

Indigenous land claims and native community lands in practice: Experiences from Bolivia

Dr Annabel Pinker

James Hutton Institute

Thinking community land dynamics across continents: Bolivian native land titling and Scottish community land ownership

Annabel Pinker, SEGS Department, James Hutton Institute
& Carey Doyle, Rural Policy Centre, Scotland's Rural College



The James
Hutton
Institute



Exploring the Effects of Community Landownership

This research aims to provide a better understanding of:

- How local people, community landowning initiative staff, and engaged stakeholders perceive the social, economic, political and environmental impacts of community land ownership over time.
- The possibilities and challenges faced by communities in establishing themselves as economically and socially sustainable enterprises since land acquisition.
- The less tangible experiential and cultural effects of such land tenure changes.

Project steps

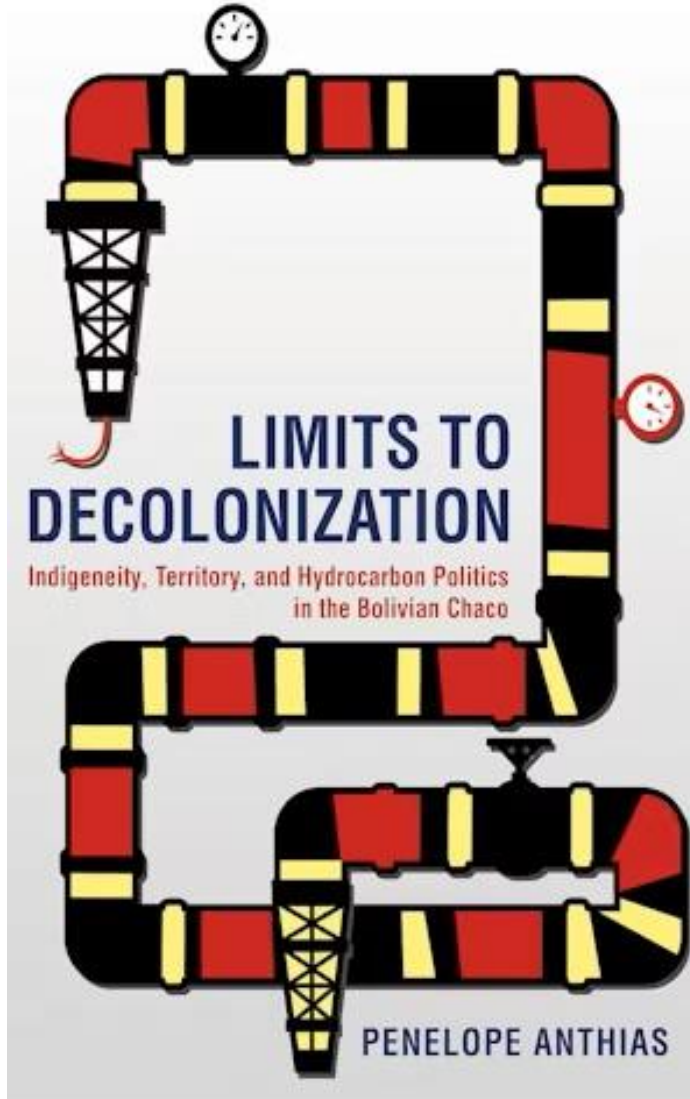
- Fieldwork with four community landowners across 2024/2025.
- Literature review
- Interviews and participant observation
- Fieldwork ongoing until the end of 2025.
- Final Scottish Government report in March 2026
- Sharing learning with participating communities



Case Studies

- Knoydart Foundation
- South West Mull and Iona Development
- Pairc Trust
- Melness Crofters Trust

Limits to Decolonization – Penelope Anthias



- Examines struggles around indigeneity, territory and the politics of resource extraction in Bolivia.
- Explores how colonial relations are reproduced and contested at resource frontiers, and in struggles over land and property.
- Her first book, *Limits to Decolonization*, explores the politics of territorial titling through the legal category of “native community land” (*tierra comunitaria de origen* [TCO]), a category of collective property that can be claimed by indigenous and campesino peoples under Bolivia's 1996 agrarian reform law. She focuses on the dynamics and legacies of Bolivia’s Native Community Lands (TCOs) in the gas-rich Chaco region, exploring the everyday work of demarcating, mapping, and titling land claims under the highly circumscribed political limits established by the TCO process.

Resonances between Bolivian and Scottish land struggles

- Scottish community land ownership and Bolivian native land titling are generative and enabling in significant ways.
- The (often) long temporalities and intense labour involved in gaining control over land.
- Native land titling in Bolivia and community land ownership in Scotland unfold within larger landscapes of private landownership regimes, market logics, and extractive industries.
- Indigenous land tenure in Bolivia and community landownership in Scotland do not imply autonomy per se.
- The tensions between land imaginaries and the logics of property.