

# Land-Just Transitions: Citizen Opposition to Renewable Grabbing in the EU

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**Just Transitions for  
Worthy Lives:  
Beyond Fossil and Green Colonialism**

**Just  
Fossil Fuel  
Transitions**  
Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence

**ONLINE  
ZOOM EVENT**

XIV Edizione della Giornata di Studio "OLTRE LA GLOBALIZZAZIONE"  
A cura della Società di Studi Geografici

**OLTRE LA GLOBALIZZAZIONE:  
Transizioni/Transitions**

**02 / 2024**

Firenze, 6 Dicembre 2024  
Università degli Studi di Firenze



# Accelerating our Energy Transitions

accueil > Actualités > Panorama des lois > Loi du 10 mars 2023 relative à l'accélération de la production d'énergies renouvel



← Panorama des lois



## Loi du 10 mars 2023 relative à l'accélération de la production d'énergies renouvelables

Economie Société

- EU Target: Net zero by 2050, 55% emissions reduction by 2030
- Legislative reforms to expedite planning processes (eg France)
- Concerns: Equitable land access under SDG 1.4

# What about land?

- Global land rush post-2008-09 crises persists
- Just transition approaches overlook the land question
- Objective of the research project:
  - *Draw attention to land justice and contentious land politics in energy transition planning*
  - *Explore and operationalise the concept of “Land-Just Transition”*







- **GREEN GRABBING**
- Enclosure of farmland for (corporate capture of) environmental ends
- Biofuel plantations, REDD schemes, tree-planting for carbon markets
- Potential impacts: Displacement, loss of local rights, environmental harms
- “Grabbing”: to highlight power asymmetries and extra-economic coercion that facilitate enclosures

Brussels, 21 January 2015

**OPINION**

of the  
European Economic and Social Committee  
on

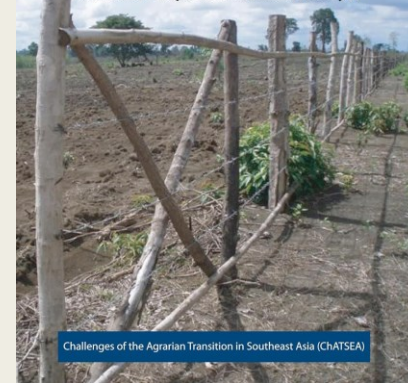
**Land grabbing – a warning for Europe and a threat to family farming**  
(own-initiative opinion)

Rapporteur: **Kaul Nurm**

**POWERS OF  
EXCLUSION**

LAND DILEMMAS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Derek Hall, Philip Hirsch and Tania Murray Li



# Renewable Grabbing in the EU

- Increasing patterns of farmland privatization and concentration in the EU
- Formalised land rights + social and political rights: less risks of extra-economic coercion
- But multiple “powers of exclusion” intersect: regulation, force, the market, legitimation (Hall, Hirsch and Li 2011)
- Market-led green transitions raise land value, excluding smallholders

# Citizen Opposition to Renewable Energy Planning

- Broad societal support for renewables but high levels of local opposition on the ground
- Not only NIMBY, but also broader concern (biodiversity, localized food systems, landscape integrity, community wellbeing)-Vast literature
- Two other important issues they draw our attention to:
  - *Unequal distribution of the environmental effort*
  - *Alternative pathways to sustainability transitions (vs market-driven, large-scale climate action)*





# Conflict Transformation Approach

- View local opposition as constructive forces of proposition, not obstacles
- Alternative frameworks (degrowth, agroecology, food sovereignty) and deliberative democracy
- Community-led vs profit-driven green transitions-
- Just transformations vs Just Transitions



“Energy By and For Citizens”  
Cinema-debates-  
workshops-site visits



**DES PANNEAUX  
SUR NOS HANGARS,  
PAS SUR NOS HECTARES**

“SOLAR PANELS  
ON OUR BARNs,  
NOT ON OUR HECTARES”



## FIELDSITE: Gers, Occitanie Region (France)

Strong agricultural economy (70% of land) with rising solar and biogaz projects

Occitanie region aims to be first 'positive energy region' in Europe



## Gers : un vent de fronde dans le département contre l'agrivoltaïsme et la méthanisation

ABONNÉS



Une délégation a rencontré de la directrice de cabinet du préfet, Julie David. DDM - NEDIR DEBBICHE

# ETHNOGRAPHY

*What alternative “land-just transition visions” are expressed, how and by whom? Which injustices of renewable energy planning processes do they address? What are their transformative potential?*

Active resistance to the multiplication of photovoltaic and agrivoltaic projects

Coalition of diverse actors (farmers' trade unions, environmental organisations, neighbours)

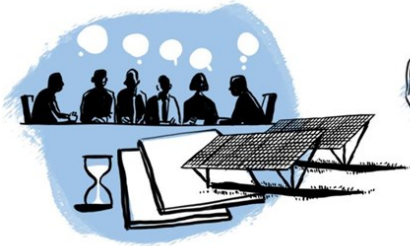
Agrivoltaïsm: farming community divided

# JUSTLANDING RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Mathilde Gingembre-PhD (Supervisor: Prof. Massimo de Marchi, UNIPD)  
Submitted to Marie-Curie Postdoctoral Fellowships Call 2024-2025

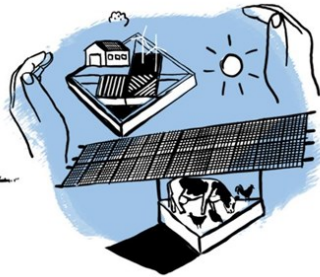
**SO1: ASSESS THE REGULATORY POTENTIAL OF THE LOCAL STATE IN RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT IN FRANCE**

**Method:** *Cross - case study of governance process*



**SO2: IDENTIFY AND MAP THE DIVERSITY OF SOCIETY'S "LAND-JUST TRANSITION VISIONS" (LJTV)**

**Method:** *Q-Methodology*



**SO3: EXPLORE THE TRANSFORMATIVE POTENTIAL OF CONFLICTS FOR SUSTAINABLE TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Method:** *Ethnography*



**SO4: IDENTIFY THE MECHANISMS BY WHICH LOCAL POLITICS OF RENEWABLE ENERGY PLANNING AFFECT LAND JUSTICE**

**Method:** *Empirical Environmental Justice Analysis*



Illustrations by Sofiya Voznaya

# Concluding Thoughts

- Goal: Identify injustices in renewable energy planning
- Propose: Operationalize 'land-just transitions' concept and advance conceptualisation of land justice for European context
- Ensure: Energy transition respects right to equitable land access (SDG 1.4)