

IC - (21390) - PLACE IDENTITY AROUND THE "GREEN EXTRACTIVIST LANDSCAPES" OF FOREST INDUSTRY IN CHILE.

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Background and objectives

The forest industry in Chile has grown steadily in the last 30 years, becoming one of the pillars of the national economy. The intensive development of this activity under the seal of neoliberal policies has caused a high socio-environmental cost for the rural communities that traditionally occupy these territories and that currently live immersed in "forests" of monoculture of exotic species destined to the export. Some of the costs widely recognized by academia, environmental institutions and the residents themselves are water scarcity, forest fires, soil degradation and loss of native forest, among others.

This presentation discusses around the question of how communities living in environments drastically intervened by forestry, develop their place identity

Process and methods (for empirical research)

We analyse some preliminary data from an ongoing investigation contextualized in the Ñuble region in central-southern Chile. This region has a high percentage of rural population (31%) and more than 20% of its land area is covered with forest plantations. The research is based on a study of multiple cases, from an ethnographic design that selected various territorial units based on their socio-environmental vulnerability, to subsequently apply a series of interviews to local residents and key informants, as well as a review of documentary sources and image analysis.

Main results (or main arguments in the case of critical reviews)

Results points to the recognition of the progressive socio-environmental deterioration in terms of vulnerability and loss of peasant culture. Likewise, a feeling of lack of protection and institutional support is appreciated.

Implications for research and practice/policy | Importance and originality of the contribution

We adopt the environmental psychology approach to understand the complex experience of inhabiting environments highly precarized by the forest industry. Results are valuable to know the territorial projection, as well as to identify personal and social resources to engage local communities in actions of sustainability and social debates regarding to territorial development.

Palavras-chave : Place identity, forest industry, rural communities, Chile