interpretations and governmentality to tease out the expectations embedded in these discourses. This combination supports my identification of what REDD+ *would have to accomplish* to be deemed successful in Guyana and Suriname, the only two REDD+ participating countries entirely within the Guiana Shield. In turn, this identification improves understandings of the relationship between failed or failing conservation and development initiatives and the subsequent intensification of extractive activity.

KEYWORDS REDD+; forests; Guiana Shield; governmentality; discourse; Guyana; Suriname

Introduction

Extractive activity and environmental conservation have always been at odds. The Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD+) initiative was developed in part to tilt the odds in conservation's favor by 'making forests worth more alive than dead' (Office of the President, Guyana 2010, p. 7). After several years of negotiations and pilot projects, parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) agreed in 2013 on the Warsaw Framework for implementing REDD+ (Zelli *et al.* 2019). REDD+ has since developed into a political project (Myers *et al.*

2018), a fragmented, differentially constituted, internationally driven effort to marry forest conservation and economic growth. Its aims are to provide payments for the work of standing forests, to compensate for efforts to prevent emissions and to increase the removal of carbon from the atmosphere (Aipp and Iwgia 2012).

REDD+ has been subject to intense debate centered on its ability or lack thereof, to generate substantial, tangible results (Angelsen *et al.* 2017, Fletcher *et al.* 2016, 2017). As the debate rages, extractive activity has been deepening its hold in the Guiana Shield, an Amazonian eco-region that forms one of the largest remaining unfragmented blocks of tropical forest on earth (Haden 1999, iii). Extractive activity is being embraced there due, in part, to the combined failure of REDD+ to deliver vast amounts of promised funding to alter unsustainable development paths and the subsequent, recent announcements of major oil discoveries in the territorial waters of both Guyana and Suriname, which are the only two REDD+ participating countries situated entirely within the Guiana Shield. Over ten billion barrels of oil were found in Guyana's territorial waters by Exxon Mobil (Smith 2021) and a find of an estimated three to four million was also recently announced in the waters of neighboring Suriname (Unknown 2020, Krauss 2021). These events signal the validity of the US. Geological Survey's estimation that the Guyana–Suriname Basin of the Guiana Shield had 'mean undiscovered resources of over 15 billion barrels of crude oil' (Smith 2021).

While extractive activity, namely gold mining, has always been the most significant driver of deforestation in both Guyana and Suriname (Hammond *et al.* 2007, Collins 2019a), the nature of this extractive activity is shifting in ways that further advantage extractive activity. These shifts include the expansion of traditionally small amounts of onshore oil production in Suriname (Hout 2007) to include significant offshore activity and the introduction of oil production to Guyana. They are set to dramatically alter the fortunes of these two small, postcolonial nations, struggling to provide economic earners to meet the development ambitions of their populations. Guyana had gained independence in 1966 from the British and Suriname in 1975 from the Dutch, inheriting racially divided populations (Collins 2019b) and economies reliant on agriculture and raw material for export at unfavorable prices. So significant are these developments that the British Broadcasting Corporation asked whether Guyana will soon be the richest country per capita in the world ('Will Guyana Soon Be the Richest Country in the World?', 2019). Suriname's comparatively smaller discoveries are also significant for altering the country's economic fortunes.

Forest conservation through REDD+, on the other hand, has shown remarkable-staying power despite growing concerns about its likely and ongoing failure (Fletcher *et al.* 2016, Lund *et al.* 2017, Myers *et al.* 2018) and the effects of its afterlife (Massarella *et al.* 2018). In their work towards

'unpacking the performative role of expectations' (Massarella *et al.* 2018, p. 384) in REDD+ in Tanzania, Massarella *et al.* demonstrated how expectations functioned in convincing local communities to support conservation and development projects. In so doing, they added 'insights into the growing critical discussion of conservation fads' (Fletcher *et al.* 2016, Massarella *et al.* 2018, p. 384, Redford *et al.* 2013). In like manner, I focus on expectations as a site for examining what REDD+ *would have to do* to satisfy its diverse, local stakeholders. I argue that extractive activity is overtaking REDD+ in meeting local expectations as a result of the combined failure of REDD+ to deliver vast amounts of promised funding, and recent, major oil discoveries in the territorial waters of the Guiana Shield. While it would come as no surprise that vast sums of revenue from oil production could displace environmental conservation priorities, especially when those conservation priorities were valued for enabling positive development outcomes, few connections have been made between the unmet expectations that linger in the aftermath of failed or failing REDD+ projects and the subsequent deepening of extractive activity in ways that could meet those expectations. I attend to this gap in the literature by basing my arguments on data I collected in the early phases of REDD+ readiness, dedicated to the preparation of national REDD+ strategies and plans, through a year-long multi-sited ethnography (Marcus 1995) of REDD+ in the Guiana Shield. The data was analyzed using a combination of Foucauldian discourse analysis and governmentality. I use critical discourse analysis to show how REDD+ is interpreted regionally and governmentality to tease out the expectations embedded in these discourses. This theoretical and analytical combination supports my identification of what REDD+ *would have to do* to be deemed successful by its stakeholders and highlights the potential of deepening extractive activity for meeting those expectations. In the sections that follow, I first theoretically situate my arguments and outline my methods. I then chart REDD+'s progress in Guyana and Suriname. Next, I describe the discourses constituting REDD+ while teasing out their embedded expectations. I discuss the significance of my findings in the conclusion.

Unmet expectations and Foucault

The debate on the extent to which REDD+ is failing continues to rage in the critical literatures on conservation and development (Fletcher *et al.* 2016, Lund *et al.* 2017, Massarella *et al.* 2018), environmental policy (Angelsen *et al.*, 2017, Fletcher *et al.* 2017, Hook 2019a) and REDD+, more broadly (Enrici and Hubacek 2018). For Angelsen (2017), REDD+ is best understood not as a market-based policy but as results-based aid, a distinction that preserves space for the market to be seen a viable option for supporting environmental conservation. For Angelsen, while REDD+'s 'rhetoric of

result-based payments has survived' (Angelsen *et al.*, 2017, p. 719), REDD+ itself has been reinterpreted within international finance practices and national policies in ways that are synonymous with largely ineffective conservation efforts. Coupled with the fact that both REDD+ and the international carbon market intended to support it have still not been fully realized, this reinterpretation contributes to REDD+'s lack of results (Angelsen *et al.*, 2017). Supporting this view of REDD+ as mostly results-based aid through a focus on Guyana, Hook (2019a) confirmed that REDD+ was never constructed as a challenge to entrenched deforesting practices, but was driven instead by 'personal relationships and narrow political interests' (Hook 2019a, 1016).

Arguments in support of REDD+'s continued viability in Guyana were bolstered when Overman *et al.* (2019) used data from 2001 to 2012 to estimate the income to the Guyanese state from REDD+ activities by multiplying the forests' stored carbon per ton by the carbon price. The result led them to posit that REDD+ can successfully offset lost income to the state from gold mining and forestry activities, the major drivers of deforestation. 'To the state' here is particularly important because mining provides direct employment to 13,800 people and indirectly to 19,000 (The Government of Guyana 2015). Gold mining is one of Guyana's most significant and difficult to manage (Hook 2019b) income earners. Further, while REDD+ may indeed have been able to outperform gold in providing income to the state, this performance is being weakened by current developments. By 2019 (Bank of Guyana Annual Report 2019), gold output had increased by approximately 46% and its revenue to the state by approximately 14% as compared to 2012 figures (Bank of Guyana Annual Report 2013). REDD+ is even less likely to outperform oil as a state income source, although deforestation is not so much the issue in the case of oil because Guyana's oil production is offshore.

In contrast to this view of REDD+ as results-based aid masquerading as a market-based mechanism (Angelsen *et al.*, 2017, Hook 2019a), Fletcher *et al.* (2017) link REDD+'s failure to the inability of conservation markets to replace those tied to extractive activities, such as mining. They note that REDD+ has fueled an 'economy of expectations' (Borup, 2006 in Fletcher *et al.* 2016, *unpaginated*) that promises elusive future benefits, leading stakeholders and communities to accept small steps in its general direction (Fletcher *et al.* 2018). In like manner, drawing on the vantage point provided by my simultaneous interrogation of two REDD+ participating countries, one of which (Suriname) did not benefit from a bilateral REDD+ agreement, I see the characterization of REDD+ as results-based aid rather than market-based conservation as justified primarily when the study focuses exclusively on a single country's national reinterpretation of REDD+, as is the case of Guyana and its REDD+ agreement with Norway (Hook 2019a). When analyses are broadened out to include Guyana and Suriname's simultaneous

multilateral efforts towards engaging in REDD+ in preparation of the eventual arrival of a global cap-and-trade initiative, REDD+ is shown instead to be a market-based policy that failed in its ascendence.

Differences aside, Hook (2019b) writes that, 'Perhaps the most serious long-term effect of the gulf between the exaggerated rhetoric associated with Guyana's REDD+ programme and the minimal delivery has been the unwarranted raising of expectations' (Hook 2019a, p. 1019), expectations that Massarella *et al.* (2018) define as 'imagined ideas about the future that are produced, circulated and mediated through social interaction, resulting in social change' (Massarella *et al.* 2018, p. 376). I outline the means for marking out expectations as a site for analysis through Foucauldian discourse analysis and governmentality in the rest of this section.

Discourse analysis

Given that REDD+ represents a loose amalgam of efforts for identifying funding sources, testing its feasibility in different localities, and readying candidate countries for implementation, a wealth of academic engagement with its discursive conceptualization in historically, culturally and ecologically diverse places at different scales around the globe has emerged (Aicher 2014, Astuti and McGregor 2015, Di Gregorio *et al.* 2015, Van Der Hoff *et al.* 2015, Vijge 2015, Milne *et al.* 2016, Bastakoti and Davidsen 2017, Brown and MacLellan 2020, Mbatu 2020, Ramcilovik-Suominen and Nathan 2020). These discourses provide a framework for understanding how REDD+ stakeholders interpret the initiative, often situating it within their preexisting political objectives.

Foucauldian inspired critical discourse analysis is useful for parsing the varied meanings of REDD+. In this sense, discourse is 'an ensemble of notions, ideas, concepts, and categorizations through which meaning is ascribed to social and physical phenomena, and that is produced in and reproduces in turn an identifiable set of practices' (Hajer 1997, *unpaginated*). Discourses, flexible and drawn on by multiple actors, are formed through the process of preparing for REDD+, providing a useful frame for understanding co-constitutive, national, and regional interpretations of REDD+. Within this body of work, inadequate attention has been paid to the discourses of actors involved in the process through a focus on 'what REDD+ should achieve and how it should be operationalized' (Vijge *et al.* 2016, p. 57). This simultaneous, ethnographic identification of regional discourses through national-level projects in Guyana and Suriname contributes to filling this gap while supporting my view of REDD+ as a failing market-based instrument.

Meta-discourses have since been increasingly engaged with in analyzing REDD+ discursively (Vijge *et al.* 2016) with some authors drawing on the

frame provided by Bäckstrand and Lövbrand (*see* Nielsen 2014, Di Gregorio *et al.* 2017). However, an understanding of more grounded discourses and effects of REDD+ is valuable because these discourses appear to vary from place to place (Aicher 2014). As REDD+ was rolled out into different localities, interacting with different societal conditions as it proceeded, its eventual localized constitutions took on tones that differed from its initial framings. Critical discourse analysis, bearing the capacity of representing meaning whether or not that meaning is associated with actors imbued with the power to govern, has been effectively used in this endeavor to demonstrate local contestation of REDD+ specifically and international climate policies in general (Somorin *et al.* 2012, Astuti and McGregor 2015, Di Gregorio *et al.* 2015, Van Der Hoff *et al.* 2015, Milne *et al.* 2016). Guyana and Suriname, however, have been largely overlooked in this discursive REDD+ literature.

In conducting discursive analyses of governing policies attention must be paid not only to the method of analysis but also to that which is being analyzed. The object of analysis (i.e. the policies) may have already been imbued with the power to govern. However, in the case of discursive interpretations of national stakeholders, the power to act cannot be taken for granted. Put simply, not all discourses are imbued with the power to govern. This raises the question not just of how governance is enacted as outlined through governmentality, but of *how governance has been or could be enacted* in particular discursive terrains, especially in view of those discourses not imbued with the power to govern. REDD+'s discursive literature has generally not been accompanied by an examination of how governance can be carried out according to these discursive expectations. These considerations can be suitably explored through governmentality which focuses on the diverse governing logics through which behavior is shaped (Okereke *et al.* 2009), to which I turn next.

Governmentality

Dean's (2010) elaboration of how governmentality analyses could take place is useful for extracting the expectations embedded within discourses. Governmentality is a post-structural approach for analyzing the techniques and logics of governing (Dean 2010). In line with REDD+ researchers who have used Foucauldian tools, such as that of critical discourse analysis, to explore how international governance discourses shaped REDD+'s international emergence (Zelli *et al.* 2019) and influenced local REDD+ governance practices (Palmujoki and Virtanen 2016), I examine the discourses of socially mediated interpretations of REDD+ (Somorin *et al.* 2012, Di Gregorio *et al.* 2015, Van Der Hoff *et al.* 2015, Milne *et al.* 2016, Bastakoti and Davidsen 2017).

While discourse remains in the realm of meaning-making, the study of governmentality, the art of government, is concerned with regimes aimed at generating truth and knowledge encompassing certain practices and rationalities as part of their effort to reform that which has been identified as the population (Dean 2010). In such a study, it is necessary to examine the 'characteristic techniques, instrumentalities and mechanisms through which such practices operate, by which they attempt to realize their goals and through which they have a range of effects' (Dean 2010, p. 31). Attempts to analyze governing regimes require that we ask how certain practices are called into question, and that we identify first, different forms of visibility; second, specific ways of expression, thinking and questioning; third, different ways of acting or directing, drawing on expertise through certain practices, mechanisms and technologies; and fourth, the various ways of shaping the subject (Dean 2010). Regarding the first, efforts to govern aspects of society through governing regimes must make certain practices perceptible rather than others. The second aspect of Dean's analytic requires that ways of expression be identified, representing the *techne* of government, as he calls it, or the language and vocabularies through which governing regimes are expressed. Third, Dean's analytic requires recognition of the ways through which practices that have been made visible are directed and redirected through particular strategies employed in governing. Finally, in the fourth aspect of the analytic, attention must be paid to the target of the governing regime, those individual or collective bodies whose practices are the focus of the governing regime (Dean 2010).

However, rather than interpreting governmentality as an intervening act of government by a body or policy already infused with the power to govern an existing population, as might be suitable for analyses seeking to understand how REDD+ as an international policy governs national forests (Collins 2019a), I invert Dean's framework to demonstrate what REDD+ governance *would have to do* to satisfy the expectations of its diverse, local stakeholders. This is, therefore, an iterative reflection on how REDD+ was initially received in these contexts, what must now be done to meet the expectations made of it and how the deepening of extractive activity can fill the expectational void of its failure. Next, I elaborate my methods.

The discursive method

This project is based on an interpretive, epistemological approach (Yanow 2000). I identified these discourses partly through my attendance at an international REDD+ conference in Suriname (*see* Best 2014) where these discursive interpretations came clearly to the fore. Additionally, throughout a calendar year, ending in December 2014, I collected over 80 policy documents related to REDD+, forest conservation and development in the

Guiana Shield and conducted approximately 60 in-depth interviews with REDD+ stakeholders identified by the Governments of Guyana and Suriname through Readiness Preparation Proposals (R-PP) submitted to the World Bank to source financing for REDD+ preparation, including representatives of government, non-governmental organizations, gold miners, foresters, civil society organizations, forested community members and international governmental organizations. I conducted participant observation through unpaid internships for 5 months with the Guiana Shield Facility (GSF) of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Guyana, and for 4 months directly with the UNDP in Suriname, both central to REDD+ implementation in these locations. The internships afforded me access to the REDD+ stakeholders with whom the UN offices worked. I explained in the consent form signed by each inter-viewee that I remained, however, an independent researcher being tempora-rily hosted by the UN offices. I also conducted desk research on REDD+ from the end of my data collection period to submission of this paper.

The data was gathered, coded and analyzed through Atlas Ti software. The identification of codes was reflective of an iterative process based on my research questions, emergent themes in the data, and the theoretical frame-work. The codes and their groupings became my base for bolstering the discourses of REDD+ which, along with selected quotes included in this text, serve as representations of the wider data body. These discourses are not indicative of a monopoly of, or a coherence of, thought of specific actors. Instead, they represent my recognition that through the discourses, people speak and act across nominative categorizations, irreducible to assigned stakeholder categorizations. Given that REDD+ in neighboring Guyana and Suriname is pursued at the national level, with only small areas of titled indigenous forests in Guyana presently excluded from the forest national tally and all forests in Suriname being claimed by the state, these discourses represent interpretations of REDD+ in geographically contiguous forests.

This project is somewhat limited by the paucity of literature on REDD+ and land use practices in Suriname. It is also limited by circumstances that saw Suriname not yet benefitting from a bilateral REDD+ partner or from an oil discovery as fortune-changing as that of Guyana. This accounts, in part, for this paper's stronger representation of Guyana. Finally, I caution that this is not a comparative study. It is a study that examines REDD+ in the eco-region of the Guiana Shield within which Guyana and Suriname are the only participating countries completely within the Shield. I use the ecoregion as my entry point rather than deferring to states demarcated within it through colonial histories (Collins 2019a, 2019b). Limitations notwithstanding, I turn next towards providing an overview of REDD+ progress in Guyana and Suriname.

REDD+ in Guyana and Suriname

The neighboring countries of Guyana and Suriname have some of the world's highest rates of forest cover and lowest rates of deforestation (Best 2014), along with small populations, densely populated coasts and sparsely populated forests (Bureau of Statistics Guyana 2012, Ministry of Labour, Technological Development and Environment 2013). Their forests are increasingly under threat from infrastructural development and the extraction of gold, lumber and other natural resources (Bovolo *et al.* 2018) destined largely for the international market. Onshore oil production in Suriname is not a significant driver of deforestation.

Guyana, through its bilateral REDD+ agreement with Norway, was intended to stand as a global showcase of how climate change can be addressed through low carbon development and international cooperation (Office of the President, Guyana 2013) even though the effort was seen by some as merely a means to recentralize the power of the former President of Guyana and to provide patronage to forest communities (Bulkan 2014, Hook 2019a). In 2009, Guyana signed the Guyana–Norway agreement committing Norway to providing up to 250 million USD to Guyana for performance payments towards avoiding deforestation, an intended showcase of REDD+'s potential to the world. The final payment of the agreement was made in December 2019, some ten years after the intended five-year agreement's slated end. Guyana also received 3.8 million USD from the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) to support its readiness process, along with smaller grants from nongovernmental and intergovernmental organizations like the Guiana Shield Facility. Thus far, only forest conserved and managed by the state (amounting to approximately 80% of the nation's forest cover) has been allocated for REDD+ in Guyana with plans on stream for indigenous communities with legally defined land rights, to be given the option of including their titled forests. To date, Guyana has developed its Forest Reference Level and is working on developing its National Forest Monitoring System and National REDD+ Strategy (Severino *et al.* 2019). In Guyana, a change of government in 2015 brought about uncertainty for REDD+ (Hook 2019a) but it continues to be pursued.

Suriname's national entrance to REDD+ was more in tandem with REDD+'s global expansion. In collaboration with the UNDP, Suriname had its R-PP approved by the World Bank in March 2013. Suriname received 3.8 million USD from the FCPF to support its readiness efforts and was subsequently awarded an additional 2.6 million USD to complete its preparation process. Suriname submitted its first national Forest Reference Emission Level in 2018 (Government of Suriname 2018). Suriname is also still within the readiness phase of REDD+.

Across both countries, non-governmental organizations such as Conservation International and the World Wildlife Fund, civil society organizations representing marginalized groups, and government offices with varying foci, such as the management of gold mining and forestry, are working towards REDD+ readiness with collaborative efforts taking place across the Guiana Shield. The discursive interpretations of REDD+ in these spaces are discussed next.

Discursive expectations

In May 2014, the first REDD+ conference for highly forested, low deforestation (HFLD) countries was held in Suriname (Best 2014). Representatives of countries that meet those characteristics gathered there, including representatives from Guyana and Suriname. The participants, inclusive of United Nations REDD+ program officials, national government representatives, representatives of forest-dependent communities and those of other civil society organizations, expressed varying interpretations and expectations of REDD+. The representatives of forest-dependent communities and local civil society organizations expressed their frustration with REDD+ by drawing on narratives of exclusion and a need for recognition, while challenging what they saw as the unjust policies of the developed world. Responses from the head table, comprised of government officials and representatives of international organizations and international non-governmental organizations, either opted not to address the concerns of the forest-dependent community representatives, deferring them to later in the conference; or reverted to discussions on the structural aspects of REDD+, such as the intended grievance mechanism, as being eventually able to address these concerns. National governments took a middle ground, largely positioning REDD+ as beneficial for national development. These interactions highlighted the contested politics of REDD+ along with its different discursive interpretations and expectations. I turn now to fleshing out these discourses, commencing with the technical.

Discourse, expectations and the technical

The technical discourse is the interpretation of REDD+ in Guyana and Suriname closest to the UNFCCC conceptualization of REDD+. This discourse is the most influential , being drawn on primarily by representatives of international organizations like UN-REDD+ and national policymakers. Through this discourse, REDD+ is discussed primarily as a tool for managing and conserving forests and the initiative recast as a technical innovation in forest management (Gupta *et al.* 2012). The technical discourse in both countries is operationalized by representatives of intergovernmental

organizations, government officials and consultants. It is characterized by a strong emphasis on certain types of knowledge (Aicher 2014) and by the process of demarcating aspects of nature based on measurable function, such as carbon storage and land value. The technical discourse features a strong focus on the economic valuation of the environment, demonstrated by the careful measurement, as shown in Figure 1, of its financial value and the emphasis on rational resource use determined through likely income (FCPF 2012, 2013). As demonstrated in Figure 1, forests are seen in the technical discourse as a cost-effective investment opportunity through which climate change can be mitigated, as opposed to more expensive and technologically reliant options.

This technical discourse sidelines the socio-political circumstances in which it operates, depicting these circumstances as manageable but outside the domain of the wider international body supporting REDD+. However, these socio-political considerations frequently resurface to challenge this neutrality (Lund *et al.* 2017, Myers *et al.* 2018) as highlighted in the social justice discourse discussed later. MRV systems are also manifestations of the technical discourse through which REDD+ is seen as a tool for managing and conserving forests. The technical discourse comes closest to the intended meaning of REDD+ since without it, the international community will not monitor forests in a verifiable form and payments will not be possible for
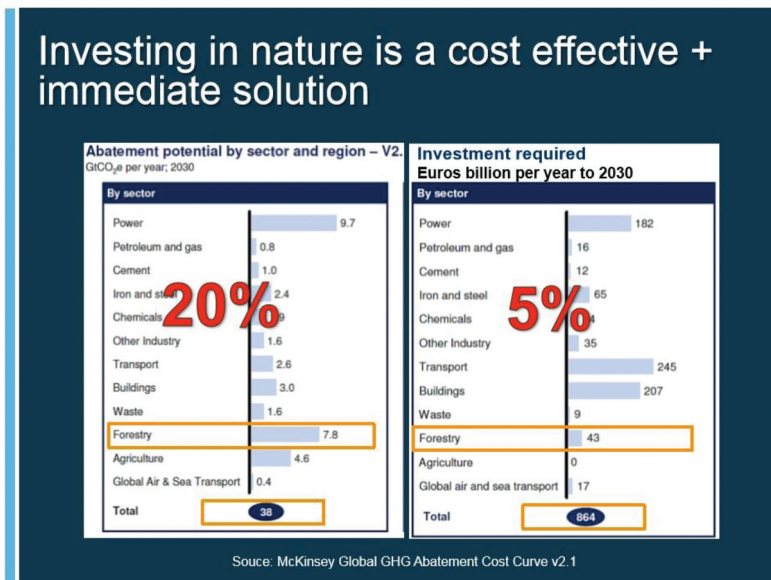

Figure 1. Slide from NGO Director Presenting at HFLD Conference (NGO Director, 2014, Public Communication).

measurable reductions in deforestation. It is also the most powerful discourse since it is strongly evident in national policy documents and practices, being adopted most by those actors imbued with the power to govern and to directly influence policy outcomes.

Expectations of technicality

Analyzing this discourse through an inversion of Dean's governmentality framework shows that, the technical discourse has the following embedded expectations:

Forms of visibility. The technical discourse relies on improving the visibility of forest management and use practices. It aims to make the forests and the carbon dioxide stored within it increasingly visible to those seeking to be compensated for its conservation.

Ways of expression. It is expressed predominantly through the development of Monitoring, Reporting and Verification systems reliant on statistics and images, such as deforestation rates; interim monitoring reports, consultant reports economically valuing the forests and satellite images.

Ways of acting. It is enacted when actors related to REDD+ in the Guiana Shield draw on and contribute to it by working towards conserving and sequestering carbon specifically and by organizing themselves to provide and receive payment as incentives.

Shaping of subjects. People who draw on and contribute to the technical discourse, both collectively and individually, represent themselves as rational REDD+ subjects responsive to incentives introduced into the environment. Users of and contributors to this discourse aspire to the increased visibility of the forests and increase of earnings gained through REDD+ and its supporting technologies.

These aspirations amount to what I determine to be the underlying goals and expectations of the REDD+ stakeholders who draw on and contribute to this discourse.

Discourse, expectations and development

The development discourse frames REDD+ as a tool for bringing development to Guyana and Suriname. The development discourse is pervasive due to its varied, constitutive interpretations of development. Yet, it both complements and challenges the technical discourse, being drawn on by almost all of my interviewees while being ubiquitous in policy documents. The development discourse motivates people to support REDD+,

commanding sway with some international organizations and NGOs, forested communities and national governments in both countries, such as Conservation International and the UN offices. Within the development discourse, REDD+ is qualified for its potential to contribute to national development predominantly by government representatives and policy-makers. REDD+ is also seen as a tool for development by historically disadvantaged forest communities seeking to access development outcomes and to gain access to the daily life conveniences of their coastal counterparts.

Through this discourse, national governments and civil society represen-tatives emphasize REDD+'s potential to bring development to their countries through narratives centered on the need to address climate change; the fulfillment of basic needs for education and healthcare; the strengthening of the system of allocating land rights and the need for economic growth (FCPF 2013). The governments of Guyana and Suriname also relied on infusing ideas of development into their REDD+ implementation process through its associated development frameworks, the Low Carbon Development Strategy (see Office of the President, Guyana 2013) in the case of Guyana, and Climate Compatible Development Strategy (see FCPF 2013) in the case of Suriname, both of which were strategies intended to alter national development paths away from unsustainable, largely extractive, practices. While economic growth concerns dominate both frameworks, concerns for social justice and development are also expressed. The Surinamese government explicitly highlighted connections between its eco-nomic endeavors and global market demands stating that increased demand for tropical timber and low concession fees and taxes targeted at attracting foreign investment in the timber industry, present a challenge to conserva-tion (FCPF 2013). The development discourse is also demonstrated by the Amerindian Development Fund (ADF), a UNDP Project that seeks to bring development to indigenous communities in Guyana through REDD+ funding.

The development discourse was evident also at the earlier-referenced HFLD conference when a Surinamese indigenous community member described the development needs of his community, including an improved airstrip, clean drinking water and improved education. He explained that the forest cannot provide these things so the community would happily maintain the forests if they could receive them. Implicit in his request was recognition that the agents gathered at the conference table had the ability to help. Tellingly, in response to the challenges described by the indigenous repre-sentative, the panel coordinator responded, 'That is what REDD is about, bringing development' (LB, 2014, Public Communication).

Expectations of development

Analyzing this discourse through an inversion of Dean's governmentality framework shows that it features the following:

Forms of visibility. Levels of development, including needs for climate change readiness, the balance between economic growth and conservation, and the need to fulfill certain basic needs, are targeted and made visible.

Ways of expression. The development discourse is expressed through developmental indicators, such as the building of airstrips in forest communities, the reported wellbeing of indigenous communities, climate change readiness and the creation of business opportunities.

Ways of acting. This discourse encourages income-earning activity with REDD+ being portrayed as having the ability to generate economic growth, when pursued in addition to other, more entrenched income earners. Within the development discourse, REDD+ is situated within a basket of economic earners for export alongside those that result from forest degrading activities.

Shaping of subjects. Through this discourse, REDD+ is envisioned as fostering the emergence of a wealthier local subject, loosely conceptualized in the image of wealthier countries, communities or individuals. Supporters of and contributors to this discourse aspire to increased personal or community earnings or development outcomes, such as improved roads.

Discourse, expectations and social justice

The social justice discourse necessitates that specific actions be taken to address the plight of forest users, specifically through measurable and identifiable progress towards land titling and community development indicators. Like the development discourse, the social justice discourse exists along a continuum with diverse groups drawing on and contributing to its formation, including representatives of forested communities and civil society groups, such as collectives formed by gold miners or forest workers. They make frequent and overt calls for addressing the historical injustices they see as continuing to affect them, even though these calls often conflict, for example, in conflicts between miners and indigenous groups (Hennessy 2013, Collins 2019b, Hook 2019b). The social justice discourse is one of resistance, characterized by a response to domination and to sovereign power, and partly, to the implicit development imaginaries of the development discourse. The social justice discourse embodies the experiences of forest users as a continuation of the history of marginalization these communities faced since colonialism. The frequent refrain of these communities

is that the national status quo is unfair and that they have been treated unjustly not only by the former colonial masters of Guyana and Suriname but by independent governments who continue to see the forests that communities have used for centuries as pools of natural resources to be exploited for national economic gain (Collins 2019a, 2019b).

Though not imbued with the power of policy and institutional decision-making influence, the strength of the social justice discourse was demonstrated in the rejection of Suriname's R-PP on two occasions by the World Bank when the lack of consultation with forested communities (WWF Global 2013) was pointed out by communities themselves causing the Surinamese government to engage in consultation activities; and when small-scale gold miners in Guyana forced the reconsideration of legislation to strengthen gold mining regulations as part of the government's implementation of the low carbon development strategy. The social justice discourse is occasionally drawn on and enacted by governments and civil society interacting with outside powers but is strongest within forest communities and their representative non-governmental organizations. This is, however, the least conventionally influential discourse due to its comparative lack of supporting institutional power vis-à-vis state government and international organizations, and its consequent reliance on lobbying and persuasion. In this discourse, the perceived injustice meted out to forested communities and other forest users is highlighted, along with its impact on historical land use practices. REDD+'s successful implementation, in turn, depends on its contribution to addressing these deeply rooted histories that have left people in forested communities outside mainstream development and that often favored the demands of gold miners and foresters for continued access to natural resources in lands communities call their own.

Most often, these claims for redress of the social justice discourse are unconcerned with REDD+'s carbon reduction aims. In Guyana, representatives of the Amerindian People's Association, a non-governmental organization representing indigenous interests, explained that while REDD+ may be useful for protecting forests and may have beneficial outcomes for indigenous people, it is being poorly executed and that the issue of land rights must be addressed before they lend their support. They stated 'Amerindians have lived in the forest for years and have always protected it. People can't come to tell me that I should stop my way of life because it wouldn't be fair' (Office of the President, Guyana 2009, *unpaginated*).

These concerns for land rights were more vehemently expressed in Suriname due perhaps to the almost complete absence of land rights of the forested communities. Forested community representatives used REDD+ related fora to voice their concerns, asserting their claim based on their histories as first peoples (Collins 2019b). Some community representative organizations saw REDD+ positively for presenting an opportunity to

reinstate land rights on the national agenda. Representatives of a government ministry in Suriname pointed out the histories of forested communities as steeped in self-reliance for generations in the case of indigenous people, and escape from slavery and eventual self-governance in the case of maroons (Governmental Organization, 2014). The official view of the Surinamese government, however, is that indigenous and maroon people within Suriname have the right to freely, but not exclusively, utilize the lands on which they reside (FCPF 2013). The social justice discourse envisions REDD + as a means of remedying those past injustices that continue to structure the present. In the words of one indigenous community representative in Suriname:

> REDD+ is a way of keeping everybody cool and big countries that have the money continue to destroy the world, so they give you a little bit of the money to say 'I give you this', but they are still doing the same thing that they used to do (Non-governmental Organization, 2014, Interview).

Expectations of social justice

Analyzing this discourse through an inversion of Dean's governmentality framework shows the following:

Forms of visibility. Speeches, Reports and Communications within which people argue that REDD+ is primarily in the interest of richer countries. These communications express the need for greater consideration of marginalized groups and issues of justice around land rights.

Ways of expression. The social justice discourse is expressed through demands for local consultation, recognition and justice through REDD+.

Ways of acting. Ways of acting vary greatly in this discourse, considering the lack of formal, institutional power of those who use it. Within the social justice discourse, action is undertaken through protests that impede technical REDD+ progress and through the expressions of grievances about the perceived lack of development in rural communities. The social justice discourse encourages the integration of social justice concerns into REDD+ and the increase or improvement of consultations with communities.

Shaping of subjects. Users who draw on this discourse aspire towards forested communities and users having more just circumstances through land rights, inclusion in the larger national development thrusts taking place in both countries, and the benefit of these groups of greater awareness of their historical marginalization across both societies.

Altogether, these discourses and their embedded expectations show that REDD+ is being pursued as a tool for achieving divergent demands, even within constituent discourses. This variance is demonstrated for clarity in Figure 2, highlighting the Elements of Dean's Frame for Exploring Regimes of Truth. These discourses are not entirely independent of each other. There is often overlap with different actors calling on and contributing to different discourses at different times. Quite frequently, there is overlap between the development and technical discourse as the two are closely related, with technical discursive progress being demanded in the hopes that it will eventually lead to the satisfaction of the demands of the development discourse, and vice versa. The social justice discourse too features demands for development while also using technical discursive tools of forest monitoring in indigenous communities (WWF 2015).

Conclusion

Recognizing REDD+ as a fragmented, differentially constituted, internationally driven project to incentivize avoided deforestation in diverse contexts around the world (Myers *et al.* 2018), I provided in this article a flexible discursive frame for demonstrating how REDD+ is interpreted in the Guiana Shield. By complementing discourse with governmentality, I sketched out the expectations being made of REDD+, showing that as REDD+ is pursued, it is imagined in ways that amount to much more than its carbon sequestration, climate change mitigation core. I demonstrated what REDD+ *would have to do to* satisfy the expectations of its stakeholders in Guyana and Suriname. My framework for combining discourse analysis and governmentality to determine and trace how REDD+ success is imagined in particular places might be useful for other researchers retrospectively interrogating the expectations and failure of conservation and governance initiatives.

REDD+ would have to generate wide-ranging even conflicting outcomes to be deemed successful by its diverse, local stakeholders. Imagined REDD+ success encompasses outcomes as varied as land rights, greater inclusion in decision making and an end to marginalization on the part of forested communities; infrastructural development and wealth generation through improved business prospects for communities, miners and the state; and climate change resilience, mitigation and funding for adaptation through alternative development paths; along with abundant avoided deforestation incentives for miners and others engaging in extractive activity.

Yet, to date, REDD+ has failed to generate anything close to that expected of it, including the 580 million USD per year floated as the economic value to the nation to Guyana of its forests to the world (Office of the President, Guyana 2013) that would, once received, be deployed in the pursuit of

Discourse	Elements of Dean's Frame for Exploring Regimes of Truth (Dean, 2010)			
	Forms of Visibility	Ways of Expression	Ways of Acting	The Shaping of Subjects
TECHNICAL	Carbon Dioxide in Forests	Monitoring, Reporting and Verification Systems; Deforestation rates; Interim reports, Economic valuations of forests, Satellite images	Conserving carbon and providing payment as incentives	Imagined rational REDD+ subject responsive to payments
DEVELOPMENT	Levels of Development	Indicators of Development (GDP, Wellbeing, Climate Change Readiness, Business Opportunities)	Engaging in income earning activities like REDD+	Imagined wealthier subject, whether in the form of countries, communities, or individual business prospects
SOCIAL JUSTICE	Justice or lack thereof and unsatisfactory Land Rights	Demanding consultation, Stopping R-PP approval, Oral and Written challenges to REDD+, Lack of Development progress based on Indicators	Integrating concerns into REDD+ Model; Consultations with communities	Forested communities and users imagined as having more just circumstances through land rights; inclusion in national development thrust; and benefitting from greater awareness of their historical marginalisation

Figure 2. Discursive expectations of REDD+ in the Guiana Shield.

alternative development paths. In Suriname, where no such amounts were publicly promised to my knowledge, REDD+ has still failed to launch with the arrival of no bilateral partners or payments for performance to date. REDD+'s failure to meet expectations in the Guiana Shield is also likely to yield some unintended outcomes, such as reduced pressure on gold miners to change their deforesting behavior and continued dissatisfaction on the part of indigenous communities who will have lost REDD+'s land use demands as an entry-point for demanding stronger land rights.

However, while these two countries continue to 'get ready for REDD+', their reliance on extractive activity in the form of continued gold mining and expanding offshore oil production has been deepening, overtaking REDD+'s capacity for meeting the expectations of local stakeholders and demonstrating as it does so how the failure of conservation and development initiatives makes space for the embrace of extractive activity. Take for example the 2018 announcement by ExxonMobil, a company drilling for oil in Guyana's territorial waters, that it will 'contribute US$10 million to a new collaboration with Conservation International and the University of Guyana to train Guyanese for sustainable job opportunities and to expand community-supported conservation' (Exxon 2018). This sum is intended to provide precisely those outcomes previously expected from REDD+, except in this case, the funding is coming from extraction rather than conservation, showing that the expectations made of conservation and development projects live on, finding ways to be met, even as conservation fads, like REDD+, come and go (Redford *et al.* 2013, Lund *et al.* 2017). The newness of these developments, however, precludes an analysis of the extent to which extractive activity has thus far been able to meet these demands.

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