



Sveriges lantbruksuniversitet
Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

The political nature of global change

Power, authority
and recognition in the context of
climate change adaptation

Professor Andrea J. Nightingale

Climate Change Adaptation Planning



- UNFCCC guidelines and funding for LDCs
- Assessments of biophysical hazards and who is most at risk from them
- Development of institutions to govern and respond to changes

Adaptation defined by the IPCC as adjustments *to climate change*

Reframing adaptation



- Adaptation is part of the dynamics *of* societies rather a technical adjustment to biophysical change *by* society.
- Positive adaptation for one group may be maladaptation to another
- Political processes determine which view is considered more important at different scales and to different constituencies.

Power and Politics in Climate Change Adaptation

- *Politics: the processes through which individuals and collectives cooperate and compete to order and govern everyday affairs*
- *Power: (Foucauldian) probing the operation of power in adaptation*
 - *Authority*
 - *Recognition*

See: (Eriksen, Nightingale and Eakin 2015 Reframing adaptation: the political nature of climate change adaptation, Global Environmental Change)

Political 'all the way through'



- Adaptation programs land in already politicized contexts
- Bring financial resources
- Seek to realign how people are situated in relation to their resources and each other

Thinking through power and politics

Authority

Abilities to govern
resources often a measure
of or a means to assert
authority

Adaptation programs are
simply another context for
such struggles.

Lund (2008), Raeymaekers (2008), Sikor
and Lund (2009), Hansen and Stepputat
(2001), Peluso (2009)

Recognition

Access to resources a
measure of recognition by
the state

Desires for autonomy,
rights and belonging to
the state

Nightingale (2011, 2015), Fraser (2000,
2010), Butler (1997)

Adaptation at the Third Pole

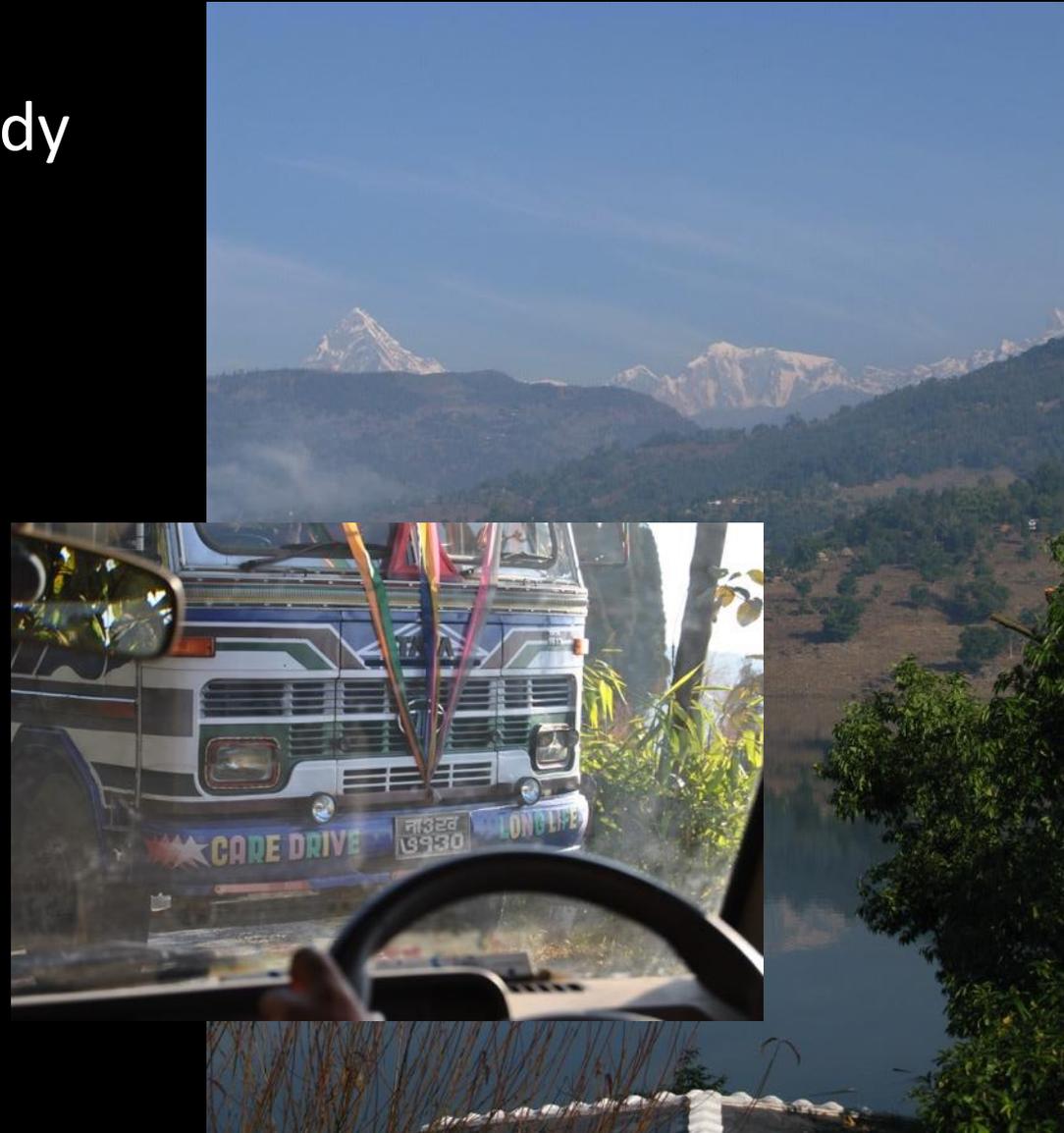


- International support for adaptation planning (NAPA, LAPA, Strategic Program for Climate Resilience, others)
- Nepal's NAPA a global model—participatory development
- LAPA--Building participatory, local institutions.
- Solid institutional design.
- (Nightingale 2015, *Challenging the Romance with Resilience* in Harcourt and Nelson (eds.) *Practising Feminist Political Ecologies*)



Following the LAPA

- Multi-scalar case study tracing from the national policy to on the ground projects
- Projects are all very new
- Challenges of doing research in dynamic contexts



Nepal as a State of Change

- Political transition, violence
- Earthquake, climate change
- Migration, rapid social change
- Governance of resources and demands for recognition are at the centre of political struggles



Scales of Governance in Nepal



- Global geopolitics
 - Development of NAPA
- National bureaucracies in transition
 - Lack of line authorities
- Districts without local elections
 - Whose in charge?

What's in a name?



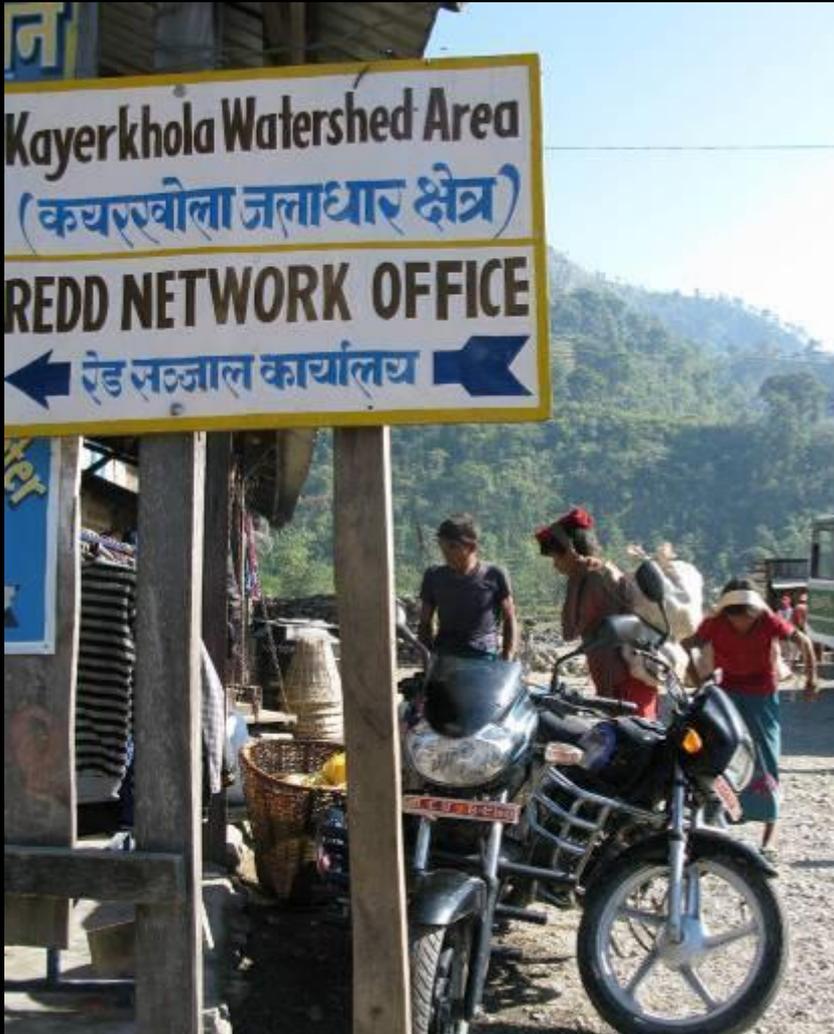
Government of Nepal
Ministry of Science, Technology & Environment
Department of Environment

- Ministries to manage climate change programs (and funds!) changing.
 - Ministry of Environment 2010-2013
- Programs within the same Ministry competing = authority
- These are the places where party politics are most fierce right now.
 - Government posts are the way to reward loyal party cadres = recognition

Districts and Line Authority

“we have so many demands here, roads, drinking water, electricity. Climate change is a cross cutting issue but there is no Ministry of Environment office here... how can local infrastructure [i.e. offices at the local level] and national level structure come together?”

Authority within local adaptation efforts



- Competition for gaining contracts
- Competition for leadership of environmental projects
- Institutional choice (Ribot)—which local institutions are engaged

Recognition within adaptation

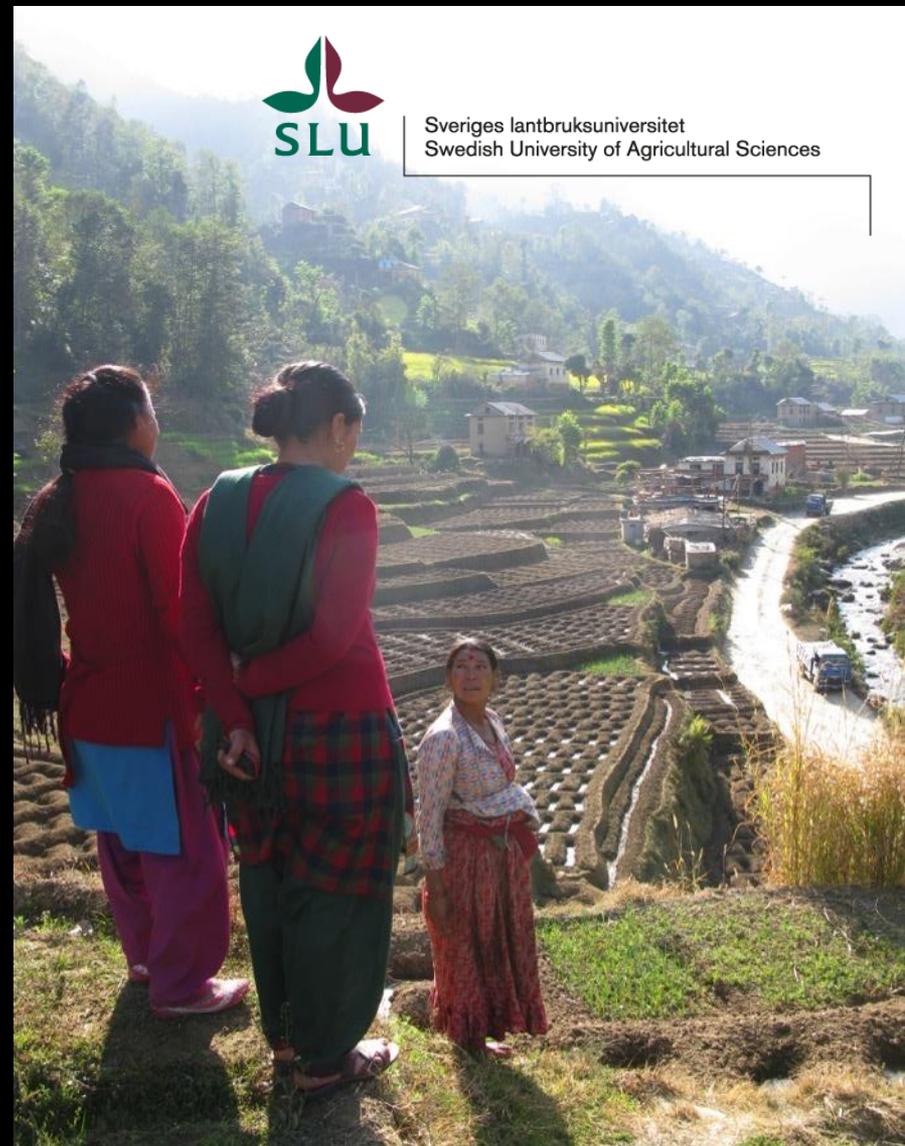
- Access to new projects a sign people are 'seen' by the state
- Desires for cultural identity-based recognition of their needs
- Questions over what 'adaptation' should look like



Conclusions

- Resource governance is a key site where new ideas about citizenship and justice are contested

Leaders and institutions that are legitimated to govern change emerge from struggles over authority and recognition



- A focus on authority and recognition brings into view how the trajectory of change unfolds in practice
- Climate change adaptation needs are shaped by power and politics at least as much as they are by biophysical change

Conclusions (cont.)

