2019-04-20

The Political Ecology of Conservation and Development in Galapagos - Sustainability between the Global and the Local

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THE POLITICAL ECOLOGY OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN GALAPAGOS – SUSTAINABILITY BETWEEN THE GLOBAL AND THE LOCAL

By

Johann Besserer

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Faculty of the University of Miami in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Coral Gables, Florida

May 2019
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

THE POLITICAL ECOLOGY OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN GALAPAGOS – SUSTAINABILITY BETWEEN THE GLOBAL AND THE LOCAL

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Globalization and the demands of human population growth in Galapagos are driving consumption of natural resources, and environmental governance is occurring in an increasingly complex social and cultural setting as global influences meet local perceptions and concepts. This dissertation uses a Political Ecology framework to conduct a multi-method analysis of the shifting and confluent multi-political-level issues that underlie conservation in Galapagos, influenced by global and local conceptualizations.

The analysis was conducted through a Globalization-critical lens that posits that structural disadvantages in the Global South result in resentments in local society against real and/or perceived neoliberal exploitation by foreign agents. This resentment creates barriers to successful implementation of even sensible conservation policies and thus must be considered for the global conservation community to be effective in their missions.

The work critiques and advances the existing literature on conservation discourses in the archipelago in Chapter 2, elucidates how political changes towards a socialist national government have affected conservation policies and international actors in Galapagos in Chapter 3, and lays out in detail how global, national, and local conceptualizations influence interactions between different interest groups in Isabela Island in Chapter 4.
The results of Chapter 2 suggest that the conservation policy discourse in Galapagos should be re-structured to increase compliance with existing rules and to encourage the creation of new regulation that will satisfy socio-economic development needs as well as effectively protect the local environment. The results of Chapter 3 strongly indicate NGOs can reach civil society through social development programs, demonstrating that NGOs can more effectively serve as mediators between the government and society by targeting their efforts towards specific local stakeholder groups. Chapter 4 exemplifies how shifting alliances between interest groups can harm the effectiveness of international efforts that promote sustainable development without adapting global concepts to local realities and sentiments in the Global South, or benefit them if they do so.

This analysis of North/South relationships in conservation exemplifies the perceptions, attitudes, and conceptualizations of different local interest groups at multiple political levels in Isabela, Galapagos, around opening a commercial airport with direct connection to mainland Ecuador. However, this study can stand proxy for similar struggles around the world as human populations grow and resources become scarcer, increasing pressures on local environments. It contributes to the understanding of how best to achieve conservation success in developing societies, with broad applicability to NGOs hoping to bridge the gap between local and global goals.
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Introduction

The Galapagos Islands are an archipelago 600 miles off the coast of Ecuador in the tropical eastern Pacific Ocean. Administratively, ecologically, and socio-economically, Galapagos is difficult terrain. It is bio-geographically unique due to its long isolation and serves as a natural laboratory for international science (e.g., Quiroga 2009), but it is ecologically under threat due to the pressures of human development and exploitation such as invasive species and over-exploitation of natural resources (e.g., Watkins and Cruz 2007). Socio-economically, Galapagos suffers from this very isolation and encounters the same problems as many islands and other isolated regions (e.g., Epler 2007). However, Galapagos should not be studied in isolation. Rather, the Islands represent a great focal point for research as they face the same conservation vs. development problems as the rest of the world, but their isolation makes these issues more readily apparent, presented as if under a magnifying glass (Baldacchino and Niles 2013). Administratively, there has been a long-standing battle between “visionaries,” with goals of long-term conservation, and “populists,” with their eyes set on short-term political gains (CDF and WWF 2002).

There are several long-standing fault lines between human development and conservation in Galapagos that are influenced on several political levels by global, national, and local influences. While global forces are influencing the three major economic actives in Galapagos: tourism, fishing, and conservation – in a variety of ways, the national government is often simply seeking rents in the archipelago,¹ and locals are struggling to

---

¹ Ecuador is attempting to rent seek in Galapagos tourism. While the literature usually discusses this phenomenon in the context of economic development, and usually in regard to Africa (e.g., Collier 2007),
thrive while maintaining economic and socio-environmental control of their Islands, both (Ospina Peralta 2006).

This dissertation has wider relevance for conservation, as “Galapagos is a microcosm of the social, political, economic and ecological changes occurring in the world (Watkins and Cruz 2007:19).” Globalization and the demands of human population growth drive consumption of natural resources, which increases pressure on global and local environments. At the same time, environmental governance is occurring in an increasingly complex social and cultural environment as global influences meet local perceptions and concepts (IBID). Furthermore, the impact of human development and urbanization from tourism is especially pronounced on small islands, due to their fragile natural environments and geographical limits (Dodds and Graci 2012). Governing global and local institutions must adapt to these realities to effectively guide society towards sustainability – and islands offer a perfect case study object (Baldacchino and Niles 2013).

As a multi-disciplinary facilitator, the US-based 501(c)(3) recognized non-profit organization Intercultural Outreach Initiative (IOI) works at the human-environmental intersection in Galapagos, promoting social development and conservation at the local level using international concepts. This formal analysis of IOI’s work in the community of Isabela, Galapagos, Ecuador, contributes to the understanding of how best to achieve

the (cont’d next page) problem with rents and rent-seeking in states and communities is also exemplified by crude oil in Ecuador, which produces lots of revenues for state and operator, but neither jobs nor economic growth for society, outside of those direct revenues. In effect, this type of governmental income causes a disconnect between the state and society: since the state gets its revenues from these rents, it doesn’t require as much in taxes from the population, which means that it is insulated from society economically and therefore does not need to answer to society for the choices it makes.
conservation success in developing societies, with broad applicability to other NGOs hoping to bridge the gap between local and global conservation and development goals.

1.1. Background

1.1.1. Globalization, Conservation, and North-South Relations

Globalization is a very expansive concept. In its broadest sense, it is a product of modernity, and to be more specific, western modernity. Modernity is, according to Escobar (2012), values, concepts, and institutions that have developed out of the European experience since the French Revolution and the Enlightenment. It is built upon concepts of individual freedom, personal property, democratic representation, and a rule of law. Globalization as such is not a new concept and has been influencing socio-economic societal organization since the early days of trade. It is defined as the increased movement of goods, services, labor, and finance across international borders (e.g., Sharma 2008).

There have been several socioeconomic paradigms over the past two centuries, iterations that have had various degrees of trade openness. Broadly speaking, 19th century Liberalism had basically no restrictions on international trade. Bordo, et al. (1999) state that the overall share of international trade was larger in the classical liberal era, pre-1914 under Pax Britannica. Keohane (2002), however, notes that earlier periods of integration were only partial, mainly because financial integration was limited, and the emerging markets were not integrated. The first half of the 20th century, with two world wars and the inter-war period, was marked by mercantilist-style economics and protectionism.
The international economic order established by the Allied forces after World War II was marked by Keynesian economics that allowed for certain trade protections while establishing the welfare state and the installment of intergovernmental (development) organizations such as the IMF and the World Bank. In the 1970s, fueled by Vietnam War expenses and the oil crisis, the US abandoned the gold standard for the US dollar and started privatizing the economy to lower federal expenses and eliminate governmental inefficiencies. These policies resulted in the early 1980s, under President Reagan and Prime Minister Thatcher, in an economic model called Neoliberalism.

Seeking highest returns by increasing efficiencies and lowering production costs, Neoliberalism accelerated Globalization and had GDP grow at unprecedented rates and created great amounts of wealth – for some. It also demanded free markets and trade with very little government intervention such as taxes or regulation. The lost tax revenues had to be made up for by cuts in government spending, typically in education, healthcare, and welfare programs. It is commonly claimed that the market is the most efficient way to allocate collective resources and provide society with a maximum return on of their collective spending, as the tide rises all boats. Globalization is just as commonly critiqued for creating substantial inequalities, between different regions within countries (e.g., see US coasts vs. “rust belt”), or, more evidently between the Global North and the Global South (Tarrow 2005).2 State intervention is needed to compensate those who lose as a result of Globalization to maintain social stability (Rodrik 1998) and avoid mass migration (Stieglitz 2006).

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2 “Global North” is used to refer to more economically developed countries in the geographic north (OECD countries), whereas “Global South” refers to developing countries primarily located in the southern hemisphere.
There are competing theories as to whether Globalization is good or bad for the welfare state. The efficiency hypothesis states that Globalization has a constraining effect on the welfare state. Cerny (1990) first raised such concerns by a concept called the race to the bottom (RTB). He furthered his concept in 1995, claiming that the compensation state was turning into a competition state (Cerny 1995). His theory of the RTB laid out how, in a free trade environment, countries would compete with one another to attract capital, creating favorable conditions for multinational corporations to invest in their countries, for example, by lowering labor and/or environmental standards, lowering taxes, and reducing government spending to keep inflation low. Susan Strange (1996) seconded this argument, claiming that the “impersonal forces of world markets are now more powerful than the states to whom ultimate political authority over society and economy is supposed to belong.” The opposing view claims that Globalization largely brings benefits to its participants. Bhagwati (2004) argues for the compensation hypothesis, which states that trade creates growth and that it generates wealth for all trading partners. Sassen (2005) claims that the discussion is outdated and that global actors are creating their own spaces outside the container of the national, arguing, thus, that Globalization is in part subverting the Westphalian system itself.3

While the concept of Globalization generally refers to economics – the production and consumption of goods and services – “[it] is becoming a form of intellectual power embodied in a knowledge system, propagated by institutionalized authority, and manifested in a neoliberal ideology” (Mittelman 2004:xi). Furthermore, it can also be

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3 Westphalian peace treaties signed in Münster in 1648 terminated the Thirty Years War and acknowledged sovereign decision-making power of states within their territories.
applied to other industries and sectors like conservation and (Eco)tourism. Globalization “changes power relationships, cultures, and the environment” (Collier and Dollar 2002:121).

Historically, there have been difficulties in successfully integrating development and conservation, with conservationists failing to persuade development practitioners of the long-term benefits of conservation in the field (Fisher, et al. 2012). However, the importance of conserving the planet’s natural environment has become increasingly prevalent in development discourse, and Globalization has an effect on the relationship between humans and the environment (Brewington, et al. 2013). Globalization affects environmental conservation in the Global South, and policies implemented on a global scale do not work as well as desired or anticipated, thereby falling short of expectations which are based on successes in the developed world. Neumann (2014) suggests that this shortfall is due to a difference in policy perspectives: policy based on western conceptualizations, implementation under local perspectives of the relationship between humans and nature in the Global South. Our understanding of nature is shaped by a series of schemes, perceptions and emotions constructed and produced in regions where the accumulation of academic, economic and political capacity allows these definitions to emerge and be exported to the rest of the world. Those who live in areas that are the focus of international attention, such as the Galapagos Islands, must accommodate the structuring effects of these accumulated constructions. Within this context, certain groups, including international NGOs, national governments, scientists and the mass media, seek to consciously or unconsciously manipulate the moral, aesthetic, motivational and cognitive structures of the local residents (Quiroga 2009:123).

In Europe, biodiversity is humanized and incorporated into narratives of culture and history. As a result, conservation policy in the developed world is aimed at maintaining traditional land use practices and taking human needs into account. In contrast,
international conservation efforts in the Global South are based on a narrative of an undiscovered primordial wilderness that naturalizes biodiversity, leading to “fortress-style” conservation areas that limit or prohibit human use, thereby making local compliance and conservation success much more difficult (Neumann 2014). Fortress conservation frequently excludes people from wilderness enclosures, weakening the relationship between humans and nature (Evernden 1993; Neumann 2008). Yet, global interest in scientific research and tourism, as well as environmental politics, often rely on physical and conceptual boundaries, reinforcing the separation between humans and the environment through (selective) exclusion. Thus, western conceptualizations of nature always have a “clear social and political function” (Smith 2008:15). This type of intrinsic value of nature in western environmentalism often alienates non-westerners (Mulder and Coppolillo 2005), but conservation and sustainable development are part of an increasingly globalized understanding of nature and our relationship with it (Quiroga 2009).

Martinez Alier (2007) has coined the term popular environmentalism, in which a place is not conserved for its inherent value but for the benefit of people – especially lower income people living in or near the resource. Distinctions drawn between environmentalism and conservationism are based on philosophical differences. Conservationism developed in the first half of the 20th century as a response to newly emerging environmental degradation. It is based on a rural, landowner’s perspective and revolved around the pragmatic approach that humans need to protect the environment to continue to receive economic benefits from it. Conservationism is explicitly human-centric, largely based on voluntary stewardship, and can be described simply as
protecting nature for humans. Environmentalism, on the other hand, emerging in 1960s and 1970s, seeks to protect nature for its inherent value. It is, thus, nature-centric, its implementation philosophy is largely based on regulation, and it can be described simply as protecting nature from humans (Worte 2012). In other words, the conservationist manages environmental resources for sustainable human consumption, whereas the environmentalist protects environmental resources, especially from humans.

In a study comparing conservation approaches between the European Union and several locations in the Global South, Neumann (2014) finds that conservation strategies in the Global South are often designed by experts from the developed world, trained in the temperate zone with a limited understanding of the complexity and dynamism of tropical ecosystems and local practices. Thus, the architects of many fortress-style conservation areas in the Global South “rely on an ideological mix of Marshian ideas of nature’s delicate balance combined with the radicalized, hierarchical concept of humankind and faith in the superiority of Western science” (Neumann 2014:34). Such ideologies, rather than scientific evidence, have often provided the moral and scientific background for conservation paradigms that are inevitably based on global knowledge, creating “a dynamic of [their] own; a vortex into which researchers and those involved in policy are drawn” (Fairhead and Leach 2003:21).

In countries where social and environmental services cannot be provided by the government, such services are often funded through NGOs, which often have their own political agendas (Lavalette and Ferguson 2007). These agendas may be perceived as undermining the sovereignty of developing countries, as they are implemented by foreign experts (Deepak 2012). NGOs often enter a region already knowing exactly what policies
they want to implement to reach a certain goal – often fortress-style conservation areas. While large scale NGOs take on such projects frequently, they do not have enough local knowledge to be effective – the so-called Samaritan’s dilemma (Gibson 2005). Elinor Ostrom, *et al.* (2012) name this the panacea trap and call for a more polycentric, participatory system to provide public services at multiple political levels in complex systems.

Globalization also affects culture through the interacting influences of international regimes and policies, trade, NGOs, and global civil society. Vallega (2007) discusses how culture has been recently approached, and what inputs may be identified with respect to small islands and small island states, especially in the humanistic arena. According to Vallega (2007), culture is a mantle of symbols, values attributed, and places of local communities. Therefore, culture must be considered an intellectual and spiritual endowment that is the essential basis for designing culturally sound conservation strategies and actions (Vallega 2007).

Cultural diversity can be both increased through migration and commercial marketing narratives, as well as decreased through displacement of local culture (Collier and Dollar 2002). While migration is often happening Northbound, commercial influences usually are directed Southward, geographically speaking; people generally migrate towards the economically more prosperous, developed countries, and Northern industry sells its products in less developed countries that lack the equivalent industries.

While the pundits of Globalization and trade might find this North-South relation inherently beneficial for all parties, not all solutions with respect to cultural and environmental concerns are beneficial to or successful in the Global South when
implemented according to Northern conceptualizations (cf. Neumann 2008). Although
well designed in the context of the developed world, Northern conceptualizations are
often not applicable in the Global South. This mismatch is an issue of supply and
demand, where the solutions supplied by the North are not in demand in the developing
world (Soman, Stein, and Wong 2014).

Globalization of conservation brings outside practices, institutions, and concepts into
local communities in the Global South (Mulder and Coppolillo 2005). This influx of
influential, novel conceptualizations creates insecurities and distrust. Yet the experience
of the Global is partial to each individual, group, or sector, and the influences vary by the
lived experience (Sassen 2008). In Galapagos, for instance, international conservationists
are concerned that local communities are merely focused on economic growth through
natural resource exploitation, and local populations fear that the outsiders will evict them
from their homes, prohibiting their traditional ways of life and ways of making a living.
Local communities in the Global South often perceive western environmentalism to be
fueled by foreign self-interest seeking recreational opportunities in a nature no longer
available in their home countries or driven by local governing elites interested in national
prestige or travel opportunities (Mulder and Coppolillo 2005).

1.1.2. The Global Archipelago

Issues confronting societies must be conceptualized to be dealt with in a structured
manner. Since their inceptions, the natural sciences have tried to analyze all details of
nature into objective truths. Certain social sciences, however, posit that nature (and all
other concepts) are a constructed reality (Neumann 2005). Accordingly, different people
with different backgrounds conceptualize and construct nature in different ways. These
societal “constructs emerge in specific economic and sociopolitical contexts and are associated with particular groups with concrete interests and histories and under particular regimes” (Proctor 1998). To reduce the inherent conflict between conservation and development that governments face, Delmas and Young (2009) propose governance without government for a sustainable world. Their concept outlines intergovernmental organizations, the private sector, and civil society as the three main actors to govern sustainable development.

Civil society is defined here as a political arena where groups of society seek to shape societal rules outside of the realm of the political parties and process (e.g., Scholte 2011). Scholte (2011) suggests that effects of Globalization need to be dealt with at a local level through a polycentric network of governance. Global civil society too often relays the voice of the North, and concepts from the South do not penetrate in the global governance arena (Scholte 2004).

Global civil society combines the efforts of international and transnational regimes (Young 1999), and while they lack sovereign authority, their relationships transcend national frontiers (Finkelstein 1995). Therefore, global civil society transcends the traditional Westphalian order, transcending sovereign borders and state arrangements. The sum of global civil society’s collective actions can be called global governance, defined by the United Nations as:

> the many ways individuals and institutions, public and private, manage their common affairs. It is a continuing process through which conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated and cooperative action taken. It includes formal institutions and regimes empowered to enforce compliance as well as informal arrangements that people and institutions either have agreed to or perceive to be in their interest (United Nations 1995).
Global civil society has been credited with offering the opportunity to redefine democracy in the context of global governance and, in that manner, address a legitimate deficit of national governments. This opportunity is linked to the fact that civil society does not require a territory and benefits from the seal of public opinion (Scholte 2002). Charles Tilly defines a social movement as “a sustained, organized public effort making collective claims on target authorities (Tilly 2006).

Global civil society’s transcending national borders affects the influence of Globalization on local societies. While Globalization has been around for centuries, in the past, it has taken place within the inter-state system (Sassen 2005). Modern Globalization, with cheap transport and instant communication, has amplified Globalization to actors and topics outside “the national as a container of social process and power” (Sassen 2008:23). Wimmer and Glick-Schiller (2002) even argue that thinking within national borders is outdated, as there are too many trans-border processes to justify such organization.

While Sassen’s (1991) concept of the Global City refers to economic zones in which national organization in a Westphalian sense is partially unbundled by global cosmopolitan conceptualizations that transect local culture and socio-economic order, the Global City concept can be applied in other areas, such as conservation, and in other spaces, including islands. The Global City is not a descriptive term that describes an actual city. Rather, it is an analytical tool that allows the detection of “the Global” as it is displayed in “the specifics of a place, its institutional orders, and its sociospatial fragmentations” (Amen, et al. 2006:x). The Global City, just like Galapagos, is a “terrain where a multiplicity of Globalization processes assume concrete localized form” (Sassen 2005:40); it is the local manifestation of Globalization itself.
As in the Global City concept, ‘the Global’ has installed itself in Galapagos and is “itself constituted through a multiplicity of locals” (Sassen 2008:20). In other words, global influences in Galapagos transcend culture and governance, particularly in conservation, influencing ‘the Local’ through international NGOs in environmental policymaking, through international corporations in the cruise ship sector, and through international buyers in the fishing industry. These interactions expose local society and their conceptualizations to the Global and “internationalize” local actors (e.g., Tarrow 2005; Ospina Peralta 2006).

According to Sassen (2008), the Global underlies the world economy through the influence of financial interest and influences all local activities and resources. Thus, it is important to decode what is local (or national) in local conceptualizations and what is brought in by the Global, to understand newly emerging territorial and institutional conditionalities in a globalizing world.

Many of the constructs and concepts that are used to understand the world have been produced in the developing world and are being used in and exported to the rest of the world. The problematization of specific issues and the way that international organizations use specific discourses to tackle issues of poverty or environmental issues in the developing world have been informed by these concepts and are only partially applicable to the local problem at hand (Escobar 2012:158).

The Galapagos, as a space highly influenced by global conceptualizations, thus must be viewed through such global, national, and local lenses to decipher what local needs are, how policies should be conceptualized to be effective, and how the process of their creation can be influenced to make them more sustainable.
1.1.3. Socialism of the 21st Century and *Buen Vivir*

In Ecuador and many other countries in Latin America, Neoliberalism has failed to deliver on its promise to bring modernity and prosperity (Escobar 2012). The neoliberal period has produced negative growth rates, as opposed to an average of 3 to 5% growth during the previous period of Import Substitution Industrialization (Grugel and Riggirozzi 2011).

Economic crashes, in Venezuela in 1998 and in Argentina and Ecuador in 2001, led the general public to distrust market liberalization and structural adjustments a la the Washington Consensus (Grugel and Riggirozzi 2011). Welfare decreased during the era of democratization, which led to the rise of populist alternatives to Neoliberalism and (unfulfilled) modernization (e.g., Rosales 2013). Accordingly, the people of newly democratized countries in Latin America elected leftist governments in the early 2000s (Campello 2011). The structural adjustments arising from the Washington Consensus had devastating effects on economies, especially in the Global South (e.g., Stiglitz 2002), and were the epitome of neoliberal oppression (Tarrow 2005). In the wake of these sentiments, Ecuador’s Rafael Correa, for instance, successfully campaigned on the promise “to end the long night of neoliberal adjustments” in 2006 (Lewis 2017).

These new governments promised an alternative, non-neoliberal/non-Globalization path to modernity. The Socialism of the 21st Century promised such a path. The project dismantled Neoliberalism by raising export taxes, nationalizing utilities, and seizing control over, and thereby gaining the rents from, hydrocarbon extraction and mining

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4 The Washington Consensus is a set of 10 rules imposed on recipient countries by Intergovernmental Organizations such as the IMF or the World Bank, which cut government spending to increase the likelihood of repayment of loans (e.g., Rodrik 2006; McCleery and De Paolis 2008).
In Galapagos specifically, this type of rent-seeking policy behavior included seeking control of (and rents from) the booming tourism sector.

The Neo-Developmentalism under President Correa specifically stated goals other than economic development in their national development plan. Such goals included cultural sovereignty, environmental protection, and dignity for all – summed up in the *Buen Vivir* concept (Escobar 2012).

*Buen Vivir* merges Western modernization with indigenous ontology. Indigenous ontology differs distinctly from the Western modernity discourse, which is based on individualism, representative democracy, and common dualisms such as modern binaries separating good and bad, or nature and people. Indigenous ontology is relational, is based on communal decision-making, and considers nature to be part of society (as opposed to the Western nature/society binary division) (IBID). Indigenous ontology doesn’t understand the concepts of beginning and end: there is no “under-development,” only a natural state, and, accordingly, there is no ontological concept of “development” or of a struggle to achieve it. Under the *Buen Vivir* concept, people should strive to live well, as opposed to living better, which implies a continuous struggle for more. Thus, it is inherently critical of growth, capitalism, and consumption (Villalba 2013). This concept is reflective of perceptions in the Global South that the capitalist welfare state is not able to mitigate the effects of poverty and thus is having a negative human and environmental impact (*e.g.*, Campello 2011; Soman, Stein, and Wong 2014).

In Ecuador, the concept of *Buen Vivir*, which embraces a plurality between Western thought and indigenous ontology, has defined Ecotourism development and the extraction of natural resources to be the primary finance mechanisms for the reestablishment of a
welfare state (Villalba 2013). Indeed, the many cash transfer programs of the socialist
government have alleviated poverty and have been very beneficial to the overall well-
being of the country. Thus, this so-called “New Brown Left,” less ‘green’ and less ‘red’
than prior socialist iterations (Kroger and Lalander 2015), had to come up with funding to
finance the “return of the (expensive) State” (IBID). At first, they renegotiated oil
contracts (PetroOriental), taking ownership of the wells and expropriating where
negotiation was not successful (Oxy), and suing oil companies for environmental
damages under the new constitution ($18 billion from Chevron). They also levied a so-
called Tobin tax, which brought in 10% of all currency exchange and financial exports
(Rosales 2013).

However, as the price for crude oil dropped from ~$140 to ~$30 a barrel in 2014, the
central government of Ecuador had to come up with new ways to finance the many social
programs of *Buen Vivir*. The government thus focused on rent-seeking in tourism in
Galapagos as the new “cash cow” for their social programs, and the environmental
considerations and relational ontology with nature of the *Buen Vivir* concept took a back
seat. It seems that, while the *Buen Vivir* ideology certainly has the intention of protecting
the environment, now, having run out of money with crude prices down over 70% from
2014, the Socialism of the 21st Century faces a dilemma: comply with social and
economic promises or protect the environment. As the whole concept is financed by
extraction, this dilemma has always been a conceptual incongruity in the neo-

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5 A problem long foreshadowed in the literature (*e.g.*, Campello 2011)
developmental *Buen Vivir*, called the Latin America Paradox, with progressive
governments supporting extractive industries (Lalander and Kroger 2015).

1.1.4. Ecotourism and Sustainable Development

The origins of Ecotourism can be traced back to the environmental movement of the
1960s and 1970s, when early concerns about the environment arose from books like
*Silent Spring*. People were gaining an understanding that natural resources might not be
endless, and many wanted to have a lower impact in their travels as well. The term was
first coined by Hector Ceballos-Lascursian in 1981 (then director of PRONATURA) to
promote conservation in Chiapas, Mexico (Mulder and Coppolillo 2005). Ecotourism is a
subfield of sustainable tourism (Sharpley 2009) and a form of alternative tourism, namely
natural area tourism (Newsome *et al.* 2013). While natural area tourism is a concept
directed at the user, divided into several layers of involvement of the traveler with the
visited environment, the encouragement of sustainable tourism typically has been
directed toward travel suppliers and destinations.6

While there is no universally agreed upon definition of Ecotourism (Buckley 2015), most
fall generally along the same lines. Martha Honey, one of the leading authors on
Ecotourism, was one of the first to outline Ecotourism as “travel to fragile, pristine, and
usually protected areas that strives to be low impact and (usually) small scale. It helps
educate the traveler, provides funds for conservation, directly benefits the economic
development and political empowerment of local communities and fosters respect for
different cultures and for human rights” (Honey 1999:25), which is still a commonly used

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6 Newsome (2013) defines Adventure Tourism involving the traveler “in” the environment, Wildlife
Tourism as involving the traveler “with” the environment, and Ecotourism as a travel experience “for” the
environment.
extensive definition. The Ecotourism Society uses a simpler version: “responsible travel to natural areas which conserves the environment and improves the welfare of the local people” (Hoyman and McCall 2012:3). The International Ecotourism Society claims that the industry protects the environment and benefits conservation, helps to empower local communities, and educates tourists (Self, et al. 2010).

Ecotourism, thus, embodies the principles of sustainable socioeconomic development (e.g., Sharpley 2009b). The World Commission on Environment and Development defined sustainable development as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (WCED 1987:16). This so-called ‘Brundtland Report,’ or ‘Our Common Future,’ is cited as a significant turning point in highlighting that development and environmental issues cannot be separated. This report brought the notion of sustainable development into the global discourse and laid the groundwork for the ‘Earth Summit’ in Rio de Janeiro 1992, leading to the Agenda 21,7 the 1994 Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, the 2000 United Nations Millennium Declaration, and the subsequent 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development Plan of Implementation. Towards the end of the Millennium Goals timeframe (2000-2015), the UN advanced the agenda and produced the report “Greening a Blue Economy” (UNEP 2012) at the Rio +20 conference, ultimately leading to the sustainable development goals of 2015 (e.g., Vallega 2007; Arsel and Buscher 2012).

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7 Particularly relevant in the context of this dissertation is Chapter 17, Subject Area G, which was specifically dedicated to the “Sustainable Development of Small Islands.”
Indeed, Schubert and Lang (2005) concluded that in the period following the Brundtland Report, until 2001, ‘sustainability’ was the dominant term in the field, thus showing how this idea became increasingly synonymous with development. The concept of sustainable development suggests economic growth as a means of eradicating poverty, which in turn would contain environmental disaster (Sachs 2010). Similarly, Adams (2009) acknowledges that the Brundtland Report succeeded in engaging policy-makers to find more sustainable ways of development. At the resulting ‘Earth Summit’ in Rio de Janeiro, the concept of sustainability expanded development to mean more than economic development and included social and environmental dimensions. The concept became known as “the triple bottom line” (Delmas and Young 2009), leaning on the business term for what really matters to business, the bottom line, or profits. The main implication of the sustainability discourses of the last 25 years was the need for businesses to adhere to this triple bottom line, positing that businesses should build social and environmental sustainability into their practices. While these factors are difficult to combine in a world of neoliberal Globalization, societal perception might be changing in the millennial generation, making such adherence an essential requirement for the consumer (Arsel and Busher 2012).

While the triple bottom line provides a good baseline to assess Ecotourism, the net impacts of Ecotourism on the environment remain a matter of debate (e.g., Packer and

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8 It must be noted that, while very important, especially in the Global South, eradicating poverty alone cannot eliminate ‘environmental disaster.’ Rather, it limits one of the many risk factors of environmental degradation: overexploitation of natural resources for survival and basic needs. In fact, economic development that is not sustainable (e.g., industrialization) increases environmental pressures arguably greater than those alleviated. The concept of the Kuznets curve posits such impacts as a natural process of development that reaches a tipping point, after which wealth in a society produces more sustainability (e.g., Yandle, et al. 2002).
Ballantyne 2015). Similar to Rodrik’s (1998) arguments on Globalization, Stonich (1998) argues that the aggregate benefits of Ecotourism outweigh its negative impacts. However, these benefits usually accrue with those actively involved in the business, while the costs are borne by those who are not well positioned to provide similar services, creating new or widening existing social gaps (Stonich 1998).

Twenty years after the Earth Summit, the environment is mostly still taking a backseat in discussions about development.

In spite of the high-powered gatherings, agreements and commitments, little progress has been achieved in improving the environment and in pursuing sustainable development. Global environmental trends continue to be negative and the promise of significant financial resources to address the challenges of environment and development has not materialized (El-Ashry 2007).

For the Rio+20 conference, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) developed the concept of ‘green growth’ as a means of “fostering economic growth and development, while ensuring that natural assets continue to provide the resources and environmental services on which our well-being relies” (OECD 2011). Additionally, a 2011 report by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) advocates for a ‘green economy,’ defined as “improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities” (UNEP 2012). This approach therefore highlights the need to place a higher value on nature to prevent its exploitation, and green growth is described as a key theme emerging from the 2012 Rio+20 conference (e.g., Bartelmus 2013; Nhamo 2014).

There are several ways to organize Ecotourism, though the lack of clearly defined parameters creates confusion at the local implementation level (Cobbinah 2015). Protecting the local culture and producing local social benefits, such as education and
health care, is paramount for guiding principles of sustainable Ecotourism. Ecotourism should additionally generate the necessary funding for such protections (Self, et al. 2010). Bhutan, for instance, has adopted a strategy of “controlled liberalization” to semi-privatize a former government monopoly (Rinzing et al. 2007). Costa Rica has a more liberal approach, incentivizing operators to adapt more small-scale and eco-friendly practices to steer them away from mass tourism (Erikson and Lidstrom 2013).

Ecotourism arose out of a desire to comply with the ethics of global civic society but is now being commodified by Globalization’s consumerism (White, et al. 2015). Whereas its intentions are defined by the literature as being highly beneficial to sustainable development (Kleszczynski 2016; Rinzing et al. 2007), Ecotourism is often criticized for not delivering on its promises (Coria and Calfucura 2011) or for being outright abused for ulterior motives (Das and Chateree 2015). Such motives generally revolve around the raison d’être of economic Globalization – making money.

Most authors consider Ecotourism beneficial, especially when measured against the usual alternatives of mass tourism or natural resource extraction. Sharpley (2009), Matthews (2012), and Kiper (2013) are all generally in favor of the concept, stating that, under certain conditions, the concept is beneficial overall. While it is based in nature and generates tourist satisfaction, it adheres to principles of ecological sustainability, environmental education, and local benefit (Newsome et al. 2013). Thus, Ecotourism is often also used as a sustainable development tool by developing nations (e.g., Curvelo Vidal and Miller 2012; Zacarias and Loyola 2017). While mass tourism is built around the concept of visiting another place and consuming its offerings, the conscious traveler wants to have a positive impact on the location visited. All forms of Ecotourism have in
common the desire to avoid problems stemming from mass tourism, where the local population often does not benefit and most of the profits “leak” from location to an international investor. Furthermore, Curvelo Vidal and Miller (2012) and Kleszczynski (2016) use concepts of Ecotourism to achieve community development without negative consequences for the local environment.

However, there are also critical voices arguing that Ecotourism does not deliver on its promises (Coria and Calfucura 2011) and that it is merely a buzzword invented by the travel industry to increase sales (Das and Chatterjee 2015). Most commonly in these critiques, operators are accused of “greenwashing” or “eco-selling” (Self, et al. 2010). Greenwashing is the process of selling an activity as sustainable while the operation does not actually comply with the respective requirements (Self, et al. 2010). To comply with the ethics of global civil society, Ecotourism operators need guidance and frameworks. In Costa Rica for instance, Ecotourism operators are government rated on a five-leaf scale to combat greenwashing (Kleszczynksi 2016). However, governments often have economic development responsibilities and lack vision or capacity to develop such labels to reign in abusive industry behaviors. Eco-selling is the administrative equivalent of greenwashing, labeling any kind of activity as “eco” so that it will sell better.

Eriksson and Lidstrom (2013) go yet a step further in their criticism of Ecotourism, claiming that there is an inherent conflict between sustainability and tourism – between conservation and development – which are, qua definition, antagonistically related. Berkes (2004) suggests, however, that in community-based conservation, conservation

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9 Leakages herein refer to an export or withdrawal of economic profits from the operational location of the business to their headquarters, often outside the community or the country.
and development can simultaneously be achieved. Thus, well-implemented community-based Ecotourism that benefits the local community and actively promotes conservation could achieve both human development as well as environmental sustainability.

Matthews (2012) calls out the commodification of culture as one of the greatest perils of Ecotourism, and Cairns (2011:34) criticizes the commodification of social relations and the environment through environmental Neoliberalism in Galapagos. Arsel and Buscher (2012), on the other hand, make a very convincing case in “Nature Inc.” that there is NOT an inherent conflict between growth and sustainability. They argue that a neoliberal approach to sustainability is needed to get the power of business into environmental protection. Their market-based approach, similar to carbon trading or payment for ecosystem services, is self-regulating. Fear of ecological collapse would intensify the commodification of nature and thus, rarer commodities would achieve a higher price and, thereby be consumed less.

Tourism accounts for roughly 8% of global GDP, and it has often been adopted by non-industrialized developing countries as a primary tool for economic development (e.g., Berno and Bricker 2001). Ecotourism is the fastest growing sector of the tourism industry with estimates ranging around $30 billion annually (Honey 1999) and growth rates of 30-40% (Zacarias and Loyola 2017). The growth of the industry is attributed to its stated goals and marketed image.

Growth does not necessarily mean overall bad for the environment, however. In fact, the World Commission on the Environment and Development’s report (1987), as well as the Rio +20 conference report, Greening our Blue Economy (UNEP 2012), explicitly state economic growth to be part of sustainable development. Economic development
produces the income that is required for prosperity, and prosperity is a basic requirement for social stability. And by extension, social stability is a basic requirement for environmental sustainability.

Ecotourism minimizes its environmental impacts while “giving back” by creating environmental awareness, providing financial benefits to conservation and the local economy, as well as empowerment for local cultures (e.g., Honey 1999; Weaver 1999, 2001, 2003). The specific concept of Ecotourism was presented to consumers in the form of actual tourism products (Stokes, Cook, and Drew 2003). The concept builds upon sustainability yet offers the travel industry a consumer-driven approach to tourism product management. It encompasses all aspects of travel – not “just” the environment – and thereby promotes the perception of giving back, fostering economic development and diversification.

This approach might be especially applicable for a future in which the millennial generation is growing into the economy. The millennial generation is used to having everything available at the click of a button (Lyons, et al. 2011). Such fast and easy consumerism is hard to change ideologically. However, this generation is also used to demanding sustainability of the suppliers of their consumption. “Giving back” has become a key term in the Ecotourism industry. It plays off of a millennial desire to conserve by consumption (IBID). Thereby, this generation’s focus on “the self” can be turned into a positive attribute and overshadow their lackluster involvement in “contributing.” Combining personal pleasure and travel with the ethics of responsible citizenship, thereby promoting a triple bottom line in the tourism industry, might just add to the “futurability” of our planet after all (Baldacchino and Niles 2013).
Aside from producing local economic benefits, conscious travelers want to “give back” in their travels and protect local culture. Zacarias and Loyola (2017) detail how Ecotourism can be empowering for local society. “Giving back” as such can happen via an Ecotourism that protects nature and gives back to local community (see, e.g., Matthews’s (2012) seven dimensions or Samia, et al.’s (2017) 24 best practices) or through another type of sustainable tourism called volunteer tourism. Kiper (2013) defines volunteer tourism as a type of Ecotourism that makes the volunteer feel connected and useful during their travels, usually in an environmental protection area or a remote community.

Ecotourism is based on the premise that the visitor is willing to pay to see or experience a certain eco-service. Thus, the ecosystem service has a value, even though, unlike conventional economic valuation, the user often does not have enough information about environmental trade-offs to be able to adequately judge the value of the services they consume. The underlying problem of our planet is that using a natural resource is free as long as one has access or property rights. The production of negative externalities usually is not traced back to the emitter. The concept of ecosystem services explains that, for example, if the price of using clean air to emit a pollutant were not zero, the responsible industry would be much more inclined to address the issue, as the additional cost would attack their bottom line. Galapagos has a unique set of ecosystem services due to its high biodiversity conservation value, but is only of moderate importance for more production-oriented ecosystem services, which are additionally limited by local conservation policy (Costanza 2016).
1.2. Conceptual Framework and Motivations

This dissertation is written from an interpretivist standpoint and takes a descriptive inference approach, from qualitative data, in a political ecology framework. Qualitative methods are suitable for teasing out the intricate details about thoughts and emotions that are difficult to assess from more quantitative approaches (Strauss and Corbin 2008). Descriptive inference is a valid approach to understanding an unobserved phenomenon on the basis of observation (King, et al. 1994). As King, et al. state, “sometimes the state of the knowledge is such that much fact finding and description is needed before we can take on the challenge of explanation” (IBID).

After qualitative and quantitative analysis of the state of conservation policy discussions in Galapagos in Chapter 2, Chapter 3 evaluates the influence of NGOs in conservation policy in the context of shifting national politics from a historically wildly fluctuating array of right-wing, ex-military, business oligarchy led governments (D’Orso 2014) to a socialist Buen Vivir regime. Ultimately, this dissertation will situate the work of IOI over the past 10 years in the Galapagos in this socio-ecopolitical context. Chapter 4 assesses IOI’s community interactions through a Political Ecology approach\(^{10}\) using ethnographic analysis, giving a historical context to multiple political levels of interest group interaction under the pressures of global, national, and local conceptualizations.

The research is conducted as a single case study, which is a case as “an instance of a class of events” (George and Bennett 2005:17). Case studies increase the likelihood of creating reliable contributions to science (Geddes 2003). Furthermore, case studies are an

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\(^{10}\) Political Ecology is the analytical framework used for this dissertation, see section 1.2.2.
effective tool for deriving new hypotheses. They analyze an aspect of history to develop or test explanations that may be generalizable to other situations by extrapolation (George and Bennett 2005). Case studies are often used in Political Ecology to evaluate local-level human-environment interactions linked to global processes like tourism, development, and conservation (e.g., Zimmerer 1998; Slater 2003; Sawyer 2005).

Single-N studies can be case-specific tests for existing theories or can generate new theory. In general, small-N studies are suited to generate hypothesis, not to test them, and are a good hybrid for in-depth analysis and greater scope of contextualization. While single-N case studies are descriptive, thick, have an intense focus, and are comparative in context, they require cautious interpretation, as they are prone to false uniqueness and false universalism (Halperin and Heath 2012) and can be susceptible to selection bias (e.g., King, et al. 1994; Geddes 2003).

1.2.1. Data Collection

Collecting reliable data is the most important part of any delicately political subject. King, et al. (1994) elaborate that data quality can vary depending on the purpose for which it was collected, cautioning that this variability can lead to bias and skewed results. They recommend that data can be significantly improved by 1) recording and reporting the collection process, 2) collecting on as many implications as possible, 3) maximizing their validity, 4) ensuring reliable collection methods, and 5) ensuring replicability (King, et al. 1994).

The data for this study were collected through 52 qualitative, in-depth, open-ended interviews with members of different sectors of local society in Isabela, Galapagos,
Ecuador.11 Each interview was scheduled to last 90 minutes and followed the interviewee’s story in order not to lead any questions or conclusions. Each interview was performed by the same interviewer, eliminating inter-observer variability (O’Reilly 2005). Creating a personal rapport is important to create the necessary trust between interviewer and interviewee to obtain honest answers. So, each interview was held in person and in situ. Holding the interview in the personal sphere of the participant minimizes intrusion of the interviewer into the routine of the interviewee, thereby minimizing data bias (IBID). This interview format can reveal underlying alliances and enmities in a community. A more structured but closed, inquiry-based format might block or otherwise bias personal, potentially sensitive details through “othering and mothering” or the idealization of concepts (Meltzoff 2017).12

This interview format directly collects qualitative data, and so can be less concerned with representativeness through volume and interview standardization than quantitative interview set ups, which can easily be skewed by the aforementioned factors (O’Reilly 2005). Despite generating data that are often not statistically significant for generalization (with an average sample size of 35-40), in-depth interviewing and participant observation are two of the purest empirical methods used in qualitative research, and the strength of

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11 The interviews were held in compliance with the University of Miami’s Human Subject Research regulations, exempt from Institutional Review Board inspection under the category of research that only includes interview and observation interactions and in which the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained (UM 2018). To that extent, digital records were anonymized, and a random participant number was assigned to each interviewee. The original field notes that have the participants name and information related to the schedule of the interviews, are kept in a locked location when not in use.

12 “Othering and mothering” are processes that help to explain how interest groups nurture hostilities and rivalries by building “Us vs. Them” narratives and by defending negative actions beyond reason, respectively.
such qualitative work lies in understanding the “how and why,” not understanding the “how many” (Small unpub.).

To statistically test some of the qualitative data collected, data were quantified post-hoc. Such mixed method combination is often employed to confirm qualitative results, or to reduce a certain method’s weaknesses with the other employed (“complementarity” and “confirmation”) (Small 2011). This type of cross-over analysis “quantitizes” qualitative data (e.g., Maxwell 2010; Onwuegbuzie, et al. 2011). Data quantification was done by the same logic to generate a suite of nominal and continuous variables. The nominal variables were assigned by self-identification of the respondent or by assignment by the interviewer according to indirect statements made by the respondent in the interview. Each continuous variable was assessed on a Likert-type rating scale, in which a value of 1 to 5 was assigned based on the respondents’ answers. Rather than the typical range of strongly disagree to strongly agree, the ratings were assigned as: 1) actively/directly stated negative feelings regarding the corresponding independent variable (IV); 2) stated generally negative feelings regarding the corresponding IV; 3) no mention of or mentioning the IV indifferently; 4) stated generally positive feelings regarding the corresponding IV; 5) actively/directly stated positive feelings regarding the corresponding IV.

1.2.2. Political Ecology and Ethnography

Political Ecology arose out of the 1960s liberal political movement, and its foundations are a reaction against industrialization and modernity. It presumes that the core of all ecological problems is underlain by social and political conflict, and therefore demands analysis of the “complex social, economic, and political relations in which environmental
change is embedded” (Neumann 2005:5). In other words, it is a field “associated with assessing the political linkages between society and environmental change” (Forsyth 2009:Preface). Thus, the interactions of local interest groups that make up the socio-political fabric of a given place must be understood to make impactful conservation interventions.

Political Ecology, in part, arose as a critique by geographers and anthropologists to the empirical and ideological research in their field, at its core criticizing the neo-classical economic assumption of the individual rational actor (Neumann 2005). It incorporates techniques from various other disciplines, such as anthropology, environmental history, ethnography, and ecology, while maintaining a distinct geographic focus. Being an interdisciplinary approach, Political Ecology studies ecology with a distinct anthropocentric orientation, with considerations of the surrounding and interrelated ecosystem (Maguigad, et al. 2015). Thus, Political Ecology is often used to examine the dynamics of unequal economic and political power distribution, unequal access to resources, and vulnerable populations and their relationship with nature (e.g., Bryant 1998; Nygren and Rikoon 2008).

Political Ecology is often rather broadly referred to as the “politics of environmental change,” or the “political dimension of human environmental interactions” (e.g., Boderhoff Mulder and Copolillo 2005), and Blaikie and Brookfield (1987) defined it as an interdisciplinary field that combines “the concerns of ecology and a broadly defined Political Economy. Together this encompasses the constantly shifting dialectic between society and land-based resources, and also within classes and groups within society itself.” (Blaikie and Brookfield 1987:17). Political Ecology and its variations provide a
particularly useful framework to analyze interactions in small communities in the field of Ecotourism and its relation to nature (Maguigad, et al. 2015).

A political ecology approach can reflect the shifting and confluent multi-political level issues that must be identified to fully understand the underlying motivations in a community. While this dissertation uses statistical analysis of quantified qualitative data (Chapters 2 and 3), these results are used to test and support the results of the Ethnographic analysis (Chapter 4), rather than to create their own arguments as a positivist approach would. Neumann (2005) states that positivist approaches focused on individual rational actors with technocratic solutions are overly simplistic and often focus on proximate outcomes, and hence their explanatory powers are limited. Explicitly, he states that causal proof through chains of explanation “can never be made compatible with the epistemology of logical positivism” (Neumann 2005:44). He suggests that analysis of environmental change needs to be moved beyond the proximate causation of human impact which requires a number of methodological adjustments (Neumann 2005):

1) Historical analysis is an important tool to understand the origin and magnitude of environmental change and to explain how current social and political relations and conditions developed.

2) Analysis should be on multiple levels to link specific conditions to regional or global patterns.

3) Ethnographic approaches must be implemented to address questions of rationality and to assess causes of conflict attached to the environment through differing interpretations.
Analyses using Political Ecology approaches see the interactions of interest groups “in concert with their environments at different spatial scales (from international to regional to local, etc.) as well as the power relations of government and the various classes and stakeholders within society” (Maguigad, et al. 2015:140). Historical analysis, one of the main methodologies in Political Ecology, has often been concerned with colonialism and its influence in shaping the relations between the state, the market, and society on global and local levels (Neumann 2005), as in part used in Chapters 3 and 4.

Political Ecology can open a dialogue in science between often entrenched social-science- and economics-oriented critics of conservation and its natural-science-trained advocates (Adams and Hutton 2007), a discourse gap analogous to the cleavages in Galapagos between socio-economic aspects of human development and the need for environmental conservation (see Chapter 2). Thus, it offers a suitable framework for this dissertation.

Ultimately, there is no single appropriate methodology for Political Ecology. Neumann (2005) names multiscaler analysis as a hallmark of the field but acknowledges that the most important methodologies used in the field include discourse analysis (Chapter 2),

political-economic and historical analysis (Chapter 3), and ethnography (Chapter 4).

Ethnography “provides a critical medium for exploring the dynamics of cultural politics which animate environmental conflicts” (Moore 1996:126). Ethnographic analysis is not limited to studies of the exotic “other” but is also focused on institutions and organizations: governmental, non-governmental, and multilateral. Ethnography,

13 Chapter 2 analyses and critiques the literature on discourse analysis, rather than doing discourse analysis as such
therefore, is a crucial tool for pointing out conflicting perspectives between local,
regional, and global actors on a given environmental issue (Neumann 2005).

Ethnography is a set of methods in which the researcher participates openly or covertly in
the daily lives of the subjects for extended periods of time to understand and describe the
culture, beliefs, experiences, and social rules of the subjects from within (Bell and
Aggleton 2012). To do so, researchers need to “get close” to the experiences of other
people which requires “physical and social proximity to the daily rounds of people’s lives
and activities (Emerson, et al. 2014:1).

O’Reilly (2005) defines ethnography as

a practice that evolves in design as the study progresses; involves direct and
sustained contact with human beings, in the context of their daily lives, over a
prolonged period of time; draws on a family of methods, usually including
Participant Observation and conversation; respects the complexity of the social
world; and tells rich, sensible, and credible stories.

Ethnography can be used by interpretivist (as in this work) or positivist research. To the
interpretivist, Ethnography serves as “the art and science of describing a group or culture,
the aim being the explication of meaning. For the positivist it is a tool to get the causal
story right” (De Volo and Schatz 2004:267).

Ethnography is often criticized for being “just stories,” for suffering from normative and
sampling bias,14 and for not conforming with traditional “scientific research designs” (De
Volo and Schatz 2004). Yet, ethnographic fieldwork is importantly assessing the roots of
conflict arising from different meanings ascribed to the environment and its usefulness to
human society (Neumann 2005).

14 Normative refers to content bias such as “going-native,” whereas sampling bias often criticizes, for
example, small sampling sizes or non-random selection of subjects.
The ethnographic research design of Chapter 4 is based on the set of 52 in-depth, open-ended interviews with different community, non-profit, and government agency members, analyzed to identify different interest groups around an apparent dichotomy between conservation and human progress and to map their perspectives as influenced by global and local conceptualizations around opening a commercial airport in Isabela Island.

1.2.3. Addressing Bias

Ethnographers begin their research with biases and preconceived notions, as do researchers in every field. This in itself does not imply lack of academic rigor. On the contrary, while uncontrolled bias can undermine the quality of the ethnographic research, controlled bias can focus and limit the research effort. To mitigate the negative effects of bias, one must make it explicitly known and contextualized (Fetterman 2010). To that extent, Conelly and Clandinin (1991) contend that it is the responsibility of the researcher to reveal his/her subjectivity, in other words, the beliefs, judgements, and perceptions that guide how meaning-making occurs.

Underlying my motivations for this dissertation are eight years of field work in the Galapagos Islands, actively engaging in Participant Observation (PO). Naturally, my own life-work history has shaped my assumptions. Given my exposed position in Galapagos, heading IOI as the Executive Director on site in Isabela from 2006 to 2012, avoiding a certain amount of bias was impossible. Therefore, addressing my subjectivity, both from researcher and subject perspective, was essential. All interviews were held in situ, and no clothing associating me with IOI was worn. On the contrary, to emphasize the research aspect of the interviews, a point was made to wear University-branded clothing,
explaining that I no longer worked for IOI Isabela. Considering the management hand-over to a local woman, SaraLuz Ruiz Escobar in 2011, this explanation is believed to be credible; she is the longest sitting organizational leadership on the Island, often involved in public outreach and news, and public perception of IOI administration is thus transferred to her. Accordingly, I could credibly project being a visiting scholar from the University of Miami.

Other inherent biases that may influence the data are less easily addressed. There is presumably a certain amount of (de)colonial bias in the local Galapagos participants with the researcher being a white westerner, along the lines of the above-discussed North-South relationships and the resulting (overt or subconscious) grievances. Similarly, as a male researcher, there is bound to be some inherent gender bias doing interviews with women in a rural Ecuadorian community.\(^\text{15}\) The immersed researcher has the responsibility to continuously address his own subjectivity and critically reflect on the consequences of the dialectic relationship between the researcher and the subject (Kitonga 2013). In doing so, I conclude that while some inherent bias is (generally) inevitable, my extensive time in Isabela (6 years) helps bridge the colonial bias, because I am locally known and trusted; further, the female empowerment work that IOI is engaging in is addressing some of the gender bias: I designed these projects and have publicly challenged the community of Isabela to confront its “machismo.”

I am researching in a community that has known me as an activist of sorts. Reitan (2012) describes activist scholarship methodology as inherently co-constitutive and dialectical

\(^\text{15}\) 52% of the participants were female.
with the subject studied. While I do not consider myself as an activist on behalf of either IOI nor for global or local conceptualizations, I am inherently bound to the normative commitments that have led to the founding of IOI, and thus to IOI’s influence in Isabela. Thus, as suggested by Reitan (2012), I consider this research not as linear but as a reflexive, co-constituted, dialectical process. She defines this type of “participatory research (PR)” legitimate via its emergence from engagement of scholars in various struggles in the Third World – which I certainly have done in conservation in Galapagos. Further, PR has roots in neo-marxist theories of development and dependency, feminism, and liberal human rights movements, all of which I identify with as the basis of my intellectual and philosophical foundations.

I am aware of the limitations that the dialectical relationship of PR between subject and researcher brings with respect to the unbiased analysis of IOI’s interactions and the accounts of third-party interactions in the community. Addressing my own subjectivity helps to show how discourses must overcome barriers in the human psyche, influenced by world views and identity narratives. Scholars have a duty to analyze their own positions and how “all assumptions embody ethical ideas and judgments” (Lynch 2008:712).

Rather than creating a data-skewing bias, the role of the Participant Researcher is closer to that of a sympathetic insider with genuine respect for the ideas and aspirations of

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16 Ollman (2003) states, “Dialectics restructures our thinking about reality by replacing the common-sense notion of ‘thing’ (as something that has a history and has external connections with other things) with notions of ‘process’ (which contains its history and possible futures) and ‘relation’ (which contains as part of what it is its ties with other relations)” (Ollman 2003:13). A dialectical process assumes a “double movement” between subject and object, mutually affecting one another; in this dissertation: how the Global and the Local are mutually co-constituted. Concretely, studying an interest groups’ stance towards a global conceptualization implies an understanding of how they were impacted locally by the global forces that created the conceptualization.
participants. The entire process is therefore one of joint creation and of shared ownership between the subjects and the scholar, which Reitan (2012) calls accompaniment. This means PR is a necessary tool for ethnographic research that enables a collaboration based on trust, common understanding and analysis of the problem, and a commitment to solidarity and equality. The role of the researcher from this perspective is to articulate a “common sense” that will be widely seen as authentic and relevant by the participants, and to produce results that will be judged on their authenticity in light of the participants’ lived experience (Reitan 2012:33).

In other words, in my case and in relation to this dissertation, the PR approach enabled me to produce results that in theory will be respected by civic society in Galapagos and, thus, will be policy relevant.

Furthermore, in line with the relational indigenous ontology of the Buen Vivir concept of Ecuador’s constitution and development plans, Hodson (2013) states that objectivity in life “is a metaphor created by those unable or unwilling to take responsibility for the human condition.” Thus, the record of the human experience (“data” that is “processed” by the researchers through a “coding” and “analysis” exercise”) serves only to reinforce the myth of objectivity that has the promise of removing us from the human condition (Hodson 2013:357). The problem with such “false” objectivity is that it creates a “relational dead zone” between the researcher and the community that is being researched and thus skews the results (IBID).

Thus, while not claiming objectivity, this work is relevant to the pertinent conversations around conservation and development in Galapagos, credibly narrowing in on influences of the Global and the Local in the policy sphere in the archipelago. The in depth, in situ interview format used to collect the data was subjectively well received by the participants. The 52 interviewees, on both sides of the conservation vs. development
divide and irrelevant of their affiliation to IOI, were eager to be heard, and many stated appreciation for the unpresumptuous research design, which was possible only through extensive local knowledge and planning through a “glocal” lens. According to unprompted comments, the approach was unlike what the interviewees had come to expect from previous experiences with foreign researchers, NGOs, and policymaking, leaving the results highly anticipated locally.

1.2.4. International Relations, the Environment, and Levels of Analysis
Since Political Ecology assumes that all ecological problems are underlain by social and political processes, and a plethora of global forces and conceptualizations influence conservation in Galapagos, this dissertation borrows some of its framework of analysis from Political Science and specifically from International Relations (IR). Global environmental issues are an important part of IR. Neumann (2005) posits that global conservation is driven by the political interactions of the state, international organizations, and civil society. Furthermore, environment and development are topics established by the United Nations as central to the agenda of international relations for the 21st century. This agenda reflects the longstanding “north–south” issues of decolonization and uneven development (Dyer 2001).

Walt (1998) makes a compelling case that policymakers and practitioners should heed theories of international affairs since they need theories to make sense of the enormous amounts of information confronting them in their decision making on a daily basis. However, IR theory is weak in explaining changes of such nature and, thus, policymakers use simplistic panaceas in lieu of good theories of change (Snyder 2008).
In line with Political Ecology’s assumption that all environmental problems are socio-political at their core (Neumann 2005), the academic field of IR has a branch dedicated to the environment: that is, how well national governments or global actors cooperate to address transnational or global environmental issues (e.g., O’Neill 2017). The most emblematic arena of the international community coming together over environmental issues might be the fight against global climate change through documents such as the Kyoto Protocol and, more recently, the Paris Agreement (e.g., Atkins and Sosa-Nunez 2017). Individual activists, NGOs, and states must work together in cooperation with international organizations such as the United Nations to derive strategies related to environmental issues at global, national, and local levels to achieve sustainable environmental governance (Dupuis 2017).

IR theory has long distinguished among three broad levels of analysis, each a general theoretical orientation corresponding to one of Waltz’s (1959) well-known “images” of IR from his Man, the State, and War. Borrowing from Waltz (1959), this dissertation uses three levels of analysis: 1) within individuals; 2) within the structure of individual states; and 3) within the structure of the interstate system. Whereas Waltz’s seminal IR work of the “3 images” referred to the causes of war,17 the concept is adapted in this dissertation to accommodate conceptualizations of environmental protection, human development, and conservation policy. Waltz’s images categorize conceptualizations within individuals, within the structure of individual states, or within the structure of the interstate system – herein the basis for local (Chapter 4), national (Chapter 3), and global

17 1st image = Individuals, such as dictators, are the cause of war; 2nd image = the domestic system is the cause of war, with domestic needs and elites influencing foreign policy; 3rd image = the international system causes war, as the system has no regulating body, the resulting anarchy causes war.
conceptualizations (Chapter 2) in the battle between conservation and human development in Galapagos.

The Chapters of this dissertation conceptually narrow from the Global to the Local. Thus, Chapter 2 uses Waltz’s 3rd image and the international influences of an anarchic global system that act only in self-interest and aim to benefit exclusively their own interests (Cohen 2008) – e.g., a cruise industry supporting science and conservation to boost sales of a pristine Ecotourism product, creating the Galapagos Paradox. The second image focuses on the policies of states, or, more precisely, on the interactions of domestic actors, inside or outside government, as well as on the institutional settings through which socio-economic interests are mediated and converted into policy. Gourevitch (2008) reversed Waltz’s second image, arguing that domestic institutions not only affect foreign policy, but that foreign policy also influences domestic institutions (e.g., Sjur Kasa 2013). Thus, for the purpose of this dissertation, the second image reversed is used to assess how Globalization influences on Buen Vivir policies determine conservation policy in Galapagos (Chapter 3). Last, the first image analyzes individuals and human nature and focuses on the base of ideas and knowledge that legitimize policymaking, implementation, and compliance – the amalgamation of which shapes the shared conceptualizations of local interest groups that lobby around conservation and development in Isabela, as ethnographically explored in Chapter 4. The first image sharply contrasts with the rational-actor assumptions that are the base of the many policy-making actors at the national and global level (the 2nd and 3rd images in the Waltz analogy).
The IR foundations of this dissertation are based on neo-marxist dependency theory assumptions (see e.g., Tarrow 2005), which submit that the capitalist powers of the developed world (and their global conceptualizations), in an “unholy alliance” with developing world elites, are using the environment of the developing world for their own economic and conceptual benefits (Walt 1998). This type of neo-imperial North/South relation is a thread that carries through all Chapters of this dissertation. This perceived and/or real exploitation is imperiling the efficacy of conservation policy in Galapagos and is contested at multiple times and multiple levels by local society, as described throughout this work.

Thereby, arguably, this work falls into the field of Critical Globalization Studies (CGS), with an obvious focus on development and the environment. CGS is focused on suffering as a result of structural violences and is born out of the underlying fear that local and national decision-making processes in the developing world are challenged and subverted by institutions, actors, conceptualizations, and policies of neoliberal Globalization (Reitan 2012). CGS is not inherently anti-Globalization, however, but rather challenges whether and how Globalization processes benefit the interests of actors historically situated in positions of power, for example, through colonization. It aims to give voice to the Local and those negatively impacted by Globalization by looking beyond a single academic discipline’s boundaries. CGS calls into question Neoliberalism’s core ethics – competition, efficiency, extreme individualism, and consumption – which serve to reduce human beings to homo economicus. It instead strives to revalorize cooperation, citizenship, and

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18 Reitan defines structural violences as the cause of societal suffering, particularly in marginalized communities and the developing world, such as “poverty and debt, landlessness, the loss of the commons, ecological devastation, IMF and World Bank Structural Adjustment Programs, and ‘free’ trade agreements” (Reitan 2012:27).
autonomy from the local to the global levels and to promote the concept of work as a human right and a social contribution (Reitan 2012:38 et. seq).

This dissertation analyzes different global and local forces and conceptualizations that influence conservation policy in Galapagos. As described in Chapter 2, there is a long history of distinctly local and global influences shaping conservation policy in Galapagos. Old and outdated grievances must be overcome to allow for productive discourse to create conservation policy that addresses current threats at the human-environmental intersection. Chapter 3 analyses how major political changes at the national level are changing the ways and how far globalizing forces can reach into (a now Socialist) Ecuador. In turn, international NGOs, formerly the most influential players in Galapagos’ conservation policy, have had to change their approach to continue to influence conservation in Galapagos. Chapter 4 evaluates the interactions of interest groups in Isabela under global, national, and local forces and assesses conceptualizations surrounding the often competing concerns of environmental protection and human development as the Island’s economy transitions from resource extraction to an emergent, evolving “Eco”tourism.
Chapter 1: Localizing Conservation Discourses in Galapagos

2.1. Summary

Conservation discourses in Galapagos revolve around opposing issues of conservation vs. economic development, with select interest groups lobbying for either issue. Neither side of this discussion is achieving policy implementation to their satisfaction. There are substantial disconnects between implemented conservation policies and local compliance as well as rampant development without desired creation of welfare.

Discourse analysis in the literature to date identifies two discourse groups merging into one hybrid discourse.\(^{19}\) Identifying new strategic alliances among different interest groups will improve each group’s ability to effect policy compromises, which would loosen the current policy gridlock and smooth the path towards a sustainable Galapagos. This chapter reviews existing literature on varying positions in conservation policy to date and ground-truths these discourses against current sentiments in the local population through a mixed method approach.

A qualitative dataset was created through in-depth, open-ended interviews, and participants were classified by life-work histories into groups. Trends amongst these groups, found in the qualitative analysis, were juxtaposed with the academic debate to discover hypothesized disconnects. The findings were tested quantitatively using discriminant analysis and K-means clustering.

\(^{19}\) A discourse is ‘a specific ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categorizations that are produced, reproduced, and transformed in a particular set of practices, and through which meaning is given to physical and social realities’ (Hajer 1995:44).
The results suggest that the conservation policy discourse in Galapagos should be restructured to increase compliance with existing rules and increase the creation of new regulation that will satisfy socio-economic development needs as well as effectively protect the local environment. By re-sorting interest groups into two new discourse with new strategic alliances towards common goals, this chapter suggests that conservation policy can be implemented successfully in Galapagos without compromising sustainability in the archipelago.

2.2. Background

Social development in the Galapagos Islands is challenging conservation paradigms (Villacis and Carrillo 2013). Historically, Galapagos has had two distinct public discourses amongst different interest groups regarding conservation policy (Quiroga 2009). The interest groups behind these discourses have impacted socio-environmental sustainability in the islands through the creation of and varying compliance with environmental regulations.

2.2.1. The Local Perspective and the Fishermen’s Discourse

One discourse is focused around a utilitarian view of nature with a frontier mentality. This utilitarian perspective aims to make the land arable through the domestication of nature. Human progress, survival, growth, and economic development are the focus of this societal group. Conservation is generally opposed, viewed as a concept imposed by the international community that restricts human progress, well-being, and economic development.

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20 I define frontier attitude as the desire to conquer and exploit nature as quickly as possible with no regard for conservation (cf. Hofstadter and Lipset 1968).
development. Known as the local discourse or fishermen discourse (Quiroga 2009), this group opposes, circumvents, or actively sabotages environmental regulation and policy. This discourse group generally consists of Galapagos long-term residents who work in the extractive or productive sectors. These are descendants of the early settlers of Galapagos, people who arrived on the Islands and survived by finding the resources to live and thrive, domesticating nature and extracting its bounty. Ospina (2001) calls this domestication of wild nature an act of possession that gives a sense of ownership. Accordingly, the fishermen believe it is their right to exploit the resources their islands provide. Often this used to go as far as believing that the international scientific community is operating for its own benefit, fundraising for the protection of a “pristine nature” (Quiroga 2009; Hennessey and McCleary 2011).

With local fisheries having declined massively by regulation (i.e. catch limits) and overexploitation (Toral-Granda 2008), and tourism now generating almost 20 times as much revenue as extractive fishing in Galapagos (Brewington 2013), members of the local discourse have begun adapting to a new narrative. By the mid-90s, land-based or local tourism was becoming more popular, even promoted by international organizations and embraced by local policy makers (Epler 2007). Tourism is becoming more accepted as an income generator, rather than perceived as a foreign exploitation.

2.2.2. The International Perspective and the Scientific Discourse

The other discourse is focused on science and conservation, severely restricting certain freedoms of the residents of Galapagos. This so-called international or scientific discourse is centered on a science-based worldview, wherein Galapagos is a unique place with valuable ecological features that should be protected at all costs (Quiroga 2009).
This discourse group argues that conservation should be managed by international organizations to prevent degradation by local society. Policies arising from this discourse turned Galapagos into a tightly regulated, low-impact, foreign owned, Ecotourism destination that is accessible for international educational visitation (e.g., Ospina 2001; Grenier 2007; Quiroga 2009, 2013). The scientific discourse aims for human impact to be minimized. Human presence in the islands was seen as the number one threat to the preservation of a natural zoo or museum that is to be protected for (international) posterity. By carrying this notion forward to an extreme, the scientific discourse was even delegitimizing the very human existence in Galapagos (Constantino 2008). This neo-malthusian “fortress-style” conservation can easily turn hegemonic (Neumann 2005) – as was the case in Galapagos.

Due to the unique bio-geographical features of Galapagos, the global community historically has had a special interest in the islands (Quiroga 2009) and a strong influence on conservation policy (e.g., Tapia et al. 2009). However, most of these “planners” were natural scientists, not experts in sociology or human development. As a result, the scientific community’s conservation policies heavily impacted local livelihoods, which were based primarily on natural resource exploitation. Thus, the policies arising from the scientific discourse were strongly resented by local populations.

Cairns (2011) revealed perspectives held by members of the international discourse community, including that it is not the role of scientists to attempt to create culture, that science is not communicated effectively to decision makers, and that local leaders, not

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21 Foreign in this case defined as “not from Galapagos”, both continental Ecuadorian and foreign national
foreign institutions (NGOs), should be making conservation policy in the islands. Thus, while many assistance organizations are present and active in the archipelago, the NGO sector has a two-fold problem. The first is that it is unidirectional in purpose: non-profits come to Galapagos to protect the unique environment. Their perspective and discourse revolve around science, tourism, conservation, and how to integrate the three to minimize human impact on the archipelago (Quiroga 2013). Secondly, the policies the NGOs are instrumental in creating are ineffective due to a lack of compliance; these regulations are instituted by outsiders and are therefore considered only partially trustworthy by the local community (Quiroga and Ospina 2009).

2.2.3. Cruise-Tourism and Foreign Exploitation

The scientific discourse has been deeply involved in policy processes in Galapagos for decades via international NGOs (see also Chapter 3) and has made the conservation community close bedfellows with the cruise industry.

Tourism, especially large-scale tourism operations, shares with the conservation sector much of the conservation discourse of saving nature from extractive activities. Many of the owners and operators of large vessels frequently mention the necessity of protecting the Galapagos from the harming hands of the locals (Quiroga 2013:29).

Locals have perceived the cruise industry as part of neo-imperialistic economic exploitation – “Eco-fascism” (Cairns 2011). In Ecuador and many other countries in Latin America, Neoliberalism has failed to deliver on its promise to bring modernity and prosperity (Escobar 2010). Instead, the neoliberal period (1980 ~ 2005) produced negative growth rates for the region, in contrast with an average of 3 to 5% growth during the previous period of Import Substitution Industrialization (Grugel and Riggirozzi...
2011). These internationally introduced economic policies have caused severe, lasting grievances in the local population.

For most of the 20th century, Ecuador’s plan for Galapagos was one of settlement, development, and extraction to solidify their sovereignty claims over the Islands (Ospina 2006). The Galapagos appeared as a site of international travel interest via various explorations and publications by the United Nations and the IUCN, the creation of the Galapagos National Park (1968), and a dedication as a UNESCO world heritage site (1978). As a result, international marketing firms started to commodify Galapagos’ unique nature and wildlife viewing opportunities (Larson 2002). International institutions that had begun protecting this Ecuadorian sovereign territory for international posterity designed a floating hotel tourism model in the 1960s and 70s. This model was instituted to satisfy Ecuadorian economic needs and to create an income stream for conservation. As there was no local expertise or capital to create and operate an environmentally conscious cruise industry in Galapagos, most concessions were given to international operators (Grenier 2007).

As a result, the Galapagos cruise industry was well regulated, with regulations built on international standards and minimal primary impacts to their visitor sites. These international regulations and ethics brought with them an inherent interest to protect the visited resource – especially from destructive practices of the local extractive industries. However, foreign ownership created large leakages in the local economy, with a majority of the income generated in Galapagos leaving the islands, causing inflation without increasing the quality of life (Hoyman and McCall 2012). Consequently, the local
population benefitted little to not at all from the largest source of income in the islands (Epler 2007).

Contributing to so-called conservation funds (Novy 2000), the cruise industry became one of the main funding mechanisms for science and conservation in Galapagos. While the primary impacts of cruise tourism were well regulated, secondary impacts of this tourism model were left unaccounted for. The main secondary impact of the cruise-based tourism industry has been a growing local population on the island needed to support and supply the cruise industry. Growth and immigration exponentially increased the demand for public services such as water, health, education, overwhelming the capacity of the local municipal governments. The growing human presence and their growing environmental footprint were hidden away from the eyes of tourists – a process known as the “Ecotourism bubble” of Galapagos (Hennessey and McCleary 2011).

2.2.4. The Ecotourism Bubble and the Galapagos Paradox

The Ecotourism bubble is also the base for a phenomenon known as the Galapagos Paradox. The paradox is a dichotomy created by the cruise industry’s marketing the archipelago as pristine nature with no human presence. Effective marketing, however, brings more and more people to the Galapagos. In this way, the concept of pristine nature is threatening the very characteristic the industry is capitalizing upon, making Galapagos more crowded and bringing in more invasive species (Quiroga 2009).

The tourism bubble is one of the reasons why local resistance to international perspective runs deep. The local discourse argues that the cruise industry is harming local economic and social interests. While the floating hotel policy has indeed kept many of the primary impacts of tourism off the Islands, and anti-extractive industry policies may have been
well intended, they omitted consideration of the social welfare of the local population (Watkins and Cruz 2007).

As the population grew rapidly from both the secondary impacts of the cruise industry as well as a boom in fisheries, more jobs and income were needed to sustain them – increasing pressure on the only local economy at the time, resource extraction – worsening the main threat to sustainability of Galapagos. To create alternative incomes for the local population and thereby lower the environmental pressure on these resources, both discourse groups pushed to involve locals in the economic activity that was supposedly protecting the environment: tourism (IBID). Since locals did not have the expertise or the capital to run expensive and difficult to operate, high value cruise businesses, land-based tourism was supposed to bridge the gap.

2.2.5. Land-based Tourism and a Hybrid Discourse

Land-based tourism (LBT) has lowered inequality in Galapagos by reducing the financial leakages of the tourism sector (from the cruise industry), thereby increasing wealth retention on the Islands and better distributing that income throughout the community (e.g., Epler 2007; Taylor et al. 2003, 2008). In addition, LBT dramatically reduced the pressure on overfished stocks by pulling former fishermen into the tourism sector and away from resource extraction. Land-based tourism is on track to surpass the cruise industry as the primary choice of accommodation in Galapagos (Quiroga 2013.) However, land-based tourism is less regulated than cruise tourism and thus has a higher primary impact on the environment. In addition, it has resulted in yet more immigration and has shifted the primary environmental threat from resource extraction to the introduction and impacts of invasive species (Epler 2007).
The contrasting local and international discourses have been in open conflict for decades, which has made conservation efforts ineffective. The well-intended international conception of a perfectly “pristine” Galapagos harmed conservation efforts by disenfranchising the local population (Hennessy and McCleary 2011). In turn, local compliance with reasonable environmental regulation was low, as a rebellious act against perceived economic oppression. To address the resulting discontent with disputed policies, the international community and their environmental regulations began to address criticisms from the local discourse (see Ospina 2006), reframing conservation as a social problem. Local educational and public awareness campaigns were pushed by the international community to advance the conservation agenda. As a result, the local population adopted the key phrases coined by the tourism and conservation organizations to gain access to a growing land-based Ecotourism market (Quiroga 2013).

The new land-based, local form of tourism was transcending and, in many ways, uniting both local and scientific discourses while having turned into both the largest source of local income as well as the greatest threat to conservation of the Galapagos. Under the pressure of increasing tourism, the discourses, formerly divided along international vs. local and conservation vs. extraction lines, merged into a new hybrid model that includes important elements from the traditional science, conservation and tourism discourse while maintaining the odes that the local residents have a right to use the rich natural resources of the islands and to shape and to be shaped by the social-ecological interactions that define the Galapagos (Quiroga 2013:38).

The scientific community had realized that sustainable protection of the Islands would not be possible without the support of the local population (Quiroga 2013). Thus, local authorities opened policy to include opportunity for local economic growth outside the extractive sectors. In the early 2000s, NGOs and local authorities actively pushed
fishermen into a community-based tourism. As they moved into land-based tourism, the fishermen realized that only a healthy ecosystem attracts tourists to their unique home.

These shifting attitudes unified the goals of both interest groups and forged the “hybrid discourse.” The hybrid discourse still considers conservation to be important, but also includes locals and their societal welfare. Unifying the formerly oppositional discourse groups under the hybrid model was demonstrably beneficial, as the former fishing sector, previously practically at war with the international community, became the sector most promoting the goals of internationalization to increase economic gains in their new industry of land-based tourism. Under the hybrid discourse, therefore, the fishermen had effectively fallen into the trap of the Galapagos Paradox, and increased its threat.

The impacts of this hybrid discourse on the local societal fabric remain unclear. The hybrid model has been described as bringing together two very distinct and conflicting viewpoints (Quiroga 2013). As new user groups are testing the Paradox, conservation policy must adequately address threats from increasing tourism, immigration, and local development. In addition, it must manage the commons to long term sustainability of Galapagos’ marine resources and social implications must be considered (Quiroga 2017) - something that top-down management strategies tend to ignore (Ostrom 2015). An effective management system must thus be comprehensive and flexible enough to address the needs of Galapagos’ “Island Biocomplexity”, a framework for assessing socio-economic systems in island ecosystems (Walsh and Mena 2013).

I hypothesize that the hybrid model does not provide the necessary policy framework for an adaptive and participatory management system. Further, I hypothesize that the hybrid discourse, through its focus on outdated issues, is not beneficial to present-day Galapagos
conservation. Old and carried forward grievances by several stakeholder groups are resulting in policy gridlock and are failing to address current, pressing conservation concerns. Finally, I hypothesize that the Galapagos Paradox is an outdated and misclassified phenomenon arising from a neoliberal approach to conservation in the early stages of the conservation discourse, and no longer exists.

2.3. Methods

This Chapter uses a mixed method approach to assess societal opinions and behaviors regarding conservation and development in Isabela, Galapagos. Qualitative data were taken to outline the interactions of different interest groups in the community of Puerto Villamil, Galapagos, Ecuador. These qualitative data were subsequently “quantitzed” (cf. Maxwell 2010; Onwuegbuzie, et al. 2011) by ascribing Likert-scale ratings to the participants’ statements to statistically test the results of the analysis via JMP Pro v13.

The qualitative data were generated through 52 in-depth, open-ended interviews with members of different sectors of the local society, including local institution and NGO staff, the extractive and tourism sectors, and formal and non-formal community leaders (see Appendix 7.1.1). The hand-written notes were transcribed electronically, ordered by content topics, and translated into English, if held in another language.\(^{22}\) The electronic data were summarized into life-work histories (LWH) of the interviewees to classify individuals into groups. The raw qualitative data thus provided the data for an extensive data chart (see Appendix 7.1.8) and a list of groups (see Appendix 7.1.1), both of which are the basis for the quantitative testing of the qualitative results of this chapter.

\(^{22}\) German, English, and Spanish were used for this research.
The data chart revealed a total of 47 relevant independent variables (IV) that were used in the analyses. Of these, 38 were completed by all respondents, creating 1976 data points overlapping between all participants. The other 9 variables were specific to certain previously identified subsets of the participants, creating a complete dataset with 2224 data points. 18 variables were quantified into continuous values, 14 of which were independent.

Discriminant analysis (DA) was used to test the validity of the qualitative dataset by reproducing the correlations and interactions of discourse groups in the literature, outlined above, via statistical analysis of 13 continuous variables, using JMP pro v13. Furthermore, DA was used to test the statistical significance when changing assumptions about the discourse groups as assigned in the literature, as well as to test statistical significance of newly assigned discourse groups - the dependent variable/s (DV).

Discriminant analysis is a statistical tool to evaluate how different (or similar) pre-assigned groups are. The tool uses independent, continuous variables to assign them to categorical dependent variables. The analysis puts out discriminant functions that are a combination of the IVs that pull apart the DVs, whereas the length of the line indicates the strength of each IV on the overall discriminant function. In essence, discriminant analysis shows what differences exist among the nominal groups and evaluates the accuracy of the classification.

Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was used to assess the statistical relevance of each of the IVs used in the previous DA. While very similar to DA, PCA can show discriminating components without pre-assigned groups, and also display these on multiple axis – creating a 3d matrix. PCA takes the original IVs and creates an equal
number of “new derivative” IVs. Each of these is a combination of each of original IVs. The “PCA IVs” show relevance in terms of prediction capability regarding the DV(s). PCA IVs can be ordered by outcome relevance and less relevant PCA IVs can be dropped to reduce complexity of the analysis while all remaining PCA IVs will still consider all of the original IVs – now ordered by overall relevance regarding the DVs. However, the nature of the mixed method approach in this chapter was for the quantitative analysis to support the qualitative data. Thus, this study did not use PCA to assign groups to the data. Rather PCA was used to assess which IVs were statistically significant and thus most relevant for the DA, to reduce complexity and work with the smallest number of relevant components.

K-means cluster analysis was used to identify how many groups (DV(s)) would be ideal to display the dataset – that is, in how many discourse groups to separate the respondents statistically. K-means cluster analysis calculates the average or mean of all variables and calculates their distance from the group average, the center of a given cluster. Depending on the number of clusters in the analysis, it will calculate the shortest average distance to as many centers and thereby cluster the data points into groups. The analysis was run for one additional and one less DVs than the current literature uses (2 to 4 groups).

2.4. Results

2.4.1. Qualitative Analysis

During the qualitative analysis, a discrepancy between participants’ opinions regarding the IVs in the dataset and the IVs ascribed to certain professions by the literature (e.g., Quiroga 2009, 2013; Cairns 2011; Brewington 2011) became apparent. Certain professions’ answers were clearly not corresponding to their DVs (discourse groups) as
described in the literature (cf. Appendices 7.1.1 and 7.1.2). Concretely, this was most apparent in fishermen, National Park employees, and tourism sector employees.

The fishermen are traditionally ascribed a negative attitude towards conservation, falling into the extractive/frontier mentality local discourse group with an inherent bias against the top down approach of government as well as laws and regulations restricting the ability to live out their “pirate lifestyles” in the “Wild West” that was Isabela into the 20th century (Quiroga 2009; Meltzoff 2013). In the research, many interviewees in this profession instead displayed an interest in conservation and openness towards compliance with environmental regulation.23 Contrary to older literature (Finchum 2002), they now also showed willingness to comply with regulations regarding their high-value target species as long as they were not existentially threatened by the restrictions.24 They did however, still display a clear animosity against the National Park, as the perceived main threat to their economic existence. Several fishermen still state concerns about new zoning laws (proposed during the time of the research) and consider the Park to be the biggest obstruction to human progress in Galapagos, but they were very open to conservation as a concept.25 It was clear from their statements during the interviews that they had reflected on the boom and bust cycle of the sea cucumber fisheries of the 90s, learning that stocks were finite, even in resource rich and low population density Galapagos, and that a certain measure of conservation is important for long term prosperity.

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23 E.g., Participants no. 9, 16, 26;
24 E.g., Participants no. 16, 47;
25 E.g., Participants no. 22, 51;
The Park and the NGOs have an international perspective and are the very center of the scientific discourse, with a high trust in the work of authorities and the highest conservation mentality. While acknowledging that more monitoring, science, and compliance are the key to sustainability, even with specific follow up questions in the interview, there were clear statements that the fishers are not to be trusted nor considered allies in the conservation battle for Galapagos. Interviewed members of NGOs and the National Park still did not trust the fishermen in any way and mostly stated flat refusal to work with that societal group.26 At the same time, members of the National Park and NGO sectors were not concerned about the effects of tourism on the environment.27

Land-based tourism sector employees, as part of the hybrid discourse ascribed to using conservation symbols and language of the scientific discourse while using the environment for their economic activities in a sustainable way, displayed distinct isolation tendencies, lamented that the authorities (National Park) were not open to developing new visitor sites, and called conservation policy oppressive and obstructive to economic development.28 Being the suggested solution to effective conservation policy in Galapagos in the literature (Quiroga 2013), this group sound a lot like what would be expected from the extractive sector group in the literature - regulation-distrusting free spirits are exploiting nature for their economic gains (Quiroga 2009).

The discrepancies between literature and the qualitative dataset, outlined above, sparked the idea that lack of effectiveness of conservation policy might be caused by the structural set up of the sphere in which it is created. It seemed that the analysis of the

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26 E.g., Participants no. 32, 50;
27 E.g., Participants no. 11, 37, 42;
28 E.g., Participants no. 12, 26, 30, 47, 48;
societal discussions around conservation in the literature are based on wrong, outdated premises: by correlating interest groups with certain professions. The qualitative analysis revealed that, the shift into a land-based tourism economy did not produce a homogeneous interest group and that the former extractive industry alliances, having lost a substantial part of their members, had shifted their collective interests, needs, and goals. The results suggested the emergence of two camps – one pro-conservation, one pro-growth; both with local ideological conceptualizations based in the fishermen’s discourse and opposing perceptions of public services and acceptance of authority.

2.4.2. Quantitative Analysis

To test this hypothesis, several statistical tests were run using the quantified data from the qualitative dataset. The first test, a discriminant analysis (DA1), was to evaluate if the qualitative data would be able to reproduce the same results as the literature describes, delineating participants of the discourse groups by profession. The dataset contains 13 relevant IVs with continuous values. These were used to run a discriminant analysis, with pre-assigned discourse groups (DV$s$) by their profession as in Quiroga 2013.

The results of DA1 highly significantly reproduced Quiroga’s results29 (see Figure 2.1), clustering the data points around the 3 DV$s$ with P-values of $<0.0001$ and $0.0008$ on either axis (see Appendix 7.1.3). 10 of the 52 samples were predicted to be in a different DV category than assigned by their profession, and average mis-assignment probability as per the discriminant scores was 28.09%. The dataset is, thus, considered to be a valid base from which to critique the models of the literature.

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29 Quiroga’s (2013) results were that the conservation discourse was clustered around three discourse groups (local/fisherman, international/scientific, hybrid) with members categorized by profession.
Given the discrepancy between the opinions stated in the interviews and the collective opinions ascribed to their professions by the literature, in a second pass, the data points were colored to correlate with the discourses as ascribed by the LWH. The result shows a mix up in the clustering of data points no longer graphically correlating with the DVs (see Figure 2. 2). Statistically, significance was only given on one axis with $P=0.0295$ and $P=.4124$ respectively (see Appendix 7.1.4). 17 of the 52 samples were predicted to be
in a different DV category than assigned by their profession and average mis-assignment probability as per the discriminant scores was 35.81%.

The qualitative analysis was suggestive that 2 new groups were emerging vs. the 3 groups defined in the literature (Quiroga 2013). One pro-conservation, anti-growth, with little trust in public services and the other vice versa. Thus, 2 new DV categories were ascribed to each participant, as per the perception in the qualitative analysis – dubbed by the author as Golden Frontier Tourism and User Fortress Conservation. To test the assumption of the qualitative data - two discourse groups better reflecting societal

![Visualization of discrepancy between the opinions stated in the interviews and the collective opinions ascribed to their professions by the literature (Ref. Appendix 7.1.4 for statistical detail)](image)
discussions around conservation in Galapagos than three groups - a K-means analysis was run. The results (see Figure 2.3) confirmed the assumption that a clustering of the data into 2 groups is a better fit, as shown by the lowest $R^2$ (or CCC/Cubic Clustering Criterion) score of -0.08193 for 2 clusters.

To potentially reduce the complexity of the statistical testing of the dataset, a Principle Component Analysis (PCA) was run. The results showed that all 13 IVs used to assess the models in the literature were relevant (see Figure 2.4). Thus, none were excluded for DA2.

*Figure 2.3 Biplot of K-means test showing 2 clusters separating cleanly (Ref. Appendix, 7.1.5 for statistical detail)*

To potentially reduce the complexity of the statistical testing of the dataset, a Principle Component Analysis (PCA) was run. The results showed that all 13 IVs used to assess the models in the literature were relevant (see Figure 2.4). Thus, none were excluded for DA2.
Figure 2. A Principle Component Analysis Biplot showing that all 13 IVs used to assess the models in the literature are relevant (Ref. Appendix 7.1.6 for statistical detail).

Thus, to confirm the assertion of the qualitative analysis that the dataset was best split in two discourse groups separated by their preferences regarding conservation in Galapagos, rather than by profession as suggested by the literature (Quiroga 2009, 2013), a second discriminant analysis (DA2) was run. With the variables shown as relevant by the PCA and the respondents assigned into two DVs, ascribed to each participant according to the LWH in the qualitative analysis, DA2 showed a highly significant split between the 2 groups with a P-value <0.0001 (see Figure 2.5). Only 1 of the 52 samples was predicted to be in a different DV category than assigned by the qualitative data, and its mis-assignment probability as per the discriminant scores was 31.4%.
2.5. Discussion and Implications

The qualitative data suggest that the discourse groups as described in the literature, with membership defined primarily by profession, no longer hold true as the economy and the respective income structures have shifted and diversified. Similarly, the Galapagos Paradox caused by a neoliberal approach to conservation in the early periods of the conservation discourse, seems to be an outdated/misclassified phenomenon that no longer exists.

Discriminant analysis reproduced the discourse models of the literature but revealed a discrepancy between the respondents’ statements and the properties generally ascribed to their professions. Because the real-world attitudes held by community members do not match pre-assigned opinions, their categorization into the 3 discourse groups (local/fishermen, scientific/international, hybrid) by profession as described in the literature (e.g., Quiroga 2009, 2013; Cairns 2011; Brewington 2011) seems no longer relevant and not beneficial to an effective conservation policy process in present-day Galapagos.
Instead, a new structure for discussing how to protect the environment in Galapagos from current and future threats is needed. New alliances for human progress and environmental protection have formed, and, under the new model suggested in this chapter, will be able to lobby their respective case for a sustainable policy process. By eliminating the us-against-them juxtapositions between international design and local implementation, these new alliances will be able to increase local policy compliance and thus lead to a more sustainable Galapagos.

2.5.1. Old Grievances in the Hybrid Discourse

The hybrid discourse was intended to bring together former opponents in the extractive and conservation sectors to produce more effective policy outcomes. However, this attempted unification was imperfect, suffering from old grievances between former discourse adversaries, resulting in frequent policy gridlock, as described below. The results of this study call into question the current day relevance of these grievances between the previous discourse groups.

The animosity in the policy sphere under the hybrid discourse between formerly opposing interest groups is blocking advances in conservation policy. In necessarily but ineffectively addressing and harmonizing grievance issues of the formerly quarreling parties, the content of the discourse was never reframed to include the new topics of a changed socio-economic reality in Galapagos. From increased vectors for invasive species to overload of local infrastructure, exponential land-based tourism growth has substantially altered the requirements for conservation policy in the past 10 years. Fishing has all but disappeared and is no longer an ecological threat or a sustainable income for that sector after years of yield decline (Hearn et al. 2006), policy tightening,
and parallel inflation (Quiroga 2013). The fishermen, however, hold a long-standing tradition of distrust against NGOs and the National Park. They have long accused the international conservationists of turning conservation into a scheme to steal money raised for conservation and view the Park as restricting their economic prosperity. While a clear animosity against the National Park was still found in this study, this tendency seems to correlate mostly with historic path dependency – an old enemy never forgotten. The data show that this group actually states their preference for conservation of their stocks over unrestricted extraction.

On the conservation side, remembered grievances of NGOs and the National Park are such that they still do not trust the fishermen enough to work with that societal group. Too many bridges have been burned for the Park to even consider a change, with still-fresh memories of Giant Tortoises lynched by fishermen in Isabela in the 90s as a symbolic act of discontent and resistance to authority in response to tightened sea cucumber fishery regulations. Similarly, members of the Park and NGOs still consider tourism to be mostly beneficial to protection of the Galapagos. This viewpoint is carried forward from when cruise-tourism was considered an ally to the scientific discourse and thought to be the best way to protect the biodiversity of Galapagos (Grenier 2007; Ospina 2001). Yet while they continued in a policy discourse revolving around protecting natural resources from overexploitation by fishermen, cruise and land-based tourism lead a subtle skew of infrastructure and policy development geared to promote growth rather than buffer against its impacts (Hennessey and McCleary 2011).

By settling old and no longer applicable grievances, stemming from the initial two discourses (local vs. international), and focusing on shared policy goals between the
former opponents, policy gridlock that occurred under the hybrid discourse can be addressed and effective policies can be negotiated by new and unlikely alliances.

2.5.2. A Changing Economy and an Unchanging Need for Conservation

While the socio-economic situation in Galapagos has changed over the past decade, the need for environmental protection has not. New issues arising in the literature are based on the same underlying concepts that require the current policy process to be made functional, rather than replaced, addressing Galapagos’ Island Biocomplexity.

As the economy and the demands for environmental policy are changing, researchers have tried to advance the policy discourse discussion. After coining the hybrid discourse, Quiroga (2013) suggested the discussion be carried forward to address new problems, such as diverging interests between ecological isolation and connectivity, calling for further research. Similarly, the continentalization of the local population, wherein the archipelagos population is becoming more similar to that of Ecuador mainland, has been argued to be a socio-economic threat to Galapagos (Grenier 2012). This discussion surrounding the future of Galapagos culture certainly has value. Furthermore, some even argue that the fight against invasive species is lost and should therefore be abandoned, with those conservation resources invested in other areas (Wolff and Gardener 2012). However, this argument is controversial and too radical a change to be effective in shifting the conservation discourse to confront current day conservation issues.

These arguments for the direction of future policy discussion and discourse evolution drift away from the current applied conservation policy discussion sphere. This drift is especially true as the national government in Quito is taking on more control over the islands (see also chapter 3 on the (waning) influence of NGOS in the Galapagos policy
sphere). The underlying problems of these arguments can be seen as results of the failures of the current policy discussion under the hybrid discourse to address Galapagos’ “Island Biocomplexity” via a comprehensive and adaptive model that effectively integrates the complex dynamics of human needs and the environment (Walsh and Mena 2016). The hybrid discourse does not account for adaptive agent behaviors in reaction to new conditions and altered relationships caused by a changed socio-economic or environmental reality.

Both the socio-economic and the environmental realities have changed substantially over the last decade, however (e.g., Watkins and Cruz 2007; Epler 2007). Growth in both parts of the tourism sector, cruise- and land-based, have led to substantial immigration (e.g., Epler 2007; Lu, Valdivia and Wolford 2013), causing isolation/connectivity changes and leading to continentalization. Invasive species are directly and exponentially correlated to numbers of visitors and population growth (Watkins and Cruz 2007). According to Taylor, et al. (2009), immigration has lowered per capita income increases to 1.8% per year, despite a growth in GDP of almost 10% per year in the same time period (1998 to 2005). This negative growth in purchasing power, considering the 10% inflation, is continuously eroding quality of life in Galapagos (cf. Granda Leon, et al. 2013). This erosion is leading to local demand for more growth, especially in the land-based sector.

There are relatively high levels of immigration to Galapagos, considering it has its own immigration policy even for Ecuadorian nationals, as per the Special Regimen Law of Galapagos (LOREG – Spanish acronym) of 1998. However, the economic activities and the resulting policy needs arising from the effects of the hybrid discourse remain unchanged, as most migrants are employees or family of the new land-tourism operating
businesses. Thus, policy discussion must continue on the trajectory of balancing human needs against exploitation of natural resources. Concretely, policymakers must find a sustainable balance between extraction, conservation, and tourism (economic growth) (Hoyman and McCall 2012). The results shown above suggest a re-alignment of interest groups that are shaping into new alliances (cf. Brewington 2011). These interest-based alliances could be strong but have not been embraced by the hybrid discourse discussion.

Along with the shift towards a mainly tourism-based economy (Epler et al. 2008), there have been several parallel shifts among subsections of interest groups that formed alliances in the hybrid discourse that have so far gone unnoticed by the formal discourses. The data show that the fishermen discourse group has effectively split in two. While this group as a whole still maintains many of the same characteristics, such as their general distrust in the National Park, it is clear that those who still engage in extractive activities have shifted to a pro-conservation mentality to protect their stocks. The other faction, now working in land-based tourism, is pro-growth oriented to increase their income.

Similarly, while not in an active way as the fishermen did, the group of the scientific discourse has also split. Political changes under the policies of 21st century socialism, started under President Correa in 2006, have caused the national government to take a more assertive role in the policy making process in Galapagos. In the wake of the changes and limitations to the impact and freedoms of foreign institutions in Ecuador, many international NGOs either left the country in protest, were no longer permitted to work in the country, or have, under the pressure of the new socialist policies, had to change their approach to a less executive and more advisory role in the policy process.
The cruise industry can no longer be considered part of the scientific discourse either. What was called a (Galapagos) paradox, is not so paradoxical at all in reality. The cruise industry wanted to be considered part of the conservation effort to boost sales of a product they were selling as pristine (Hennessey and McCleary 2011). Thus, they financed conservation efforts and promoted a pristine Galapagos. As long as there was a highly destructive extractive sector, this “paradox” might have seemed inadequate terminology. However, secondary impacts of this industry and their product on the islands have turned out to be the new main threat to Galapagos’ ecosystem (e.g., Novy 2000; Watkins and Cruz 2007; Taylor 2008; Hennessey and McCleary 2011). Thus, a policy discourse promoting environmental protection must treat them as such, rather than as an ally to conservation.

This study reveals these shifting viewpoints, supporting the need for a new structural layout of the conservation discourse in Galapagos. By recognizing these emerging stakeholder alliances, more effective policy discussions can take place in a new policy framework. A new framework needs to be able to account for the linked effects of social and ecological systems, addressing Island Biocomplexity.

2.5.3. Local Discourses for a Sustainable Galapagos

The results of this study suggest that two new, distinctly separated discourse groups have formed. Each group has its own views on what the driving forces behind their needs are and how they want these to be addressed by policy. The Golden Frontier Tourism group lobbies for environmental exploitation for human progress while the User-Fortress Conservation group lobbies for environmental protection.
The data suggest a new organization of the conservation discourse in Galapagos based on the new alliances that have formed in the face of a changed socio-economic reality in Galapagos. The first group with shared interests supports a “Golden-Frontier-Tourism” discourse (GFT). The name is derived from the Gold Rush-style past of the fishing sector and the frontier mentality of the early pioneers of the islands. Land-based tourism, as did sea cucumber fisheries and shark finning in the past, has taken on many gold rush qualities. Dreams of quick fortunes have driven many people into the industry and continue to lure more, putting pressure on the environment and the product. Now working in tourism, this group is making demands that were formerly ascribed to the local/fishermen discourse. They feel economically suppressed by the policy-making authorities like the National Park, but notably no longer feel negatively toward the NGOs and the international community.

The GFT wants to expand their product to new visitor sites and to reduce environmental regulations to save cost. To accommodate their growth needs, they lobby for infrastructure improvements such as new airports, additional modes of transportation in the form of land and marine vehicle concessions, the loosening of building codes and architectural ordinances, and the opening of additional National Park areas to visitation.

The other newly emerging discourse is held by the “User-Fortress-Conservation” (UFC) group. Under the new model suggested here, international economic and post-colonial interests are no longer driving the conservation discussion in the UFC, as was the case in the scientific discourse. As a result, the UFC discourse group has increased the likelihood of their policy suggestions being accepted by the local population. UFC represents the needs of the extractive industry within the borders of the Park and the Marine Reserve, as
well as the desire of the conservation sector to build a fortress-style framework to protect the environment. This fortress, however, is not completely closed off, but grants access to certain user groups through concessions and regulations to be created in cooperation with the extractive sectors. This newly inclusive process thereby not only increases compliance, but also achieves active enhancement of new policies via enforcement assistance and information sharing.

The emerging alliances revealed by this study bring the conservation discourse discussion back to square one. The new alliances once again split along the lines of protection vs. exploitation (Figure 2.6). However, the interest groups within each discourse have shifted. In the GFT, land-based tourism has taken the place of lobbying for natural resource exploitation to achieve human development. While the National Park remains on the pro-conservation side of the discourse (UFC), they have been joined by a national government that has more assertively entered the policy sphere in Galapagos, as well as the remaining fishermen and farmers, who are interested in the preservation of their stocks (fishers) and see themselves as natural allies to the conservation process (farmers).
The GFT is already united in their quest for higher income. However, to be able to make their case for human development credible to the UFC, they need to unify their strategy. The current free-for-all mentality of gold rushing individuals is not only harming the environment but will ultimately kill the “golden goose” via the tragedy of the commons. The GFT will be most effective in achieving their goals by introducing some measures of self-control and limitation, introducing a structured plan of where desired development will lead: a cohesive vision for their industry, their product, and the way they want to achieve it, while also limiting their environmental impact.

While the cruise sector was not part of this analysis, they are summed into the GFT by association. They have claimed goals of environmental protection when resource extraction was the biggest threat to conservation in Galapagos. Ultimately, however, these are businesses, and as such, they have a profit motive. Despite being additionally steered by international ethics that include demands for corporate social responsibility goals, cruise tourism has a negative sum impact on conservation of the Galapagos, given
the effects of human population growth and invasive species (e.g., Watkins and Cruz 2007, Epler 2007, Self et al 2010). Thus, the proposed discourse model includes the cruise-tourism industry in the GFT. Furthermore, potential intra-industry cooperation resulting from the inclusion of this mature sector of the tourism industry in with the young land-based tourism sector opens an avenue for substantial knowledge transfer with regards to incentive measures and best practices (e.g., Powell 2008, Self et al 2010) that limit the impacts of tourism on the environment.

To combat the growing threat from the ever-expanding tourism sector effectively, the UFC faces the challenge of overcoming grievances still lingering from when the members of this discourse groups were opponents. Being composed of groups that were on opposite sides of the conservation vs. extraction and the international vs. local battle lines, the various factions of the UFC must realize that their goals are ultimately the same: a protected environment with limited but sufficient use-rights for a limited number of locals. While they may remain uneasy allies, a practical alliance against a common threat should enable them to cooperate on issues of conservation in ways that previously were not considered possible. The land-based extractive sector (farmers and hunters) can support the National Park’s efforts for invasive species control by not abandoning their farms, a major source of invasive species reproduction and spreading (Brewington 2011). In return, the Park and government can help this sector with development programs, making their industry more productive via import restrictions during harvest season, hunt and kill permits for feral animals, and local subcontracting for large scale conservation campaigns (Carrion, et al. 2011). The fishing sector must accept certain catch restrictions, including no take zones and seasonal closures, and they can support the Park with stock
analysis and by reporting infractions by tourism operators. In turn, the Park needs to re-
consider efforts perceived as obstructive to the fishing sector. An example from the time
of the research was re-zoning near-shore and near-human-settlement areas from fishery
designated to tourism designated use-zones (allowing touristic but not extractive
activities), a proposal strongly opposed by the fishing sector. Increasing catch limits on
stable stocks and supporting processing infrastructure for the fishing sector by the Park
would support the economic survival of this group and thus further increase trust in the
Park and regulatory compliance in this sector.30

The data further suggest that conservation policy negotiated and implemented under the
new discourse model will lead to higher levels of acceptance and participation, causing
regulations to be more effective by increasing compliance and stewardship. Whereas
under the old discourse classification (local/international/hybrid), based solely on
profession, only 25% of the participants in the research fell into the conservation
category, 61.5% are now categorized in the User-Fortress Conservation group.
Conversely, 75% of participants were assigned to discourse groups that were lobbying for
one form of exploitation of nature or another (fishing (28.8%) and tourism-growth
(46.2%)). The Golden-Frontier Tourism lobby under the model is supported only by
38.5% of the respondents (see Appendix 7.1.2).

This shift in alliances could mark a turning point for socio-ecological sustainability in
Galapagos. By reframing the policy discussion around the proposed model that addresses
Island Biocomplexity via two discourse groups that lobby for human progress and

30 For further discussion of the qualitative results regarding interest group interaction and practical
integration of the above discussion, see also Chapter 4.
environmental protection respectively, it can effectively revolve around current and future conservation issues without being gridlocked into outdated grievances. The new alliances on both sides of the discourse are thereby freed to influence policy around the use and protection of the natural resource that is the Galapagos. Clearly defined interest groups on either side of the discourse can thereby lobby and compromise their opponents achieving compromises that balance the needs of environmental conservation and human well-being.

2.5.4. Localization of Conservation Policy – a New Role for NGOs

Conservation policy was largely driven by international concepts, resource extraction by local ones. This neo-colonial us-against-them juxtaposition caused resistance in the local population against conservation policy even in conservation minded locals. No longer being part of the policy making process, NGOs have the opportunity to assume a new, more effective role in the policy process.

On a macro level, the two original discourses revolved around how to protect nature, driven by international concepts (science/conservation in international discourse), and how to tame and use nature through extractive practices, driven by local concepts (extraction/fishermen in local discourse). The hybrid discourse was intended to bring them together. Social constructs, that are the base of these social concepts, emerge in specific economic and sociopolitical contexts and are associated with particular groups with concrete interests and histories and under particular regimes (Proctor 1998). The us-against-them juxtaposition between the international and local conceptualizations of how Galapagos should be “used” in relation to protection vs. exploitation, was, in turn, largely transposed to a man-against-nature juxtaposition (cf. Neumann 1998), with discourse
alliances forming along similar lines. The hybrid discourse eliminated some of that cleavage by bringing local actors into the tourism business (and out of fisheries), making them part of the international concept of sustainable utilization and protection of Galapagos’ natural resources.

Furthermore, foreign influence in policy-making (by NGOs and foreign-owned industry) previously distanced the local population from their democratic influence over their territorial use rights and alienated them, reducing understanding and compliance. This grievance was one of the main complaints of the local/fishermen discourse in their antipathy toward the scientific discourse and their respective conservation policies. The empowerment of the national government, now making autonomous decisions in its territory and asserting more influence in the policy process in Galapagos, has somewhat removed NGOs from the policy-making discussion. This shift has caused the local population to perceive NGOs as less and less “invasive” in local politics and policy making.

No longer seen as the foreign invader-policy-creator, NGOs have the opportunity to take a new, more advisory role in the policy process. These organizations are able to assume a mediating role between the two discourses, a neutral position that empowers them to provide scientific assistance to both sides and to provide education in the necessary communication process between the two factions. To further improve effective formation and implementation of conservation policy in Galapagos, the NGOs should be actively strengthening the new discourse groups through technical assistance and institution building.
Under the discourse model proposed here, newly neutral NGOs can help in the process via institution and capacity building on both sides. Their scientific and international expertise can help both discourse groups with best practice examples and help each faction in the effective lobbying for their needs in a now purely local conservation discourse for a sustainable Galapagos. By being removed from the policy process, NGOs might have a chance to more effectively influence it.

2.5.5. The Galapagos Paradox, Resolved

The Galapagos Paradox was caused by the fact that conservation policy was supported by the cruise-ship industry - a member of the scientific discourse but perceived as foreign exploitation, and the source of the current greatest threat to conservation in Galapagos. By categorizing this industry into the GFT discourse, the us-against-them juxtaposition is effectively eliminated and the Paradox, thus, solved.  

The new classification in the conservation discourse suggested above has effectively addressed the Galapagos Paradox. The connections between conservation and cruise tourism that has created the Galapagos Paradox have been severed. It was caused by migration to Galapagos as a result of marketing a foreign-operated tourism product - a pristine, people-free, natural laboratory - the operators of which were categorized as being in the conservation discourse. At the same time, the success of this foreign-owned tourism industry was creating unpredictable and unsustainable flows of people and other

31 Note: by this new classification the paradox is solved such that it is no longer paradoxical. The underlying negative effects on the environment still exist. In fact, by lobbying jointly for expansion of the sector, the influence of the sector might grow. Thus, it is essential that best practices from the mature cruise sector be transferred into the young land-based sector and not vice-versa. While this process was not monitored by this study, positive (pro-conservation measures) knowledge transfer seems more likely to maintain the unique selling proposition of a pristine environment in the Galapagos – the main driver for sales in the Galapagos tourism industry.
organisms to the islands, turning into the greatest threat of the very nature they were promoting and claiming to protect.

The Paradox was a holdover of neoliberal, neo-colonial conservation approaches of the 20th century. Excluding the local population from tourism was a form of eco-fascism (Constantino 2008) and alienated local populations from the international conservation discourse by causing resentment against foreign exploitation. This approach laid the base for ineffective conservation policies in Galapagos and much of the developed world (see also Chapter 4).

Including locals into the sector for anti-extraction, ethical, and socio-economic reasons, as has happened under the hybrid discourse and is supported in the new model presented by this chapter, by no means eliminates the threat posed by increasing tourism. On the contrary, the threat to environmental sustainability now comes from both from cruises and land-based tourism. It does, however, solve the paradox such that the greatest threat to conservation is no longer worsened and promoted by a member of the discourse group representing environmental protection.

2.6. Conclusion

While the hybrid model admitted past mistakes and acknowledged rights of use and self-determination of local society, it still was administrated under the old policy structures, based on an us-against-them conceptualization between internationally influenced policy making and suppression of local needs. Via the new separation into interest groups by industry and ambitions, this chapter resolves the international/local dichotomy in conservation and adequately places responsibilities onto the stakeholders living and working in Galapagos. The lobby of a new alliance between local and international
tourism (GFT) is limited in their attempts for growth and resource exploitation by a new local alliance for conservation (UFC). The conservation alliance is supported by (inter)national knowledge and funding to promote environmental stability by NGOs and the federal government, while the needs of the international travel community are being protected by an alliance benefitting from the inflow of revenue ensuring socio-economic stability and prosperity for the islands. The suggested structure of the conservation policy discourse, with new and unlikely alliances, can be an effective solution towards framing effective conservation policy for a sustainable Galapagos.
Chapter 2: NGOs in Galapagos – Between Governance and Civil Society

3.1. Summary

Conservation policy in Galapagos was reformed in 2015 centralizing sovereign control over policymaking, which had often been strongly influenced by foreign, non-governmental institutions (NGOs). The reforms streamlined overreaching and overlapping regulatory responsibilities amongst agencies and included management plans that adhere to the triple bottom line of sustainable development.

In this process, NGOs were cut from policymaking and put under tight governmental controls, effectively henceforth serving as extensions of the government in Ecuador. This loss of independence for the NGOs also shifted the burden of negative civil perception resulting from policymaking to the governing institutions. To assess the potential for NGOs to act as mediators between policy making institutions and local society, a qualitative dataset was created through in-depth, open-ended interviews.

These data were “quantitized” and analyzed using K-means clustering to categorize participants into interest groups according to shared perceptions of governing institutions and similarity of opinion about socio-environmental development. Tukey’s HSD tests were used to post-hoc assess significant differences among interest groups.

These analyses clustered participants into four distinct groups. Overall, participants had low trust in their governing institutions, even after the 2015 social reforms. NGOs were trusted more than governing institutions across all four interest group clusters.
Under the new regulations, NGOs work closely with governing institutions as well as with local society in Galapagos. This position creates a unique potential for communication both upward, to the government, and downward, to society, providing an opportunity for the sector to coordinate effective implementation of and compliance with conservation policy. NGOs can more effectively serve as mediators between the government and society by using these analyses to target their efforts towards specific, newly identified local interest group clusters.

3.2. Background

Conservation policy is not effectively discussed in the Galapagos Islands due to outdated interest group alliances that cause policy discourse to stall on old grievances (see Chapter 2). Before conservation policies can be successfully implemented, these interest groups must be better understood, including their composition from within local civil society and the factors that bind them together and influence their behaviors (cf. Chapter 4). Even well set up conservation policy (see Chapter 2) can only be as successful as its implementation in the field.

This chapter focuses on interest groups and their relationship to governing institutions and NGOs. Therefor, it identifies potential interest groups according to data quantified from 52 in-depth, open ended interviews, and clustered by their preferences via K-means cluster analysis. These interest group clusters are placed in the context of governance structures in Galapagos. The analysis uses the Intercultural Outreach Initiative (IOI) on Isabela Island as a case study to examine how third-party actors, like NGOs, can influence interactions between government and society to increase conservation policy effectiveness in Galapagos.
It is hypothesized that a) after reforms in governance structures, governing institutions are facing substantial distrust from the local population; b) that NGOs no longer face this problem as they are no longer involved in policymaking; and c) thus, NGOs can serve as a mediator, bridging communication and trust gaps between governing institutions and local society.

3.2.1. The Socio-Political History of Governance in Galapagos

Galapagos is divided into two primary administrative sections – protected and urban areas. Until the mid 20th century, Ecuador’s plan for the Galapagos was to solidify its sovereign claim on the Islands and to make the lands habitable (Hennessey and McCleary 2011). After scientific explorations by the IUCN and UNESCO, the Galapagos National Park (GNP) was created between 1959 and 1968, protecting 97% of the total land area. In 1986, the Galapagos Marine Reserve (GMR) added the submarine environment to the protected area. Four small urban and rural human-use zones were established in San Cristobal, Santa Cruz, Isabela, and Floreana Islands, governed by Municipal administrations. Around the same time, the Charles Darwin Foundation (CDF) was established to provide scientific support to the National Park (Reck 2017). In addition, there are a plethora of civil organizations influencing the governance process in the archipelago.

Until the 1970s, few people lived in or visited the islands, and basic human needs and the environment existed in relative harmony. This equilibrium was upset with a boom in commercial fishing (shark fins, sea cucumbers, and lobsters) and increased travel in the 80s and 90s. Fishery stocks came under severe pressure from overexploitation, and flourishing tourism began to cause human migration and the introduction of invasive
species, which are the top threat to conservation to this day (Watkins and Cruz 2007). From 1970 to 2010, population 10-folded from ~2,500 to 25,000, and it is projected to pass the 33,000 inhabitants mark in 2019 (Epler 2007, INEC 2010, INEC 2018).

Tourism numbers have increased even more, rising from under 10,000 on 4-5 so-called floating hotels (cruise ships) in the early 70s, to 122,450 in 2005 (Epler 2007), to 241,800 in 2017 (Galapagos Observatory 2018).

The stark growth at the end of the 20th century dramatically altered the political and social landscapes in Galapagos. The “gold rush” of sea cucumber and lobster fisheries led to over-harvests and violent conflicts between residents, migrants, and policy makers (Meltzoff 2013), while the presence of a growing number of foreign guides, tourism operators, and NGOs ignited conflict between residents (insiders) and outsiders (foreigners) with conflicting world views and policy goals (Quiroga 2009).

Between overexploitation of natural resources and increasing tourism, ecosystems and public infrastructure alike came under severe pressure in the 1990s. Growing concerns over development and migration led the Ecuadorian government to pass a Special Law
for the Conservation and Sustainable Development of the Galapagos Province (LOREG\textsuperscript{32} – Spanish acronym) in 1998.\textsuperscript{33} The LOREG was the result of extensive negotiations between government officials, conservation NGOs, and residents, and it attempted to bring together the many stakeholder groups and their priorities for the archipelago’s future (Brewington 2011, Lu, Valdivia, Wolford 2013). The main achievement of this new law was limitations on immigration to Galapagos. Everyone living in the Galapagos in 1998 was grandfathered-in as a permanent resident. To obtain permanent residency thereafter, one had to be born in the islands or marry in, similar to sovereign countries. These new policies applied even to Ecuadorian nationals and leave no alternative routes to naturalization in the Galapagos.

Limiting migration to Galapagos helped to lower the trajectory of human impact on the islands. However, it did not solve the problems arising from multi-level, multi-competency, and often-competing administrative agencies. There remained a plethora of public and private institutions operating in Galapagos, influencing socio-economic and conservation policies (Watkins and Martinez 2009). Due to the complexity and relative power positions of politicians, scientists, NGOs, and civil society in Galapagos, competing interests frequently arise, resulting in turf wars and policy gridlock.

To more easily (and not exhaustively) display these competing agents, Brewington (2011) adapted Blaikie’s (1995) political ecology framework for grouping Galapagos

\textsuperscript{32} LOREG = Ley Organico Regimen Especial de Galapagos.

\textsuperscript{33} For an in-depth account of the history of the National Park and, in particular, the Marine Reserve, see Reck (2014).
policy stakeholders groups in useful categories, summarizing their influence and objectives (see Table 3.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Position in political economy</th>
<th>Source of power</th>
<th>Interests and aims</th>
<th>Means to reach aims</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government organizations</td>
<td>Vertical structure, uneven access to tourism revenues, control over public works</td>
<td>Centralized Ecuadorian state</td>
<td>International funding and exchange</td>
<td>Laws and statutes, budgets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDF/CDRS and researchers</td>
<td>Inform national policy, exert local influence</td>
<td>Science as legitimacy</td>
<td>International recognition, policy development</td>
<td>Publications, networking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International conservation NGOs</td>
<td>Represent prestigious global initiatives, legitimized by environmental value</td>
<td>Donor funding, government partnerships</td>
<td>Protection against biodiversity loss</td>
<td>National and international awareness campaigns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galápagos residents</td>
<td>Varies: little to none (the poor, migrants) to significant (the wealthy, tourism operators)</td>
<td>Municipal representation, cooperatives and associations</td>
<td>Resource access, tourism development, goods and services</td>
<td>Varies: lobbying, poaching, voting, protests</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The structures and compositions of the respective groups and the respective stakeholders seem to be continuously changing. Since 2005, even the main government authority for the province has changed three times, emphasizing Ecuador’s general political instability (e.g., D’Orso 2014; Nash 2009). Since the “Citizen’s Revolution” of 2006, Correa was the longest sitting President in the history of Ecuador (until 2017), providing stability. Yet, the Galapagos Islands were (and still are) suffering continuous environmental degradation, formerly from extraction of natural resources, especially fisheries, and today from tourism – in part due to ineffective implementation of the LOREG and inadequate governance structures (Viteri and Chavez 2007; Hoyman and McCall 2012).

Since taking power in 2006, the socialists have drafted a new constitution (2008), revised the special law for Galapagos (2015), restructured the governing institutions of the
province (2009, 2014), and invested heavily into education and social development. These restructurings were necessary to bring the Galapagos back from its UNESCO status as a “threatened” World Heritage Site, a designation received in 2007 due to the ongoing environmental degradation (e.g., Watkins and Cruz 2007; Tapia, et al. 2009; UNESCO 2010).

Galapagos was historically fragmented in decision-making and centralization is a welcomed feature to combat institutional incompetency (Epler 2007). Some policies like healthcare, education, and immigration were made at a national level, while conservation and economics decisions were made at local level. This fragmentation has led to unchecked development and caused public perception to run in very different directions in different communities (Lu, Valdivia, and Wolford 2013).

The underlying issue has historically been that environmental and social policies have been treated as separate (Lu, Valdivia, and Wolford 2013). Thus, there was no vision shared among various stakeholder groups of how and why Galapagos should be protected or developed. Despite various calls for an integrated policy approach (e.g., Watkins, et al. 2008; Tapia, et al. 2009b, 2011; Castrejon, et al. 2014), the centralization of power was met with opposition from the freedom loving “pirates” of Galapagos (Constantino 2007; Meltzoff 2013). On the other hand, the Correa government has established many social programs under their policies of Buen Vivir, financed by exports of hydrocarbons (Escobar 2010).

After the democratic “Citizen’s Revolution” in Ecuador in 2006, and under the politics of the 21st century socialism regime lead by President Rafael Correa, the office of the Governor was “promoted” to the rank of a special Minister, giving way to centralist
tendencies. After the new constitution (2008) and in Correa’s second term in office, this centralist process was further advanced, and the Consejo de Gobierno (Government Council) replaced the highly complex INGALA structure in 2013. Accordingly, Galapagos no longer has a Governor, but a Minister for Galapagos affairs in charge of the Consejo.

Until this change, Galapagos was a “regular” province with a Governor representing the ultimate Central Government authority. The provincial government’s all-powerful executive branch was INGALA, the Galapagos National Institute, established in 1998 to govern the newly established LOREG. Amongst many other functions, INGALA was tasked with the enforcement of migration regulations and restrictions, as well as the study and mitigation of the impacts of introduced species related to the growing human presence and the creation of a development plan. It was an attempt to streamline the approach to conservation policy and management (Brewington 2011). Due to its complex structure with over 50 central and 9 local government agencies (see Appendix 7.2.1), INGALA had problems providing a unified vision and effective implementation of development and conservation objectives (Watkins and Martinez 2009).

In addition, there are three municipalities in Galapagos administering the counties of San Cristobal, Santa Cruz, and Isabela Islands. The municipalities are led by elected Mayors with four-year, once-renewable terms. The municipalities are in charge of public services and city ordinances such as building codes, waste management, water/sewer, infrastructure, energy, and urban roadways.

After the institutional reforms under Correa, the newly created structure under the Consejo eliminated conflicting multi-level competencies between socio-economic
regulations (under provincial control, INGALA) and other national authorities, for example, those involved in environmental management (Environmental Ministry). However, these reforms also took away Galapagos’ semi-autonomy granted by LOREG/INGALA due to the significant socio-economic and bio-geographical difference with the Ecuadorian mainland (Reck 2014).

After the implementation of the new constitution and the affirmation of the special governance regime in Galapagos (Llerena, et al. 2017), the national government centralized many of Galapagos’ government entities under the Ministry of Galapagos Affairs in 2015. The LOREG was reformed along with this administrative change. This centralization has resulted in an administrative push by the national government in Quito to implement the Socialist agenda in the far-flung region of the Galapagos Islands. Buen Vivir policies, as per the new 2008 constitution, adhered to a triple bottom line approach: protecting the environment while aiming at social equity and economic development (Villalba 2013).

The World Commission on Environment and Development defined sustainable development as development that meets the needs of today without taking away the ability of future generations to meet theirs (IIED 1987). The concept expanded development to mean more than economic development by including social and environmental dimensions. The concept became known as “the triple bottom line” (Delmas and Young 2009), leaning on the business term for what really matters to business, the bottom line (money).

The main implication of the sustainability discourses of the last 25 years has been that businesses should also adhere to a triple bottom line, building social and environmental
sustainability into their practices. While these goals can be difficult to combine in a world of neoliberal Globalization, sustainable development following the triple bottom line was easier to realize in the post-neoliberal agenda of the Socialism of the 21st Century (see also Chapter 4) and adhered to what was called for in the literature for years – an approach that no longer pitted nature against humans, but combined the two as the base for an integrated management approach in a socio-ecological system (Tapia, et al. 2009).

Administrative structures also changed substantially with regards to conservation policy. Before the reforms of 2015, the GNP and the GMR were separate entities, while the cities were administered by the municipalities under the watchful eye of INGALA and a “Jefe Politico,” a central government Ombudsman. After the reforms, GNP and GMR administration were merged under the GNP in the Ministry of Environment to be in charge of all protected areas (Llerena 2017). Previously, a new Agency for Biodiversity (ABG – Spanish Acronym) was formed in 2012 to protect and manage environmental aspects related to the urban areas (Cruz et al. 2017) as one of the first new agencies in the centralization process.

Along with the reform of the LOREG came a new management plan, “Plan Galapagos.” In the process of creating the plan, SENPLADES34 did a comprehensive analysis of the socio-environmental state of the province. The analysis pointed out that the development model for Galapagos was unsustainable due to negative impacts caused by human settlement. The main problems identified were low diversification of the economy, high dependence on the continent, low Internet connectivity, rapid urban development, low

34 SENPLADES = Spanish Acronym for National Secretariat of Central Planning and Development.
quality of public services, and a weak governance model that still did not respond dynamically to conditions of the archipelago (SENPLADES 2014). The impacts of this unsustainable development model were analyzed as high demand for growth in tourism, introduction of invasive species, biodiversity loss, changes in land use, habitat loss and fragmentation, degrading water quality and availability, and degradation of quality of life (IBID).

The newly implemented Management Plan, “Plan Galapagos”, has a time horizon of 5 years and replaces the previous Regional Conservation and Sustainable Development Plan (CGREG 2016). The vision of this plan and its management principles (see Figure 3.2) integrated the elements of sustainable development:

“A peaceful territory whose inhabitants are committed to the conservation of their natural heritage, where the population and nature can exercise their constitutional rights of Buen Vivir; interculturality is encouraged, and fair and equitable access to the use and exploitation of natural resources according to the biophysical limits of the Archipelago is guaranteed, with a management and governance approach that establishes Galapagos as a national and international model of sustainable development (translated from CGREG 2016).”

Plan Galapagos is designed to ensure social welfare (under the Buen Vivir concept, see also Chapter 4) as well as long-term conservation for the islands (Rousseaud, et al. 2017). It is thus addressing the long-standing calls for an integrated management approach that does not separate human and environmental well-being, but instead considers Galapagos as a holistic socio-ecosystem that allows for sustainable resource exploitation and agriculture, while protecting the environment and generating socio-economic benefits for the local population.
Notably, the new management plan and the revised LOREG omit participatory management, a key element of governance during the previous 17 years of its regime (Llerena 2017). Lu, Valdivia, and Wolford (2013) show how attempts to resolve crisis through mechanisms of participatory governance were complicated by the variety of ways in which people defined each of the main concerns. They find that environmental management is about relationships among those invested in living and making a living in a given space.

Accordingly, citizen participation, a key element of society under the Buen Vivir concept as well as historically in Galapagos (see also section 2.a.iii), is still an important part of
governance in Galapagos, recognized under both the inclusive approach of the Plan Galapagos and in Art 3, Principle 4 of the LOREG.35

3.2.2. International Influence and Centralization

Apart from the official political structures in place, governance in the Galapagos has long been influenced by NGOs. Cairns (2013) pointed out three emerging directions for future policy development in Galapagos: 1) an international responsibility for protection, 2) a socially equitable distribution of income, and 3) sustainable development balancing the needs between growth and environmental protection. The first direction makes the case for handing control of policy-making to International nonprofit organizations such as the Charles Darwin’s foundation (as discussed later in this section). The second is reflected in the Socialist agenda of the current government of Socialism in the 21st Century in Ecuador, as discussed in the previous section. The third emerging discourse seems to be guiding the discussions around conservation policy development in the Galapagos Islands (cf. Chapter 2).

Due to the unique bio-geographical features of Galapagos, the global community historically has had a special interest in the islands (Quiroga 2009a). Often NGOs “become in general an element of mediation between social interests and political regulations” (Zürn 2006: 39). In Galapagos, however, while many assistance organizations are present and active in the archipelago, the non-profit sector is uniquely involved in policy creation and has a two-fold problem preventing it from taking on this

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35 “Citizen participation: Citizens, individually and collectively, will participate in a leading way in decision-making, planning and management of the Special Regime of Galapagos, in accordance with the Constitution and the law” (Llerena 2017:107).
mediating role\textsuperscript{36}: 1) It is very unidirectional in purpose. The majority of non-profits come to Galapagos to protect the unique environment (see Table 3.2 and Figure 3.3). Their perspective and discourse revolve around science, tourism, conservation, and how to integrate the three to minimize human impact on the archipelago (Quiroga 2013). Neumann calls this “fortress-style” conservation (2005). 2) The non-profit sector and its research are suffering because they are outsiders, are therefore considered only partially trustworthy by the local community, and thus do not receive reliable data (Quiroga and Ospina 2009).

\textit{Table 3. 2 International assistance in Galapagos 2007-13 by sector (Source: SETECI 2014)}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTOR DE INTERVENCION SEGUN SENPLADES</th>
<th>NUMERO DE PROYECTOS</th>
<th>PORCENTAJE</th>
<th>MONTO PROVINCIAL DE COOPERACION</th>
<th>PORCENTAJE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMBIENTE</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>$62,929,127,09</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENERGIA</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>$52,873,357,25</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROTECCION SOCIAL Y FAMILIAR</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>$3,512,619,67</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRODUCCION</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>$3,505,508,80</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SALUD</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>$953,504,74</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUCACION</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>$467,359,06</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JUSTICIA</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>$383,897,16</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CULTURA</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>$372,594,83</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INFORMACION</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>$150,000,00</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TELECOMUNICACIONES</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>$123,760,97</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEPORTE</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>$62,911,56</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASUNTOS INTERNOS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>$4,890,73</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EQUIPAMIENTO URBANO Y VIVIENDA</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>$3,200,00</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total general</strong></td>
<td><strong>134</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>$125,342,731,86</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{36} See chapter 2 for a suggestion of a new (mediating) role for NGOs in Galapagos.
Conservation NGOs and institutions have become the arbiters over everyday life in the islands, often retreating to ideological absolutes (Brewington 2011). Thus, at the height of their influence in Galapagos policy-making, NGOs faced resentment by the local population similar to that felt by the national government in Quito since exerting more centralized influence on the province (Shaw 2015). Between 2007 and 2013, 50% of the funds from international conservation NGOs operating in Galapagos were dedicated to protecting the unique environment (see Table 3. 2). Under the new administration, this percentage has risen to 82.83% from 2014-2017 (Cancilleria 2018). Remarkably, of the 26.5 million dollars contributed by NGOs in this most recent timeframe, 97.76% have come from the United States.

NGOs, thus, have also contributed millions of dollars to the Galapagos economy, contributing 8% to income growth between 1999 and 2005 (Taylor et al. 2006). Between 2007 and 2013, international assistance projects contributed over 125 million SUS to the Galapagos economy (see Table 3. 3). Of this sum, 14% were contributed by NGOs.
Table 3.3: Types and Volumes of international assistance in Galapagos 2007 – 2013 (Source: SETECI 2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FUENTE DE COOPERACIÓN</th>
<th>NUMERO DE PROYECTOS</th>
<th>MONTO PROVINCIAL DE COOPERACIÓN</th>
<th>PORCENTAJE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BILATERAL</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>$74,959,308,14</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MULTILATERAL</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>$30,670,931,32</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONGD</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>$17,512,492,40</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MULTIDONANTES</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$2,200,000,00</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total general</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>$125,342,731,86</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While projects were formerly executed directly in Galapagos via agreements with INGALA, since 2013 SETECI has operated as the central agency supervising all foreign assistance projects nationwide, including Galapagos. After another reform, they are now part of the Cancilleria (under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility), working in the same capacity.

Whereas Non-Governmental Organizations per definition independently cover sectors of public services in which a government does not or cannot sufficiently provide, in Ecuador, centralization has taken the concept ad absurdum. Under the control of the Cancilleria, international NGOs in Ecuador must comply with the government’s 2013 national plan for development\textsuperscript{37} of the Planning and Development Secretariat (SENPLADES – Spanish Acronym), which is directly serving the office of the President.\textsuperscript{38}

In an attempt to reign in money laundering from drug trafficking (for which many of the ~5,000 NGOs in Ecuador were used), the SETECI introduced a rigorous nation-wide control regime for NGOs in Ecuador. This regime ensures that “NGO actions correspond

\textsuperscript{37} Plan de Desarrollo Nacional para el Buen Vivir.
\textsuperscript{38} For a graphic display of the complicated structure of Government in Ecuador see Appendix 7.2.2.
to national planning priorities and that funds are channeled according to pre-set for goals and have to be accounted for annually. All projects must focus on mining, environment, education and human talent, public health and safety, and productive sector development”39 (El Comercio 2018). While these rules arguably thereby give the international assistance sector more structure and their projects local relevance, they also semi-governmentalize NGOs, directly serving the centrally planned government agenda.

Money laundering via NGOs in Galapagos is arguably limited due to geographic isolation and specific focus on environmental protection. Regardless, the national SETECI rules apply in Galapagos as well, and the government appreciated their new power to limit foreign policy meddling in their sovereign territory, as had happened for over 50 years in Galapagos. In trying to create a more functional system of governance in Galapagos, the Consejo started to implement and enforce stricter rules on NGOs in 2014. At the time of their analysis, SETECI found over 100 actors involved in international assistance projects in Galapagos (SETECI 2014).

Leaving an ethical discussion about governmental intervention in the non-profit sector aside, the new SETECI control regime has had significant effects on the NGO community in Ecuador and in Galapagos. Of the ~5,000 NGOs in the country, nationwide only about 200 “survived” the rigid controls. In Galapagos, where the majority of international assistance projects were executed by NGOs (see Figure 3.4), their numbers were reduced to 36 contributing organizations, of which 7 maintain offices in the islands.

39 Contextual translation from Spanish.

The most influential of these international NGOs in Galapagos are the Charles Darwin Foundation (CDF) and its local office, the Charles Darwin Research Station (CDRS). The CDF collaborates with national and international scientific institutions and, amongst many other functions, provides reports to the government regarding conservation in the islands (Reck 2017). When the National Park was established, it was severely understaffed and the advisory role of the CDRS was essential to the development of conservation protocols. Per the LOREG, the CDF was also authorized to provide advisory support to INGALA at a provincial level (see Figure 3. 5; cf. Brewington 2011).

The CDF is the longest standing, most exposed, and most public NGO in Galapagos, with abundant literature documenting their actions (e.g., Reck 2017). Thus, they stand as proxy for the NGO sector for the purpose of this introduction.
The CDF effectively has been in the lead on conservation efforts in Galapagos from the mid-20th century into the early 2000s and has had major input into Galapagos policymaking. They have been the scientific advisor to the government for decades, have worked on the special law for Galapagos, have worked with the park on regulations, carrying capacities, catch limits, and eradication programs, and have even branched out into education (Watkins and Cruz 2007; Epler 2007; Reck 2014).

Their work, however, has often been resented in the local population, a response representative of local feelings towards science and international meddling in local policy at large in Galapagos (cf. Chapter 2). When they created scientific knowledge about the environment to guide environmental policy, they were accused of being against local human wellbeing (NPR 2005; Barber and Ospina 2009; MacDonald 2009). When they started environmental education programs, they were accused of brainwashing the public.
for their own benefits by stealing money through fundraising (Quiroga 2009). And when the organization recently re-focused on its core competency, science at the Charles Darwin Station in Santa Cruz, retreating from social projects and education and withdrawing its presence on other islands, it was accused of not caring about the community. The influence of the CDF in conservation policy has been met with skepticism and outright opposition from the beginning, declining significantly after the implementation of restricting regulation in the wake of the LOREG (see Figure 3.6).

Figure 3.6 Index of positive institutional image (Source: Barber and Ospina 2009b)

The local perception of CDF is that it is tightly integrated with foreign interests that are involved in policy making in the archipelago. During the time that the CDF had a large amount of influence in Galapagos policy, they spent a lot of local credibility by focusing too much on environmental conservation and not enough on human development (Castrejon, et al. 2013). This perception manifested in resentment of the local population about their role as second-class citizens, less important than a tortoise (Quiroga 2009; Brewington 2011). By the time the CDF and social sciences in general began to realize
that social and economic development were integral components of environmental conservation, the organization already had lost too much credibility to recover (Castrejon, et al. 2013).

The CDF’s first report on socioeconomics in Galapagos came out in 2007 (Watkins and Cruz), which coincided with two negative externalities that added to the demise of their influence in public policy. With the economic crisis of 2008, they slid into severe financial trouble, having to scale back everything but their core competency, scientific research (Personal Conversation with Swen Lorenz, then Director of CDF).

Simultaneously, the political winds in Quito changed, and foreign assistance was no longer as readily welcomed (Reck 2017). After a difficult decade with an emergency overhead cost fundraiser campaign in 2015 (AboutGalapagos 2018), the CDF is back on the public stage in Galapagos with a renewed long-term Government advising contract in 2016 (CDF 2018).

The criticism and headwind above notwithstanding, NGOs do fulfill an important role. Despite their absolute values for public perceptions being low, their scores are high relative to institutions in general (Barber and Ospina 2008). This general mistrust in institutions goes beyond the foreign-local dichotomy. Barber and Ospina (2008) show Galapagos institutions relative to attributes ascribed to public institutions by the local public. The CDF comes out on top of all institutions examined for all positive attributes (see Figure 3. 7). Interestingly, their former closest partner INGALA comes out at the exact opposite side of the spectrum, ranking lowest. Thus, they were replaced by a new agency.
This chapter will assess how NGOs\textsuperscript{40} in the Galapagos fare under the new local administrative structures and how they are perceived by and interact with the local public.

3.2.3. Civil Society and Island Culture in Galapagos

In the early days of the triple bottom line concept of sustainable development, economic and ecological goals were focused on to the exclusion of societal development (Vallega 2007). As described above, Galapagos was no exception. Under the new management approach of the Plan Galapagos, social equity was a novel component in official policy. Vallega (2007) furthermore states that the more local culture is respected, the more equity is guaranteed. Culture is often associated with indigenous populations (\textit{e.g.}, Vallega 2007; Grenier 2013). Galapagos does not have an indigenous population, nor does it

\textsuperscript{40} IOI is used as the case study and serves as a proxy for the sector analysis in this chapter.
qualify for any of the eight other criteria for island culture (Grenier 2013). Nevertheless, social movements are plentiful around various issues in Galapagos civil society, which has developed its own identity (Barber and Ospina 2009c; Ramos Chalen 2015). Civil society is defined here as a political arena where groups of society seek to shape societal rules outside of the realm of the political parties and process (Scholte 2011). These groups include non-profit organizations, the family, and the private sphere.

While showing distinct signs of local pride, existing civil society in Galapagos has been described as full of negative attitudes where most residents have a negative view of social interactions among Galapagueños. Roughly 75% of Galapagueños have the desire to live in Galapagos their entire lives. Yet, over 60% think that locals are too selfish, and almost 79% don’t trust in their fellow citizens due to the large amount of gossip in the Islands. (Barber and Ospina 2009c).

The absence of a common cultural heritage might be the reason behind a general lack of trust in Galapagos. Only 37% of Galapagos permanent residents were actually born in the islands (Ramos Chalen 2015). While only less than 2% are foreign born, 61% come from various other provinces of Ecuador. As Ecuador is a very diverse country with very different cultures in different regions, these heritage groups often have little in common.

Despite the differences among its residents, Galapagos is developing its own island culture. Ramos Chalen (2015) defines culture as “the combination of material and immaterial elements that determine the way of life of a community as a whole, including practices, social patterns, language, and social, economic, political and religious systems.” Island residents appreciate living in Galapagos, due to its tranquility, the beauty of the surroundings, and favorable conditions of public safety and employment –
especially when pitted against living in mainland Ecuador. According to Ramos Chalen (2015), the resulting culture displays social patterns that appreciate non-motorized modes of transportation, respect nature, have favorable attitudes towards sustainability, and engage in the political process.

Social patterns, which collectively form a culture in any given society, are furthermore the habits, morals, and beliefs that are acquired from being part of that society. In Galapagos, citizen participation is an important part of the emerging culture. A high percentage of the Galapagueños believe that participation is important for the archipelago. Between 2002 and 2012, 65.7% of the population had contributed to a civil society organization, and 84% had participated in a form of civil activism (Zapata 2013). It is not surprising that 87% agree that social and environmental programs of public institutions are improved by civil participation, and 75% agree that only civil participation can create social change. As a result, interest in supporting any particular cause is generally high (58%), yet distinctly highest in Isabela (76%) (IBID). This willingness to participate does not translate into a greater willingness to accept (environmental) regulation, however (Barber and Ospina 2009; Shaw 2015).

Galapagos culture has traditionally held an ambivalent attitude towards the global discourse of conservation (cf. Chapter 2). Environmental protection was often circumvented, in protest of rules created by global influences outside the local civil society, to ensure human well-being (cf. Chapter 4). However, while Galapagos local society resents that in the past little has been done to support them as legitimate denizens of the islands, the need for environmental protection is becoming recently more understood and appreciated. (Quiroga 2013).
Galapagos society has been divided on the issue of the influence of conservation and
science in the civil sphere. The political fault line lies mostly between economic
development and conservation (Quiroga 2009 and 2013). Support for science and
conservation comes primarily from international pro-conservation groups, while local,
pro-business development/extraction groups oppose their influence in policy (Brewington
2011). To the local community and the local polity, science institutions in Galapagos
(i.e., conservation NGOs) do not only inform conservation decisions; locals also contend
that conservation is the reason science is done, is the raison d’etre for international NGOs
in Galapagos (Barber and Ospina 2008b).

Outside of the professional parts of civil society, the NGOs, the best-organized and most
powerful civil organizations historically have formed around the fishing cooperatives.
This very strong lobby group completely dominated the public domain in the 90s and into
the 2000s, and, while weakened by the decline in fisheries, is still a strong force in local
civil society. Any attempts to limit fisheries for whatever conservation, sustainability, or
governability purposes were opposed and have resulted often in violent contestation by
other parts of civil society (MacDonald 2009).

Apart from the fishing COOPs, Watkins and Martinez (2009) identified a plethora of
additional commercial organizations, including transportation cooperatives, trade and
tourism associations, and credit unions; identity and community associations, including
indigenous, sports, and cultural; and educational and religious institutions that represent
the various interest groups within Galapagos society. At first glance, counter to Barber
and Ospina’s (2008, 2009) analyses of institutions mentioned in the previous section,
Zapata (2013) finds a high level of trust in civil society. The difference can be explained
by distinguishing public institutions and civil society and the fact that Zapata (2013)
includes the family as a civil society group. Family (88.7%) and the educational system
(42.6%) were shown to have the highest level of trust among civil society groups (Zapata
2013). The National Park (34.4%), NGOs (30.7%), and citizen groups (30.6%) all come
in around the 30% range. Neighbors (24.1%), Religious Groups (27.7%) and local NGOs
(25.5%) score in the 20% range. Trust in national, provincial, and local governing
institutions was shown to be lowest, scoring under 18%.

Formerly, violent contestation has been against the international conservation community
(NGOs) and the restrictions imposed on the (local) extractive sector. Its low approval
rating for the national government can now be seen in the streets. Despite the inclusive
and on-paper sustainable nature of the new Plan Galapagos, the reforms again sparked
violent contestation in Galapagos (Shaw 2015). As described in Zapata (2013), civil
society took seriously their role overseeing institutional abuse in the dichotomy of human
development against environmental protection. This time, however, roles were reversed.
While civil society protested limits on resource exploitation during the reforms in the late
1990s, contestation during the 2015 reforms protested the expansion of the tourism sector
(by non-local entities) in Galapagos (Shaw 2015).\footnote{With the 2014 decline of crude prices to $30 a barrel, the Socialist Government had run out of funding for their extensive redistribution plans (Plan Nacional de Desarrollo del Buen Vivir), which were developed when the oil price was at $140 a barrel and calculated “conservatively” at a rate of $100 a barrel. With the main source of international currency so reduced, tourism was to serve as a replacement. Galapagos, as the biggest tourist attraction of the country, was to be exploited via rents from foreign and national investment in the local tourism industry, footing the bill for national development.}
3.3. Methods

This chapter uses a mixed method approach within the overarching Political Ecology framework to assess the interactions of local interest groups that make up the socio-political fabric of a given place must be understood to make impactful conservation interventions. Here, both quantitative analysis and qualitative assessment of stakeholder interests, concerns, and daily activities are used to provide rich insight for assessing relations between humans and the environment (Brewington 2011). In-depth analysis of local civil society and its interaction with conservation policies and the respective governing institutions will deepen the understanding of how to increase compliance with existing and future regulation. Thus, the unit of analysis for this chapter is the domestic level to understand how civil society, government, and outside influences interact in the national policy sphere.42

To understand civil society in Galapagos, this chapter analyses data quantified from an ethnographic dataset, assessing differing local perspectives to identify interest groups. This qualitative dataset was generated through 52 in-depth, open-ended interviews with members of different sectors of local civil society, including local governing institution and NGO staff, the extractive and tourism sectors, and formal and non-formal community leaders (see Appendix 7.1.1). The hand-written notes were transcribed electronically, ordered by content topics, and translated into English, if held in another language.43 The electronic data were summarized into life-work histories (LWH) of the interviewees to classify individuals into groups. The raw qualitative data thus provided the content for an

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42 Borrowing from Waltz (1959), there are three levels of analysis: 1) within individuals; 2) within the structure of individual states; and 3) within the structure of the interstate system (cf. section 1.2.4);
43 These interviews were held in German, English, and Spanish.
extensive chart (see Appendix 7.1.8), in which the data were “quantitized” (cf. Maxwell 2010; Onwuegbuzie, et al. 2011) by ascribing Likert-scale ratings to the participants’ statements which was the base for statistically testing the results of the analysis via JMP Pro v14.

The chart revealed a total of 47 relevant independent variables (IV) that were used in the analyses. Of these, 38 were completed by all respondents, creating 1976 data points. The other 9 variables were specific to certain previously identified subsets of the participants, creating a complete dataset with 2224 data points. 18 variables were quantified into continuous values, 14 of which were independent.

Eight independent variables were identified as being relevant to policies regarding conservation vs human/economic development. K-means cluster analysis was used to identify how many groups would be ideal to display the dataset – that is, into how many interest groups to separate the respondents statistically. K-means cluster analysis calculates the mean of all variables and calculates an individual’s distance from the group average, the center of a given cluster. Depending on the number of clusters in the analysis, it will calculate the shortest average distance to as many centers, thereby clustering respondents into groups. The analysis was run for two to ten groups.

The groups were then analyzed for their differences and shared values with regards to the 8 policy-relevant variables used in the cluster analysis. A Tukey’s HSD test was run post-hoc to assess among group differences for each variable.

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44 1) trust in politics (local governance institutions); 2) trust in the work of the PNG (national governance institutions); 3) trust in IOI (NGOs); 4) opinion of public services; 5) pro-conservation mentality; 6) anti-immigration sentiment; 7) pro-growth mentality; 8) pro-airport mentality;
This analysis was correlated with interactions between governing institutions, NGOs, and civil society in relation to environmental policy creation, implementation, and compliance.

3.4. Results

3.4.1. Governing Institutions

In line with the literature (Zapata 2013), the dataset created for this research shows that society in Isabela still does not fully trust its governing institutions after the reforms of 2015. As a proxy for governance at the municipal level, in charge of infrastructure and urban regulation in the 3% of non-protected land area in Galapagos, the dataset included a Likert scale evaluation of trust in their local politics with 1 being minimal trust and 5 being fully trusting (see Figure 3. 8). Trust in local politics less than neutral, with a mean of 2.5±1.21. In other words, 46% of the participants had an at least somewhat not trustworthy perception of their local government.45

45 Of the 52 participants in the dataset, 49 (94%) were living in Isabela, and 48 (92%) had permanent residency in Galapagos. Thus, when referring to “locals” or “local society”, this paper refers to residents of Isabela Island.
Figure 3. 8 Level of trust in local government on 1-5 Likert-type scale; 1 = low; 5 = high

The participants’ perceptions of the quality of public services, fully administered at the county level by the municipalities, further demonstrate this dissatisfaction.\textsuperscript{46} 61% of the participants held a less than neutral attitude toward local public services, with a mean of 2.23±1.1 (see Figure 3. 9). In combination, these results show a low level of trust in the local governance.

\textsuperscript{46} Public Services defined here as Water, Sewer, Public Infrastructure Development, Waste Management, and Code Enforcement.
Figure 3.9 Perception of quality of public services provided by the local government (GADMI) on 1-5 Likert-type scale (water, sewer, waste management, infrastructure development, code enforcement); 1=terrible; 5=great

Participant perception of the National Park (PNG – Spanish acronym) is representative of their feelings toward governance at the national level. The PNG is trusted more on average by the local population than is the local administration. However, with a mean of 2.75±1.34 and with 50% having a less than neutral opinion of their work, the local population still holds an overall negative perception of the PNG (see Figure 3.10).
Several accounts detailed by participants paint a clear picture of where this negative attitude stems from, historically and locally, in Isabela (cf. Chapter 4 for qualitative, ethnographic analysis of local society in the context of global forces influencing policy-making in Galapagos). These results, “quantitized” from the dataset (cf. section 1.2.1; Maxwell 2010; Onwuegbuzie, et al. 2011)), reflect the general sentiment stated in the literature about disconnects between governance and society, as described in the background section above.

3.4.2. NGOs and Civil Society

This chapter hypothesizes that NGOs can serve as a mediator between institutions of governance and local society. Accordingly, IOI’s relation towards the governing institutions (upward mediation potential, UMP) and its influence in local society
(downward mediation potential, DMP) were tested, assuming that potential mediation can only happen in a relationship that is interactive, positive, and trusting.  

There are no variables relating to UMP in the dataset. However, an analysis of IOI’s organizational documents shows that they have long-standing legal agreements mutually respected and publicly recognized by the governing institutions in the Galapagos. Since the changes in governance structures in 2015, IOI has worked with all governing institutions represented in Isabela. Projects have ranged from infrastructure development at the municipal and provincial administration levels to research with the PNG, from medical clinics in cooperation with the Ministry of Public Health to veterinarian campaigns with the ABG and technical support in the Agriculture and Fishery sectors under the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAG – Spanish Acronym). These successful collaborative projects demonstrate high UMP.

The dataset indicates that IOI’s work in the community has a direct, positive influence on public perceptions of institutions in Isabela. IOI’s focus group had a significantly higher trust in the work of IOI than the non-focus group. The focus group also had a significantly higher trust in the PNG and a significantly increased perception of the quality of public services (all p<0.05) (see Figure 3. 1). Further, the general population (not part of the focus group) has a higher mean level of trust in IOI (3.61±1.17) than it

47 Whereas, in the background section of this chapter, the CDF stood proxy for the NGO sector due to the availability of historical accounts in the literature, IOI stands proxy for the NGO sector in the results section. IOI has been the only NGO that maintains offices in Isabela Island for almost 10 years at the time of this writing. Since 94% of the participants were residents in Isabela at the time of the research, it can be assumed that they were referring to IOI when talking about the sector, when not explicitly stated otherwise.

48 For more information on IOI’s work with public institutions in Galapagos, see also IOI (2018b): https://www.ioi.ngo/biodiversity-protection/
does in its governing institutions (2.3±1.24 for local and 2.27±1.26 for national level).

These results indicate that IOI also has high DMP.

Figure 3.1 Comparison of trust in governing institutions between general public (n) and members of IOI's focus group (y), on 1-5 Likert-type scale; 1 = low; 5 = high. Asterisk indicate significant differences among groups.

3.4.3. Civil Society in Isabela

A K-cluster analysis, run with 8 policy relevant variables (see footnote 44), split the dataset into four interest group clusters49 with an optimal CCC value of -0.9351 (see Figure 3.12).

49 The clusters are 1) Public Sector, 2) Sustainable Business Community, 3) Workforce, 4) Expansionary Business Community; (see section 3.5.3)
Figure 3.12 Biplot of K-means test showing 4 clusters separating the dataset cleanly using the variables detailed in footnote 44, see Appendix 7.2.3 for statistical detail.

Analysis of the four identified clusters showed correlations between 2 distinct sets of variables, one set of variables regarding policy making institutions (variables 1-4 in footnote 44) and one set of variables assessing personal behavior and opinions (variables 5-8 in footnote 44).

These results can be displayed with a qualitative nomenclature for easier accessibility, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. 5 qualitative nomenclature for interest group cluster analysis. High indicates a mean value >3.5; medium indicates a mean of 2.5 to 3.5; and low indicates a mean <2.5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster</th>
<th>Trust in policy making institutions</th>
<th>Behavior and Opinions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>trust in local politics</td>
<td>trust in PNG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 1</td>
<td>medium</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 2</td>
<td>low</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 3</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 4</td>
<td>low</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The valuation is derived from the values around the Likert scale underlying the dataset. *Medium* indicates a mean value around the neutral valuation of 3 (between 2.5 and 3.5). Valuations above 3.5 are denominated *high*, and below 2.5, *low*.

In relation to the set of variables regarding policy-making institutions and public services, Figure 3.13 shows clusters 1 and 3 having distinctly higher trust in institutions\(^{50}\) than clusters 2 and 4. All clusters show relatively high trust in NGOs and relatively low perception of quality of public services.

![Figure 3.13](image)

*Figure 3.13 Comparison of the four interest group clusters and their trust in policy-making institutions on 1-5 Likert-type scale; 1 = low; 5 = high. Letters indicate significant differences among clusters.*

The variables related to personal behaviors and opinions, displayed in Figure 3.14, show clusters 1 and 2 having distinctly higher conservation related values and distinctly lower (economic) growth related values\(^{51}\).

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\(^{50}\) Referring back to Waltz’s images (cf. section 1.2.4), the displayed variables refer to: politics = local government/first image; PNG = national government/second image; NGO = global institution/third image; conservation related values = Pro-conservation mentality and being against immigration; Growth related values = Pro-growth mentality and pro-airport construction;
3.5. Discussion

Socialism of the 21st Century reformed the governance structure of Galapagos. The new and streamlined structures are more centralized, submitting the formerly largely independent province to more control from Quito and removing much of the policymaking influence of NGOs. However, these reforms also brought Buen Vivir concepts to the administration of Galapagos, implementing the triple bottom line principles of sustainable development: respecting social, environmental, and economic development alike.

Addressing Buen Vivir considerations in the management of the archipelago, Plan Galapagos, a reformed integrative management plan for the province, attempts to provide a construct to adequately balance human and environmental needs. However, successfully addressing the rapid changes facing the archipelago requires continuing intensive and expensive research efforts. In the past, most baselines were obtained for
environmental factors only. Also, they were assessed by foreign institutions, namely NGOs. This foreign influence in national policy making was largely revoked in the 2015 reforms (cf. 3.2.2).

Including human development and resulting new forms exploitation of natural resources (i.e. Ecotourism) as part of the triple bottom line approach to new policy requires initial and ongoing research, communication of results, and funding. As research capacities and funding of the Ecuadorian central government are limited, international cooperation for funding and expertise, through highly regulated foreign assistance agreements, was embraced. Thus, there is substantial opportunity for the NGO sector to support sustainable development in Galapagos through new routes.

3.5.1. Sustainable Governance

Considering the prevalent complaints by local society that social development was not respected, and that policy focus was only on environmental protection, suppressing local economic development (e.g., Quiroga 2009; Brewington 2011), the inclusiveness of a triple bottom line approach should have been welcomed by local society. However, a comparison of the literature and the data show that local society has barely reacted to the various changes in governance structures over the past decade. As shown in Figure 3.15, Isabela society’s trust in its governing institutions is basically unchanged in 2018, three years after Plan Galapagos went into effect, from what it was before (Barber and Ospina 2008) and after the new constitution went into effect in 2008 (Barber and Ospina 2009), and before the reforms of 2015 (Zapata 2013), as shown in Figure 3.15.

52 PNG: representing national institutions; GAD: representing local institutions; NGOs: CDF 2006-2013; IOI 2018;
One notable exception is trust in the NGOs measured in this study. While the literature consistently has found public trust in NGOs to hover around 30%, these data show a marked increase in local perceptions regarding this category of institutions, with 50% of respondents holding positive attitudes toward IOI. While the literature focused on other communities in Galapagos, the increase in public trust in NGOs found in this study in Isabela likely is indicative of the changing public perceptions surrounding the role of these foreign institutions.

In the past, NGOs, via their influence in policymaking, were perceived arbiters over everyday life in the islands, often seen as making decisions by ideological absolutes based in global conceptualizations (Brewington 2011). Along with the centralization of the governing structures came an apparent disempowering of NGOs in Ecuador at large, but specifically in Galapagos, where their influence had been exceptionally high (see section 3.2.2). This disempowerment may prove a positive turning point. The results of
this study suggest that with direct policymaking off the table, local society has gained trust in the NGO sector, which may open doors for new alliances.

Further, after having done extensive studies (SENPLADES 2014), the government, realizing that they were short on funding and expertise, has also embraced regulated but strongly backed international contracts with NGOs. Thus, while the NGO sector has been substantially reduced in numbers and must follow tight content and financial controls, there is nevertheless substantial opportunity for the NGO sector to support sustainable development in Galapagos through cooperation with governing institutions.

In fact, working with the governing institutions while increasing the level of trust from local society, NGOs have a unique socio-political opportunity to act as a mediator and communicator between the governing institutions and local society.

3.5.2. NGOs as Mediators between Government and Society

The newly stable national government, advancing an agenda dedicated to the triple bottom line, aiming to promote social, environmental, and economic prosperity, is an essential structure for nonprofit organizations, local civil society, and lower levels of government to function properly. Under the Plan Galapagos, the knowledge and experience of the international community (as embodied by the NGOs in Galapagos) is being leveraged to inform the government, as well as to help them execute projects and achieve national development goals.

Here lies a huge opportunity for the non-profit sector. No longer directly involved in policymaking, NGOs can act as intermediaries, educators, and mediators between the governing institutions and society. The government relies on the sector enough that they
use them to execute their centralist socialism agenda and achieve national development goals (cf. section 3.2.2). This standing gives the NGOs knowledge about as well as influence in the development process, and they are in a position to do quality control. Despite this insider position, the sector is now perceived as an executive rather than as a legislative agent and has thus gained substantial trust within local society. In Galapagos, this trust provides a huge opportunity for NGOs to branch beyond their historical focus on science and environmental protection and contribute to sustainability across the entire triple bottom line.

In general, and in Galapagos in particular, natural sciences have attempted to quantify details of nature into objective truths. Certain parts of social sciences however, posit that nature and all other concepts are a constructed reality (e.g., Neumann 2005), in which case each person creates reality for him or herself using the best information available. Thus, I believe that communication and education are key elements of a sustainable Galapagos and are an important niche for NGOs in Galapagos. As Science cannot inform policy alone (CDF & WWF 2002), and one of the five main perceived problems in Galapagos is lack of environmental education and awareness (Lu, Valdivia, and Wolford 2013), communication and education about the environment and the science underlying conservation policy are the most important factors for local compliance (Viteri and Chavez 2007).

IOI, the only permanent NGO in Isabela Island and the only one in Galapagos that focuses on local societal needs to address conservation (Cancilleria 2018), has taken such a communication and education role. IOI runs a “Multi-level Community Interaction Program (MCIP)” that combines several aspects of personal and economic development,
involves the participants in IOI’s conservation work with government institutions, and provides cultural and environmental education for a broader understanding of human-environmental interactions (see Chapter 4 for a detailed description and analysis of this work). The results of this work are significant. As shown in section 3.4.2, the members of this focus group have increased levels of trust in the work of the PNG, NGOs, and a higher perception of the quality of public services on average.

Qualitative analysis of the data indicates that the higher scores in the focus group can be attributed to the increased exposure and information the participants receive through their involvement in the MCIP. The environmental education part of the program increases understanding of underlying natural processes, helping to create a greater appreciation for the work of the PNG and the importance of conservation policy. The exposure to an NGO, through the interactions of working together and being part of the MCIP, creates a sense of belonging.

Through years of direct participatory interaction in Isabela, IOI is seen as a local organization. Thus, the alienation effect of a foreign institution is bridged (see Chapter 4 for more on localization of global influences) and trust is created through the active involvement with and the resulting transparency of the organization.

Trust in the local politics is not significantly higher in the MCIP participants (p=0.1817). While it is conceivable that recent disagreements between IOI and the Municipality in Isabela influenced the 2017 suspension of a cooperation agreement between IOI and the Municipal Government, it is not an explanation for this result. Rather, the perceptions of local politics in local society run much deeper than the MCIP reaches. For explanation,
Chapter 4 will dive deeply into thick ethnography to describe Isabela’s socio-political history.

Counterintuitively, considering the overall pro-conservation effect of the MCIP, the participants also display a more positive attitude toward airport construction on average – a variable associated with human development, not conservation. IOI does not promote a large infrastructure project that would open the biggest vector for invasive species on the island and cause tourism numbers to increase steeply, increasing stress on an already overwhelmed public infrastructure. Participation in the MCIP, thus, does not conceivably promote a pro-airport mentality, and this result is likely correlation, rather than causation. Rather, the economic situation of the MCIP participants helps to explain this attitude. Members of the MCIP are, in many cases, housewives, often of rather low-income fishermen. Thus, they historically are at the lower end of the income spectrum.

53 The ethnographic analysis in Chapter 4 pivots around the issue of the potential future opening of a commercial airport with direct flights to Ecuador mainland on Isabela. This seemingly straightforward infrastructure project epitomizes the very dynamics of conservation vs. human progress in Galapagos and is thus a key variable of this dissertation. The airport story offers a paradigm for the dynamics between global and local conceptualizations, for conservation and economic development, and for the resulting threats and benefits to sustainability in Galapagos.
Presently, while the economic assistance given to members of the focus group dilutes the significance of this relation (p=0.1857), the level of wealth of the MCIP participant is still below the mean wealth of the general population (Figure 3. 16). Overall, the dataset shows wealth positively correlating with a pro-conservation mentality (p<0.0001) and negatively correlates with a pro-growth mentality (p=0.0035), as shown in Figure 3. 17.
Overall, the MCIP increases trust in institutions. Viteri and Chavez (2007) argue that trust in institutions, and their respective policies, is a basic requirement of compliance with environmental regulations. Thus, IOI, through its work with local society, increases the likelihood of compliance with environmental regulations, contributing to a sustainable balance of human development and environment in Galapagos.

3.5.3. Categorization of Interest Group Clusters in Isabela

As described in section 3.2.3, civil society in Galapagos is very active, particularly in Isabela, where 76% of the population has an interest in actively participating in a cause (Zapata 2013). However, civil society is not uniform, but rather is divided into subgroups (interest group clusters) that differ in their shared Principles, Institutions, and Concepts (PIC – Meltzoff 2013). These subgroups thus conceivably strive for different policy outcomes.

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54 For identification and qualitative analysis of the interest groups and their PICs, see Chapter 4.
The cluster analysis of the dataset resulted in 4 interest group clusters. Clusters 1 and 2 show distinctly higher values for conservation related behavior and opinion variables (green in Table 3.6), whereas clusters 3 and 4 show distinctly higher values for development related ones (orange in Table 3.6). This split into conservation and human development minded cluster categories is congruent with expectations for a policy environment that struggles to find a balance between human development and conservation, supporting the results of Chapter 2.

Table 3.6  Categorization of interest group clusters (Highlighted: green= positive correlation with environmental conservation; Orange= negative correlation with environmental conservation; yellow= low trust in governing institutions; red=largest concentration of MCIP participants)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conservation Behavior and Opinions</th>
<th>Trust in policy making Institutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>conservation</td>
<td>Local/National Institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 1</td>
<td>medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 2</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 3</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 4</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis becomes more revealing with reference to sustainable development in Galapagos when variables regarding policymaking institutions are included in the analysis. Trust in the governing institutions does not split along the same conservation vs. development lines. Rather, each cluster category has a split between low (yellow in Table 3.6) and medium-high trust in governing institutions, where trust in the NGOs within each cluster is consistently higher than the trust in the governing institutions. Confirming the assertions of the previous section, NGOs are trusted more than governing institutions in all interest group clusters, placing NGOs in an ideal position to mediate between governing institutions and civil society.

55 Cf. Fig. 3.14
56 A distinction was made between pro conservation discourse groups (User-Fortress Conservation) and pro-development oriented discourse groups (Golden-Frontier Tourism).
To give these interest group clusters working names, the participants in each cluster were analyzed by their profession and industry and for their relation to extractive and tourism sectors. As marked in Figure 3.18, the Conservation-minded clusters can be dubbed 1) Public Sector57, with a majority national government and NGO employees, and 2) Sustainable Business Community58, dominated by respondents owning established businesses in the tourism industry.59 The Development-minded clusters can be dubbed 3) Workforce60, with a majority part-time employed, job-hopping, or with temporary political appointments in the local government, and 4) Expansionary Business Community61, which includes respondents from former extractive industry now working in tourism, the transportation sector, and part-time or unemployed respondents aspiring to find a job in the growing tourism sector.

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57 Participants: 1, 5, 14, 22, 30, 31, 38, 39, 42, 46, 49, 50, and 51;
58 Participants: 3, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 26, 47, and 52;
59 Guides are considered 1-(wo)man enterprises for this categorization.
60 Participants: 2, 8, 18, 19, 20, 21, 27, 28, 34, 35, 36, 37, 40, 41, and 44;
61 Participants: 4, 7, 15, 16, 23, 24, 25, 29, 32, 33, 42, 45, and 48;
3.5.4. IOI and Interest Group Interaction in Isabela

As resources and reach are limited, NGOs may need to focus their efforts to have the greatest impact. In relation to conservation, NGOs might intuitively want to focus on working with interest group clusters 3 and 4 – those with lower conservation and higher pro-development behaviors and opinions – to get the most “bang-for-buck”. However, as building trust is key to growing understanding and compliance, it can be argued that
NGOs should focus on working with interest group clusters 2 and 4, as they have the highest differential between trust in governing institutions and NGOs (see Figure 3. 19).62

Figure 3. 19 Trust differential Governing Institutions & NGOs

The participants in IOI’s MCIP do not distribute evenly across the four clusters. While most of the MCIP participants fall into cluster 3, IOI is also working with 28.6% of the participants belonging to cluster 4 and with 9.1% of those in cluster 2 (see Figure 3. 20). Thus, IOI is working mostly with the cluster that has the lowest trust differential. The statistical analysis of the dataset of this chapter does not reveal whether this is correlation (IOI can work with this group because they trust NGOs and governing institutions) or causation (the trust in institutions is high in this group because they are interacting with IOI). Chapter 4 will address this question via qualitative, ethnographic analysis of underlying socio-political structures in Isabela.

62 Trust differential = (trust in NGOs) - (±avg(trust in PNG, trust in politics))
In any case, the results indicate that IOI could more effectively improve community-wide compliance by increasing its involvement with interest group clusters 2 and 4, building environmental stewardship and increasing trust in those with a high differential between trust in governing institutions and trust in NGOs. In fact, for bang-for-buck conservation, a focus on cluster 4 seems the most potentially impactful, as cluster 2 already has the highest pro-conservation mentality of all interest groups (green in Table 3.6).

![Figure 3. 20 Percentages of MCIP participation per cluster group (red=yes)](image)

In addition, the data reveal that the interest group clusters also have a significant positive correlation in age (p=0.0019), increasing from 28.8 years to 47.7 years. Similarly, mean
wealth scores decline significantly from clusters 1 to 4, from 3.38 to 1.92 (p=0.0002) (see Figure 3. 21).

Therefore, to increase impact in Isabela by working with cluster 4, the expansionary business sector, IOI should design its programs to be attractive to an older audience and offer financial incentives to the participants.

3.6. Conclusion

To increase their sovereign control over the Galapagos province, the central government has seized control of governance from the NGO sector and designed sustainable management plans for the archipelago. This revocation of power came as a shock to the non-profit sector at first and resulted in a substantial decrease in organizational presence in the country and the province alike. Those that survived the new regime of being under strict financial and contextual control were rewarded with the general public’s increasing trust in the NGO sector in Galapagos. Much of the animosity against the sector by the local community was apparently not directed at the institutions per se, but rather against
the policymaking with which they were associated. This animosity seems to have transferred to the central government along with their assuming legislative control.

As a result, NGOs are now trusted more by local society than the governing institutions. This opens an opportunity for NGOs to act as mediators between the government and society. The NGOs work closely with the governing institutions on implementation of national development and conservation goals and thus have intimate knowledge of policy objectives. Society often lacks this knowledge due to both lack of trust in the governing institutions, lack of governmental communication, and lack of societal involvement in the policymaking process. Because NGOs often work in education and are trusted more by civil society, they have the opportunity to bridge the communication and knowledge gaps that underlie the lack of civil regulatory compliance.

Because society is not uniform, but instead is composed of different interest groups, and because the funding of NGOs and governing institutions is limited, working with high impact interest groups can be important to achieve conservation goals. In Isabela, four interest group clusters were identified. The “expansionary business sector” cluster has the lowest conservation and the highest development mentality while also showing the highest differential between trust in NGOs and governing institutions. As a result, they are identified as the having highest potential for positive impact by the mediation work of NGOs between the governing institutions and civil society. This group is also the oldest and least wealthy of all clusters on average, and interactions and programs should be designed to account for these factors.

IOI’s work in Isabela has a positive impact on the participants of their Multi-level Community Interaction Program (MCIP). MCIP participants have significantly higher
trust in NGOs, the PNG, and an increased perception of the quality of public services, strongly indicating that IOI is reaching civil society with their MCIP. These results demonstrate IOI’s high downward mediation potential. However, IOI has a limited reach with the expansionary business sector, which makes up much of the interest group cluster identified as having the most improvement potential for positive conservation impact. Almost 50% of the MCIP participants are in the “workforce” interest group, which has the highest levels of trust in institutions as well as the highest pro-conservation and lowest pro-growth behaviors and opinions.
Chapter 3: Shifting Alliances - Global Conservation and Local Ecotourism in Isabela

4.1. Summary

As discussed in Chapter 2, both Ecotourism and Conservation are global concepts long at play in Galapagos. International conservation NGOs, the scientific community, and the cruise ship industry jointly lobbied for low-impact tourism in a protected area and for policies highly limiting resource extraction and human development: a pragmatic, ideological union dubbed the scientific or international discourse in the literature (Quiroga 2009). Chapter 2 suggested that this union was no longer viable due to shifted interests in an economy moving local incomes away from fisheries and into land-based tourism.

Chapter 3 suggested that the (international) non-profit sector, formerly highly influential in local policymaking, had lost their indirect legislative mandate to the central government. NGOs thereby gained increased acceptance in local society as cooperators, educators, and communicators – a nexus between the people and their governing institutions. This policy-neutral role gives the sector an opportunity to mediate between interest groups forming around a recently emerging fault line in the battle between conservation and human development in Galapagos: between conservation-minded policymaking institutions and a growing tourism sector.

This 4th Chapter discusses how global and local forces influence civil behavior and policy compliance in Galapagos following the 2015 LOREG reforms, qualitatively assessing how local interest groups interact with socioeconomic and political changes and
what role NGOs can take in this setting. This Chapter juxtaposes these interactions with
economic development in the tourism sector and details IOI’s interaction with the
community in Puerto Villamil to assess how the emergence of a Multi-level Community
Interaction Program (MCIP), a participatory intervention approach that evolved through
the empowerment of a community focus group, influenced local society in their
navigation of globalizing island life. Lastly, the Chapter assesses whether an international
NGO can serve as a bridge connecting global influences, national policies, and local
society.

4.2. Background

4.2.1. Governance of Socialism of the 21st Century and Buen Vivir in Galapagos

The Quito government of Correa is currently centralizing the governance structure of the
province, taking away policymaking powers from the “traditional” conservation
governance institutions (cf. Chapter 3). Since taking power in 2007, they have drafted a
new constitution, revised the special law for Galapagos, restructured the governing
institutions of the province, and invested heavily into education and social development.

Nevertheless, Galapagos remains an arena with many actors of divergent interests, and
governance in Galapagos has been traditionally fragmented between municipalities, the
international community, and the central government (cf. Chapter 3). As any island,
Galapagos has limited human resources and educational infrastructure (Baldacchino and
Niles 2013). Due to the high level of international interest given the islands’ exposed
position, the international community has stepped up to help administrate (and thus, in its
own opinion, save) the Galapagos Islands. Whilst under the national control of Ecuador
in a Westphalian sense, in practice, Galapagos has been regulated and governed by local
authorities and foreign NGOs for decades (cf. Chapter 3). Quito’s sovereign influence has hence historically been limited, and Galapagos has a history of foreign involvement mixed with local administration, with all forms of regulatory construction present to some degree (e.g., Quiroga 2009, 2013; Brewington 2011; Cairns 2011). This type of mixed governance approach has created an intense socio-political environment where global and local forces compete for attention in the conservation vs. development arena. The current centralization of power and decision making under the regime of Socialism of the 21st Century has often been suggested to be a requirement for conservation success (Epler 2007). Thus, it should be a welcomed feature to combat institutional incompetency and achieve more sustainable governance. However, while some policies like healthcare, education, and immigration were made at a national level, development and economic decisions are partly outside of the national governments realm and are still made at local levels, by the municipalities, diminishing the centralization effect (cf. section 4.7.2).

The non-profit sector, mainly in the form of the Charles Darwin Foundation (CDF), has had major input into Galapagos policymaking since the early 1960s. This organization has been the scientific advisor to the government for decades, has worked on the special law for Galapagos, has worked with the Park on regulations, carrying capacities, catch limits, and eradication programs, and even has branched out into education (e.g., Watkins and Cruz 2007; Brewington 2011, Reck 2014, 2017). In Galapagos, most of the environmental conservation knowledge and experience is concentrated in the international community (cf. Chapter 3). All the while, these policy influencers neglected the social realm in their conservation approach and thus created a local society resentful
of conservation and, by proxy, of the international community and their influence (e.g., Watkins and Cruz 2007; Quiroga 2009; Castrejon, et al. 2013; cf. section 4.4.4).

4.2.2. Ecotourism and Civil Society in Galapagos

Galapagos civil society has experienced significant change in its socio-economic surroundings over the past decades (e.g., Watkins and Cruz 2007; Brewington, et al. 2013). While the local environment was formerly under pressure from the overexploitation of natural resources from fisheries, a boom in tourism has taken over as the main threat at the socio-environmental frontier (e.g., Watkins et al. 2008). While international conservation interest in the Galapagos Islands is high, efforts to sustainably preserve the archipelago often have not led to the desired outcomes (e.g., Tye 2008). These efforts have failed due to a lack of local understanding of the global conceptualizations used by the international community in designing local conservation policies, as well as a lack of international understanding of local socio-economic and cultural needs to make these policies effective. The international assumptions underlying the policy process in Galapagos aggregate into ideologies that constrain power dynamics among interest groups, funding sources, professional and other relationships, and particularly institutions and organizations (Wolmer 2006).

This gap between policy creation and local implementation and compliance hinders conservation success (Viteri and Chavez 2007). At a foundational level, it is based on differing conceptualizations of nature between the Global and the Local – between policy makers and user groups. Based on global conservation concepts used to promote international sales of their product, the cruise-based tourism sector in Galapagos has conceptualized a narrative of nature with a geophysical, evolutionary progression
The geophysical conceptualization is based in changing historical perceptions of nature in Galapagos. Cairns (2011) describes a progression of historical perspectives, from a “barren wasteland” in the times of the earliest visitors from Thomas de Berlanga to Charles Darwin in the 16th to 19th centuries, to a “natural laboratory” in the mid 20th century. Designing cruise ship tourism as a funding mechanism for Science, the tourism industry began to market Galapagos as an Eden, the cradle of evolution, or a touristic paradise. It is not without irony that the last stage in this progression is “paradise in peril” – in peril from excessive human impact, attracted by the very conceptualization designed to promote conservation – the so called “Galapagos paradox” (Quiroga 2009; Hennessey and McCleary 2011).

If properly implemented, Ecotourism can sustainably bring economic growth in a less socio-environmentally detrimental way than most other activities, especially in remote, developing country locations where the only alternative is usually extraction of natural resources. However, if not implemented properly, Ecotourism can cause more harm than good and can be utilized to promote neoliberal goals of exploitation (cf. Chapter 1). Without the political will to manage Ecotourism in a sustainable way, it simply slides into mass tourism by its own success, becoming the industry it had tried to circumvent (Weinberg, et al. 2002).

In Galapagos, tourism has grown largely without a coherent local strategy for sustainability, and the free use of natural resources has been said to be one of the biggest problems in conservation (Brewington 2011). Rather than generating revenue for education and social development, the cruise-owning Ecuadorian oligarchy lobbies for
looser regulations to increase profitability (Nash 2009; Meltzoff 2013), and concessions for new land-based tour operators have been given out for free, in an effort to combat extractive fisheries. While the impacts of extractive fisheries have indeed declined, a culture of “a right to consume nature” has been long instilled (Constantino 2007), in Galapagos as in the Global South in general.

Galapagos has always had a fractured Ecotourism development strategy, leading to environmental degradation and inequality – thus, not fulfilling the basic requirements of the triple bottom line approach of Ecotourism. In fact, the Galapagos has been an example of the lack of Ecotourism modeling, and almost fatalistic behavior can be seen in its tourism development. Occupation rates in hotels are already below 50% (Epler 2007; Shaw 2015), yet more hotels are being built to get a piece of the pie. Matthews (2012) defined seven requirements of Ecotourism. In his ranking of assessed sites, the Galapagos ranks last for compliance with and enforcement of rules. In global perception once considered a model case of sustainable tourism, Galapagos now serves as a warning of the dangers of Ecotourism without proper planning, government control, and local involvement (Honey 1999). Garcia et al. (2013), however, suggests that this is changing with the implementation of a new model of Ecotourism in Galapagos, which maximizes local benefits, promotes conservation (by minimizing impacts), and sharing responsibilities between institutions and civil society.

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63 Ecotourism needs to 1) happen in nature, 2) contribute to conservation, 3) produce long-term funding for conservation, 4) produce socioeconomic benefits for the local population, 5) provide environmental education to the locals as well as 6) cultural education the tourists, and it must first and foremost 7) minimize environmental impacts of the experience (Matthews 2012).
To produce benefits sufficient to justify environmental degradation from the respective activity, an Ecotourism product can be valued via payment for ecosystem services and through Ecotourism modeling, generating the funds necessary to successfully implement the demands of the triple bottom line of sustainability and Ecotourism: economic development combined with social and environmental protection. Epler (2007) has suggested the implementation of such an Ecotourism modeling approach to Ecotourism in Galapagos, arguing that new concessions should be purchased and that the revenue should go to an education fund to increase social development in the Islands. Furthermore, an Ecotourism modeling approach could be used to implement a high price-low volume tourism strategy (Renzin 2007) or to increase the National Park entrance fee (currently $100 dollars for foreigners) to support environmental protection projects (Epler 2007). However, these recommendations have not been put into effect.

Until recently, Galapagos tourism was mostly built around a “foreign-owned” cruise ship sector.64 The idea of rent-seeking in tourism is a practice well-established globally and foreign investment in high quality tourism products has been described as a success strategy for small island economies (Baldacchino and Bertram 2009). In the Galapagos Islands, cruise-tours account for over 65% of Island GDP (Epler 2007). The vast majority of the cruise industry being “foreign” owned, a mere 15.0 percent of tourism revenue is reaching local people (85% leakage); numbers show that out of the $419 million spent in Galapagos on tourism in 2007, only $62.9 million USD entered the local economy.

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64 The majority of the cruise ships in Galapagos is actually Ecuadorian owned, by the Ecuadorian Oligarchy (Meltzoff 2013). However, to Galapagueños, and particularly to Isabeleños, national oligarchy ownership is as foreign as ownership by someone from another country. Thus, when referring to the “foreign” cruise industry, this Chapter refers to “conceptually foreign,” i.e., with global concepts and demands, rather than strictly to international ownership.
(Hennessy and McCleary 2011). This low share in local economic productivity hampers social development and, ultimately, conservation efforts among the local population. Local prices rise as the overall cost of living rises (Marin Luna 2009; Hoyman and McCall 2012), as does the social gap between those who benefit from the tourism growth and those who do not. Eventually, an increasing social gap in Galapagos could lead back to overfishing for subsistence, fulfilling the threat of environmental damage that the international organizations hoped to prevent by promoting tourism in the first place, but ultimately at an elevated rate to accommodate the higher prices (Taylor, et al. 2008).

One of the main secondary impacts of the cruise-based tourism industry has been a growing local population on the island to support the cruise industry with construction of layover hotels and transport between airport and ship. However, because the high revenues of the cruise industry have not benefitted local society economically, many have had to resort to other sources of income (Taylor, et al. 2008). This tourism model thus left secondary impacts such as inflation, increasing social gap, and pollution from overburdened public infrastructure unaccounted for and hidden away from the eyes of tourists.

The cruise operators were in a public discourse group with the scientific community, promoting global concepts of fortress-style conservation. At the same time, they were aiming to maintain a “pristine” image for their product. The concept of the “pristine Galapagos” (Hennessey and McCleary 2011) was minted by the international community to protect the Galapagos, exemplified by the concept of floating hotels. Through this form of “Eco”tourism, the environment was to be protected from the negative impacts of human existence in the islands. Protecting both the environment and the sales concept of
the pristine, the floating-hotels tourism model was designed to enable international 
visitation while minimizing primary local impacts at the visitor sites. While the primary 
impacts of cruise tourism at the individual visitor sites were fairly well managed through 
regulations65 built on global concepts in alliance with the conservation sector, secondary 
impacts on the archipelago went largely hidden or unnoticed.

Known as the “Ecotourism bubble” of Galapagos (Hennessey and McCleary 2011), the 
cruise-based tourism industry succeeds because “the social relations that make these 
natural experiences possible are hidden from the view of visitors” (Hennessy and 
McCleary 2011:146). This bubble hides the local realities of the islands to maintain the 
illusion of pristine nature that captivates the tourists’ imaginations. Itineraries are 
staggered by the National Park and the tour companies to ensure that only one ship will 
be in a given location at a time, giving tourists the impression that they are alone in the 
wild, and land-based tourism and fishing are prohibited in the sites visited by the cruises 
to complete the impression. This tourism bubble is one of the reasons why local 
resistance to international conceptualizations runs deep. The cruise industry has been 
perceived by locals as a sort of neo-imperialistic economic exploitation.

Additionally, the establishment of the Marine Reserve in 1998 put restrictions and zoning 
regulations on the fishing sector – the boom-time income source of Galapagos. In the 
same way that locals felt exploited through foreign-owned companies, they felt that the 
ew regulations, designed by international organizations using global concepts, 
oppressed their way of life, resulting in civil unrest (Hearn 2008). During that time, it

65 For example, these regulations include leave no trace policies, limited trail access to sites, dumping 
regulations for ships, small groups sizes, and strict guide requirements.
became clear that the conflicts were about not only economics, but also differing perceptions – “incommensurable cosmologies” – of the value and best use of nature (Quiroga 2013).

These mismatched cosmologies still come to a head today. Conservation policies in Galapagos are underlain with the same global ideologies and problems that Neumann (2014) described as “[m]an being the enemy and pristine nature having to be protected from his influence.” Contrarily, in early settler days, the Ecuadorian government encouraged cultivation of farmland by giving away free land to campesinos from the mainland (Quiroga 2009), and this frontier mentality of pioneers’ taming a threatening wilderness continues to influence local conservation concepts today. Human impact, at the time mainly from overexploitation of natural resources for local income, became the main threat to sustainability in Galapagos. To lower the environmental pressure on these resources, there was a big push to involve locals in tourism –land-based tourism (Watkins and Cruz 2007).66

Each Island in the Galapagos has developed its own unique “flavor” of land-based tourism. Constantino (2008) describes this process as “local residents defining spaces for their past and future,” resulting in “integrated niches” that incorporate and merge the local human and nature experiences, as per the local socio-environmental settings. Analogous to the distinct species of tortoises on different volcanoes, each community has chosen a distinct path in its transition from agriculture and fisheries into tourism.

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66 This quickly led to a shift in pressures on the environment from exploitation of resources to increased demand of fuel and consumption goods and overburdening of public infrastructure.
San Cristobal has a history of sugarcane production and is the capital of the province of Galapagos. Cristobal tourism is marked by adventure-seeking, such as island-hopping tours, sport fishing, and surfing, and an airport was built near town to attract cruise ships into the harbor.

Santa Cruz has historically had the largest port for cruise ships and is home to the scientific and NGO community in Galapagos. Thereby, it also has the highest level of development and the highest influx of visitors and foreign influence on its culture.

Isabela is the most isolated of the three major developments in Galapagos. The local economy was based on fisheries and agriculture (Meltzoff 2013) and is only recently transitioning into tourism. Isabela has always striven to maintain an image of a romantic beach town, despite differing and often conflicting visions and approaches to tourism development (cf. section 4.7.1) between the different interest groups on the Island (cf. sections 4.4.3 to 4.4.6).

4.2.3. Global Conceptualizations and Airports in Isabela

The conceptualization of nature in Galapagos concerns the interactions between humans and nature, as well as societal organization around this topic (Brewington 2011; Meltzoff 2013; Quiroga 2013). How different interest groups with distinct practices, institutions, and concepts (PIC – cf. Meltzoff 2013) interact with conservation policy is based on their perceptions and interpretations of reality. As human history does not enter into the prominent conservation narrative that has evolved throughout human existence in Galapagos, but rather was hidden away from the public eye to preserve a “pristine” Galapagos (cf. Cairns 2011; Hennessey and McCleary 2011; Quiroga 2009; 2013), local civil society has created their own narratives to establish a space for dealing with their
existence. This space is created from their history and for their future, merging the human and non-human experience in Galapagos and thereby closing the human/nature gap (Constantino 2008).

How civil society in Isabela has created its own reality and is determining its trajectory have already been discussed extensively in the literature (e.g., Constantino 2008; Cairns 2011, Brewington 2011; Hennessey and McCleary 2011). The Island has its own rhythm, its own culture, and sometimes rather erratic approaches as to how to organize life and society. Brewington (2011) describes four groups of residents as Isolationists (lowest education), Protectionists (most foreigners), Moderates (most Mainlanders), and Developmentalists (most Galapagos-born).

Such classifications of different actors and groups in local society are important to uncover how:

the layers of human history, the history of science, evolution, and geological change build upon one another. They cross, coalesce, and collide in the creations of creatures, science, and life narratives in the Galápagos Islands. Scientists, fishermen, conservationists, and tourism workers struggle to find the appropriate place for themselves and for other humans within the different frames of time and space used implicitly and explicitly, used sometimes without awareness and at other times with aggressive force. And these frames shift within the contexts of Galápagos evolution, conservation, historical past, and present conflict (Constantino 2008:23).

Thus, the ethnographic analysis of this Chapter pivots around the non-abstract issue of the future opening of the airport on Isabela to direct flights to the Ecuador mainland. A scenario for potentially opening the local airport to commercial, direct flights to the mainland has been part of the municipal planning since President Gutierrez visited the island and promised as much in 2004 (Meltzoff 2013). This seemingly straightforward infrastructure project epitomizes the very dynamics of conservation vs. human progress
and of shifting interest group conceptualizations and alliances in the face of global forces
and local needs. Different local interest groups perceive the opening as a threat, an
opportunity, or a blend of both. Thus, the airport story offers a paradigm for the dynamics
between global and local conceptualizations, for conservation and economic
development, and for the resulting threats, such as outsider ownership’s undermining
local grassroots efforts at land-based Ecotourism, and benefits, like the emergence of new
ways to create a sustainable economy, post fisheries boom, that protects the local
environment.

While referring to a variety of concepts in the following sections, depending on the
respective reference to, for example, an industry, an interest group, an issue, a reading, or
a socio-political process, the terms of “global” and “local” concepts are used regarding
common associations in local society. As clarified in each section, “local” and “global”
influences refer to what is right or wrong, acceptable or detestable, normal or strange, at
multiple levels of analysis. Larger-scale concepts involve, for example, a political context
(colonial-style strongman vs. neoliberal capitalism) or a philosophical context (the
relation between man and nature: domination vs. protection), while more personal-scale
concepts could involve, for example, a family relation (like the role of women: non-
institutionalized housewife gig-economy vs. female empowerment) or a business
conceptualization (what is a pristine beach: raked, white, and palm-lined vs. in its natural
state with debris and wrack line).

According to local perception, there are three degrees of separation between Isabela and
the globalized world. There is a big difference in concepts between the Global North
(referred to as the US and Western Europe) and Ecuador. Then, there is an equally large
gap in concepts between Ecuadorian mainlanders and Galapagueños. And last, but not least, spoken with true local pride, the largest conceptual gap is between Galapagueños and Isabeleños. Since only 4% of the participants in this research were non-Isabeleño Galapagueños, a distinction between Isabela and the other Islands cannot be drawn in this dissertation. However, the ethnographic analysis will refer to the differences in conceptualizations among the international/global, Ecuadorian/national, and the Isabeleño/local.

Isabela is a small, isolated community, and socio-economic changes strongly affect interest groups, their behaviors, and their alliances. In 2010, there were 2256 total residents in Isabela divided into 665 households (INEC 2010). While there has been no official count since 2010, the population is projected to pass 3k in 2019 (INEC 2018) but is rumored to have passed 5000 in 2017 already.

While there are no Galapagueño or Ecuadorian NGOs left in Galapagos after the reforms of 2015, Watkins and Martinez (2009) identified a plethora of civil organizations. These include transportation cooperatives, trade and tourism associations, and credit unions; identity and community associations, including indigenous, sports, and cultural; and educational and religious institutions (Watkins and Martinez 2009). Interest in participation in such civil society groups is particularly high in Isabela (Zapata 2013). Furthermore, civil society is actively interested in putting checks and balances on institutions (IBID). In the dataset created for this dissertation, 81% of the participants are currently engaged in some form of a civil organization, including 37% that were part of the IOI focus group MCIP.
Isabela has had a basic, small plane airstrip since long before the research for this dissertation began. In 2004, when right-wing, ex-military President Gutierrez visited the Island and promised to build an airport to connect the community directly to the mainland, the also right-leaning Mayor Gordillo eagerly took on the storyline and project, as it mobilized his base. In 2008, a small airport building with an expanded airfield was opened. However, beyond one inaugural flight, the airport was never approved for commercial flight operation due to an array of infrastructure deficits regarding the size of the airfield, the control tower (or lack thereof), as well as deficient safety and communication protocols. The pending completion of these requirements, and the resultant ability to open the airport to a direct connection to the mainland, remains a highly politicized topic in Isabela, with the core debate revolving around human progress vs. conservation, connectivity vs. isolation, and global influences and local interactions.

Airports confer an air of prestige on those who build them. They are symbols for prosperity, worldliness, and power, and are magnets for business and trade (Freidheim and Hansson 1999). Button, et al. (2009) call this the perpetuity effect, wherein the development of an airport is associated with changing the structure of the economy and increasing regional economic production, as has happened on many islands in the Caribbean and the Mediterranean. Similar to the Galapagos, these island economies transitioned from fishing and agriculture to tourism (Button, et al. 2009).

For these reasons, airports generally are correlated positively with economic development. However, airports have a larger local and regional effect on economic development by moving people than they do by moving cargo; while both the number of passengers and flights are related to economic output, wages, and incomes, Florida, et al.
(2014) find little association between these economic factors and cargo. According to a study performed by Benell and Prentice (1993), to create the economic value equivalent to an average year of employment, the average number of additional air-travel passengers must increase by 1126, based on a sample set of airports in Canada. Each one of these additional passengers is expected to add a monetary value of approximately $78.08 to the economy (Benell and Prentice 1993). Thus, airports, while good for economic prosperity, strongly positively correlate with growth in migration and visitation.

As discussed in earlier Chapters and epitomized by the LOREG, immigration and the resulting increased pressure on the limited infrastructure are the main threats to conservation in Isabela and in Galapagos at large. Thus, opening an airport in Isabela to gain economic benefits for the local population would result in substantially increased visitation and concomitant stress on the local infrastructure, culture, and environment. Opening an airport would greatly increase the threat posed by invasive species (Causton 2008), creating a hitherto non-existent additional vector for introduction. Furthermore, it would enable direct access to the Island for not only visitors and residents, but also investors. And last, but not least, the airport’s opening would create a series of hidden costs for the local municipality in increased demands on water, sewer, and waste management, as well as on electrical systems that have already reached managerial and operational capacity (cf. Buckley 2015b).

Besides concerns about negative effects for the environment, a different part of the international community is eying Isabela as an untouched gem for investment in tourism. The Island has so far been shielded from the effects of direct access, readily visible in directly-accessible Santa Cruz and Cristobal, as a result of the 2-hour boat ride currently
required to reach Isabela after a layover on one of the other Islands. From a local perspective, connectivity is, of course, desired for ease of travel and medical evacuation purposes, though conservationists have made it clear that additional connectivity increases the threat to endemic nature and culture (Quiroga 2013, Walsh and Mena 2013). However, opinions are split over what this connectivity would mean regarding foreign tourism investment in the local socio-economy, and whether the local infrastructure can handle the additional stress. While the current local administration is doing everything it can to increase local capacity in preparation for the airport’s eventual opening, there are also interest groups in opposition to this move towards Globalization of the Island.

This dissertation’s scope does not seek to measure or quantify the respective carrying capacities or potential socio-environmental and economic impacts from opening an airport.67 Rather, opinions and behaviors surrounding conservation and human development are assessed within and among interest groups that interact around the issue of airport construction on multiple political levels and with historic trajectories that have long been in development.

To gain a full understanding of the drivers of Isabela society, this Chapter summarizes story-lines related to historical patterns in interest group interaction regarding local conservation, global influences, and economic development. Utilizing Constantino’s

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67 It must be remarked that this kind of work has been done in the past at the provincial level (Epler and Proaño 2007). Follow-up research will be important to a) update the results to the current realities in Galapagos and b) do a local analysis for Isabela to make the eventual, seemingly inevitable opening of an airport in Isabela less damaging to the socio-environmental fabric on the Island.
(2008) integrated niches⁶⁸ and building on the rich first-person accounts of Meltzoff (2013), this Chapter will qualitatively assess the narratives revealed in the interviews taken for this research and will contextualize them within the global-local dialectics present in the socio-economic shifts towards Ecotourism in Galapagos since the reforms of the LOREG of 2015.

4.2.4. La Fundación – the IOI Approach

After ethnographically assessing current civil society in Isabela via interest group interaction analysis at multiple political levels that accounts for shifting alliances over time, it is hypothesized in the last section of this Chapter that NGOs, specifically IOI in Isabela, can be a mediator between global and local forces interacting at the human environmental intersection. The Intercultural Outreach Initiative (IOI) is a Florida based non-profit that finances the conservation of isolated and unique places of particular natural beauty by inviting travelers to contribute to its social and educational preservation efforts (IOI 2018). Its core competency is specialty-travel financed environmental and social sustainability programming, merging educational travel with conservation and community development. Therefor, IOI’s model assists nascent local Ecotourism sectors to get a foot on the first rung of the development ladder while promoting civil society through environmental education and social development. As a non-profit, all surplus from IOI’s educational travel programs goes into sustainable development efforts at the respective locations – from coral gardening to teaching English, and from female empowerment to turtle research (IBID).

⁶⁸ Constantino (2007) defines an integrated niche as “a way of being that is at once a social, a historical, and an evolutionary site of interaction.”
4.2.4.1. History and Philosophy

IOI, founded in 2006, was originally called the Isabela Oceanographic Institute (also IOI), and was intended to be a traditionally financed conservation organization in the Galapagos Islands. At the time, sea cucumber fisheries were a high value fishery on Isabela, and there were few opportunities for work outside of this ecologically harmful industry. The idea for the organization was centered around the notion that introducing land-based tourism and educating the local population about sustainability and conservation could have long-lasting, positive effects on both society and ecosystem.

The original name was derived from a local partner university’s desire to establish an Oceanographic Institute in Isabela, with IOI acting as the corporate social responsibility branch of said institute. The two organizations parted ways due to insurmountable philosophical differences in 2008, though IOI didn’t officially take on its current and more fitting name – the Intercultural Outreach Initiative – until April, 2013.

In 2012, operational management was handed over to a local director. Through an organization-wide restructuring, IOI’s approach and procedures were modified into an internationally replicable model. IOI’s mission expanded away from its Galapagos specificity to “provide international education programs that support the education, conservation, and social development of isolated communities by assisting local institutions in sustainably handling the human-environmental intersection” (IOI 2018).

IOI supports scientific research and conservation projects in local environments under stress from development and resource extraction. To reduce the economic incentive for environmental degradation from exploitation, IOI addresses socio-economic problems of poor and marginalized fishing communities in Galapagos, Costa Rica, and Cuba. IOI’s
outreach programs focus especially on gender equality and female (entrepreneurial) empowerment to help reduce intra-family power imbalances and alleviate economic pressures in the male-dominated extractive industries.

In Galapagos, IOI’s work has contributed to the transformation of the Galapagos Islands from a fisheries-based economy into one of the premier Ecotourism destinations in the world. IOI is currently the only NGO with a permanent presence in Isabela Island, as well as the only organization in Galapagos concerned with social development issues to promote conservation (Brewington 2011, Cancilleria 2018). The Charles Darwin Foundation (CDF), the only other NGO with a permanent representation in recent years, permanently closed their offices in Isabela and retreated to their headquarters on Santa Cruz Island in 2010.

4.2.4.2. A Dual Operational Approach

IOI’s business model has two distinct but complimentary branches of operation. On the income side, specialty travel in education abroad generates funding for the non-profit—the expense side. The surplus generated by each travel program funds the conservation efforts at the respective location or project.69 To that extent, IOI offers two types of specialty travel products, namely, educational group travel programs and individual volunteer opportunities, that both create an educational experience for the participants and raise funds to support local outreach programs. Both the study abroad and volunteering programs are targeted at college students. Study abroad groups visit the IOI locations to study the local ecosystems and society while having the opportunity to

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69 IOI also maintains sites in Costa Rica and Cuba.
participate in IOI’s local research and outreach efforts through service learning. The volunteers’ assistance is fully focused on civic engagement in IOI’s outreach projects. The actual contribution of each participant varies by topic of study and location – from research participation, to service learning, or support of ongoing local efforts – and is embedded in a sustainable travel experience. As such, all IOI programs are designed to have minimal negative environmental and social impact and to maximize local financial and training benefit. Unlike traditional international tourism efforts that are run top-down and operated by the international organization, IOI’s travel programs work bottom-up, outsourcing all non-academic travel components into the local economy to promote the nascent local Ecotourism efforts. Thus, IOI is more a facilitator than an agency or operator, acting to connect international clients and local providers. IOI’s programs are particularly suited for early stage Ecotourism industries, as its students and volunteers, through IOI’s awareness training, are cognizant of the developing nature of the local industry and thus are more forgiving clients than the average tourist.

The revenue from these programs finances a variety of environmental and social outreach projects to promote sustainable development in each location. The model does not rely on philanthropic support to keep the outreach projects funded. Thus, IOI has complete operational flexibility in terms of needs-based program design, since its funding is independent of donor interests and funding cycles.

To maximize local benefit through such needs-based design, all of IOI’s programs and projects are co-designed with local institutions. While often lacking the financial or human capital to execute such programs themselves, these institutions do have the necessary local experience to assess needs and possibilities. IOI aims to provide global
financing and best practice concepts to assist local efforts promoting conservation and sustainable economic development.

The overall goal in every project or program design is to achieve socio-environmental sustainability between human development and environmental protection. To achieve this delicate balance, IOI conducts scientific research via its university partners, supports local institutions in their conservation and social development efforts, and works with local residents to promote economic prosperity while conserving the environment.

IOI’s Galapagos programs in social development are organized with the local and provincial governments and have ranged from education programs in the local school system to creating focus groups for personal growth and vocational training in the Ecotourism sector. In conservation, IOI has a cooperation agreement with the Galapagos National Park to establish environmental baselines for improved ecosystem monitoring, to set up protection areas, and to fight invasive species and pollution. Furthermore, IOI works in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries to increase food sovereignty from continental Ecuador and to increase the institutional strength and abilities of the local production COOPs, for example, by assisting the fishing COOP to reestablish collective storage facilities for their catch.

Apart from this type of institution-building, IOI’s most comprehensive and ambitious approach is a civil society development project. In 2010, IOI formed a focus group, the Familias Embajadoras del Buen Vivir,\(^70\) which currently consists of 25 local families. As the group developed over the years, it became the base for IOI’s interaction with local

\(^{70}\) Spanish – Ambassador Families of Good Living
interest groups in Isabela. The focus group offers members the opportunity to participate in a continuing education program and to host foreign students and volunteers, thereby increasing intercultural competency.

This “Multi-level Community Interaction Program (MCIP)” aims to help participants become environmentally conscious leaders who act as multipliers within their wider community and who are empowered to be successful in an economy rapidly changing towards land-based Ecotourism.

4.2.4.3. Multi-level Community Interaction in Galapagos: Institution-building and Civil Society

IOI’s mission is to facilitate relationship-building amongst the environment, society, and governing institutions to create immediate and long-term socio-environmental sustainability. Accordingly, IOI provides financial and technical support to local institutions in Isabela to develop projects in economic development, social equality, and environmental sustainability to increase environmental stewardship. IOI also seeks to achieve a sustainable balance between human needs and environmental protection in Galapagos at the individual, non-institutional level, designing a program that integrates conservation, education, and social development for its participants.

IOI’s MCIP is designed to increase awareness of the interconnectivity between environmental conservation and communal well-being. It affects personal and social growth in Isabela. On a personal level, the participants learn that their voice is valued, and they feel empowered to effect change. Socially, the MCIP fosters community engagement with government and regulatory decision-making. Therefore, the program offers local participants assistance in basic language, personal development,
environmental sciences, and vocational skills to prepare them for economic activities in a
globalizing economy, outside the local extractive sector. Additionally, the MCIP provides
the opportunity of valuable, first-hand, cross-cultural experiences and revenues for the
participants through hosting IOI’s international volunteers and students.

The MCIP is a noteworthy program because it addresses the 3 pillars of sustainable
development – social, environmental, and economic concerns – and deeply integrates a
group of often disenfranchised people with IOI’s international education program as well
as IOI’s conservation work in local institutions. Through the program, the participants
become empowered in their social circles, resulting in a multiplier effect as they share
their skills, knowledge, passion, and leadership. Accordingly, the larger goal of this
program is to develop the group from being IOI beneficiaries into a fully-formed
association. This transformation would enable the group to be a formal partner with
whom IOI would execute environmental and social development projects.

The MCIP has a broad curriculum revolving around environmentally conscious socio-
economic development, including urban gardening, public and emotional health, art,
English language skills, food safety, and entrepreneurial skills. The program also offers
talks from visiting scientists about local ecosystems and their connection to human
(ab-)use.

The learning experience is re-enforced through environmental and social civic
engagement projects. Since IOI understands institution building to be an integral part of
sustainable development, these civic engagement projects are executed in cooperation
with local institutions. This cooperation gives the participants the opportunity to get to
know, engage with, and work with their governing authorities – and vice versa. Through
dialogue and engagement, the participants have their opinions heard and can effect potentially necessary change in the institutions. As the institutions get a better feel for and engage with the needs of the community, civil compliance increases, making the institutions more effective in executing their mission.

While events run in cooperation with local authorities are important, the MCIP group is also leading their own environmental and social projects within the community. These leadership opportunities allow the participants to hone their skills in creative thinking, project management, and group organization. Ultimately, the participants could become the vanguard of an emerging sustainable civil society that aims to benefit both the community and the environment.

4.3. Methods

For the purpose of a thick, descriptive representation of what moves civil society regarding the global forces influencing Galapagos, under what has been called “the politics of invasion” (Brewington 2011), this Chapter breaks with the “quantitized” methodological themes of the previous Chapters in this dissertation. While the preceding Chapters analyzed statistically and theoretically the “who, how, and why” behind the discussion and implementation of conservation policy in Galapagos, it is, in the end, human behavior and civil compliance with the implemented rules and regulations that will determine conservation success and the future of Galapagos.

Thus, this Chapter analyses qualitatively the inner workings of civil society in Isabela to gain a deep understanding of individuals’ motivations and how they gather into groups with similar understandings and needs (interest groups) to have greater support and influence in the decisions determining the exogenous circumstances of their lives and
livelihoods. This qualitative analysis uses a Political Ecology Framework, which presumes that the core of all ecological problems is underlain by social and political conflict (Neumann 2005). Thus, the interactions of local interest groups that make up the socio-political fabric of a given place must be understood to make meaningful, long-term conservation interventions. Qualitative assessment of stakeholder interests, concerns, and daily activities, such as this Chapter provides, offer a rich insight for assessing relations between humans and the environment (Brewington 2011).

One of the main approaches in Political Ecology is ethnography, which “provides a critical medium for exploring the dynamics of cultural politics which animate environmental conflicts” (Moore 1996:126). Ethnographic analysis is not limited to studies of the exotic “other” but is also focused on institutions and organizations: governmental, non-governmental, and multilateral. Ethnography is a crucial tool for pointing out conflicting perspectives between local, regional, and global actors on a given environmental issue (Neumann 2005). Thus, to understand civil society in Galapagos, this Chapter takes an ethnographic approach that is based on in-depth, open-ended interviews with a representative cross-section of 52 community, non-profit, and government agency members, mapping the perspectives of different interest groups.

One of the ways in which a comprehensive understanding [of the power dynamics underlying any discourse shaping policy] might be achieved in the Galápagos context is following an ethnographic approach (…) with attention to the particular scientific and policy practices and forms of agency which both give rise to and sustain, but may also challenge dominant discourses over time (Cairns 2011:198).

71 Often conservation policy in the local and national institutions has a very short-term orientation (Meltzoff 2013)
However, instead of looking at global system level influences on the policy discourse (cf. Chapter 2) or the involvement of the scientific and non-profit communities in the policy process in a changing national level political environment (cf. Chapter 3), this Chapter qualitatively and deeply analyzes local civil society and their interaction with conceptualizations from the Global North, such as conservation and Ecotourism. The unit of analysis for this chapter is the individual,\textsuperscript{72} to analyze aggregates of individuals in groups of shared interest by their Practices, Institutions, and Concepts.

Qualitative data were generated through 52 in-depth, open-ended interviews with members of different sectors of local civil society, including local institution and NGO staff, the extractive and tourism sectors, and formal and non-formal community leaders. Each interview was scheduled to last 90 minutes and followed the interviewee’s story in order not to lead any questions or conclusions.

Each interview was done by the same interviewer, eliminating inter-observer variability. Each was held in person and in situ. Creating a personal rapport is important to create the necessary trust between interviewer and interviewee to obtain honest answers. Holding the interview in the personal sphere of the participant minimizes intrusion of the interviewer into the routine of the interviewee, thereby minimizing data skew (Meltzoff 2017). This interview format can reveal underlying alliances and enmities in a community. A more structured but closed, inquiry-based format, such as a written survey, might skew, or not reveal at all, deep personal, potentially sensitive details. Surveying,

\textsuperscript{72} Borrowing from Waltz (1959) and as detailed in Chapter 1, there are three levels of analysis (“images”): 1) within individuals; 2) within the structure of individual states; or 3) within the structure of the interstate system.
for instance, cannot reveal “othering and mothering,” personal concepts such as closely held belief systems, or idealization of such concepts73 (Meltzoff 2013).

Hand-written notes taken during the interviews were transcribed electronically, ordered by content topics, and translated into English, if held in another language.74 The electronic data were classified into life-work histories (LWH) of the interviewees. LWHs reveal a person’s Practices, Institutions, and Concepts (PIC; Meltzoff 2013). These include close family ties such as parents and siblings, political and religious affiliations, education levels, migration patterns, and monetary flows such as remittances. These concepts or ideals are influenced and mediated by surrounding institutions, such as the state, the church, or a business affiliation such as a cooperative or a union (Neumann 2005).

Patterns among the LWHs identified via PIC analysis allows for categorization of interviewees into interest groups. PIC analysis further reveals interest group interactions over time. Groups were analyzed for potential CAGE patterns, mapping interest group composition and evolution over time to give historical perspectives. CAGE is an acronym that stands for Capital, Age, Gender (identity), and Ethnic Identity (Meltzoff 2013). Of the four, capital is the most complicated category to assess, particularly ascribed capital (by others), which is used to analyze the factors that go into having wealth and power, and control over resources. There are several types of capital available to an individual,

73 Idealization of concepts is a Freudian process in psychology through which an individual or a group perceives their actions as conforming with a positive concept, i.e. modeled after said concept, while their actual actions deviate from this concept unnoticedly and, at times, substantially. It stems from the narcissistic aspiration of compliance, rather than verifiable actions. Ideals can be created internally or acquired (e.g., internalized from parents or society) and can be used defensively or productively (Spruiell 1979).

74 These interviews were held in German, English, and Spanish.
ranging from ascribed wealth (e.g., from land ownership), to education, physical skills and abilities in labor or sports, or the obvious financial wealth (IBID). Financial capital refers only to monetary wealth, the single category that, for example, international development organizations classically focus on to the exclusion of the subtler forms of capital that also play a role in determining wealth and resource control. Ascribed capital is what you get from family and family friends, like social connections and land. Educational capital can be formal or informal education. While Age and Gender are fairly self-explanatory, Ethnic Self-Identity relates to family customs and traditions and to local pride. This category is especially important in Galapagos; while there is no population indigenous to the Islands, a strong sense of separate identity exists between different Islands and different regions in continental Ecuador (Grenier 2013). In Isabela, every non-Isabeleño is an outsider. While a lot of identity among Islanders is shared, Ecuadorians from the continent are basically foreigners with a shared cultural background and little socio-economic difference is made with actual foreigners in a Westphalian sense.

This Chapter use Participant Observation (PO) to document the interaction network of IOI and related changes in socio-ecological behaviors. Observing local life-work histories with PO is important because self-perception and reality often vary, skewing less in-

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75 Gender identity is an important stand-alone field of study. The scope of this work did not permit a detailed analysis of the intricacies of gender identity in the community on Isabela Island, and for the purposes of this dissertation, gender is assessed in a binary, male-female system.

76 In other words, someone from the mountain region (e.g., Quito) would generally have a very different set of values, beliefs, and cultural background than someone from the coast (e.g., Guayaquil). Historically, the mountain and Amazon regions have more indigenous influence, while the coastal regions have larger Afro-American and Hispanic influences. While Galapagos’ residents are from all regions of Ecuador, the sense of identity between Islands is also very distinct due to the relative isolation between early settler populations, differing availabilities of natural resources, and distinct socio-economic development.
depth data such as surveys. Whereas LWH reveal ideals and institutions, PO gives clues to real-world implementation of the ideals ascribed through LWHs, showing actual practices and behaviors, not the ideal versions claimed during interviews. PO often reveals substantially different behaviors than the idealized concepts stated in the LWHs. Meltzoff termed this process “idealization of concepts,” in which a participant says all the right things because s/he believes them, but doesn’t act accordingly, through force of habit, convenience, or conflicting or competing self-interest (Meltzoff 2013).

Through these intense engagements with local residents, the researcher’s substantial pre-existing professional knowledge of Galapagos civil society was further deepened.

4.4. Ethnography at the Global-Local Intersection in Isabela

While each Island has created its own narrative according to the evolution of their spaces (Constantino 2008), Galapagos societal evolution can be divided into four distinct phases, or epochs. Hennessey and McCleary (2011) give a detailed historical overview of societal history, and Meltzoff (2013) details deep, rich insights into interest group perceptions at various times in each of these epochs. Building on this literature, this Chapter evaluates the interaction of local civil society with global forces that have been influencing life in the Islands over the past 30 years.

The following qualitative analysis of the life-work histories of residents of Isabela will put into historical perspective the changes in the social fabric at multiple political levels, caused by the Globalization of the local economy via an escalating, land-based Ecotourism. The resulting interest group interactions were mapped through the analysis of qualitative data and juxtaposed with PO data to evaluate the differences between the stated goals of a group and how they act in reality.
Local interest group interactions and their practices are influenced by those perceived as outsiders and their global concepts. Such outsiders in Isabela are stakeholders present in the socio-economic realm of the Islands, but are not directly involved in the socio-economic process, such as commercial marketing, NGOs, and government agencies. Through the analysis of local narratives surrounding international conservation policy, this Chapter tracks the origins of anti-global(ization) sentiments, elucidates changes in local interactions, and assesses the role of IOI as a potential mediator between global forces and local needs in this dynamic.

4.4.1. Historical Perspectives of Socio-Political Epochs in Isabela

When the first families came to settle on Isabela Island in the very late 19th century, the coastline was nearly uninhabitable. This first epoch of civil organization in Isabela was about survival and the domination of a seemingly untamable nature. Barren and dry, the nearshore environment could barely support human life. Settlement in this first epoch in Isabela was characterized by two distinct political and economic forces: to provide labor for colonial-style haciendas and, after World War II, to reinforce sovereign claims against a US military presence that had been established to support a variety of long-range radar stations to protect the Panama Canal from Japanese amphibious assault.

Long before a municipality existed on the Island, national-level politicians occasionally visited Puerto Villamil, giving away large swaths of land to local residents and newcomers to gain political favor and to garner votes during campaigns, as well as to promote further colonization of the Island. People were mostly interested in additional

77 (And the rest of Galapagos)
farmlands as they tried to emancipate themselves from the position of plantation laborer.

On the newly gained plots, the hard-working peasantry could start to build their own existence and little by little become independent.

Land that was given away was considered low quality at the time. In the highlands – *la parte alta* – only the southeastern slopes of Sierra Negra Volcano usually receive sufficient rain for agriculture. The fringes of the humid zone, from El Cura via Los Mellizos through Cerro Loja and Barrio Loja, at least supported grasslands for cattle-raising but were considered inferior. With little connection to the outside world, the center of Island life was in the highlands. There were few residents on Isabela at the time and thus no competition for real estate. Currently, coastal land that was given out for free in the 1950s and 1960s is worth millions of dollars. Via these giveaways of real estate, rent-seeking behavior was instilled in the local population of Isabela. Land-giveaways and rent-seeking from this practice can still be commonly observed in Isabela today (see section 4.4.2)

In the absence of frequent supply shipments, settlement concentrated on the southeastern slopes of Sierra Negra Volcano, where precipitation from the rising prevailing winds creates a humid microclimate suitable for agriculture in non-drought years, particularly important as Isabela has no secure source of water, unlike the other Islands. Otherwise, life in Isabela was tranquil but tough by modern day standards. With little to no

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78 One family for example got the entire highest elevation of arable land along the slopes of Sierra Negra Volcano from “El Cura” to “los Mellizos.”
79 Entire sections of the beach, for example between the Naval Base and the eastern end of the beach and from the western edge of town to the start of the National Park, were given away as single pieces. These plots each have 1000s of feet of beach front. During the time of this writing, a partial plot of 120 feet of ocean front was on the market for over half a million USD.
infrastructure in place until the 1970s save for the remainders of the barracks of the US forces, Galapagos’ relentless environment could take a toll on society. However, these hardships also created a strong sense of community amongst its residents. The older generations still talk of the joys of 6-hour overnight donkey rides to get water from a brine lowland spring during a sequilla\textsuperscript{80} or trading between the separate cultures of fishermen and farmers that happened during occasional mixers.

The Thomas de Berlanga Parish, the name of the rural legal entity that is the agricultural highland community, still exists today, and the area now is the only agricultural zone on Isabela. Over 95% of the population now lives on the coast in Puerto Villamil; a second highland settlement at “Alemania” was abandoned. While being recalled as even more idyllic, with an array of tropical fruit farming, swimming holes, and a cave system with plenty of water, its penal colony history and the sheer distance from port left it deserted in the 1970s.

\textsuperscript{80} Spanish = drought
The **second epoch of civil organization** in Isabela started in the 1970s when the Ecuadorian state started to formalize societal organization and representation in the Galapagos. Formerly only being regarded as an agricultural settlement to firm up Ecuador’s sovereign claim over the Islands, with the rise of international interest in cruise-based Ecotourism and international science and conservation efforts in the Islands, rent-seeking became a viable source of revenue for the national government. Thus, more institutions were established on the coast line in Puerto Villamil, in close vicinity to occasionally visiting ships, to increase accessibility for traveling personnel.

The honeymooning era between the “foreign-owned” cruises, the national government, and the international NGOs was the beginning of a relationship that caused local
resentment against these groups in the local population, with implications for today’s conservation discourse (cf. Chapter 2). But, such alliances shift over time. For example, during the fishermen contestations of the late 1990s, the cruise-sector politically protected local fishermen from the restrictions of Marine Reserve management (see section 4.4.3).

With more frequent supplies\textsuperscript{81} and easier, non-physical jobs available in Puerto Villamil, people started migrating down to the coast. This effect was greatly amplified by the start of the first fishing boom of Galapagos in 1985. Lobster buyers from Guayaquil, Ecuador, contracted local women, amongst others, to manage the buying on Isabela in the first boom and bust industry on the Islands, fulfilling unsustainable quotas (Meltzoff 2013). The migration from the \textit{parte alta} to the \textit{playa}\textsuperscript{82} has ultimately had severe labor effects on the agricultural sector (Brewington 2011), affecting the entire social fabric of Isabela. At the time, there were no anti-foreigner sentiments. On the contrary, during these times of relative isolation, a connection to the outside world was mostly welcomed by all interest groups in society. The occasional supply ship brought news and necessary essentials, and visitors, who made small town life a little more exciting, were warmly welcomed; some visitors extended their adventure into permanent residency for work, love, or family.

This openness to outsiders started to change in the 3rd epoch of societal history, during the 1980s, when immigration steeply increased during a 2\textsuperscript{nd} boom in fisheries. While shark fins and lobsters were a profuse and profitable fishery, the real “gold-rush of

\textsuperscript{81} One ship every 4 - 6 weeks
\textsuperscript{82} Spanish – highlands and beach
Galapagos” started when Chinese buyers came to trade for pepinos (Spanish – sea cucumber). A fishing crew could make several thousand US-dollars a day, in a time when Ecuador’s currency was still the Sucre, and an average annual income on the mainland in 1990 was $US 1370 (World Bank 2018). The human population jumped from 400 to 1600 in a matter of years (Epler 2007), and tranquil life turned into a boom-town wild-west society (Meltzoff 2013) with more money than they knew what to do with. The result was more migration, this time tempting opportunists and “supporting infrastructure.”

At the time (and into the 21st century), economic life on the island was largely based on a barter system. As there was no bank in Isabela, and foreign currency was of especially little use, stories abound of fishermen “making it rain” with $100 bills in the streets for bypassing kids, or drunk fishermen passed out in the municipal park using sacks of bills as pillows. Not all migrants were going directly into fishing, however, and not all beneficiaries of this boom were unwise with their money. Prostitution, as an example of “supportive infrastructure,” was such a lucrative business on the Island that even teen-aged, easy-going surfers would take up running a brothel. It is rumored that the most expensive neighborhood of Guayaquil, Sanborondon, was founded by the Guayaquilean prostitutes of Isabela, who saved their money in a time where they could make 4-5 thousand dollars with a single client, as boastful, drunk fishermen would get into machista bidding wars over the lady of the hour.84

83 In current US-dollars
84 While gender inequality is less pronounced in Galapagos than it is in mainland Ecuador, the principal problems related to gender and women’s rights are intra-family abuse, low quality education, and lack of employment opportunities and sources of income (Rosero and Valdivieso 2009).
Wild though this epoch was, the resentment against global forces did not stem from the “excitement” (with all its negative consequences) of this high powered, wasteful, and fast-lived boom and bust economy fueled by money from the far east. It came from western conservationists’ efforts to reign in not the social, but the correlating environmental mayhem of the fishery. Their international concepts of stock assessment and catch limits coincided with the national government’s initial efforts to curtail immigration and to bring human existence into harmony with the environment under the LOREG$^{85}$.

The special law of 1998 was mainly designed around socio-environmental problems surrounding the booming pepino fisheries. Growth and immigration exponentially increased the demand for public services such as water, health, and education, overwhelming the capacity of the local municipal governments. Additionally, immigration of Ecuadorian nationals was lowering Galapagos per capita income increases to 1.8% per year, despite a growth in GDP of almost 10% per year between 1998 and 2005 (Taylor, et al. 2008). This negative growth in local purchasing power, considering the 10-15% inflation in Galapagos, continuously eroded quality of local life in Isabela (cf. Granda Leon, et al. 2013). This erosion added to the eventual start of the next epoch with yet more local demand for more growth, this time in the land-based tourism sector (see 4th epoch, below).

Isabela is not traditionally a fishing culture. Rather, they were farmers turned fishers by the promise of quick riches in fishing booms. This change had a two-fold, devastating

$^{85}$ Spanish Acronym – Ley Organica Regimen Especial de Galapagos – Special Law of Galapagos
impact on the socio-environmental fabric of the Island. On the economic side, these new, boom-time fishers did not understand their medium. They did not know how to live in equilibrium with the environment to ensure that stocks would not deplete and would remain available tomorrow. Instead, as a textbook case example of the tragedy of the commons, everybody took as many sea cucumbers as humanly possible before the next guy could. This attitude led to severe environmental impacts and the near biological collapse of the species, as well as the eventual economic collapse of the fishery in the mid-2000s (e.g., Hearn, et al. 2008; Toral-Granda 2008; Reyes, et al. 2013; Ramirez and Reyes 2015). Before the collapse, however, the repercussions also had devastating effects in the social realm. As stocks were running lower, fishers would dive deeper and longer to get their prey. Undereducated on avoiding the physiological effects of extended dive exposure, or blind to an “invisible problem”86 (Meltzoff 2013), they would surface with nitrogen narcosis. In the absence of a readily available decompression chamber, many died, further altering the social dynamics in town.

The fisheries boom-time eras of lobsters, pepino, and even illegal shark fins – and their eventual stock collapses – had a two-fold effect on the Global vs. local narrative. New opportunities motivated groups to shift alliances and rivalries. First, fearless (or subconsciously fearful) fishermen became a political force to be reckoned with, fighting conservation regulation that threatened to curtail their lavish lifestyle. As discussed extensively in Chapter 2, conservation policy was largely created and implemented by a conglomerate of “foreign” influences under the scientific community and the cruise ship

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86 The young fishermen were aware that they were risking their lives, but pride, youthful death-defiance, and acceptance of fate led these men to ignore the risks of their dive practices. This is not unique to Isabela, but a common phenomenon in fishermen and young men worldwide (Meltzoff 2013).
tourism sector.\textsuperscript{87} As their policies were directed at stopping resource extraction, then one of the biggest threats to conservation in Galapagos, the so-called “scientific discourse group” created a lot of resentment in the local population against anything “foreign” (Quiroga 2009).

This effect was largest in Isabela as the port most reliant on fisheries, closest to the productive fishing grounds of Bahia Elizabeth and the west side of Isabela. Secondly, the constant loss of life in Isabela society during the decade of the \textit{pepino} boom (1996-2006) became the conceptual base of, as well as the eventual \textit{raison d’etre} for, IOI. As discussed above, IOI was founded in 2006 with a grass-roots conservation mission to help diversify the local economy away from fishing and into the next, and currently ongoing, boom epoch of land-based or local Ecotourism, while preventing local disenfranchisement through global forces (\textit{e.g.}, foreign investment in the sector).

The 4\textsuperscript{th} \textbf{epoch of societal evolution in Isabela}, the epoch of Ecotourism, was started in the mid-2000s by the national government and international NGOs with local capacity building programs like cooking and bartending classes for the local hospitality industry, dive master certifications for local fishermen, and English classes for the emergent hotel sector. Naively, little did anyone in governance anticipate that this industry would become the next Pandora’s Box, too firm was the local focus on fighting resource extraction.

\textsuperscript{87} It is important to note that the cruise industry was not actually pro-conservation in this discourse. They were supporting the scientific community in their pro-conservation policies as it fit the Eco-product they were selling (cf Chapter 2 on Galapagos Paradox). However, inherent to the purpose of any capitalist business, as the global concept would have it, their main aim was unimpeded tourism operations, not protection of nature. Thus, they also supported pro-extraction policies to appease rioting fishermen (bad for sales) in the late 1990s, and withdrew their support when the fishermen lost overall political clout at the end of the fisheries booms (Meltzoff 2013).
Of course, at its conceptual inception in Galapagos, land-based or local tourism wasn’t thought of as a boom industry, but rather as a sustainable alternative to resource extraction. It would give an economic alternative to fishermen as well as stop the massive financial leakages in the cruise-industry, thereby reducing income inequality in local society. In the name of conservation, collective efforts were taken by the national government and the international community to foster the necessary local know-how for people to be involved in a small-scale, land-based tourism sector that would support both the local socio-economy and the environment – congruent with the sustainability pillars of Ecotourism.

Along with its global concept intentions, the new epoch of Ecotourism affected the socio-political intersection in Isabela. Along with the above-described NGO sector push for sustainability through shifting socio-economic behavior came a strong pro-development push from local government to expand local infrastructure, in search of the next financial boom to replace fishing. Under the political slogan of “Isabela crece por ti” (Spanish – Isabela is growing for you), the Mayor started an unprecedented infrastructure program designed to boost economic prosperity and human well-being in the Island. Expanding a local airstrip into a full-blown airport has been one of the keystones of this development push. These two global and local forces were not complimentary, however, and have failed to promote sustainable development. Rather, they continue to compete for space and acceptance amongst different interest groups that shape the discourse around conservation vs. development in Isabela.
4.4.2. Isabela Interest Groups – the Global, the Local, and the National

The most emblematic issue of competing influences and opinions amongst interest groups in the 4th epoch of civil organization, the epoch of Ecotourism, is the potential opening of a commercial airport in Isabela. As described in Chapter 3, civil society’s opinions and behaviors in Galapagos split along the lines of conservation vs. human development and varying levels of trust in local, national, and international institutions. With fisheries now accounting for less than 4% of the local economy (Watkins and Cruz 2007), interest groups in Isabela, formerly heavily influenced by the locally rooted concepts and practices of this extractive industry, are increasingly defined around the global(izing) intentions and concepts surrounding Ecotourism.

Identified below are eight interest groups that elucidate the complicated mesh of socio-political global vs. local conceptualizations currently at play under the 4th epoch of Ecotourism in Isabela. Analysis of these interest groups can illuminate if and how IOI, as a non-profit straddling both the Global vs. local as well as the conservation vs. development barriers, can act as a facilitator or mediator between the competing forces. The topics of the stories told by the various interest groups overlapped (emblematically on the airport) but the underlying Practices, Institutions, and concepts (PIC) analysis sorted the participants into clearly distinguishable interest groups with overarching alliances and rivalries (see Table 4.1).

As detailed in the Methods, each interest group was analyzed for its CAGE pattern. CAGE pattern analysis revealed further details within the groups, correlating with the group members’ historical trajectories.
Each of the interest groups had distinct narratives.\textsuperscript{88} While the quantitative analysis of Chapter 3 focused on the zoomed out level analysis of larger-scale policies and institutions, this Chapter’s qualitative ethnographic interpretation seeks out interest groups and their interactions at Waltz’ first image, the individual (Waltz 1957; cf. also Chapter 1), analyzing group behavior and opinions and giving historical perspective, as well as insights into dynamic changes over time.

\textsuperscript{88} There were more stories than interviews, not a fraction of which can be written out here. The storylines laid out here are selected for their relevance to the overarching theme of global vs. local influence in Conservation and Ecotourism in Isabela.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interest group</th>
<th>PIC</th>
<th>Alliance</th>
<th>Dominant influence</th>
<th>Stance on airport</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fishermen</td>
<td>traditional lifestyle, relational, not transactional, nepotistic/inefficient, value education (for future generation), economically disenfranchised, don’t want out of fishing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former Fisherman</td>
<td>transactional, corruption is normal, man dominates nature for personal benefit, opportunism is a way forward, Tourism is only future for ISA</td>
<td>Old-Timers</td>
<td>local</td>
<td>pro-airport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FisherWives</td>
<td>non-capitalist micro-businesses, personal, barrier style economy, relational, not transactional, disenfranchised, accepting of corruption, no foot on ladder for new EcoT epoch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young Professional Mothers</td>
<td>level of education, merit based achievements, against corruption, nature needs protection, inter-institutional cooperation</td>
<td></td>
<td>Young Globalizers</td>
<td>against the airport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Influencers</td>
<td>merit based achievements, Planning and integrity, nature needs protection, society needs assistance, transposing global concepts into local</td>
<td>Independent developers</td>
<td>national</td>
<td>balanced view - weighing pros and cons for different reasons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers</td>
<td>education is less important, family and honest work, don’t care about corruption, man dominates nature for survival</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land-Based Tourism Lobby</td>
<td>pro growth and expansion of T-sector, use of resources for human benefit, sustainability to not kill golden goose, airport balance between clients and competition, pro-business culture with capitalism structure</td>
<td></td>
<td>Independent developers</td>
<td>national</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional National Leadership</td>
<td>island culture, mixing structure and tradition, island specific regulation/admin, interinstitutional cooperation, man and nature in harmony</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.4.3. Resentment of the Global – the Old-Timers Alliance

Propagating “Isabela First” narratives and valuing financial gains over environmental concerns, municipal politics around conservation and development in Isabela in the Ecotourism epoch seem to be as binary as US politics in recent years. Following the storylines in the interviews, the data suggest that these are not random correlations.

Politically speaking, according to local sentiment, Isabela was way ahead of the global game, as US President Trump’s management styles and personality resemble those of Mayor Gordillo, who has been elected “King of Isabela” for 14 years at the time of this writing. Socio-economically, several interest groups, particularly the fishermen and their wives around the “Old-Timers Alliance,” seem to long for the times when their self-reliant ways of life created previously unknown wealth and prosperity, rather than embrace the opportunities and benefits offered by Globalization.

During the sea cucumber boom, as much as now, under Ecotourism, global forces strongly influenced local politics, conservation, and social well-being in Isabela. While in the 1980s and 1990s, local society was flush with foreign currency from trade with Asian buyers, causing social and environmental havoc, infrastructure development to boost local incomes in the newly emerging boom economy of local Ecotourism is driving public discussion today.90

At the municipal level, Mayor Gordillo has long embraced Ecotourism as a revenue stream to replace declining fisheries. Isabela is currently in the 3rd, 5-year term of

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89 Translated from Spanish original: “Isabela para los Isabeleños”
90 In addition to planning to open the airport to direct flights to the Ecuadorian mainland, other large scale infrastructure projects underway during the time of the research were: 1) renewing the potable water grid and sewer; 2) paving the roads in town; 3) planning a cargo pier; 4) building a new passenger pier; and 5) preparations to start construction of a waterfront boardwalk connecting port and town.
Gordillo’s administration (1999-2009, 2014-2019). At the beginning of the PO data for this dissertation, between 2006 and 2008, Mayor Gordillo’s expansion policies were already fully underway. A new passenger pier was being built and the local airstrip was being renovated and expanded. A basic airport terminal (that still sits as an empty shell 10 years later) was constructed and bombastically inaugurated in 2008 by the municipal government. In local perception, the town was set for progress. It had recently been refitted with internationally donated, low light pollution street lights, electricity was made available 24hrs a day to run them, and the anti-conservation, pro-growth slogan “Isabela crece por ti” was written onto new infrastructure all over town. Furthermore, “Isabela es de los Isabeleños,” the spoken slogan of the current term, has clear anti-Globalization connotations and resembles the current US “America First” slogan.

Leaving comparisons with American politics aside, the pro-growth, anti-environment, anti-Globalization tendencies in local politics can be explained via analysis of the socio-political history of Isabela.

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91 Under Buen Vivir, public office appointments are limited to 2 terms. However, the rule was implemented under the 2008 constitutional reform and is not enforced retroactively. For both President Correa as well as Mayor Gordillo, previous appointments did not count towards this limit.

92 Prior to 2008, during the 3rd epoch of the fisheries booms, electricity became widespread in Isabela to cool and store catch during the hot equatorial daytime, though electricity (and the municipal water, running on electric pumps) was shut off from 11PM – 6AM. According to local accounts, there was no electricity in the first epoch and only a few hours’ worth in the early evenings during the second epoch of civil organization in Isabela, to extend social life on the island beyond the early equatorial sunsets.

93 Spanish – Isabela is growing for you

94 Spanish – Isabela belongs to the people of Isabela
During the height of the fisheries boom-time era, a coalition between the internationally-conceptualized, -managed, and -funded Charles Darwin Station (CDF) and the national institutions of Galapagos National Park and Marine Reserve tried to implement environmental protection measures such as moratoria on sea cucumbers and lobster to help stocks recover. This meddling in the freedom-loving lives of local fishermen, who viewed the Islands as theirs to exploit, was seen as a direct attack by the international community and their surrogates – the cooperating national institutions – against the local people and their livelihoods. According to local accounts, Mayor Gordillo, then in the leadership of the fishing COOP, was leading the charge in several mini-revolts that were staged by the fishermen in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

Once public order was restored after these riots, right around Christmas of 2000 – peak travel season - law enforcement started to look for those responsible for the riots. Local story has it that Gordillo denied involvement but hid in the parte alta to avoid
prosecution (a fairly common and effective strategy in Isabela), and two other members were scapegoated to satisfy international demands for accountability. The fishermen covered this up, and thereby Gordillo was indebted to the sector; indeed, they continue to vote for him to continue to call in favors. He carried forward this debt into office, cementing into policy anti-conservation sentiments that stemmed from an anti-extraction stance in the conservation community and the resulting resentment against international influence in Isabela (IBID).

All three interest groups in the Old-Timer Alliance are at the bottom end of the economic spectrum and are composed mostly of Isabela-born, older generations. In congruence with suggestions in the literature (e.g., Mulder and Coppolillo 2005), this alliance is skeptical of outsider institutions and concepts. They fear self-interest-fueled environmentalism’s threatening local ways of life and neo-colonial exploitation by foreign corporations.

4.4.3.1. The Fishermen
The boom in fisheries drew people away from agriculture in the highlands and brought in newcomers from the Ecuadorian mainland, as people were looking for quick, death-defying riches. The Isabela fishing COOP, in collusion with the COOPs from other islands, were a political guerilla force during the 3rd epoch of civil organization in Isabela, but in the era of Ecotourism have recently undergone a steady and deep decline in importance, membership, and operations (Palacios and Schuhbauer 2013), inversely correlated with the meteoric rise of the local, land-based tourism sector (Proaño and Epler 2008). Like agriculture two epochs earlier, the fishing COOP has declined nearly to the brink of extinction; according to local accounts, there are probably no more than 15-25
active fishermen left in Isabela, depending on the definition of “active.” The fishing COOP has shut their doors due to lack of funding, with ever-declining numbers and fewer paying their dues as a result of ever-diminishing returns (Hearn et al. 2008).

Former emblems of pride, such as the internationally funded centro de acopio,95 lie fallow beyond function for years.96

The fishing sector has had a love-hate relationship with institutions and global influences in Galapagos. Or rather, they love some and hate other global forces, and each sentiment has come in waves. After an indirect contact via Guayaquilean middlemen during the lobster-boom, the next international interactions the sector had were with Asian buyers coming directly to the Islands with unfathomable amounts of international money, cash US dollars, to buy all the sea cucumbers that could be pulled from the ocean.97 This global influence was certainly most appreciated by the local fishermen.

The competing global forces of conservation – restricting unlimited access to stocks, creating catch limits, and exploiting the Islands for “foreign” profits in the cruise sector –

95 COOP operated, sub-zero storage facilities to collect, store, and prepare catch for export.
96 A problem with the globally conceptualized infrastructure donation programs frequently observed in Isabela is that they are often based on expensive and difficult-to-maintain foreign materials and technologies. And while they rightfully include budgets for “technology transfer,” often such donations do not (and arguably cannot) include follow-up funding and structures beyond the original cost of the project. Thus, these systems tend to break quickly – and are then replaced with local technology, knowledge, and funding.

The intentions behind the globally conceptualized donations are good and valid (better sewer = less run-off and water table contamination = public health benefit; low light pollution street lights = enhanced local tourism product, social progress, and less distraction for wildlife; cooling house for fishing COOP = less spoiled catch and increased income for fishermen = less total and illegal extraction; to name a few concrete examples from Isabela). However, these projects are based on the global concepts of institutional functionality, knowledge and capacity retention, and continuity. As further described below, the local political culture is prone to high turnover with short-term gain horizons and rent-seeking behavior. Thus, initial training efforts get lost in the often abrupt and total transitions of power and responsibility. This gap between global conceptualization and local implementation reduces the long-term benefit of infrastructure donations in Isabela to minimal levels, furthering both local resentment in certain interest groups about the usefulness of foreign intervention and, conversely, doubts in the global community about the usefulness of international assistance into locally administered systems.

97 At the time, Ecuador was using the inflation-susceptible Sucre as national currency.
were not welcome and thus were contested by the fishing sector (as described above). The fishermen’s contestations threatened sales in the cruise industry due to negative international PR, resulting in political support by the cruise industry for pro-extraction policies and the eventual disappearance of the Galapagos Paradox (cf. Chapter 2). This support waned quickly, however, as did the “win” of re-opened fishing seasons higher catch limits that the fishermen had gained with the support by their newest ally, the Ecuadorian Oligarchy, as overfished stocks declined from a boom into a bust (Meltzoff 2013). After the triple interaction of declining stocks from overexploitation, better economic livelihood alternatives, and tighter regulations, more and more fishermen moved into land-based (eco)tourism and the cruise industry quickly turned away from the fishing sector, now a competitor.98

The latest shift in the relationship between the cruise industry and the fishermen interest group came in 2014, when in the lead up to the 2015 reforms, the PNG nationalized and standardized boating regulations and put cruises on fixed itineraries to assure the oligarchy-desired impression of an “alone in nature” tourism concept, giving cruise ships previously non-existent anchor rights to the port of Isabela – a concession starkly opposed by the fishermen. The diminished economic importance of fishing and the resulting lowered organization around the COOPs did not allow for a coordinated

98 Around the same time as the violent contestations of Christmas 2000 in Isabela, fishermen in Cristobal threatened to block landing of cruise groups on the beaches of Espanola – the single, important albatross watching site in Galapagos, and the cruise sector feared that further bad news in the global news cycle would disrupt sales. In an effort to appease the fishermen, they started to self-serving lobby for easing of catch limits, thereby initiating their exit from the scientific discourse and the end of the Galapagos Paradox (cf Chapter 2).
As fishermen were breaking into the tourism sector, becoming competition rather than an anti-tourism guerilla force, the cruise sector stopped their pro-extraction lobbying on behalf of the fishermen, and regulation tightened quickly in absence of this particular international pressure.
contestation against this “invasion” of the “foreign” into their local fishing port, and anchored cruises are now a permanent visual off the beach in Puerto Villamil.

This interest group is in their early 1950s on average, physically the most able and daring generation in the early 1990s, at the height of the boom. They are mostly non-religious\(^99\), have no land ownership as collateral or cattle as back-door income, and accordingly have little access to financial capital – a key impediment for starting new ventures outside of fishing.

As a whole, the fishermen interest group has a solid negative inclination against global influences in Isabela. However, despite its being a symbol of the Global, they unanimously want the airport to open, maybe hoping for a revival of past opportunities it provided in the times of the “Logistico,” a military cargo plane, used nation-wide to supply remote communities with supplies from the national government from the population centers in Guayaquil and Quito. As one of their key features, this group still carries substantial resentment against the National Park as an ally of international forces and a key enemy of the local people and human progress in Isabela.

Similarly, the NGOs especially garnered local resentment for caring about nature more than about humans and for putting into place conservation policies meant to enrich those who were benefiting from them.\(^{100}\) Given the frontier and pioneer mentalities that the

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\(^{99}\) There are trends emerging from the data that certain groups are more religiously affiliated than others (higher education levels and professional occupation in fisheries negatively correlating, and landownership and land-based tourism positively correlating with religious affiliation). Religion and its impact on the PIC, as concepts and practices related to the institution of church, are not sufficiently explored in this research and correlating them with trends in society would be interesting for future projects.

\(^{100}\) Cf. Chapter 2 on the Galapagos Paradox and how NGOs supposedly benefitted from conservation policies.
Old-Timers in Isabela hold, to dominate nature for human benefit, this correlation was easily made and was reinforced by local politics.

As the sector has declined so much but has such a strong historical influence in Isabela, the fishermen interest group is one of identity, rather than profession. They long for the old times of the fisheries boom-time era to return – not for the life-threatening dangers of diving, of course, but to have plentiful access to money again without subscribing to the rigors of the global concept of a business entity.

This group can be divided yet further into active fishermen and former fishermen, who now work in tourism (see next section). Notably, most of the fishermen still actively in fishing are the ones born in Isabela, while more of those who are now trying their luck in other ventures are former opportunistic migrants (having been grandfathered-in with permanent residencies in 1998 with the implementation of the LOREG), who came to Galapagos during the fisheries boom to find their fortunes.

4.4.3.2. The Former Fishermen

In the early stages of pushing fishermen out of unsustainable fisheries, in 2008, the Government gave out free tourism concessions to local residents. There were several levels of permits for a total of 1) 18 Tour de Bahia, 2) 40 Tour de Buceo, and 3) 14 Tour Navegable concessions. All locals had to do was deliver a sophisticated business plan showing financial feasibility for the next five years, have the financing arranged, do environmental impact assessments, show previous experience in the tourism sector, explain how they would benefit at least 25 local businesses, and have all that result in a

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101 Spanish for Bay Tours (snorkel and wildlife watching in and round port), Dive Tours (open water day tours), Small-Cruise Permit (Live-aboards);
score of above 100 points on a complicated grading scale (see Appendix 7.3.1 for a sample outline of a business plan for the “simplest” permit, Tour de Bahia). Needless to say, hardly an easy or intuitive undertaking for a guy who’s been fishing most of his life out in the tropical Eastern Pacific somewhere.

So, what happened? What could the community do to get a foot into that global opportunity door that had opened just an inch or so? The fishermen knew there was big money in tourism. The “foreign” cruises had been doing it right in their faces for decades, while they were excluded from a piece of the pie, having to resort to dangerous fishing practices that the very conservationists, those receiving donations from the cruises, were now making more and more difficult. Violent contestation, while perhaps temporarily satisfying, did not change the game, nor did it help local prosperity in the long run. While the catch limits were circumvented easily enough by sneaking additional catch onto the Logistico or by riding out to the Asian fishing fleets that were waiting to be stocked just outside the 40-mile Marine Reserve, conservationist predictions came true, and the *pepino* fishery collapsed economically in 2006. Stocks were so degraded that 2006 catch limits were never reached and thus, by 2007, the Asian buyers had effectively given up on Galapagos as a high output market and retreated to other regions,\(^{102}\) effectively ending the *pepino* boom and with it the 3rd epoch of civil organization in Isabela (Hearn and Murillo 2008).

The difficult process of applying for the few available concessions marked a turning point in land-based tourism development. While surely well-intended by the international

\(^{102}\) E.g., Yucatan, Mexico (Schachar 2018)
NGO consultants who came up with the state-of-the-art application process for sustainable Ecotourism, the unintended consequences were far-reaching and long-lasting. The local fishermen hired outside consultants themselves! There were about 3-5 guys in Galapagos at the time who could prepare such a complex application portfolio. Supply and demand drove up the price for a “cupo”\textsuperscript{103} project preparation well beyond the US$5000 mark. The fishermen had been living large, though, and the fishing industry had been in dire straits for 3 years at that point. There was no bank in Isabela at the time, and few people had 5000 dollars lying around. So, cunning Eddy Tambo-Gem (name changed for privacy purposes) came up with a solution that avalanched – outside money, with a nifty 51/49 ownership share.

The loophole was contested eventually, but it was resolved that 51\% majority shareholder ownership qualified as “Galapagueño” under Ecuadorian law. Long story short, “foreign money with a local face” became a common practice not only for cruise concessions, but for local hotels and agencies. The 2015 LOREG reforms did away with the requirement of the 1998 version that stipulated all business ownership had to be local, and the law now “prefers” local ownership, which was formerly a requirement – the Neo-Materialism of the “New Brown Left” (cf. Chapter 1) seeping into Galapagos.

The social networks of the former fishermen are focused around traditional channels like church and family. They are the group that broke away from the old extractive industries to try new ventures in a new boom – or intend to do so in the near future. Yet, most of them are still directly related to fishing and hold many of the same underlying beliefs and

\textsuperscript{103} Spanish for voucher; here: concession
opinions. However, the former fishermen unanimously see tourism as the future of Isabela, and they intend to make the most of it.

4.4.3.3. The Fisherwives

Until recently, local fishermen’s wives had 3 different women’s COOPs (OMAI, OMPAI, Pezorado Azul) working to generate additional or alternative income to their seafaring husbands via souvenir crafts, locally silk-screen printed clothing, home-made jams, and the production of smoked fish (Meltzoff 2013). These efforts were part of the global conservation influence in Galapagos, pushing for alternatives to unsustainable fisheries coordinated and financed by the National Park and WildAid. The women’s COOPs were reasonably successful, and their products were exported as far as Quito. The Pescado Azul COOP was even internationally recognized as a model project, but efforts declined rapidly with the demise of the fishing sector, and the women’s COOPs suffered from a lack of support in local politics. None of the COOPs received assistance from the local government to bring their products to market. OMAI and OMPAI operated at a small scale out of private homes before they eventually closed, but the COOP that was bound for larger success was Pescado Azul. Pescado Azul had won the Equator Prize and local leadership was premiered in Berlin, Germany, and upon their return, had commercial sized operations planned.

The Pescado Azul COOP had established themselves on a private property with a residential zoning. Their operating permits were revoked by the municipality on grounds of urban planning code violations, rarely enforced and barely publicly known, and there

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104 The homeowners continued to run the operations privately for some time after the COOPs had disappeared. In 2018 both had turned to other ventures in tourism.
was no political support for a property swap. Despite years of attempts, local political
goodwill was not to be had for the COOP women of Isabela, and they were never able to
obtain the appropriate permits in Isabela to invest the Equator Prize money into proper
processing facilities. Some claim that rather than local politics, it was corruption,
nepotism, infighting, and internal mismanagement that made the prize money disappear,
leading to the demise of Pezcado Azul. Either way, the rusting ruins of their processing
machinery can still be seen roadside in Puerto Villamil – testament to the local political
resentment against global concepts (e.g., female empowerment) in their island’s political
style of favoritism and corruption (internal and/or political).

Unlike fishing, Ecotourism had a need for on-land support staff. While their Ecotourism-
employed, ex-fishermen husbands still went out on their boats (now only for the day,
rather than multi-day fishing adventures to the productive waters of the west side of
Isabela\(^{105}\)), the women gained a role in tending to the agency/hotel. This business
orientation is a distinct Globalization of concepts in local behavior.\(^ {106}\) In this way, the
global concept of Ecotourism itself is what eventually killed off the global project of
COOPs. The COOPs lost their members as well as the basis for their existence, achieving
their originally intended goal – additional income through a (relatively) empowered status
of women in local society – despite their disappearance.

Inherently, members of this interest group, the Fisherwives, are women. While some of
the former COOP members have branched into land-based tourism, the remaining
Fisherwives have not fared well economically. These women, analogous to both

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\(^{105}\) Active fishermen still go on multi-day trips.
\(^{106}\) Those who branched off into tourism are no longer in this group, but rather are categorized into the land-
based tourism interest group, see 4.4.5.2
fishermen interest groups in this alliance, have not left fishing behind mentally, economically, or socially. CAGE analysis shows that this group is quite distinct from the others in this alliance by more than just gender. The women in their 40s who make up this interest group score lowest in formal education, have the highest numbers of children. This group has no access to financial capital. Economically, they remain employed in their households or in various low-paying temporary gigs, in a throw-back to former housewife roles. Due to their non-capitalist business orientation that favors personal micro-businesses over organizational structures, they are not fully participating in the growing land-based tourism sector. The PIC analysis in traditional fishermen’s families revolves around home-based economic behavior that has not been institutionalized into a business, such as selling pan de yuca at their home’s front door rather than opening a bakery, helping to babysit rather than opening a daycare, or selling chicharron out of a bicycle basket instead of opening a restaurant.

While the Fisherwives mostly want the airport to open to have better opportunities for commercial openings to get them a lucky dollar – a foot on the ladder of prosperity – there is considerable political baggage attached to the airport. The biggest push for the airport comes from the very same administration that closed down the Pescado Azul COOP, and along with it the dreams of its former members of independence and prosperity.

But prosperity might be further away than an airport. This group has not adapted to the global concept of working long office hours. Rather, they are well-spirited dreamers and serial micro-entrepreneurial opportunists that all have histories of failed micro-business.
While being related to the longest-standing families on the island and thus closely related to fishing and anti-Globalization politics, this group unanimously wants the airport to open for health and leisure reasons. Having had many children and aware of their own undereducation, these women tell stories of abysmal prenatal and maternal care as well as low levels of local education. They are unhappy with their isolation from the continent. Particularly, those women who have managed to allocate the respective funds to send their children to the continent for the formal education that they themselves missed would like to more easily travel to visit their children studying in mainland Ecuador.

4.4.4. Frustration with Local Colonial Behaviors - the Globalizer Alliance

The violent contestations of the fishing sector (see 4.4.3.1) were symbols of discontent against perceived and/or real “foreign” oppression. Skirmishes like these went public on a larger, global scale, with Galapagos ever a hotspot of global conservation interest. The news of fishermen rioting against conservation efforts, with pictures from the very public truck parade rallies in town, helped create a global picture of evil locals destroying an international heritage (Cairns 2011), making the local fisherman into enemy number one of conservation.107

The violent contestations against conservation policy deeply shook international NGOs and local conservation agencies like the National Park (PNG). The stage was set for a

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107 According to the data taken, these types of contestations included threats of lynching of giant tortoises, burning down national park offices, and chasing the director of the national Park off the island – after burning his house as well... This local contestation did cause reactions by the global community. When fishermen took several members of Sea Shepard (SS) “hostage”, the Ecuadorian Navy even closed down the ports of entry to bring in special forces that landed on the beaches of Isabela to restore public order (Meltzoff 2013). The whole issue was mostly a PR stunt by SS, rather than a dangerous hostage situation, but it did make waves as if it had been the latter and shone a spotlight on contestation in fisheries issues in Galapagos (albeit apocryphal in this particular instance) – presumably what the activist SS had set out to do.
long and abrasive confrontation between the entrenched camps of the international community and their global conservation principles on the one hand, and the fishermen and their local lifestyles, pride, and subsistence needs on the other. In conservation discourses, this war is still ongoing today despite the fact that political, environmental, and economic needs, alliances, and contestations have shifted from fisheries to tourism (cf. Chapter 2).

According to present interviews with fishermen, the PNG, under then-Director Juan Chavez, was respected for not being “conservation fascists” (Cairns 2011). Being a “foreigner” (from the Ecuadorian mainland), Chavez worked hard to overcome resentment in the fishing community and for the PNG to be seen as an integrative management entity working for both the environment and society – violent contestations at the time notwithstanding. He was a visionary, and his plan might come to fruition after all (see section 4.6).

In the early 2000s, it was the PNG under Chavez, an environmental protection institution representing global conservation ideologies, that laid the foundations for Ecotourism in Isabela while also working to support the fishing sector with infrastructure improvements and education. With strategic foresight, and assisted by various international NGOs, they prepared Isabela for a shift out of unsustainable fisheries by building boardwalks through the local wetlands and mangrove forests for recreational and educational purposes. Furthermore, the PNG worked in cooperation with the then-omni-present Charles Darwin Foundation (CDF) in environmental education, and the CDF established baselines for sustainable stocks. With financial help from USAID, the PNG attempted to assist the
fishing sector to become more independent of foreign buyers and more profitable through the establishment of industrial cooling facilities donated to the COOP.

This push by the PNG for global conservation concepts, namely, Ecotourism development to combat natural resource exploitation, was used in turn by local pro-development politicians to justify the environmental impacts of their infrastructure projects. When the municipality cut down coastal mangroves to build a new passenger pier or when it bulldozed dune-vegetation in Iguana nesting areas on the local beach, they countered environmentalists’ complaints, (ab)using the conservation rhetoric to claim that they were merely providing necessary infrastructure for Ecotourism and providing recreational opportunities on “pristine” beaches.\textsuperscript{108}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure4_3.jpg}
\caption{Municipal Bobcat "cleaning" the local beach, removing beach vegetation in a area that serves as a Marine Iguana nesting ground, to create a "pristine" image for tourism}
\end{figure}

The relations between Isabela’s local administration (Municipality), the national institutions (\textit{e.g.}, the PNG), and the international conservation community (NGOs) has

\textsuperscript{108} For further discussion on conflicting interests on what tourism should look like in Isabela, see also section 4.7.1
been shifting over time. As outlined above, prominent and highly involved international conservation efforts were first resented, then contested, then valued – and then lost. A combination of events in the early stages of the epoch of Ecotourism in Isabela led to the withdrawal of international organizations from the vociferous promotion of global conservation concepts: simultaneously a passive demise and an active retreat. The result was a distinct vacuum of guiding, global pro-conservation concepts, resulting in rampant and uncontrolled development meant to boost local incomes after the bust in the fishing economy.

USAID, by far the biggest contributor of international aid to conservation in Isabela in the 1990s, retired their involvement completely when Mayor Gordillo was re-elected to office in 2004, due to his history in the fishing COOP and the plethora of officially unproven allegations of corruption. Locals were hopeful that the fruitful cooperation between the PNG and USAID would be revived at the end of Mayor Gordillo’s double-term in 2009. But ironically, the election of a new Mayor (Bolivar Tupiza, 2009-2014) coincided with the rise of the anti-neoliberal leftist forces of the Socialism of the 21st century, making the quick return of a US governmental agency unlikely. While Mayor Tupiza was favorable to international assistance and is of the same socialist party “La 35” (Alianza Pais), anti-Neoliberalism sentiments that fueled the rise of “Buen Vivir” caused serious Globalization backlash at the national level, leading to, for example, the nationalizing of most of the international hydrocarbon operations. As described in Chapter 3, in the wake of this movement, NGOs came under serious scrutiny for their operations in Ecuador, and all assistance programs and projects either were made to assist in fulfilling government development goals under the Plan de Desarollo del Buen Vivir
(National Development Plan for Good Living) or were canceled. For many international organizations, these goals either did not fit operations strategically or politically, or they were difficult to fundraise for. USAID’s withdrawal for strategic political reasons was the biggest and most controversially discussed departure in the conservation community in Galapagos.

On top of the political realm, at the same time, a global financial crisis hit the economies of the world in 2008, causing donations to international conservation efforts to drop substantially. As a result, the CDF had to withdraw from all fields and all Islands that were not their core mission and base – scientific research in Santa Cruz island. While the departure of USAID left a major funding gap for conservation projects, the retreat of the CDF left a massive gap in social development and environmental education in Isabela. This blow for conservation pushed back global ideas and left the stage set for exponential development of the nascent land-based tourism sector, giving free reign to the next gold rush of Isabela – a mostly uncontrolled, local version of “Eco”tourism.\textsuperscript{109} IOI aimed to fill this void by addressing conservation issues with social development programs based on a non-donation based funding model since its earliest days. However, as discussed in section 4.6, it had to overcome obstacles at the global-local intersection to be effective.

\textit{4.4.4.1. The Young Working Mothers}

They are young, they are professional, they are independent – the young mothers of Isabela. This all-female interest group is the next generation, and their enthusiasm and ability give hope for a sustainable future. They are the youngest of all the interest groups

\textsuperscript{109} Local “Eco”tourism is often referred to locally as tourism in the ecosystem with local benefits, rather than the global concept of a sustainable tourism protecting the environment.
in Isabela. Thus, they have no relation to or prior experience with the former women’s COOPs – by the end of the fishery boom, the majority of the members of this group were still minors. The COOPs were something of their parents’ and grandparents’ generations. The young mothers have the highest levels of education amongst the local interest groups, and they have aspirations to put their training to work. It is their higher levels of education that introduced them to global concepts of environmental conservation, as opposed to the local concept of human domination of nature.

These women have embraced global concepts. They are actively involved in political discourse to fight for the future of the island, are self-employed and independent of their (ex)husbands, and work in leadership positions in public institutions. They have very little that holds them back. They are not tied to the old ways through fisheries, are not religious, have no landholdings, and, notably, very few of them derive their success from tourism. They are well connected in their social networks, and while they have little access to financial capital, they have solid incomes through their steady salaries. The steady salaries are what separates this interest group from the Old-Timer Alliance. The global concept of having a steady job rather than a series of one-off opportunities correlates highly with merit as an underlying structure, whereas digging for gold (or pepinos, in this case) is based on luck. Under the assumption of advancement through merit, the future becomes plannable. Thus, it benefits from organization and steady direction, rather than quick riches in a boom-and-bust cycle. Of course, a steady job and planned dedication to it also demands that a certain amount of social freedom is given up. The young mothers have abandoned the local conceptualization of house-wife livelihood
patterns in a family-based barter economy, thereby leaving behind the ad-hoc flexibility to help out a friend or cousin in need—a key social integrator in Isabela.

What drives the young mothers interest group, collectively, is frustration. Frustration with local politics, local public services, local education, local machismo, local booms and busts and short-term thinking. Frustration, in the end, with the old and local way of dealing with things in unplanned ways and with rewards being given out according to the nepotistic local concept of family-based promotions, rather than based on merit. These women see the potential of Isabela to be a prosperous and sustainable society—the global vision they have internalized—but they are aware that the Island does not (yet?) function according to their belief system based on these values. Accordingly, they are frustrated that progress is being held back by the inabilities of those in charge of local administration and decision making—and they have started a silent take-over.

During their interviews, members of this group repeatedly stated corruption, nepotism, and self-interest in politics to be the main problems of the Island. Corruption, in a group that puts a high value on merit, is an exclusionary factor. While other groups, particularly those in the Old-Timers Alliance, see corruption as acceptable and as a natural part of the political and economic process, the young mothers focus on corruption and nepotism as the core concepts of bad governance and the main inhibitor for community progress.110

110 Corrupt institutions (and the institutionalization of corruption as a concept into an interest group) often stem from colonial history in the developing world. Colonies that were resource poor adopted the merit-based socio-political organizational structure of the colonizing country. Both colonizer and colonized had to struggle for survival and progress, and according to the survival of the fittest, a merit-based system evolved (e.g., the British in the USA, both in trade as in war). Conversely, in resource rich colonies, the colonizers established themselves as elites and extracted riches through power and force—predetermined through their affiliation, rather than merit (e.g., the Spanish in Central and South America, both in political (non)cooperation as in economic gains). Cf. e.g., Acemoglu and Robinson (2012). Such historical systematic differences lead to distinctly different PICs. Whereas a merit based socio-
They are convinced that change is coming (has come) to Isabela and that the old times are gone – and not even political corruption can stop or reverse this process. What needs to happen though, is that change must be guided into sustainable avenues. Within the group, however, there is substantial disagreement on how that can and must be done. Some want the airport to open, most don’t. Some work in tourism, most don’t. They agree on what is not working. This group is one of collaboration, and they are seeking inter-institutional cooperation in the various levels of institutional administration of the Island – and appreciate international help. This group is well aware of the deficits in public infrastructure and even of their competing perspectives on how to achieve change. Regardless, they perceive their differences, as well as achieving a sustainable balance between environmental protection and human-progress-related development, to be manageable challenges that can be solved through collaborative effort. While supportive of arguments for conservation, many in this group weighed against those reasons the substantial travel convenience and health benefits to opening an airport. They are more worried about safety and social stability as core concepts of what makes a good community, though. Accordingly, the Working Young Mothers are mostly against opening the airport.

4.4.4.2. The Foreign Influencers

The other interest group in the Globalizer Alliance are the Foreign Influencers. They are the outside consultants who are being brought in by national institutions to tackle specific economic system values and rewards speed and efficiency, a nepotistic society that relies on friends, family, and favors for advancement tends to be more corrupt, and things tend to take longer to get done.
issues or to help improve certain processes. They are the foreign NGO staff. They are the volunteers. They have no children and no family ties in Isabela and are mostly temporary, though often long-term, residents of Galapagos. They are young, motivated, well educated, and full of good ideas. What they generally lack is local insight. In the progression of PO and interviews, the same issues often surfaced in members of this group. They often lack the socio-cultural background to understand why things work the way they do in Isabela, and thus, their globally-based solutions and ideas don’t come to fruition.

A lot of frustration is created in this group by observing local behavior, and all too often they criticize the Local for not following what seems to them to be common knowledge or sense. Those Foreign Influencers who are around long enough come to learn that things work differently in Isabela and that, to achieve change, one has to adapt global concepts to the local pace. Unfortunately, this adaptation means that progress, change, and implementation of good ideas is much slower than desired or anticipated. It is hard for them to understand why an alternative energy project that is already financed, planned out, and with all the pieces in place would not be finished in 2018, when it was supposed to be online in 2014 (e.g., delays due to rent-seeking). Or why a once already operating municipal recycling system is being actively boycotted by the local government, which dismantles functional facilities to transport them to another site, and then never re-assembles them at the new location (a rejection of a global concept, in this case of recycling, on the basis of rejecting “imposed” follow-up costs, again justified with the

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111 While IOI is currently the only NGO that has a permanent representation on Isabela, other NGOs, most notably the WWF and the CDF, with offices on Santa Cruz, do come over to Isabela for projects and workshops from time to time. The dataset contains representatives of all three of these NGOs.

112 Accounts went from inability to reassemble to as far as saying sabotaged.
elusive urban zoning regulation). It is difficult for the Foreign Influencers to comprehend how a sewer treatment plant, up and running, can seemingly be actively destroyed before a site visit of the international donors (e.g., using round up as weed killer to make the site look pretty (i.e., “clean and pristine,” see beach discussion in section 4.7.1) after months of abandonment, thereby killing off the water-treating bacteria in the settlement ponds).

Or how a brand-new grid for potable water could run afoul in months by not changing the engine oil on the pumps or the filters for the system (an example of a lack of institutional capacity due to favoritism appointments and lack of merit-based bureaucracy).

While actively supporting, working towards, and financing the above-mentioned infrastructure projects, the Foreign Influencers are not keen on seeing the airport opened to commercial flights to Isabela. This group is worried about environmental impacts caused by further overloading an already stressed public infrastructure by increasing the number of tourists in town.

![Figure 4.4 Municipal dump truck unloading unsorted trash at a site halfway up the volcano slopes. The recycling truck donated by WWF to the previous administration – not operational.](image)
The Working Young Mothers share the frustration about these issues. While the Foreign Influencers have the means to tackle these issues through their professional affiliations, the young mothers have an understanding of where the sticking points lie locally. This compatibility makes for a natural alliance promoting global concepts. The driving concept of this alliance is not so much conservation vs. development, but rather is the social well-being of society, as a base for sustainable progress.

4.4.5. Salt of the Earth and Tourism - The Independent Developer Alliance

Nominally belonging to Spain, Galapagos was no-man’s-land until Ecuador claimed it in 1832. Thereafter, it was mainly used for remote, colonial-style agriculture and sulfur mining. The Ecuadorian government started shoring up territorial claims by promoting further colonization after WWII, when they had had to allow American forces to establish military bases on their Islands to protect the Panama Canal from Japanese invasion. Despite land giveaway campaigns in the mid-20th century and the establishment of offices for governmental institutions in the 1970s, the national government’s reach has been limited, especially in Isabela (cf. 4.4.1).

During the fisheries boom-time era and in the days of cruise-based tourism, national institutions were regulating the rent-providing foreign cruises, and they were supported by an international alliance of science and conservation organizations (see Chapter 3). While farmers generally consider themselves stewards of the land and independent of the throes of politics, both the emerging local tourism industry as well as the locally appointed national institution administrators do not want to bow to foreign cruise exploitation and are looking to the national government as a reference for an independent
path of self-administration. The reference conceptualizations of this Alliance lie at the national level, and they have a balanced view on the airport.

4.4.5.1. The Farmers

Farming used to be the way of life in Isabela in the old days when people were brought in as workers for colonial style coffee haciendas. A means to survival, the early settlers successfully fed themselves and even exported substantial amounts of livestock and produce on the supply ships that eventually began passing through. The main crops were oranges, cattle, coffee, and the ever-present and highly invasive goats. It was a time of plenty in terms of what the local lands and national government support would provide per capita, local life was communal, and property rights and monetary based economics were unused concepts.

In a way, during the first two epochs of Isabela’s socio-economy, “agriculture” was the first boom-style economy. “Agriculture” was often not so much related to farming on one’s own land, but rather an exploitation of the natural common – resembling fishing and Ecotourism in later epochs. Nature provided easy access and all one had to do was pick one’s favorite flavor. People would go about their lives for weeks at a time having little to do with farming, but would go out and round up some 100-200 goats in the Park near the urban areas shortly before a cargo ship would come to the Island. They would then lead their newly gained herds down to town, wait for the ship to arrive, and sell their livestock.

Without natural predators in Galapagos, the invasive goats were so successful that breeding or otherwise maintaining herds was unnecessary. The environmental damage that goats were doing initially was not understood or was misinterpreted as a benefit to
nature, a misconception revealed in the interviews and still held to this day. While the invasive goats were outcompeting the endemic giant tortoises for low-hanging and ground foliage as a food source, many thought of the goats as a part of the local environment that enabled hunters and Park rangers to traverse the lands more easily, or that benefitted birds for nesting (Petrels) or hunting (Hawks) by clearing out the underbrush. In turn, in local conceptualization, goats were a boon, not a threat.

Environmental conservation was a foreign global concept that was not prevalent on the Island at the time.

The agricultural sector started building resentments against global concepts at several stages and at several political levels. The first round of resentment stemmed from the national government’s establishing institutions in town, in combination with a boom in lobster fisheries that caused migration to the coast, changing family structures and resulting in labor shortages in the now professional sector of Agriculture (Brewington 2011; cf. also section 4.4.1). Family structures were changed as children no longer wanted to be involved in laboring on the lands of their parents’ fincas, but rather strived for office jobs in port or to make lots of money in lobster fishing. In turn, farming shifted from being a family way of life to a professional enterprise, as farmhands now had to be hired. This change both ripped apart multi-generational farm living as well as created a need for income to pay the farmhands – or, all too often, led to the demise of the farm. As a result, modern day Isabela is completely dependent on mainland deliveries of food.

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113 Spanish for farm
The second stage of resentment was triggered by a large-scale eradication program of goats in the mid-2000s. *Project Isabela*\textsuperscript{114} was widely recognized as a global model for large scale eradication programs for Islands in the conservation world. However, it created several layers of resentment in the local population. It had a cultural impact on Isabela, severely limiting access to meat for a local specialty, *seco de chivo* (goat stew); an economic impact, limiting public access to sellable livestock; and it was executed, in large part, by international aerial hunting crews, flown in from New Zealand, taking away job opportunities that should have gone to locals. Last, but not least, it made it a lot harder for local hunters to find targets in the recovering underbrush. All that, for a couple of tortoises… As a peaceful manifestation of local discontent over the globally conceptualized eradication project and its execution without local support, the helicopters as well as the goats made it into the elaborate array of giant, new-years effigies. This local tradition burns the *viudas del ano viejo*\textsuperscript{115} in an effort to overcome and not carry resentments and negative feelings into the new year.

The all-male group of Farmers have the highest access to financial capital due to their landholdings as collateral. This group has no affiliation with the tourism sector, except for selling their limited produce to local restaurants via the farmers’ market, and has no interest in getting involved in such activity. They value traditional family values, correlating with the fact that this group by far has the highest numbers of children of all interest groups identified. They are self-reliant and trust that nature, or the national government, will provide for their needs. On the one hand, they consider themselves...  

\textsuperscript{114} Project Isabela was a cooperation between the National Park, the Charles Darwin Foundation, the Global Environment Facility, and several other supporting international agencies and institutions. It eradicated over 250,000 invasive mammals (goats, pigs, donkeys) from Santiago, Pinta, and Isabela islands.  

\textsuperscript{115} Spanish – widows of the old year
conservationists – stewards of the land, protecting nature – who are part of the solution to sustainability in Isabela. On the other, as producers of food and as large landholders, they are of strategic importance to the national government. Under Socialism of the 21st Century, and particularly since the reforms of the LOREG in 2015, the agricultural sector has gotten particular support by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG - Spanish Acronym) as well as the provincial government (CGREG – Spanish Acronym).

The airport is a potential way to connect to the outside world, for exports of products. However, they don’t have many high value crops (except a waning coffee production) and airfreight is expensive. Accordingly, this interest group is rather neutral on the airport. They don’t travel much themselves nor care for growth in the tourism sector and thus see no needs for the airport. But while they are not very concerned about invasives – they cultivate them after all – and consider all species part of God’s green earth, they would appreciate additional immigration for access to labor.

4.4.5.2. The Land-Based Tourism Lobby

This group of small business owners ventured into self-employment after the collapse of the fisheries. Said employment was mostly in the then emergent land-based tourism sector, but ranges from agencies to hostels, all the way to a small daycare. The Land-Based Tourism Lobby (LBTL) embraced the global concepts of environmental conservation and are actively engaged in local civil society.

They have a lot of social influence by their professional affiliation in tourism. Tourism being the 800-pound Gorilla in Galapagos modern economy, they are the ones pushing the next boom forward in the current epoch of Ecotourism. And this agenda, with the promise of prosperity for all, has appeal.
They are a very successful group professionally, the most economically successful of all the interest groups. Their occupations run the gamut of Ecotourism from hotel owners to guides, from agencies to operators. They have influence through their high social capital ascribed to them by their specific expertise and economic successes, and they have high levels of civil engagement in their social networks. They are ringleaders when it comes to forming public opinion and are thus highly influential even though most of them don’t hold official positions of power. They are a socioeconomically very busy group, have no interest in being taught by foreign organizations, and see no need to (further) adopt global concepts that would presumably be at offer at such organizations.

The LBTL are a group of mid-career professionals and entrepreneurs with access to capital through their unanimous landownership, and while their financial wealth falls in the middle of the spectrum among the interest groups, they are the group who have bought into the concept of the American (now Galapagueño) dream of “bigger, better, more”. Notably, they want to achieve such prosperity in harmony with nature; however, rather than contributing through their actions, they trust in institutions to take care of the conservation arena. They have little involvement with other civil organizations outside of, recently, IOI, but rather focus on economic progress via tourism as the new cash cow for the local economy.

Counterintuitively, this group is mixed on opening the airport beyond the daily Island-hoppers. While individual reasons given ranged from environmental concerns over invasive species and immigration to concerns over competition from outside businesses, and some even remarked on the benefits for health and commerce, this mixed stance as a group seems to correlate with their economic and social success. They know that pro-
tourism development like an airport does not mean unidirectional benefit. They are already at the top of the local food chain, so to speak, and change, something they all agree would come with the airport, could only serve to dilute their position. While they see the potential benefit for the sector in terms of unquestionable revenue growth, this group can afford to be in opposition to the airport project even if, or maybe especially if, that means sacrificing the convenience and business-boosting effects of an airport that would open the doors to “foreign” investment by international and national corporate oligarchy.

Furthermore, while they are unconcerned with potential social aspects (since tourism is a desirable direction to go into as a society), they are also conscious of the potential impacts on both the environment and, uniquely, on the tourist experience. While not wanting to kill the golden goose with excessive environmental impact is intuitive, the marketing perspective is slightly more surprising as a relevant variable in conservation discussions around Ecotourism. Thus, while being pro-tourism usually correlates with pro-development and pro-growth, this LBTL group is, at least in part, against growth and uncontrolled development to protect local resources and ensure sustainable local benefit – including the resulting limited industry volume, encompassing the 3 key requirements of textbook Ecotourism. Contrary to the Former Fishermen group who rely on their local, colonial-style politics for support, the LBTL, like the Farmers, rely on the national government to support them for economic opportunities.

This group lobbies their institutions and representatives for permits for their economic activities and has taken on the role that Fishermen held in the last epoch – that of violent contestation against disagreeable policies. The national government has centralized many
of Galapagos’ government entities under the ministry of Galapagos affairs (cf. Chapter 3). Additionally, they revised the special law of Galapagos (LOREG – Spanish acronym), and the 2015 reformed version now “prefers” local ownership, which was formerly a formal requirement (cf. 4.4.3.2). As a result of the 2015 LOREG reforms’ allowing “foreign” ownership, it was an alliance of the LBTL and the Former Fishermen in the streets protesting and setting cars on fire in Cristobal. The Former Fishermen and LBTL are afraid of being outcompeted by large investors, and the conservation community is dreading the potential impacts of mass tourism – which in turn is creating anti-airport sentiments in Isabela.

Like the fishermen’s protests on limits to resource exploitation in the late 1990s, contestation by the LBTL during the 2015 reforms protested the expansion of the tourism sector by non-local entities in Galapagos (Shaw 2015). When national level Buen Vivir policies first reduced the power of global influences in Ecuador to empower its people, the national government severely limited and/or taxed international corporations. Under economic pressure from declining crude oil rents in 2014, the national government once again embraced the global business community and, in Galapagos specifically, the Ecuadorian oligarchy-owned cruise sector. These reforms thus now threaten to lower local benefit from (Eco) tourism, thereby rendering the Buen Vivir ideal a great de jure concept, but de facto, the national government of Ecuador needs money in a neoliberally globalized world (Kroger and Lalande 2015). And rent-seeking in tourism in Galapagos seems to be their solution to the dilemma between sustainable Buen Vivir concepts and the economic reality of providing for the country.
On the flip side of that coin, a number of local tourism leaders have left the Island for retirement. Under the new law, these owners can now lease their hotels and concessions to outsiders. Leases for local hotels and restaurants, depending on the quality, go for between 5 and 12 thousand dollars – a month! A nice chunk of money to retire in Puerto Lopez on the Ecuadorian coast, or even in the UK or the US, to name three concrete examples from the research. As pointed out above, global influence in this regard does not necessarily mean foreign national. Here, “global” refers to the concepts under which potential investors operate, based in Neoliberalism and capitalism, and equally employed by national, and foreign national organizations. To that point, in Isabela, since the 2015 reform, the Ecuadorian-owned Opuntia Group alone, based out of Quito, has taken over 5 local hotels by means of leasing on the west side of town, the most desirable location for tourism in Puerto Villamil for its proximity to national park and beach as well as unobstructed sunset views.

4.4.5.3. The Institutional National Leadership

The elected local municipality is mainly generous with their rules and has tendencies to give freebies. Votes must be garnered, cousins need jobs, and everybody knows everyone on the Island anyways – who is to judge in the almost anarchic isolation that is Isabela. And if the nepotism goes one way this time around, political favors will shift, and the others will get their share next time. This system is how it always has worked between the 5 main extended families on the Island – a system accepted and even appreciated by the Old-Timers and rejected and detested by the Globalizers.

Distinctly, the national institutions work differently. Unlike the municipality, leadership positions are given out by (somewhat) merit-based appointments. While the directors get
changed around a lot with changes in political affiliation in Quito, meddling of “foreign”
influence by the Ecuadorian Oligarchy (Nash 2009), and short-term planning horizons
in Galapagos politics in general (Meltzoff 2013), the higher administrators are career
bureaucrats with non-political appointments and tenure. It is the national institutions that
are in charge of enforcement. In relation to conservation, the PNG is in charge of the 97% of
the land area that is protected in Galapagos as well as the 40-mile Marine Reserve. The
Biodiversity Protection Agency (ABG – Spanish acronym) manages and enforces
environmental aspects related to the urban areas (Cruz, et al. 2017). Similarly, in
development, there are national offices of the Tourism Department in charge of sanitary
controls and permits in hospitality, and the Provincial Government, effectively a national
institution by virtue of their ministerial rank in Quito, oversees non-municipal
infrastructure, immigration, and human development.

The leadership of these national institutions in situ in Isabela is the local, formally
educated elite. Appointments to permanent positions usually require university degrees,
which means that the holders have lived off-Island in their pasts. This degree requirement
is significant, as national government positions in Galapagos are filled with
Galapagueños (legally defined as those with permanent residency), which leaves a
rather small pool of people with relevant qualifications. Accordingly, this interest group
is commonly criticized by interest groups in the Globalizer and Old-Timer Alliances for

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116 The Ecuadorian corporate oligarchy is said to have sacked several park directors that were too
conservation oriented, restricting access to certain sites or denying concessions for additional ships (e.g.,
Nash 2009; Hoyman and McCall 2012).

117 Analogous to migration situations in other locations, it is interesting to note that the concept of when
someone ceases to be an immigrant and becomes a local is not based on place of birth or legal rights. Some
people who have immigrated to Galapagos relatively recently are accepted as Galapagueños. Others, who
have been around for decades and are legally Galapagueños, are not socially considered locals. It would be
interesting future research to evaluate the socio-cultural implications of migration in Galapagos.
being effectively not accountable for their actions. While they are of course not legally indemnified from prosecution, smaller mistakes that might easily cost them their jobs will not prevent the next agency from picking them up quickly. Human resources are highly limited in Galapagos, and the “musical chairs” between posts, with the same, small cohort of people shifting their institutional affiliations, makes this group stand out as a rather uniform interest group.

But even with willing and well-trained national institutions’ personnel, enforcement in Isabela is difficult. The local airstrip has been used in the past to bring in a “Logistico,” a military cargo plane, used nation-wide to supply remote communities with supplies from the national government from the population centers in Guayaquil and Quito. While everyone was free to ship personal and commercial items to the continent on the Logistico, it was also used for smuggling out-of-season catch to the mainland for export to Chinese (sea cucumber) and US (lobster) markets. With non-existent airport safety controls, the day of the Logistico’s arrival (once every 2-12 weeks) would be often chaotic, with large crowds forming at and on the airstrip surrounding the plane. The Ministry of Agriculture (MAG – Spanish Acronym), with its branches of National Park, later the Environmental Police, and recently the ABG, would guard the plane to maintain a certain level of bio-security against (inbound) invasive species and (outbound) smuggling of out-of-season catches of lobster and pepino, or even illegal catches of shark fins.

Due to previous funding shortages, and now socialist labor laws, however, Park personnel only work during the day. This was not a problem when the Logistico would show up in the late morning and leave in the afternoon. However, quite frequently the
plane would “break” and have to stay overnight to wait for parts. Then, it would leave at first light after having been “fixed” by the crew, overnight, despite no parts or necessary tools on the Island. While the plane was protected by military personnel at night, Ecuadorian armed forces salaries are no match for the kind of money involved with lobsters and sea-cucumbers. *Honi soit qui mal y pense*…118

Enforcement continues to be a problem, even in the current situation, without a commercial airport and abolishment of Logistico. While there is no more smuggling on the Logistico for inbound pure-bred dogs or for outbound illegal catch of *e.g.*, *aletas*,119 smugglers still have a job – and an airport will not change that in either direction. Smuggling has been going on for various goods in all boom-time epochs of Isabela. And if not via the airport, it happens via small fishing boats, the cargo ships, or pickups from outsiders at remote locations of the island. Accordingly, the national institutions are not negatively inclined against opening the airport. They are well aware of the various human quality of life benefits that it would bring. They are uniform however in the opinion that an opening should be gradual and highly limited to build up capacity and maintain control over the resulting negative pressures that an airport could bring in areas they are in charge of enforcing – immigration, invasive species, smuggling, and infrastructure.

4.4.6. Sanctioned Invaders - A Future Interest Group?

Before the 2015 LOREG reforms, now allowing outside involvement in Galapagos’ economy, all business ownership was supposed to be Galapagueño. It is not surprising that “La Russa”120 was frequently mentioned as a dangerous scammer around town in the

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118 The popularly used motto of the British chivalric Order of the Garter - “Evil be thee that evil thinks.”
119 Spanish for wings; here: shark fins
120 The Russian woman
interviews. She appeared on the social scene after having married a guide from Santa Cruz, a neighboring island. “Marrying-in” is the only legal way, short of birth, to get permanent residency in Galapagos. Legal rights though, in Isabela, does not equal social legitimacy. By virtue of having married someone from Santa Cruz, thus lacking local Island identity, by Isabeleño perception she basically married a “foreigner.”

Story has it that La Russa had recently been divorced from a Wall Street guy and was “looking to take over the Island,” according to local accounts. She (and her husband) bought an oceanfront property, a site formerly used for environmental education, and (legally) built a large hotel. While local social leaders don’t have much control over national laws – despite contestation – and thus cannot prevent locals from leasing out their hotels to “foreigners,” they can instead exert their social power on developments they don’t like, attempting to prevent too much “foreign” influence in their Island. When La Russa asked one of the interviewees for this research to sell her another property, the participant declined, despite the very generous offer. This story was repeated several times. Clearly, dubious global influences tying to take over the local tourism scene need to be stopped in local perception!

While not further explored in this Chapter, this group of legalized “foreigners,” in combination with the outside lessees is bound to become an additional interest group in Isabela around the exponential increase in tourism while trying to find an environmental equilibrium. While this group would fit conceptually into the land-based tourism interest group (LBTL), they are “foreigners” (again, in local perception, this term includes everyone not from Isabela) and are bound to have different levels of education, life experiences, and world views, and thus a different PIC – making them a stand-alone
interest group. In fact, if they are not sufficiently unified by their “foreigner” status, there could be several interest groups amongst the tourism lessees, separated by heritage, language, interests, etc. – by CAGE and PIC.

By casual observation it can be remarked that this interest group has a rather short “shelf-life” in Isabela\(^{121}\) and would thus likely have short- to mid-term planning horizons, pushing profit maximization strategies and connectivity. Presumably, all of them would push for the airport to open, as they have few ties to local culture, inherently are not afraid of outsiders, want to travel to visit their original homes, and have higher end businesses that would benefit from easier access to the Island.

4.5. Summary of Shifting Alliances in Civil Society in Isabela

Global concepts related to ideologies, market forces, and finance are being felt in Isabela as much as they are in other parts of the world. As shown above, the various interest groups position themselves differently around the issue arguably most emblematic of Globalization influences in the Island: the opening of a commercial airport. The analysis of these interest groups around this issue exemplifies past social dynamics in Isabela society around conservation and human progress.

While different interest group alliances around conservation and development are very dynamic, ever-shifting in historic context, the multiple levels of political layers add strong emotions surrounding closely held concepts for decision making, family relations,

\(^{121}\) This group seems to have a rather high turnover as people get enchanted by Isabela’s natural beauty, stay, but then leave within a few years or even months due to broken hearts, lack of social integration, or the difficulties of operating in an everchanging political environment of favoritisms.
political opportunism, and economic necessities to the analysis. Thus, this approximation needs to be understood as a fluid framework, rather than a definite description.

The ethnographic data show clear trends that Isabela and its civil society are globalizing. While Isabela’s heterogeneous collective of interest groups has internalized some concepts rapidly, others are still “foreign.” The analysis showed three different alliances of interest groups regarding conservation vs. development interactions, exemplified by their perceptions and behaviors around the issue of opening an airport in Isabela. Each alliance is acting according to distinct practices and is influenced by different driving concepts that manifest in the institutions that they trust, affiliate with, and interact with most. These past trajectories and recent developments since the end of data collection allow for an extrapolation into current and future shifts in interest group alliances and societal directions.

Intuitively, the younger and more formally educated the interest group, and the more financial capital they have, the more conservation oriented its members tends to be. Regarding local and global influences, this correlation means the more adapted an interest group is to global influences and concepts, the wealthier they are economically, and the more they want to protect the environment. This trend is most prevalent in the Young Globalizer Alliance, which includes the Foreign Influencers and the Working Young Mothers.

Unlike any other interest group (with the notable exception of the farmers), neither of the young globalizer interest groups are concretely focused on a tourism vs. conservation distinction. Their view seems to be more holistic, focusing on underlying and secondary issues to build a society that is ready to tackle future issues, rather than fixing one current
need or another. Most importantly, they want to improve the education and public health systems on the Island. While both of those have direct impacts on conservation (particularly public health, specifically water, sewer, and waste management), they are approaching these subjects from a social well-being perspective rather than through a conservation lens.

In contrast, the Old-Timers (formerly) in the extractive sectors and their wives, as well as municipal level politicians (part of the Former Fishermen interest group), are more prone to pro-development attitudes, have lower incomes and rely on local-level, colonial-style political strongman processes to advance their views and agendas, including the resulting tendencies toward and acceptance of nepotism and corruption. They seem to have not adapted well to the changing ways of their Island yet, and their lower levels of formal education, relevant to running a business (e.g., English language, marketing, accounting, etc.) make it harder for them to break into tourism, where they would get exposure to global concepts that would help them get a stronger foothold on the socio-economic ladder of their changing world.

While the Globalizers and the Old-Timers have distinct and mostly incommensurable views on the airport and the effects of exponential increase in tourism on conservation vs. human development in keeping with their international and local attitudes, respectively, the Independent Developer Alliance of farmers and the local Ecotourism sector acts reliant upon and interacts with national-level influences. Thus, this third Alliance also includes the InstitutioNationals interest group, the leadership of the national level institutions that are the enforcers regarding environmental protection regulation.
4.6. Between Shifting Alliances - IOI as a “Glocal” Mediator

In its 13-year history, IOI has dealt with, and amongst, continuously shifting alliances of different interest groups. These moves were caused both by swings in larger forces such as global financial crises or political shifts in Quito, as well as correlating shifts in needs and affiliations of local interest groups. IOI has had its share of run-ins and alliances with all levels of local and national authorities in Ecuador but has ultimately navigated these murky waters successfully. The following sections connect larger political trends, IOI policies and interactions with local interest groups, and interactions among the local interest groups outlined above. This case study exemplifies how shifting alliances between interest groups can benefit and harm international non-profits that hold global concepts of how best to promote conservation and sustainable development successfully at a local level in the Global South.

4.6.1. Global Ideals, Local Resentment

As a new international organization in 2006 in Galapagos, IOI had an uphill battle of its inception at the end of the pepino fishing boom. As outlined in Chapter 2, as a conservation NGO, IOI fell into the scientific discourse group by default. Thus, locals associated the new organization with the cruise-ship industry, other international organizations, and the scientific community – all locally perceived to enrich themselves by curtailing local civil society’s freedoms and economic livelihoods.

122 The cruise ship industry was perceived locally as neoliberal “foreign” exploitation, but then turned into an ally when it used its oligarchic influence to fight the implementation of stricter fisheries regulations. However, at the time that IOI came into wider public awareness in 2007/8, the cruise industry had recently dropped their support for the fishermen, as described above, resulting in additional mistrust against “foreign” promises.
Despite best intentions for local benefits, IOI was painted as a foreign meddler with
global concepts that were rejected, by virtue of their conceptual origin, by members of
the interest groups leaning away from global influences – the Old-Timers Alliance.
Indeed, the organization was founded on global concepts and perfectly fit the Foreign
Influencers interest group described above: young, idealistic, educated foreigners with
global concepts and “good” intentions who understand too little about the multiple
political layers, histories, and shifting alliances in the local socio-economy to be effective
in promoting a sustainable balance between human progress and environmental
protection. As civil society in Isabela is very involved and believes in its power to control
authorities and “foreign” control (Zapata 2013), IOI was bound to run into resistance in
its endeavors to interfere (albeit with good intentions) with local concepts and civil
organization.

Accordingly, IOI’s early local supporters were the local catholic church and community
members newly breaking into the tourism sector. Among these interest groups, its
supporters would fall into the LBTL and the Working Young Mothers groups. These
groups were educated and ambitious, and had embraced the global concepts and ideals
that IOI stood for as a means to advance in life into the emerging new epoch of
Ecotourism. In contrast, the Old-Timer Alliance and their local political representatives
firmly believe(d) that IOI, as an international organization and part of the scientific

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123 “Good” being a fluid concept agreed upon among an interest group or a larger subset of people.
124 The church falls into neither of these interest groups. In many ways, it acts like a national government
agency, mostly unaffected by local sentiments. It is also partly a “foreign” influencer, as it brings outsider
concepts into local society, while remaining an integral part of local culture, even with political weight
(which would put it into the local polity, above in the Former Fishermen interest group). Combining local,
national, and global influences and crossing many local interest groups, the church is left out of the analysis
to not skew otherwise clear trends.
discourse (cf. Chapter 2), was a scheme to siphon-off international funds, raised in the name of Isabela, into personal accounts in Miami. By this inaccurate projection, analogous to local perceptions of the cruise sector, IOI would give, at best, part of its gains back to the protection of local nature (but not to the advancement of local society), as that benefitted its business model – effectively exploiting the locals for personal gains in a cunning neo-colonial scheme covered up under the blanket of conservation. This local concept is so engrained from years of contestation against real or perceived threats against local livelihoods by the international community, that it was still recounted frequently in this research, even by interviewees who are now affiliated with IOI.\textsuperscript{125}

4.6.2. A Looming Socialist Threat and a Local Truce

IOI split with its original Ecuadorian partner, an Ecuadorian University from Quito, due to differences in strategic direction in 2007. Under pressure from local authorities after having lost its legal status in the organizational break up, IOI was mandated to cease all operations until proprietary (national level) paperwork was in place. At the time, the national government was still under the control of President Palacios, a cardiologist educated in Ohio and a social-leaning independent adapted to global neoliberal thinking. International assistance was welcome, and, as one of the 10 most corrupt countries in the world (\textit{e.g.}, D’Orso 2014), rent-seeking was common at the national government level. Thus, analogous to the suggested “Sanctioned Invaders” interest group (see section 4.4.6), IOI was legally able to stay and continue to work in Isabela; however, social

\textsuperscript{125} Ironically, the very same local conceptualization of corruption being a feature of the system, and not a bug, created the bridge to acceptance for IOI in local society. Corruption is not perceived as anti-ethical, but rather as part of the game. Thus, it is not resented, but rather something one had better be on the receiving end of. While IOI never managed to get rid of this bug completely, it has successfully achieved a change in perception in large parts of the Old-Timers Alliance, many of whom now perceive IOI to be beneficial to them. In short, a “corrupt” IOI in Isabela is acceptable, as long as it benefits their interests.
isolation and negative PR made effective interaction with the community difficult. Local were suspicious of IOI, by association with their negative experiences with other global influences. IOI had to prove itself for years to gain institutional trust before effective integration was possible.

While local society at large, but particularly the Old-Timers, remained skeptical of IOI and its global concepts, it was the national level institutions that formed alliances with IOI. The local schools were chronically underfunded and appreciated the support of IOI. Furthermore, after a leadership change in the municipal government, IOI formed a 5-year alliance with the new mayor, Bolivar Tupiza in 2009. Part of “La 35,” the recently elected socialist party, Tupiza’s decentralized mandate was to fight corruption and work for the benefit of the people, but he had to do so without much financial support from Quito and the New Socialism of the 21st Century government. While there was rising political skepticism about foreign meddling in Ecuadorian affairs under this government at the national level, international NGOs and their global concepts stood for trustworthiness and were perceived as the least corrupt institutions in Ecuador (Barber and Ospina 2008). As a result, their assistance was accepted at the local level to comply with demands from the central government.

Around the same time, the global financial crisis hit the world’s economies, and the pepino fishery finally collapsed in Isabela. With a new national political orientation, new local government, an underfunded NGO sector, and a collapsed local economy, interest groups were reshuffling in Isabela. As an alternative income to traditional donation funding, IOI started its international education program during the Christmas intersession of 2008, simultaneously as a fundraising mechanism and as a booster of alternative
incomes in Ecotourism in Isabela. With the decline of the fishing sector and the demise of the various women’s COOPs, the Fisherwives were keen to take on a new COOP-like concept of alternative incomes\textsuperscript{126} to their husbands’ now substantially diminished fisheries revenue. It was in part economic necessity that drove Fisherwives to embrace the global concepts of IOI and join IOI’s host-family program (now MCIP, cf. section 4.2.4.3). That notwithstanding, the program also had appeal for the training it offered as part of first steps on a path to a prosperous future in the emerging Ecotourism sector in Isabela, providing IOI’s international students with a home during their studies on the Island.

Concurrently, the Fishermen interest group’s local clout became diminished with loss of political support of the cruise-sector for pro-extraction policies. The correlating collapse of their main income source re-nourished local resentment against global influences in Galapagos in that group, who were again feeling stifled and politically abused to satisfy outsiders’ needs. These competing perceptions and practices between the fishermen and their wives created a fickle truce between the Old-Timers Alliance and IOI. The fishermen were wary of IOI, but their wives were generating much-needed income for the family, so objections had to be muffled. This truce was an unintended consequence of the original intention behind the program, which was to provide additional income as part of female empowerment in a strategy towards sustainable development. It needs to be remarked that these early, financially motivated steps of female empowerment were the seeds of a much broader success in this arena. Several of the early supporter women reported during the interviews that Family Sundays, a cultural integration requirement of

\textsuperscript{126} as opposed to additional income
the homestay program, was one of the most important changes to their family lives. In the rugged, fishery boom-time era, men would go out with their fishing buddies and drink for extended periods of time. This resulted in frequent domestic violence and a distancing between the men and their families. According to local accounts, being forced into spending a Sober Sunday with their family and the international student to comply with the homestay program guidelines and not lose the much-needed financial support it provided, the men started to prefer spending time with their families over their drinking buddies. This concept has been reported to carry forward even into weekends with no IOI students present on the Island and represents a shift in conceptualization towards the Global.

During this period, the fishermen’s political champion, Mayor Gordillo, was in the political opposition and not in a position to give benefits to this group of his most loyal supporters, in attempts to overshadow IOI’s benefits to the community. Additionally, IOI had started hiring local staff in 2009, who advanced to leadership positions by 2011. Local jobs are harder (though not impossible) for a political opposition campaign to attack than environmental regulations that limit local livelihoods. The combination of the newly forged local political alliance and local administrators gave IOI a new, local face, and mostly shielded it from occasional attacks by the former administration during that time period.

4.6.3. National Rejection, Local Support

From 2009 to 2014, during the time of global-local political truce, IOI gained substantial trust from various local interest groups through a variety of programs and internal changes, and public “attacks” against the presence of global influences in local society
were kept to the realm of gossip.\textsuperscript{127} By the time Mayor Gordillo was re-elected in 2014 and re-launched his political anti-global attacks of “the Local” being under attack from foreign exploitation, IOI had a variety of local interest groups defending it due to the strong alliances that had been forged in the interim.

First and foremost, direction of IOI’s on-site operations had been handed off to a local administrator in 2012. The new local Director, Sara Luz Ruiz Escobar, despite being emblematically representative of the NGO sector and global influence in Galapagos in many ways,\textsuperscript{128} as well as being not Galapagos-born, is also a seen as a young Latina woman with permanent residency and children in the local school. While she was not part of the dataset, she exemplifies the Working Young Mothers interest group in Isabela. In addition, the national institutions had embraced IOI’s financial support and technical assistance for their joint projects. And last, but certainly not least, the host-family program had evolved into a Multi-level Community Interaction Program (MCIP, cf. section 4.2.4.3). Through the MCIP, IOI gained a role as a nexus between local society, with MCIP members promoting the organizations’ concepts in each of their interest groups,\textsuperscript{129} and the local governing institutions (with the notable inherent exception of the Municipality under Mayor Gordillo).

\textsuperscript{127} A favorite line of gossip still being talked about is the brothel of young American women that the local priest was running in cooperation with IOI in their facilities, which were located in the Franciscan mission at the time.

\textsuperscript{128} Ruiz worked as Director of Education in Isabela for the CDF before joining IOI. Her brother is Juan Chavez, the former PNG director during the fishermen contestations of 2000.

\textsuperscript{129} The MCIP members interviewed (n=19) were distributed over 4 interest groups: Fisherwives (37%), LBTL (31%), Young Professional Mothers (26%), InstitutioNational Leadership (6%)
4.6.4. National-Level Threats and New Local Alliances

Focused on deflecting occasional local political attacks with the support of supportive interest groups, IOI was surprised by sudden changes in alliances that led to the 2015 reforms of the LOREG. While the Socialist national government had been critical of Neoliberalism and resulting foreign exploitation by international corporations, the non-profit sector had been appreciated and worked with. This standing changed in 2014. After having successfully funded their popular but expensive social and infrastructure programs by nationalizing and partially re-selling the mining and oil riches of the country, the crude oil price dropped by over 70% in 2014 (cf. section 1.1.3). In a double move to save their agenda and popular support, the central government in Quito opened up Galapagos as an opportunity for rent-seeking in tourism and tapped into the NGOs as extended executive branches for their Buen Vivir agenda. To ensure efforts were uniquely directed at the goals of Buen Vivir, all NGOs had to direct their efforts to at least one of the many explicitly stated goals of the national development plan (cf. Chapter 3). Of the over 5,000 registered NGOs in Ecuador (commonly said to have been used as money laundering for the Columbian cocaine trade), only some 200 survived the rigorous financial controls and restrictions by the central government. While many national organizations failed the fiduciary tests, many international NGOs left the country due to misalignment between the national plan and their strategic direction or on principle of a firmly held global concept that government meddling in NGO affairs is counterproductive and oppressive against civil society. In Galapagos, only 7 international (including IOI) and no national NGOs survived the culling (cf. Chapter 2).
IOI emerged strengthened from the onerous and lengthy approval and integration process into the national development plan. To prove benefits to their respective local communities, NGOs had to detail their activities down to daily programming, submit years of participation and financial data, as well as supporting written first-hand accounts of beneficiaries. Strategically, the goals of *Buen Vivir* fit with IOI’s outreach mission for conservation and sustainable development. Rent seeking in tourism themselves, the central government’s regulations did not operationally impede IOI’s funding model of educational travel. On the contrary, the in-depth evaluations of IOI’s operations by the SETECI\(^{130}\) during the approval process for NGOs during the 2015 reforms resulted in IOI’s revenue model’s being promoted on a national level, with its community-based nature held up as best practice for incentivizing grass-roots Ecotourism development.

Being tied in intimately with the national government via the CGREG\(^{131}\) has strengthened IOI’s local position. Acting in cooperation with the local branches of national-level institutions, sanctioned and controlled by the central government, and executing the resulting institutional projects in cooperation with local society made IOI less “foreign,” both legally as well as in local perception. IOI has gained a neutral role between local and global, between government and society. This mediating role mitigates the still-occurring occasional accusations of embezzlement or of uninvited introduction of global concepts that threaten local progress.\(^{132}\) If this trend towards deeper, neutral acceptance by interest

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\(^{130}\) Spanish Acronym – Secretaria Technica de Cooperacion International

\(^{131}\) Spanish Acronym – Consejo de Gobierno Regimen Especial de Galapagos

\(^{132}\) For example, during the writing of this dissertation, IOI was temporarily red-tagged by the municipal government in a rent-seeking move that claimed IOI had not paid its operating permits. Several national government agencies provided supporting documents for the arbitration trial, and IOI was re-opened in 5 days. IOI later also won the appeals trial in district court.
groups at all political levels proves to be lasting, IOI will have truly bridged the local-global ideological divide and become a “glocal” mediator.\footnote{For international NGOs working in volunteer travel experiences, like IOI, Soulars and McGehee (2017) outline “glocalization” as aiming at 1) adapting their organizational structures to the local culture, 2) customizing their programs to local expectations, and 3) encouraging locals to appropriate and transform global conceptualizations to fit local circumstances.}

Furthermore, the ties to the local government have opened doors to new and previously unreachable sectors, including that of agriculture. Via a recent joint project, the CGREG has connected IOI with the Agricultural sector. While IOI has had a programmatic interest in nutrition and food sovereignty, it had been limited to urban gardening initiatives within its host-family continuing education program. The agricultural sector is geographically removed, and the farmers keep mostly to themselves (see section 4.4.5.1). Only via the CGREG and a new cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG), IOI has gained inside knowledge of the sector and has successfully started outreach programs in the sector. More so, under the MCIP, the MAG is getting involved with the community via IOI by supporting IOI’s urban gardening initiative with their expertise. This connection creates a better understanding between the agency and civil society, and, in turn, the local farmers market is growing in popularity both with the highland farmers as well as the coastal town dwellers.

4.7. Future Alliances - Discussion

It is important to recognize that there are more shifts in alliances of interest groups outside of the realm of influence of IOI than within. These shifts still substantially affect IOI. Most prominently with reference to the above, IOI is not actively involved with the airport project and does not maintain an official position on the benefits and threats a
potential opening would offer; the five current and former IOI staff who participated in the research are split between three different interest groups. As such, IOI aims for a neutral, non-prescriptive role in society that assists the local path, rather than trying to define it.

Additionally, two important dynamics must be highlighted that are somewhat internal to their respective sectors but have large implications for civil society and for IOI in Isabela. One is the shifting relationship in politics between the local government (Municipality) and the national government (CGREG). The other is within the tourism sector, between those who are successfully working in local Ecotourism and identify as such (LBTL interest group) and those who are working in or who aspire to work in Ecotourism, but still identify as fishermen (Former Fishermen interest group).

4.7.1. Ecotourism vs. “Eco”tourism

The concept of what a good tourism product is (as distinct from what Isabela currently offers or should offer), underlies a separation of the two interest groups representing tourism interests in Isabela – the Land-Based Tourism Lobby and the Former Fishermen (now working in local politics and tourism) – and thereby underlies the diverging opinions on opening a commercial airport in Isabela.

For example, both groups agree that “pristine” beaches are good for attracting tourists and that a pristine beach is and should be one of Isabela’s major appeals. However, concepts of pristine can diverge massively, both on the provider and the consumer side (Hughes 2015). The more global conservation concept would mean that the beach is in its natural state, mostly untouched by human impact, can be undeveloped and irregular, and can have vegetation on it that stops erosion and gives shelter to nesting animals. The
LBTL is more prone to such Ecotourism, closer to its academic definition. The practice in regard to such a concept would be a visitation to the beach to observe, learn, and experience the institution of a nature that is perfect and beautiful as it is, without human improvements. Conservation practices under this PIC would fall under environmentalism.

Conversely, more locally oriented interest groups like the Former Fishermen have a more utilitarian conceptualization of a pristine beach. To them, the beach should be made to look like a picture in a tourism catalogue. A pristine beach is one uniform single color (preferably light), coconut palm tree lined, has no debris on it, no nesting animals that use it as a habitat, no wrack-line. There are amenities like lounge chairs and showers available and interspersed, an ice-cream vendor selling cocktails in coconuts. In fact, the municipal chamber of tourism has prohibited the cleaning of fish on the beach to not disturb a pristine image for tourism. An Ecotourist, however, might be interested however in the photo opportunities that present themselves from such activities (see Figure 4.5)

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134 Ecotourism is “travel to fragile, pristine, and usually protected areas that strives to be low impact and (usually) small scale. It helps educate the traveler, provides funds for conservation, directly benefits the economic development and political empowerment of local communities and fosters respect for different cultures and for human rights” (Honey 1999:25).

135 As planted on the main section of the beach in Puerto Villamil – seen in the background of Figure 4.5;
Interestingly, this juxtaposition is a perspective reversal from the rest of this Chapter. While this Chapter analyses the influence of global and local concepts on conservation and development interactions in Isabela, this conceptualization reverses that relationship or, rather, has a dialectic relationship between global/local and conservation-development. In other words, conservation vs. development is a topic that affects both the Global and the Local, and the perceptions are spilt in each perspective. In the example of the differing conceptions of pristine, there are global forces that dictate that a pristine beach should be clean and domesticated (e.g., tourism in Miami, Barcelona), while the same global perspective also values rugged, untouched beaches (e.g., Pacific North-West, Patagonia). This discussion is also being had between the two local, tourism-related interest groups. While being split by same the conservation vs. tourism expansion fault line as the airport, this strategic tourism debate is not a matter of global vs local influences.
PO in IOI’s outreach and environmental education programs give insight to how the different levels of conceptualizations of nature affect IOI’s work and future direction. During a beach clean-up that was organized by IOI as part of the MCIP and executed in cooperation with the National Park and the CGREG, a participating girl stated that penguins needed to be protected because the tourists want to see them and that the beach clean-up was good because tourists like clean beaches, not thinking of the inherent value of a threatened endemic species or the effects of plastics pollution to the marine environment. While the means sometimes justify the end (i.e., at least the girl supported the protection of endemic species and not littering), the work for IOI in their MCIP is cut out. While the next generation is learning conservation as a Practice in school and civil society, programs like the MCIP, that try to engrain these Practices as Concepts, will take time to achieve manifestation of the Concepts as Institutions.

4.7.2. Overcoming Resentments for a Sustainable Future

Since 2007, i.e., during the second half of his last term (2004-2009) and for the entire duration of his current term (2014-2019), Mayor Gordillo has been in political opposition to the socialist government in Quito. Before the rise of the socialists, under neoliberal policies, the national government would have to cut government spending to service foreign debt that was incurred to boost economic development (e.g., Perkins 2004). Thus, funding for far flung provinces in public health and education was tight. In the early days of Isabela crece por ti, an extreme push for local economic development made sense for
a (tourism) resource-rich town like Puerto Villamil, to counteract the starvation protocols of a Washington consensus forwarded from Quito.¹³⁶

Notably, addressing local needs for education and public health, Mayor Gordillo started a municipal clinic superior to the national government’s sub-center for public health as well as a private k1-10, Montessori principle-based school that easily outshone the local public school for those willing to pay extra. In fact, the founding members and patrons of these municipal institutions were in the groups described above as the InstitutioNationals and the Working Young Mothers. In their centralization efforts, however, the government in Quito standardized processes at a national level and took over operational control of education and health care under their local branches of the respective ministries. This standardization effectively achieved the socialist intentions of reducing non-central influence (by foreign NGOs as well local municipalities) and making access to such facilities free and thus accessible for everyone, but it also reduced the quality of service according to the now lower levels of funding, according to local accounts. It can be speculated that this reduction in quality didn’t combine well with local, “Isabela First” politics and created local resentment with the national government along the same lines as it did against global influences.

However, negative claims against apparent progress towards prosperity, with a newly emerging boom-economy, in combination with continuous, groundless attacks against alliances among multiple levels of institutions and their supporting local interest groups might isolate the municipal government. The national government may ultimately prefer

¹³⁶ The Washington consensus is a set of 10 rules imposed on recipient countries by Intergovernmental Organization such as the IMF or the World Bank that cut government spending to increase the likelihood of repayment of loans (e.g., Rodrik 2006; McCleery and De Paolis 2008).
to execute local projects with more reliable and amenable international NGOs over the local, oppositional administration. But, such a joining of two outside forces, the national and the Global, the national government and the only NGO on Isabela, IOI, would only reinforce local political resentment and further entrench the divide.

The most recent shift among alliances is happening now (and started after the dataset was already completed). Using a combination of global concepts and local trust, IOI has recently been working on bridging a trust gap between the national institutions and the Fishermen interest group, a gap that has been in existence for decades. The Fishermen and the PNG still hold substantial animosity from times past (cf. Chapter 2). To the Fishermen, the NGOs fell into the same category as the PNG, as it was they who introduced the conservation concepts that led to the PNG’s practices of stock assessments and fishing quotas. As suggested in Chapter 2, the PNG and the Fishermen actually share similar interests for sustainability; rather, tourism is their newly shared antagonist.

Under the auspices of the CGREG, 45 fishermen\textsuperscript{137} participated in workshops hosted by IOI to revive the local fishing COOP. While the process is still ongoing, with follow-up workshops and projects planned into 2020, and the outcome of this new alliance is unknown, the collaboration between conceptually the most global organization in Isabela, IOI, and conceptually the most local interest group, the Fishermen, is remarkable. It was this interest group, historical supporters of local anti-global politicking, that was most opposed to NGO influence and conservation efforts in Galapagos. Now they seem to be overcoming their resentment to join what might become a new epoch of civil

\footnote{\textsuperscript{137} Notably, that is more than the interviews suggested even existed anymore in Isabela!}
organization in Isabela – the Epoch of inter-institutional cooperation at various political levels – blazing a trail towards a sustainable balance at the human environmental intersection in Isabela.
Conclusion

5.1. Purpose of this Dissertation

The purpose of this dissertation was to assess how to improve conservation policy outcomes in Galapagos. The work critiqued and advanced the existing literature on conservation discourses in the archipelago in Chapter 2, elucidated the effects of political changes towards a socialist government at the national level on conservation policies and international actors in Galapagos in Chapter 3, and laid out in detail how global, national, and local conceptualizations influence interactions between different interest groups in Isabela Island in Chapter 4. The analysis was conducted through a Globalization-critical lens that posits that structural disadvantages in the Global South result in resentments in local society against real and/or perceived neoliberal exploitation by foreign agents. This resentment creates barriers to successful implementation of even sensible conservation policies and thus must be taken into account by the global conservation community to be effective in their missions.

The work took an interdisciplinary, multi-method approach. Under a Political Ecology framework, it combined several fields in political and environmental sciences: specifically, international relations, (Eco)tourism, anthropology, and critical Globalization studies. It is centered around my 12-year experience as the executive director of the Intercultural Outreach Initiative (IOI), half of which I lived in the study site, Isabela Island in the Galapagos Archipelago in Ecuador. IOI and its community were the anchor around which the ethnographic analysis in Chapter 4 identified interest groups surrounding the ongoing struggle between environmental conservation and human development in Galapagos.
While this struggle was exemplified by the perceptions, attitudes, and conceptualizations of different local interest groups at multiple political levels around opening a commercial airport with direct connection to mainland Ecuador, this study can stand proxy for similar struggles all over the world as human populations grow and resources become scarcer, increasing pressures on local environments. Islands can serve as valid case studies for larger systems, since their environmental systems are more limited and thus more easily studied and more heavily impacted by human development. Furthermore, their economic-political systems are fully developed, but their socio-cultural systems are limited in scope and thus, also, more readily assessable.

The following will first summarize the individual Chapters and then put the results into larger context to draw conclusions and make recommendations for further research.

5.2. Chapter Summaries

5.2.1. Chapter 2: Localizing Conservation Discourses in Galapagos

Conservation discourses in Galapagos revolve around opposing issues of conservation and economic development, with select stakeholder groups lobbying for either issue in distinct discourses. Neither side of this discussion is achieving policy implementation to their satisfaction. There are substantial disconnects between implemented conservation policies and local compliance, as well as rampant development without desired creation of welfare.

Discourse analysis in the literature to date identifies two discourse groups merging into one hybrid discourse. The fishermen or local discourse is based on a frontier mentality
with a world view in which man dominates nature to survive, making the land arable and exploiting natural resources to benefit society. The scientific or international discourse aims to protect nature at all cost. Conceptualized with a Western-centric philosophy that views man as invasive to a pristine nature, it aims to protect the land from human impact via “fortress-style” conservation approaches in order study and conserve (and visit via Ecotourism) a “pristine” environment.

This Chapter reviewed existing literature on varying positions in conservation policy to date, ground-truthing these discourses against current sentiments in the local population through a mixed method approach. Identifying new strategic alliances, as this Chapter did via discriminant analysis among different stakeholder groups, will improve each group’s ability to effect policy compromises, which would loosen the current policy gridlock and smooth the path towards a sustainable Galapagos.

The results suggest that the conservation policy discourse in Galapagos should be restructured to increase compliance with existing rules and to encourage the creation of new regulation that will satisfy socio-economic development needs as well as effectively protect the local environment. By re-sorting interest groups into two new discourses with new strategic alliances towards common goals, this Chapter suggests that conservation policy can be implemented successfully in Galapagos without compromising sustainability in the archipelago.

5.2.2. Chapter 3: NGOs in Galapagos – between Governance and Civil Society

Conservation policy in Galapagos was reformed in 2015, centralizing sovereign control over policymaking, which had often been strongly influenced by foreign, non-governmental institutions (NGOs), into the central government in Quito and its newly
created Government Council of Galapagos with the status of a ministry. The reforms streamlined overreaching and overlapping regulatory responsibilities amongst different agencies and included management plans that adhere to the triple bottom line of sustainable development.

In this process, foreign NGOs were cut from policymaking and put under tight governmental controls, effectively thereafter serving as extensions of the government in Ecuador. This loss of independence for the NGOs, however, also shifted the burden of negative civil perception resulting from policymaking that does not conform with local society’s expectations away from the NGOs and to the central government institutions.

This Chapter assessed the potential for NGOs to act as mediators between policy making institutions and local society, grouping participants into four distinct clusters based on shared perceptions of governing institutions and similarity of opinion about socio-economic development. Overall, and in line with existing literature, participants had low trust in their governing institutions, even after the 2015 social reforms. Importantly, NGOs were trusted more than governing institutions across all four clusters. Two clusters had distinctly higher conservation mentalities (Public Sector; Sustainable Business Community), while two were distinctly more pro-development (Workforce; Expansionary Business Community). Trust in institutions, as a proxy measure for the potential for compliance with environmental regulations, was split in both the pro-conservation and the pro-development groups. The “expansionary business community” displayed the lowest conservation and the highest development mentalities while also showing the highest differential between trust in NGOs and governing institutions. As a result, they were identified as the having highest “bang-for-buck” potential for
conservation programs. This group is also the oldest and least wealthy of all stakeholder groups identified, and interactions and programs should be designed to address these factors.

Under the new regulations implemented in 2015, NGOs work closely with governing institutions as well as with local society in Galapagos. This position creates a unique potential for communication, both upward, to the government, and downward, to society, providing an opportunity for the sector to coordinate effective implementation of and compliance with conservation policy. For example, IOI’s work in Isabela has a positive impact on the participants of their Multi-level Community Interaction Program (MCIP), with MCIP participants having significantly higher trust in NGOs and the PNG and an increased perception of the quality of public services.

These results strongly indicate that IOI is reaching civil society with their MCIP, demonstrating that NGOs can more effectively serve as mediators between the government and society by targeting their efforts towards specific, newly identified local stakeholder groups.

5.2.3. Chapter 4: Shifting Alliances – Global Conservation and Local

Ecotourism in Isabela

As discussed in Chapter 2, both Ecotourism and Conservation are global concepts long at play in Galapagos. International conservation NGOs, the scientific community, and the cruise ship industry jointly lobbied for low-impact tourism in a protected area and for policies highly limiting resource extraction and human development: a pragmatic, ideological union dubbed the scientific or international discourse in the literature. Chapter
2 suggested that this union was no longer viable due to shifted interests in an economy moving local incomes away from fisheries and into land-based tourism.

Chapter 3 suggested that the (international) non-profit sector, formerly highly influential in local policymaking, had lost their indirect legislative mandate to the central government. NGOs thereby gained increased acceptance in local society as cooperators, educators, and communicators – a nexus between the people and their governing institutions. This policy-neutral role gives the sector an opportunity to mediate between interest groups forming around a recently emerging fault line in the battle between conservation and human development in Galapagos: between conservation-minded policymaking institutions and a growing tourism sector.

The 4th Chapter discusses how global and local forces influence civil behavior and policy compliance in Galapagos following the 2015 LOREG reforms, qualitatively assessing how local interest groups interact with socioeconomic and political changes, and what role NGOs can take in this setting. This Chapter juxtaposes these interactions with economic development in the tourism sector and details IOI’s interaction with the community in Puerto Villamil to assess how the emergence of a Multi-level Community Interaction Program, a participatory intervention approach that evolved through the empowerment of a community focus group, influenced local society in their navigation of globalizing island life. Last, the Chapter assesses whether an international NGO can serve as a bridge connecting global influences, national policies, and local society.

The ethnographic analysis surrounding the issue of opening a commercial airport in Puerto Villamil to promote economic growth and human well-being in Isabela revealed 8 distinct interest groups that formed 3 distinct alliances:
The “Old-Timers Alliance” resents global influences in “their” island and includes the Fishermen, the Former Fishermen, and the Fisherwives interest groups. This alliance shares deeply rooted local conceptualizations and is highly influenced by and historically tied to local populist politics. Their aversion to the Global is partially ameliorated, though, by the economic promise of the next “gold rush” in tourism that would be promoted by the opening of an airport.

The “Young Globalizer Alliance” is frustrated with the outcomes (or lack thereof) of local colonial-style politics. This alliance is made up of the Working Young Mothers and the Foreign Influencers (consultants and NGO staff) and is influenced by global conceptualizations, sharing values of merit-based promotion and achievement recognition. Accordingly, these groups place a high emphasis on education as well as social well-being as a base for sustainable progress.

The “Independent Developer Alliance” is the “salt of the earth” in Isabela, independent and not influenced much by either global developments or local populism. Three interest groups comprise this alliance, including the Farmers, the Land-Based Tourism Lobby (LBTL), and the local leadership of national institutions. They are either riding the Neo-Developmentalism wave of the “New Brown Left” central government (LBTL), or are politically non-affectionate (Farmers) and want to sustainably “milk” the environment for their benefit.138 Despite these developmental aspirations, however, these groups see themselves as stewards of the land (Farmers) or don’t want to kill the golden goose of

138 (yes, pun intended)
Ecotourism (LBTL) and, thus, their exploitation of nature has rather sustainable traits (albeit not necessarily conforming with globally conceptualized conservation policy).

As growth in tourism accelerates and the relative isolation of Isabela is more and more diluted by rent-seeking policies of the New Brown Left, new interest groups are emerging that will influence society in new ways. In its 13-year history, IOI has dealt with and amongst continuously shifting alliances of different interest groups. These moves were caused both by swings in larger forces, such as global financial crises or political shifts in Quito, as well as by correlating shifts in needs and affiliations of local interest groups. In their latest iteration, these shifts seemingly disempowered NGOs in Galapagos (and in fact eliminated many of them); however, they have created a space for (forced) cooperation. IOI has embraced and is benefitting from this cooperation at the national level, as it shields the organization from local political attacks. Furthermore, no longer perceived as a policy-making institution, it is acting as a bridge between global conceptualizations and local realities, making it a “glocal mediator” that is positively affecting conservation in Isabela by helping local society level their differences around human progress and conservation through promotion of interinstitutional cooperation.

The Chapter exemplifies how shifting alliances between interest groups can harm the effectiveness of international non-profits that promote conservation and sustainable development using global concepts without adapting those concepts to local realities and sentiments in the Global South, or benefit them if they do so.
5.3. Discussion and Implications

5.3.1. North South Relations: the Global and the Local in conservation policy

At the end of the past semester, one of my students summarized my conservation class as: “it depends, and it’s complicated.” The results of this dissertation confirm that statement. While of course tongue-in-cheek, it is quite a good rebuttal of global conceptualizations that often assume the world as uniform or seek to extrapolate one’s own experiences and surroundings into other spaces, which results in generalizations and panacea solutions that produce suboptimal outcomes in international conservation. While such extrapolation is generally thin ice on most topics even within the same socio-cultural space, it is particularly tricky in North/South relations due to differing conceptualizations resulting from colonial histories, power and knowledge differentials, and different human experiences. Western fortress-style conservation, for instance, is often rejected for not respecting local social needs, and real or perceived Neo-Imperialism from outside interference in local affairs is resented to the point of violence. All too often, global reactions to such local contestations are that it is the “bad locals” that want to destroy the(ir) environment and that good global saviors are needed to stop them. Such reactions are patronizing, fall short of understanding philosophical and cultural positions of the relation between man and nature, do not account for local socio-economic needs, and are thus ultimately not sustainable and not solution oriented.

Concretely, the results of this dissertation suggest that there are global, national, and local forces at work in conservation in Galapagos. International NGOs, such as IOI in Isabela (or other practitioners and policymakers, both in Galapagos and in other places), must identify and understand these underlying influences on their constituents to help construct
effective (conservation) policies. Policies that are perceived as invasive, even if only on the merit of having been constructed by an institution representing global conceptualizations in local public perception (e.g., the PNG through its cooperation with the CDF), are ignored, circumvented, or even violently contested, even if based on sound science. “Translating” sound global conceptualizations into locally accepted ones requires time and a rich understanding of local culture and history. The resulting localized regulations are best implemented by, or in cooperation with, local or national institutions.

5.3.2. NGOs, *Buen Vivir*, and Globalization in Galapagos

The role of NGOs in Galapagos has shifted with the political changes that resulted from the rise to power of Socialism of the 21st Century in 2008. These changes gained substantial momentum in Galapagos with the LOREG reforms of 2015. Socialism centralized power in Ecuador and, under the concept of *Buen Vivir*, it philosophically rebelled against global influence of Neoliberalism and its global economic forces by implementing relational conceptualizations of indigenous culture into a new and, in relation to conservation, progressive, national constitution that went as far as giving Nature judicial personhood in court. Socialism of the 21st Century and *Buen Vivir* were innovative changes to a globalizing world order that provided Ecuador with much needed political stability, (unilateral) foreign debt cancelation, and national poverty reduction. Rebelling against the global forces of Neoliberalism, and riding on the income of nationalized crude oil extraction contracts, Ecuador was one of only 4 countries\(^\text{139}\) that managed to achieve 7 of 8 millennium development goals by 2011 (Leo and Barmeier

\(^{139}\) Along with China, Honduras, and Tunisia.
2011). As crude prices dropped by over 70% in 2014, however, even Socialism and *Buen Vivir* had to bend to the economic reality that expensive social programs must be paid for. Ecuador has since been embracing more capitalist concepts in rent-seeking moves that reach deeply into the Galapagos economy, opening local tourism development to foreign investment, albeit limitedly. The environment takes an (arguably valid) back seat (via increased growth and migration with the secondary impacts of infrastructure overburdening and expansion, and the increasing introduction of invasive species) to national interests, under a government trying to comply with election promises of poverty reduction and social development.

The according legislative changes, that started in 2008 and culminated in the LOREG reforms of 2015, culled much of the NGO population in Ecuador and in the Galapagos. The centralization efforts of the socialists restricted the NGO sector, but also opened new avenues to interact with society and government agencies. It took away many of the semi-autonomous legislative freedoms (and responsibilities) in environmental policymaking that NGOs had in the archipelago, as well as forced them to work as quasi extensions of the national government in Quito under a National Development Plan of *Buen Vivir*. This change in influence and operation awarded unexpected opportunity to the sector, now free of the burden of restricting local society in their socio-economic ways of life in the name of conservation, to act as mediators between government and society, increasing the upward (to government) and downward (to society) reach of their programs.

\[140\] HIV/AIDS reduction was the only goal not met.
The disempowerment of no longer directly creating policy increased the acceptance of NGOs in local society. Thus, it offers opportunities to increase interaction with local interest groups and to better local understanding of and compliance with conservation policy (downward effectiveness). On the other hand, the government in Ecuador is limited in reach and funding and is using non-profit organizations as highly controlled extensions of the government. This scenario provides the NGOs with inherent opportunity to work directly with the governing agencies (upward effectiveness), improving their reach and visibility, and with the continued ability to influence conservation in Galapagos.

5.3.3. Ecotourism and Sustainable Development in Galapagos

To achieve compliance with environmental regulation and, thus, to be effective, human progress and well-being must be part of conservation policy planning. Fortress-style conservation is philosophically limited in the Global South due to its global conceptualizations and the exclusion of human welfare gains from the protected areas. Ecotourism can offer an alternative to this type of conservation and can be used as an avenue to sustainable development in and around protected areas. While it bears the dangers of negative environmental impacts, eco-selling, and greenwashing, it is generally considered less environmentally destructive than other forms of economic development such as industrialization or extraction of natural resources. When implemented correctly, Ecotourism adheres to the triple bottom line of sustainable development and benefits local social welfare while minimizing negative cultural and environmental impacts. To do so, Ecotourism development must be well-planned and regulated, with high compliance of the established rules.
By expanding Ecotourism in Galapagos from a foreign-owned, cruise-based industry to a land-based, locally-owned venture, the Islands have made a notable shift towards using Ecotourism as a tool for sustainable development. The new, land-based part of the industry is improving overall local welfare and has reduced the leakages of the sector into foreign bank accounts. Inclusion of social needs into the conservation agenda and promotion of local participation in both sectors has also bridged the global/local divide between tourism and conservation and, thus, resolved the Galapagos Paradox.

Expanding tourism substantially through the addition of a land-based branch to the industry is beneficial to growth rates of the local economy as a whole; the tide is, in fact, raising most of the boats. That being said, this expansion has also exponentially increased pressures on the local environment, infrastructure, and culture and has created socio-economic winners and losers, widening the local social gap and sinking the boats tied up with anchor lines according to the old tide levels, to stick with the metaphor. To limit its impacts and become a source of sustainable development, rather than “just” economic development, the local Ecotourism industry must find a unified vision of development, establish industry standards and building codes, and construct the appropriate public infrastructure to ameliorate the inevitably increased environmental pressures Isabela is already experiencing as a result of increased visitation.

Once local infrastructure and politics are ready, a commercial airport would increase tourism and quality of life in Isabela. However, to prevent irreversible damage to local society and environment, local and national institutions and civil society must work together, stop colonial-style favoritism in local politics, and create shared vision in the sector. This research suggests that the economically more successful players in the
industry have realized that they need to be careful not to kill the golden goose. However, there are still plenty of losers in the shift from a fishing- to a tourism-based economy among the different interest groups in Isabela. International organizations, such as IOI, can act as consulting mediators in this process, bridging gaps between policymaking and implementation with outside knowledge, funding, and training in strategic areas. This mediation is especially important with those interest groups disadvantaged by the changes in the socio-economic fabric, like the extractive and productive sectors, to avoid resentments that would otherwise result in contestation of the process and progress.

The data suggest that the historical influence of local populism against global conceptualizations already seems to be abating as positive results of national and “glocal” assistance programs become clearer, and as the threat of environmental degradation continues to increase. As NGOs like IOI become “glocal” organizations and continue to work with disadvantaged sectors, local perceptions of being left behind lessen, as does the often environmentally detrimental grip of local populism based on anti-global sentiments.

It is important to remark, again, that to alleviate policy gridlock and reduce the reach of populism, the involved interest groups must overcome old grievances that cause them to be entrenched against their perceived opponents. A focus on each interest group’s goals and the factors that are important to them will forge new discourse alliances in conservation that will lead to more effective conservation policies.

5.3.4. Larger Implications

The results of this study on conservation and development in Galapagos could serve as model for other places. The example of the airport in Isabela could easily be transposed
to issues larger than a small community on an island in the tropical eastern Pacific.\textsuperscript{141} As overpopulation continues, human demand for resources and income increases. As in Galapagos, Globalization pressures will create winners and losers everywhere. If the losers are not appropriately compensated for their (real or perceived) losses, they will rebel, either violently in the streets or at the voting booth. In Isabela they did both, torching symbols of perceived oppression (park offices trying to limit income potential via fishing quotas) and voting into the highest local office someone who promises that he alone can fix their problems and that he will bring back their jobs in declining industries. This election resulted in heavy investment into development projects (airport, pier, street lights, paved roads) to promote economic growth. While it seems that these projects particularly benefited some individuals more than others, the environment certainly took a back seat (\textit{e.g.}, cutting mangroves, extracting sand for building materials from bay and dunes, sealing off wetland waterflows, and circumventing or ignoring environmental impact assessment requirements) to get the economy back on track and under control of the Isabelenos.

Zooming out to assess historical developments in Isabela, agriculture was slowly declining as more and more food was imported, and the rural youth moved into a very lucrative new industry (\textit{pepino} fishing boom) fueled by the demands of global trade (Asian aphrodisiacs). Then international organizations (CDF) and government institutions (PNG) came in and tried to halt the high impacts on the environment (fishing quotas). The once high-flying economy of this rural population was declining (fishery

\textsuperscript{141} For example, yet again pushing the urban development boundary further into the Everglades to extend the 836 highway, or yet more zoomed out, the EPA’s rolling back emissions regulations in the name of economic progress and, ironically, societal well-being.
bust), being replaced by other high paying jobs in new industries (tourism). The gains in
this new industry pulled up the average GDP and covered up the individual economic
tragedies in the declining industries. The new jobs required a different skillset (e.g.,
English), and locals couldn’t fill the positions (e.g., hotel receptionist), resulting in
immigration that stressed local resources, affecting local culture and causing inflation
from the inflow of money into the economy, but also caused stagnating or even,
relatively, declining average wages.

This trajectory caused resentment in the local population, which was a resentment against
their situation, but was channeled against the real or perceived cause of the loss of the
“good old” local socio-economic order: against the global influences causing the changes
(NGOs). To restore their old quality of life and lifestyle, locals continue to vote for a
populist who promises to make it all better, despite the facts that the environment is
openly suffering and that the positive effects of colonial-style favoritism politics are felt
by only a very small, allied minority.142

It seems the cycle of negative reinforcement from populist politics can be broken,
however. Following a series of hard-earned lessons, open reception to them, and a series
of well-prepared fortunate events, IOI seems to be on track to bridge the global/local
divide in Isabela, becoming a glocal mediator between policy-making institutions and
civil society. Earning the trust of local society was no small undertaking, requiring a

142 This chain of events that unfolded in the early years of the 2000s is not unique to Isabela. The
conclusions of this seemingly logical chain of events could have given us a pause before the 2016 elections
in the US and should give us a heads up for 2020. Replacing the words in parenthesis in this summary of
Isabela’s economic history with: manufacturing, industrialization of developing world, UNEP, EPA,
emissions regulations, outsourcing to low labor cost countries (recently automation), tech and finance,
computer skills, computer engineer, China; – in that order – creates an eerie analogy to US politics in the
Trump era.
decade of enduring local political attacks, a major political shift at the national level, and a revision of the global conceptualizations underlying IOI’s work.

There are many aspects of Galapagos’ development that have not been well managed, resulting in too steep growth rates in the name of prosperity. As it is truly a unique biogeographical location, global conservation interests rightfully criticize these shortcomings in the conservation efforts of the archipelago. However, Galapagos has highly limited human infrastructure outside the urban-zoned areas, substantial restrictions of societal and personal freedoms (e.g., restricted vehicle ownership, import restrictions, and restricted recreational movement outside the urban areas), and a total of 97% of its terrestrial and 100% of its marine environments are protected. Galapagos thereby maintains 95% of its original biodiversity despite 500 years of human influence and 4 epochs of local human development, each with its own dire environmental impacts, and thus remains one of the best protected areas in the world.
To ensure that it continues this status into the future, local and national governing institutions must work together; local stakeholder groups must overcome their old and outdated grievances, and come together to design policies adapted to the new realities of a changed economy in Galapagos; and the global community, embodied by conservation NGOs and Ecotourists, must assist in the process, providing funding, expertise, and mediation to find a sustainable balance between human development and environmental conservation.

Never was a cause more important or glorious than which you are engaged in; not only your wives, your children, and distant posterity, but humanity at large, the world of mankind, are interested in it; for if [environmental] tyranny should prevail in this great world, we may expect liberty will expire throughout (...). Therefore, more human glory and happiness may depend upon your exertions than yet ever depended upon any sons [and daughters] of men [and women] (Freeman 1775)
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Appendices

7.1. Chapter 2

7.1.1. Table 2.1 Interviewee Categorizations and Professions

Table 2.1 Interviewee categorizations and professions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interest group by profession</th>
<th>Interest group by qualitative data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fisher/famer/hunter or respective housewives</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism operator</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guide</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hostfamily only</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 2.2 Basic Statistics from Qualitative Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent:</th>
<th>yes</th>
<th>no</th>
<th>neutral</th>
<th>total (n=52)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>is directly related to extractive industry</td>
<td>63.5%</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is directly related to tourism industry</td>
<td>26.9%</td>
<td>73.1%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is working in or wants to get into Tourism</td>
<td>48.1%</td>
<td>51.9%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thinks that tourism is the future of Galapagos</td>
<td>94.2%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>has (safety) concerns from immigration</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trusts in the political process</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>46.2%</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trusts in the quality of public services</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
<td>61.5%</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trusts in the quality of education</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>48.1%</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is pro opening local airport</td>
<td>57.7%</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wants growth in local economy</td>
<td>46.2%</td>
<td>30.8%</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>has a pro-conservation mentality</td>
<td>53.8%</td>
<td>26.9%</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trusts in the work of National Park</td>
<td>34.6%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>has family involved in working with local NGO</td>
<td>48.1%</td>
<td>51.9%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is familiar with the local work of NGOs</td>
<td>69.2%</td>
<td>30.8%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trusts in the work of NGOs</td>
<td>51.9%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>42.3%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thinks NGOs should invest more in education</td>
<td>48.1%</td>
<td>51.9%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is part of GFT (yes) or UFC (no)</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
<td>61.5%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is part of local (yes), international (no), hybrid (neutral) discourse by profession</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>46.2%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.1.3. Table 2.3 Significance of Dataset

Table 2.3 Significance of dataset reproducing the models in the literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Approx. F</th>
<th>NumDF</th>
<th>DenDF</th>
<th>Prob&gt;F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wilks' Lambda</td>
<td>0.2148833</td>
<td>3.6646</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>&lt;.0001*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pillai's Trace</td>
<td>1.0723726</td>
<td>3.7571</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>&lt;.0001*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotelling-Lawley</td>
<td>2.3168888</td>
<td>3.5916</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>61.788</td>
<td>&lt;.0001*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy's Max Root</td>
<td>1.2305117</td>
<td>3.9992</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.0005*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 7.1.4. Table 2.4 Significance of Discourse Groups in Literature

*Table 2.4 Significance of discourse groups in literature with preferences ascribed to by LWHs*
7.1.5. Table 2.5 CCC Values of K-means Cluster Analysis

Table 2.5 CCC values of K-means cluster analysis to optimally split dataset

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>NCluster</th>
<th>CCC Best</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K-Means Clustering</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-0.8193 Optimal CCC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-Means Clustering</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-1.9006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-Means Clustering</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-1.6902</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.1.6. Table 2.6 Partial Contribution of Principle Components

Table 2.6 Partial Contribution of Principle Components showing that all 13 IVs used to assess the models in the literature are relevant

![Table Image](image-url)
7.1.7. Table 2.7 Significance of Discriminant Analysis (2)

Table 2.7 Significance of Discriminant Analysis (2) of dataset using 2 newly assigned discourses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Exact F</th>
<th>NumDF</th>
<th>DenDF</th>
<th>Prob&gt;F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wilks' Lambda</td>
<td>0.2071443</td>
<td>11.1882</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>&lt;.0001*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pillai's Trace</td>
<td>0.7928557</td>
<td>11.1882</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>&lt;.0001*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotelling-Lawley</td>
<td>3.8275523</td>
<td>11.1882</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>&lt;.0001*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy's Max Root</td>
<td>3.8275523</td>
<td>11.1882</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>&lt;.0001*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.1.8. Anonymized Chart of “Quantitized” Qualitative Data
7.2. Chapter 3

7.2.1. Government Structure surrounding INGALA

Appendix 3.1 Government Structure surrounding INGALA – thick bordered entities part of governing INGALA
Appendix 3. Organigram of Government in Ecuador (Source: SENPLADES 2014)

132 Entidades vigentes
Elaboración: SENPLADES
Actualizada según normativa legal a 7 de agosto 2017
7.2.3. Table 3.4 - CCC Comparison

Table 3.4 Cubic Clustering Criterion (CCC) values of K-means cluster analysis to optimally split dataset according to 8 policy relevant variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>NCluster</th>
<th>CCC Best</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K Means Cluster</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-1.4085</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K Means Cluster</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-1.376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K Means Cluster</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-0.9351 Optimal CCC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K Means Cluster</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-1.9263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K Means Cluster</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-1.7945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K Means Cluster</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-1.4399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K Means Cluster</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-1.1773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K Means Cluster</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-1.9101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K Means Cluster</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-2.1099</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.3. Chapter 4

7.3.1. Original Outline of a 70-page Tourism Concession Application Business Plan by Isabela Fisherman (elaborated by consultant)

1. Información General ......................................................................................................................................
2. Introducción .............................................................................................................................................
3. Resumen del proyecto .............................................................................................................................
4. Estudio de mercado ................................................................................................................................

4.1. Análisis de la demanda .........................................................................................................................
    4.1.1. Definición del grupo potencial de clientes .................................................................................
        4.1.1.1. Primer Grupo Potencial de Clientes (principal): Parejas sin hijos (DINKs)
        4.1.1.2. Segundo grupo potencial de clientes: Viajeros Independientes (FIT)
        4.1.1.3. Tercer grupo potencial de clientes: Turistas de tercera edad
    4.1.2. Situación actual de la demanda .................................................................................................
    4.1.3. Proyección de la demanda ...........................................................................................................

4.2. Situación actual de la competencia .....................................................................................................

4.3. Características de las principales agencias de viajes ...........................................................................

4.4. Producto turístico ................................................................................................................................
    4.4.1. Descripción del producto ..........................................................................................................
        4.4.1.1. Atractivos que se visitan.................................................................................................
        4.4.1.2. Paquetes Turísticos ......................................................................................................
        4.4.1.3. Actividades que se van a realizar ..................................................................................
        4.4.1.4. Servicios que se ofrecen ...............................................................................................  
    4.4.2. Precio del producto .....................................................................................................................
    4.4.3. Canales de comercialización ....................................................................................................
    4.4.4. Estrategias de promoción ........................................................................................................
        4.4.4.1. Promoción Internacional ...............................................................................................  
        4.4.4.2. Promoción Nacional .....................................................................................................

5. Estudio Técnico ........................................................................................................................................

5.1. Ubicación del proyecto .......................................................................................................................  
5.2. Descripción de la infraestructura y equipos ......................................................................................
5.3. Flujograma ..........................................................................................................................................  
5.4. Estructura organizativa .....................................................................................................................  
    5.4.1. Organigrama ..............................................................................................................................
6. **Estudio económico-financiero** ..............................................................................................................

6.1. **Inversiones** ....................................................................................................................................... 
   6.1.1. Inversión inicial............................................................................................................................
   6.1.2. Plan de financiamiento................................................................................................................
   6.1.3. Costos de operación....................................................................................................................

6.2. **Ingresos** ..........................................................................................................................................

6.3. **Determinación del punto de equilibrio**.........................................................................................

6.4. **Estado de pérdidas y ganancias**....................................................................................................

6.5. **Flujo de caja**....................................................................................................................................

7. **Conclusiones**.....................................................................................................................................

8. **Bibliografía**......................................................................................................................................

9. **Anexos**...............................................................................................................................................