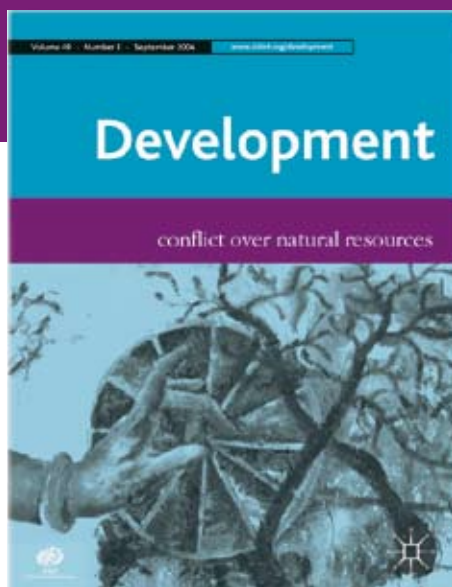


# Development

## conflict over natural resources



This edition of *Development* challenges the dominant approach to natural resource conflict promoted by the World Bank Group together with some of the prominent, mostly Northern based environmental NGOs. Their hegemonic approach to environment, natural resource management and sustainable development is one that focuses on the need for economic growth while preserving the environment, often leaving out the livelihoods and rights of the communities that live in the environments.

The authors in this journal issue leave little doubt as to who benefits from the oil wells, gold and diamonds deposits or the use of land, fisheries, water and forests. It is rarely the communities who live there. The articles explain clearly the political and economic context of the conflicts, and in so doing break down the idea that conflict over natural resources is somehow separate from the larger macro economic, military and political forces. It is in plundering the wealth that comes from these communities' resources that the rich lives of the North and of the elite in the South are built, at the expense of the dignity, livelihoods and well-being of the majority of the world's people.

Many of the articles show how local communities have to fight against not only the companies seeking to plunder their land, livelihoods, culture and habitat but also to work against a judicial system that, far from defending their rights, makes laws in order to take community rights away. At the root of the conflicts are profound economic and social inequalities, and what many, including writers in the journal have termed the violence of development.

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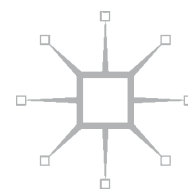
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