



## CALL FOR SESSIONS

*Conference & Summit:*

**Land governance and the politics of fair transitions:**

**Deepening the search for social justice**

IoS Fair Transitions Platform & LANDac

Utrecht, the Netherlands | 3-5 July 2024

**Call for sessions- Closes February 15, 2024!**

***Building on the successful collaboration in last year's Annual Conference, the IoS Fair Transitions Platform (UU) and LANDac are pleased to launch this Call for a second joint Conference, which will have a somewhat different set-up from what you are used to and end with a Summit. We welcome your suggestions for panel sessions and round tables for the first two days. Building on your input, we will conclude on the last day with an experiment of democracy – a more-than human Summit. There will be limited hybrid options for participation in the Conference and the Summit.***

The starting point for the Conference and Summit is the recognition that ongoing transitions in the name of climate change and clean energy are deeply unfair in multiple ways. The challenges involved in making these transitions 'fair' are enormous and some would say we are 'beyond justice' and can only limit damage. The picture is clear enough: climate policies and so-called green investments place huge burdens on people and spaces in the Global South as well as on areas inhabited by marginalized populations in countries of the Global North. Their rights are put under pressure, safeguards are lacking or not enforced, and the room to defend their lands, forests, pastures, and territories is constrained. Existing inequities are deepened.

In view of these challenges, how to do and think justice? Laws, regulations, and institutions that claim to make policies and investments more 'inclusive' often fail to do so. Instead, they may be instrumentalized by elites, facilitate resource capture, and 'green wash' extractivism. The land grab debate has shown that technical and managerial approaches alone, without a commitment to justice, risk feeding into procedural dispossession rather than fair outcomes. And as 'climate justice' is becoming part of global transition parlance, it risks being stripped of its emancipatory potential.

A first challenge is to uphold rights in view of the new wave of land and resource grabbing. For this, we can build on the experiences of those who have exposed land grabbing in its many guises and have protected and defended rights through land tenure reforms, advocacy, and grassroots activism. But how to think of social justice in the face of the high levels of destruction we are currently witnessing and how to face the issue of 'extinguished' rights? Can we extend our approach to justice to include not only protection but also restoration/regeneration and the reclaiming of vital spaces?

A second challenge is therefore to extend and deepen our understandings of social justice. There are interesting developments exploring more-than-human perspectives in debates on fair transitions. It is of particular urgency to strengthen solidarities and re-think justice in relation to past and future generations or along the lines of multispecies justice, which brings the moral obligation to consider the interests of those who cannot represent themselves in political deliberation. We propose to explore new narratives of more-than-human democracy, involving human connections with lands, natures, and their aspirations, and discuss how these could strengthen and deepen social justice. The Conference and Summit will explore both theoretical and practical implications from an interdisciplinary perspective.

### **Themes of the Conference & Summit**

We welcome empirical, theoretical, and philosophical contributions as well practical and impact-oriented ones, in the Global South as well as North. **We now invite session proposals on the following themes** (please consult the instructions for submission below).

1. **Land governance: safeguards and the defense of rights** – What is happening to safeguards to rights to land, water, and forests under the current climate imperative as well as the claiming of spaces for massive city and infrastructure development, and food production? What are innovative ways in which land governance actors and land rights activists and advocates seek to ensure due diligence in the context of growing inequality? What lessons can be learned from ongoing experiences in land governance, land administration, and urban planning?
2. **Carbon colonialism: A new scramble for land in the name of the climate?**– What are the (land governance) challenges of the rush for carbon credits and the spatial claims derived from renewable energy sources in different parts of the world? How could these challenges be met? What would it take to democratize participation in carbon markets and renewable energy and make new value chains more inclusive? And what about geopolitics: what is the role of control over land and natural resources in re-shaping international relations?
3. **Justice as restoring, re-claiming, re-commoning**– How can land governance serve a broader understanding of justice beyond protection of rights through recognition and formalization? Could/should we move beyond narrow conceptualizations of property rights as individual and instrumental? What might be valuable examples of re-commoning, and regenerative or conservation agriculture? What can we learn from ‘lived resilience’ experiences of marginalized people?
4. **Building more-than-human solidarities in the search for social justice**– Can the search for social justice build on more-than-human solidarities? What contributions can be made by the Rights of Nature movement? How to build on more-than-human connections with lands, rivers, trees, and other voiceless actors like future generations to deepen social justice? How to avoid separating human and non-human actors in the politics of fair transitions? And how to strengthen voices from the Global South in academia, activism and art? What does it take to decolonize the debate?
5. **Ecocide and social justice**– How do we think about guilt, liability and the duty of care in the context of irreversible biodiversity loss, land degradation, desertification, deforestation? How do we determine who is responsible and how do we hold them to account? What is the power of a legal concept such as ecocide?
6. **Rethinking democracy and the politics of knowledge**: What new visions of democracy are needed for fair transitions and giving voice to more-than-humans? What kinds of democratic alternatives and experiments are already being practiced, and what can be learned from them? How can marginalized ways of knowing be brought into the conversation; who can claim to speak on behalf of nature or future generations?

### **Key dates**

The conference & Summit take place on **3, 4 and 5 July 2024**. The **Call for sessions** will open on **January 16** and close on **February 15, 2024**. Accepted sessions will be published and **call for abstracts for papers** will open on **February 22** and close on **March 15, 2024**. Acceptance of papers will be communicated by April 1.



The Annual **Summer School** will take place from 8 to 19 July 2024.

*Please note: Visa application procedures to the EU are lengthy. We strongly advise to start booking an appointment well ahead of time.*

### **Conference format**

The conference will be concentrated on-site, in Utrecht city centre. We aim to stream keynote sessions. We will have the possibility to host a limited number of sessions in hybrid format.

The first two days of the conference will include plenary keynote sessions and a range of parallel sessions in 1,5 hour slots. As in previous editions of the conference, we welcome a variety of formats: paper presentations, panel discussions, round tables. The sessions of the first two days will contribute to the Summit of the last day.

Regular updates on keynote speakers, accepted sessions, and other details on the programme will be shared through the LANDac and IoS Fair Transitions websites.

### **Submitting session proposals**

The window for submitting session proposals is now open and closes by February 15. Session proposals must be submitted **in English** using the submission form which you can [download here](#). Email the completed form to: [ft.landac2024@gmail.com](mailto:ft.landac2024@gmail.com).

Please note that we will only consider proposals using the format, indicating title, contact person, which of the themes the session relates to; what will be the format of the session; and if they open up to submission of abstracts or select all presenters themselves. The organisers should also indicate if they would want to host the session in hybrid format, please note that this would require one of the session organisers to be physically present.

**Session organisers, please note:** even though we will offer some opportunity for online presentations, the session organiser commits to being present in Utrecht and taking responsibility for hosting the session. We also expect session organisers to contribute actively to the Summit on day three.

### **Registration and fees**

Registration for the conference will open in February-March and close end of June 2024.

Fees: Early Bird fee: 175 Euro (before May 15); Fee after May 15: 225 Euro. Details about student rate and the conference dinner will be communicated shortly.

**Contact:** [ft.landac2024@gmail.com](mailto:ft.landac2024@gmail.com)

Updates on the programme and the Summer School will be published through the LANDac and IOS Fair Transitions websites.

<https://www.uu.nl/en/research/institutions-for-open-societies/interdisciplinary-research/academic-foundations/fair-transitions>

<https://landgovernance.org/>

### **Organizing committee**

Nick Polson (coordinator IOS FT), Janwillem Liebrand (IOS FT), Gemma van der Haar (LANDac & WUR), Julia Tschersich (IOS FT), Wytske Chamberlain (LANDac-LAND-at-scale), Harrison Awuh (IDS-UU), Joanny Belair (LANDac), Barbara Codispoti (Oxfam).



### Summer School: Land Governance for Development

The conference takes place back-to-back with the LANDac/Utrecht University Summer School *Land Governance for Development*, which will take place 8-19 July 2024 in Utrecht. For more information and to register, please visit the [Utrecht Summer School website](#). Summer School participants may join the conference free of cost.

