

Conference title	Living territories for sustainable development
Session panel title	Land dynamics and territorializing processes: Exploring the interactions
Presentation title	Large-scale land acquisitions and territorial changes in Madagascar
Authors :	Perrine Burnod (Cirad-Umr Tetis & Observatoire du foncier), Tsilavo Ralandison (Kyoto University, Japon), Aurélien Reys (CIRAD)

Video : *Large scale agribusiness: from rush to crunch (Madagascar, Indian Ocean)*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ws3zYXgYnMk&t=20s>

Study description (5 minutes)

To sum up what we just watched, more than 90% of large-scale agricultural projects have been abandoned and for the most part, the agrarian system at a country level hasn't been impacted by these projects. That said, there are some changes happening at the local level where a few private companies have been operating in the past 10 years.

So, in a sort of a follow-up study that we carried out last year, we sought out to learn more about how these new large-scale agricultural projects are impacting the territory where they operate.

To do that, we focused on the case of a foreign company operating in an area where

People's main activity is cattle raising.

There is a big concern there about cattle thieves. With this area having the lowest population density, it is difficult to police. The presence of the state is weak. So, the traditional authorities which are big cattle owners who offer protection and security to the population.

Study findings

1) The company has changed the spatial organization of the territory but:

- it did not create an enclave (with barriers), there was no displacement of people
- villagers lost land mostly grazing land who lost land did not report a decrease in the number of their cattle.

2) The company substitutes to the traditional authorities in offering protection to the population.

The company indirectly protects against thieves because their plots make it more difficult for cattle thieves to move (as shown in the map here). Also, the presence of guards paid the company to watch out their plantations has reduced insecurity in the area.

3) And finally, there is a substitution of the state's roles in providing social welfare and building infrastructure such as school and health service

Concluding thoughts

So, to conclude, at first glance the company appears to have done something positive but, it has also generated tensions and conflicts between the population. Land access is not transparent and does not always respect the laws. The villagers' customary rights are at risk. The production and business model raises questions about sustainability, biodiversity degradation, dispossession, inclusivity, and health.