

PhD Dissertation Defense
Department of Environmental Science and Policy
College of Science
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Defense Date and Time: May 9, 2022, 11:00am EDT

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Title: The Word for World is Forest: “Forests” and worlds otherwise on the edges of the frontier

Dissertation Co-Directors: Dr. Ingrid Visseren-Hamakers and Dr. Susan Crate

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ABSTRACT

Deforestation is driving species extinctions and global climate change. Driving deforestation is the conversion of forests for commodities and cropland, including cattle ranching and oil palm in Colombia and Indonesia. Commodity-driven deforestation is connected to the ongoing colonization of these frontiers and increasing violence targeting Indigenous and forest defenders. This carries critical implications for responses to deforestation which increasingly call for the inclusion of those communities. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork in Colombia and Indonesia, this dissertation investigates how deforestation intertwines with frontier colonization, and how Indigenous and campesino communities’ forest cultivation constitutes a form of resistance and response to this.