will be used the strengthen and develop key arguments about the transformation of the commons in Namibia.

“Learning to play with strangers”: territoriality and indigenous politics in the Colombian Amazon

Gerard Verschoor (WUR/SDC)

The presentation describes and analyses efforts by an indigenous Tikuna community in the Colombian Amazon to reclaim their ancestral territory, which was gazetted as a National Park in 1975, and implies negotiations about some form of co-management with National Park authorities and the Ministry of the Interior. The efforts play out in a context in which the State and a number of international organizations actively seek to garner control over the region’s immense natural resources. This they do on the basis of a deeply-seated belief that Amazonia is a Terra Nullius and thus a playing ground for mavericks of all sorts – be they conservationists, extractive industries, or CO2 merchants. At stake in the negotiations is an alternative reading of “natural resources” and “territory”. For the Tikuna, all entities (including persons) are humans and have agency, values, appetites, and so on; hence, relations between entities are basically social (and not utility) relations governed by reciprocity and subject of care and diplomacy. Likewise, the notion of “territory” does not signal a geographical space in which someone exercises sovereignty, but rather a body continuously built by relations between entities living in different “layers” or “worlds” – a body that provides “abundance” when relations are reciprocal and built with care, but that will inevitably become “ill” (e.g. climate change, war, crime, disease) when relations go awry. The presentation thus tags a series of ontological disjunctures involving the in situ construction of a cosmopolitics (Stengers 2010) that resists the tendency to reduce politics as the domain of a select club of humans but by opening up the number of entities that may participate at the negotiation table. More broadly, the case points to the need to exercise some form of conceptual politesse- what Donna Haraway calls (2008) “learning to play with strangers” - if one is to avoid a “dialogue of the deaf” between interlocutors whose ontologies continuously interact, interfere, or mix with one another.

Fencing predators: Hunters and prey on South African game farms

Marja Spierenburg (VU) and Harry Wels (VU)

The wildlife industry in South Africa is thriving, with increasing numbers of game farms. Large parts of the South African countryside are enclosed with fences. Fences have always been strategically important in wildlife production and conservation, both to protect wildlife, but also to keep local people out. The high – often electrified – fences allow game farmers to claim ownership of wildlife. Farm dwellers – farm labourers and (former) tenants who consider the farms as their home – are relocated to recreate the idea of ‘pristine wilderness’. These relocations negatively affect their ability to claim land on the farms
through the component of the South African land reform programme aimed at securing farm dwellers’ security of tenure. Contrary to claims by wildlife industry proponents, employment opportunities on game farms – especially on hunting farms – decrease, also due to the amalgamation of farms to create viable wildlife areas. As a result, large numbers of farm dwellers end up being pushed beyond the boundaries of the fences into townships and informal settlements. The fences hence serve to claim wildlife and land. The paper will discuss the ways in which fences are used to keep certain groups of people out – especially those ‘preying on land’ through land reform – and to claim and commercially exploit wildlife. The fences keep predators in, but also hide how the status of these precious animals changes during the course of their lifetime and the different ways in which they are commodified.

The camp and the humanitarian border

Bram Jansen (WUR/SDC)

Protracted refugee camps are increasingly recognised as sites of elaborate humanitarian government, rather than temporary, dystopic waiting places for the assistance of people fleeing war and insecurity. This shifting perspective from ‘assistance to refugees’ to ‘governance of space’ challenges the conceptual understanding of camps as sites of exclusion and seclusion. Instead, it opens up a socio-economic perspective on camps that start out as responses to emergency and crises, but develop into increasingly sophisticated humanitarian landscapes with emerging economies and diverse patterns of development and mobility. In a recent article, William Walters discusses ‘the birth of the humanitarian border’ where spaces of humanitarian government merge with physical boundaries. The US-Mexico border, the Morocco-Spanish (Mellila) border, the ‘Jungle’ of Calais, and different places around the larger Mediterranean, are sites of a growing irregular migration phenomenon that is mitigated by fences, physical barriers and surveillance technology on the one hand, and by humanitarian care on the other. These ambiguous spaces are organised around the logic of containment and the logic of care at the same time. They are fluid spaces, comprised of a variety of protection measures, maintained and organised by a combination of UN, NGO, state, military, private and corporate actors, and presenting both restraints and opportunities. This paper addresses the development of ‘the camp’ in relation to this notion of the humanitarian border, and explores how this relates to processes of mobility and (forced)migration in the contemporary Syrian refugee context.

Fencing and Practices of Territorialisation in Zimbabwe’s Fast Track Land Reform

Patience Mutopo (Chinoyi University, Zimbabwe)

Situating the analysis of rural livelihoods and land based outcomes in Zimbabwe falls within the ambit of understanding the new agrarian structure. The fast track land reform led to an alteration of the agrarian structure in social, physical and political spaces. In this article I examine the concept of fencing from the social, physical and legal domains. This work is