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► **To cite this version:**

Rajiv Maher. Pragmatic community resistance within new indigenous ruralities: Lessons from a failed hydropower dam in Chile. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 2019, 68, pp.63 - 74. 10.1016/j.jrurstud.2019.03.009 . hal-03477745

**HAL Id: hal-03477745**

**<https://hal.science/hal-03477745>**

Submitted on 20 Dec 2021

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**Pragmatic community resistance within new indigenous ruralities: Lessons  
from a proposed hydropower dam in Chile**

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## **1. Introduction**

Conflicts between corporate actors and local communities around socio-environmental impacts abound. According to the Environmental Justice Atlas (2018), there are currently 2520 socio-environmental conflicts between large projects and communities taking place around the world, with 347 of these conflicts related to the construction of hydropower facilities and dams. The recent rise in socio-environmental conflicts in Chile can be attributed to communities calling for more sustainable forms of local development (Barton et al., 2012; Delamaza et al., 2017). Escobar (2006) synthesizes the main motives for community resistance to projects in the energy and extractives sector down to fears about impacts to the local ecology, economy and culture. Analysing the success of resistance groups has been extensively studied in the mining sector (Bebbington et al, 2008; de Bruijn and Whiteman, 2010; Kraemer et al, 2013) as well as anti-dam activism (Kirchherr et al, 2017; Martínez and Delamaza, 2018). In both sectors the importance of social movements, and in particular framing and international coalitions are highlighted as key determinants of success of resistance.

However, many commentators argue communities will provide their Social Licence to Operate (SLO) to companies when companies carefully implement well-planned Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategies that include impact mitigation measures, local community engagement, dialogue and consensus-making processes. As such, the literature to date has dealt with instances of successful CSR with communities in addition to successful community resistance to and rejection of megaprojects and CSR in indigenous rural settings. Consequently this article aims to examine a more nuanced, hybrid and paradoxical role played by indigenous rural communities within contexts of

socio-environmental conflicts and CSR. More specifically, the article interrogates how a more pragmatic form of indigenous community resistance to megaprojects can exist alongside positions of collaboration and outright opposition within an indigenous new ruralities setting in southern Chile. I refer to indigenous new ruralities throughout the article in recognition of indigenous struggles for collective rights in Latin America since the 1960s, distinguishing them from European and mixed or *mestizo* ethnicity. Indigenous peoples involved in struggles for their rights and autonomy do not wish to be considered as just rural peasants or *campesinos* in a Latin American context.

The article provides us with an empirical example of “processes of negotiation, manipulation and hybridization, contingent on the mobilization of associational power, and conducted through...local micro-politics” (Woods, 2007 p.502), where a global corporation attempted to intervene in an indigenous new ruralities setting. In addition, the case context offers the opportunity to analyse how divisions surface and sharpen within a rural community as a result of a globalization project (Hogan, 2004). These divisions typically pit those who see the global intervention as a threat to community life against those who perceive it as an opportunity (Hogan, 2004). However, this case facilitates theorizing the existence of a third, underreported hybrid group within rural indigenous communities that is able to resist the threat posed by a global corporate actor to their lives, whilst simultaneously receiving benefits from the company (valuing the opportunity). The article thus aims to address the gap in our understanding of the consequences of globalization in the ‘global countryside’ (Woods, 2011), or more specifically, for the Latin American context of ‘new ruralities’ (Kay, 2008). Additionally, the case offers lessons on how indigenous rural communities react differently to the proposed siting of global

extractives projects and their CSR strategies. Interviews for the case study were conducted with diverse community members, local indigenous rights organizations and corporate and state officials.

The hydropower project considered in this article was withdrawn by Enel, the Italian energy corporate project holder, in 2016. The official reason for this decision was the constant resistance it faced in obtaining legal and social licences from the authorities and community, respectively. Cases of successful community resistance to business (where communities prevent projects from operating) have been characterized in the literature as strong collective movements that do not collaborate or dialogue with the incumbents (Bebbington et al., 2008; Kraemer et al., 2013). Communities that engage in CSR-related initiatives have been portrayed as victims of co-optation (Bebbington et al., 2008; Ehrnström & Fuentes, 2016) or as savvy negotiators upon achieving a good local development deal (Cheshire, 2010; O'Faircheallaigh, 2013).

In this article, the strategy of negotiating and accepting direct CSR benefits from the company whilst simultaneously resisting siting of the hydropower project as undertaken by the hybrid group is conceptualized as pragmatic community resistance. These findings reveal a more nuanced perspective of new global ruralities, showing a middle ground between outright resistance (communitarian new ruralities) and co-optation or collaboration (reformist new ruralities), the stances typically described in the literature.

Understandably, interviewees that engaged in pragmatic community resistance did not describe this as a premediated strategy. Nonetheless, based on their retelling of past events and the perceptions of other actors, it is possible to arrive at the conclusion that these community actors were partaking in a hybrid, paradoxical form of resistance. This point is

further made salient by comparison to other community groups who favoured less ambiguous positions, opting for either collaboration or absolute confrontation with the company. In addition to proposing the concept of pragmatic community resistance, I elaborate on the conditions it requires to thrive. The implications of this case for the new indigenous ruralities and corporate-community engagement literature are also discussed. The next section discusses a review of the relevant literature, placing it within the reformist and communitarian new ruralities categories as proposed by Kay (2008). This is followed by a description of the methodology and of the case context of Neltume in southern Chile, and an analysis of the findings with discussion and conclusions.

### **2.1. Reformist new ruralities, indigenous peoples and CSR**

Kay (2008) observes that from the mid 1990's, the Latin American rural studies literature began referring to the *Nueva Ruralidad* or New Rurality, where questions were asked about the impacts of neoliberal policies on rural communities. When speaking on new ruralities I contend that we should not conflate notions of rural peasantry with indigenous peoples. The former group has, since the 1960's been struggling for their collective rights to be recognized as a separate ethnicity from European settlers and mestizos (in the case of Latin America) within a de-colonial perspective (Mignolo, 2011). Fontona (2014) reminds us that when the Bolivian state coined the term of "indigenous native peasant" it became a "bone of contention" (p.532) and since then "the tensions between peasant and indigenous organizations have become more evident." (p.533).

The 'new ruralists' note the diversification of rural livelihoods within diverse non-agricultural sectors (Kay, 2008). New ruralities scholars also appear to have a normative agenda tied to their arguments, especially around poverty reduction, environmental

sustainability, gender equity, giving prominence to the countryside, its culture and people whilst facilitating decentralization, as noted by Kay (2008). Since these authors aim to achieve these goals within the current neoliberal system, Kay (2008) labels this approach reformist.

It can be therefore argued that the vast literature on CSR that advocates for mutually beneficial relations between the private sector and society aligns well with this reformist new ruralities category. Authors such as Cheshire (2010), Prno and Slocombe (2012) and O'Faircheallaigh (2013) argue that extractives companies make CSR-related interventions in order to obtain local acceptance, more technically termed a Social License to Operate (SLO). O'Faircheallaigh (2013) takes a reformist new ruralities stance in light of CSR when positing the potential benefits rural indigenous communities can accrue from partnering with mining projects, which include poverty reduction.

The academic and practitioner literature offers best practices and solutions for defusing conflict and achieving an SLO and sustainable development. These solutions include engaging in deliberative democracy with rural communities under the banner of CSR. Examples in the context of socio-environmental conflicts include joint committees for monitoring impacts, dialogue, and building partnerships for local development<sup>1</sup>. Best practice guidelines from practitioner-led organizations, such as the International Hydropower Association's Hydropower Sustainability Assessment Protocol, the Chilean Ministry of Energy's "Dialogue Commitment: Participation Guide for Energy Projects" (2015), International Council for Mining and Metals (2010; 2012), the World Bank's

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<sup>1</sup> See Kemp et al., 2006; Eweje, 2007; Idemudia, 2007; Calvano, 2008; Gifford and Kestler, 2008; Bruijn and Whiteman, 2010; Kolk and Lenfant, 2010; Kemp et al. 2010; Newenham-Kahindi, 2010; Muthuri et al., 2012; and O'Faircheallaigh, 2013; 2015

International Finance Corporation (2010) (IFC), and the World Resources Institute (WRI) (2009) also stress the importance of listening, holding transparent dialogue, collaborating, and delivering sustainable development to local communities.

Martínez and Delamaza (2018) offer relevant examples of CSR led by Endesa and Enel in the rural indigenous Neltume community in Southern Chile (the same case study as this article). The authors point to the scholarships paid by the companies for education and tourist accommodation improvement scholarships as well as the negotiating committees established by Endesa to discuss the direction of their CSR investments with local leaders. Such corporate practices can be understood from within a reformist new ruralities perspective.

Nevertheless, various academic researchers have questioned these well-meaning recommendations and revealed the stark limitations and dark side of corporate–rural indigenous community stakeholder engagement. The authors of this literature claim that community engagement by corporate actors ignores power asymmetries (Banks et al., 2014) and in antagonistic scenarios leads to a form of co-optation (Horowitz, 2015; Maher, 2018). This involves silencing and fragmentation of resistance by the larger, more powerful corporate actors, allowing the companies to continue business as usual; in other words, the manufacture of local consent (Bebbington et al., 2008; Urkidi and Walter, 2011; Kraemer et al., 2013; Coleman 2013; Ehrnström-Fuentes and Kröger; 2018 and Maher, 2018).

In such cases of reformist new ruralities, the territorial realities are radically altered by the installation of a megaproject that provides employment albeit with increasing social conflict, ecological harm and dispossession of territory, livelihoods and culture. In short, the literature on CSR and communities has not paid attention to the voices to the



beneficiaries (Banks et al., 2014). In order to provide a fuller picture of new rurality community positions towards large business projects it is also necessary to discuss instances where rural indigenous groups who have their own autonomy projects discount any conviviality with a large high impact project such as a hydropower dam. In other words, when CSR is not welcome at any cost.

## **2.2. Communitarian new ruralities and indigenous peoples: Resistance to modernity projects and CSR**

Kay (2008) summarizes the communitarian new ruralities approach as one that aims to confront and protect peasants from the ills of neoliberal globalization. These means of defence include striving for alternatives to capitalist means of production via autonomy and self-sufficiency. One way of achieving autonomy, as noted by Kay (2008), is via diversifying production in the countryside and achieving food sovereignty. Two well-documented examples of communitarian new ruralities include the indigenous Zapatista movement in Mexico and the Movimento Sem Terra (MST) landless movement in Brazil. Since this article deals with

There are noteworthy parallels between communitarian new ruralities and the categories of progressive and aspirational ruralism proposed by Wood (2003). Progressive ruralism sees communities who value nature opposing symbolic global developments such as new roads, or in the case of this article, a hydropower plant. Woods (2003) notes that these rural groups will often associate themselves with international environmental activists to strengthen their cause within the territory. Aspirational ruralism, on the other hand explains in-migrant groups who have moved to rural spaces and wish to defend their

idyllic interpretation of rurality, even if it includes opposing the realities of traditional rural life, such as fox-hunting in the UK due to the cruelty associated with this activity (Woods, 2003).

Kirchherr et al (2017) and Martínez and Delamaza (2018) point to the importance of framing the conflict with the dam at a wider level for explaining the movement's success in defeating the companies. Cuadra (2014) discusses the scaling tactics used by social movements representing indigenous peoples against mining and hydropower projects in Chile and asserts that once the state authorizes these projects the movements almost immediately appeal for compliance with international human rights laws that Chile has signed, namely ILO Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (ILO169). This convention was ratified by Chile in late 2008; it recognizes the rights of indigenous peoples to their land, and obliges states to provide necessary safeguards, including consultation with potentially affected communities before approving projects. The ratification of ILO169 changed the scenario for Mapuche people defending their land from large projects.

Carruthers and Rodriguez (2009) describe the ways the Mapuche people in southern Chile have strategically used linkage politics since the return of democracy in the 1990s to challenge hydroelectric and forestry projects on national and international scales. They report that one of the first examples of such linkage politics took place during conflict between the Mapuche-Pehuenche people and the Spanish energy company Endesa<sup>2</sup> over the World Bank-financed Ralco dam.

The Pehuenche people forged links with Chilean ecologists and their NGOs, such as Juan Pablo Orrego, who led mobilizations, protests and legal challenges to the Ralco

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<sup>2</sup> Same company involved in the Lake Neltume conflict

dam on the international and national stages.<sup>3</sup> José Alywin is also a prominent actor in linkage politics between Mapuche environmental defenders and international human rights groups (Carruthers and Rodriguez, 2009). Alywin's Observatory of Indigenous People's Rights (Observatorio) provides legal defence to Mapuche activists (Carruthers and Rodriguez, 2009), as well as to Mapuche territories challenging large hydropower projects (OIPR website, 2018).

Specifically, to the case study examined in this article Martínez and Delamaza (2018) make the subject of inter-ethnic coalitions their main argument in explaining the successful resistance at Neltume of the hydropower project that was withdrawn by the project holder Enel in 2016. The authors point to a regional coalition with the Parlamento Koz Koz (Parlamento), who in turn have international links to scale up their activism. The Parlamento is located 55 km downhill from Neltume in the small town of Panguipulli. The organization is constituted on a territorial level and thus considered as a political base for many Mapuche leaders. The Parlamento exists to defend Mapuche people's rights to self-determination, the ability to manage and control their own ancestral territories in line with their culture and worldview. The Parlamento also works with educational programmes around Mapuche culture, language, history and rights to strengthen this ancestral identity. Much of their work to date has been to resist the siting of hydropower projects in the Panguipulli region. Their main strategies involve using a combination of national/international indigenous rights litigation and social action. They had contributed to the withdrawal of ten proposed hydropower projects as of early 2015, according to a representative of the organization interviewed.

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<sup>3</sup> Personal communication with Juan Pablo Orrego in December 2016

The Parlamento also worked closely with a lawyer from another Mapuche human rights NGO, the Observatorio, based in the city of Temuco, 200 km north of Neltume. Directed by José Alywin, the NGO has also dedicated much of its work to thwarting the installation of hydropower dams in Mapuche communities in the south of Chile via the use of international human rights laws. Indeed, Alywin is cited by Carruthers and Rodriguez (2009) for his links to the international human rights system and is a co-author on the Susskind et al. (2014) publication that analyses hydropower, conflicts and Mapuches peoples' rights in southern Chile. The Observatorio has also published several reports on hydropower dams, conflicts and Mapuche peoples' rights.<sup>4</sup> Though Martínez and Delamaza (2018) also mention the different positions taken at the Lake Neltume community, this article aims to go a step further and theorize on the different types of resistance and strategies used by the different community groups towards the hydropower project.

Despite the potential rural (indigenous) communities hold in resisting new developments such as hydropower dams, CSR and community engagement, can be used as an effective weapon to counter-mobilize and earn an SLO, causing divisions within the indigenous rural social fabric (Kraemer et al, 2013; Maher, 2018) and communitarian new rurality movements as reported by Cadeira (2008) between ideological leaders and settlers within the MST in Brazil. So far, the perspectives presented here have been from one of two sides, either showing communities resisting corporate actors, or corporations co-opting community resistance with CSR-related strategies. This raises questions around a possible middle ground for community resistance, one that could be more pragmatic.

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<sup>4</sup> See [www.observatorio.cl](http://www.observatorio.cl)

### **2.3. Hybridity of indigenous peoples and pragmatic resistance**

It is worth signaling that contemporary indigenous communities and movements have inevitably been influenced by European colonial practices over the centuries. Such a process of hybridization (Bhabha, 2012) refers to the “mixing of practices between colonizers and the colonized, to the translation of texts and practices from the colonies to the metropole, and vice versa (Frenkel and Shenhav, 2006 p.856). This hybridity perspective therefore begs for nuance when discussing indigenous peoples who live in postcolonial states since both European colonizers and colonial subjects have mutually shaped one another to varying extents dependent upon power asymmetries (Bhabha, 2012). The notion of hybridity can also be linked to pragmatism, since both terms infer a departure from purified ideological binary positions of colonized and colonizer.

The term ‘pragmatic resistance’ was introduced by Chua (2012) in a legal context, discussing how gay collective action advocated gay-friendly reforms to law, instead of taking direct collective action such as street protests, marches, or media campaigns. The pragmatic nature of this advocacy strategy was still successful in creating changes within the legal system. In sum, the concept of ‘pragmatic community resistance’ and hybridity serve as a useful framework for examining how a low-income indigenous community was able to oppose whilst negotiating CSR benefits with a multinational energy company’s proposed hydropower project. Secondly how pragmatic community resistance relates to the concept of new ruralities.

The following section details the contextual background of the case study at Lake Neltume and Endesa-Enel, followed by the methodology employed for analysing the case study and answering the research question of how communities can simultaneously resist

and engage with companies wishing to site large projects within an indigenous new ruralities context of Chile. It should be noted that though Enel formally acquired Endesa in Chile in 2015, most community residents still refer to the company as Endesa, and as such the names Endesa and Enel are used interchangeably in the data analysis.

#### **2.4. Contextual background and key actors**

Lake Neltume is in the municipality of Panguipulli, 900 km south of the Chilean capital, Santiago. Image I captures the view from the shore of the lake (nearest to Valeriano and Juan Quintuman communities). This region comprises large lakes, fast-flowing rivers, forests, mountains and snow-capped volcanoes. The Mapuche people native to the land live there with mestizo Chileans and the descendants of modern-day Germany and Switzerland. The forefathers of the ethnic European populations were invited by the Chilean state and awarded fertile Mapuche land to farm in the late 19th century. This forced redistribution by the Chilean state is felt as a grave injustice by many contemporary Mapuche people. The land issue is also linked to the civil unrest and violence seen today between Mapuche activist groups, descendants of European settlers, large forestry (Carruthers and Rodriguez, 2009) and hydropower firms, and the Chilean state. The mountains around Neltume are also renowned for the six guerrilla fighters who attempted to resist the dictatorship in Chile, an event that has politicized the community up until today (Martínez and Delamaza, 2018). Since 2013, the Chilean state has invoked the anti-terrorism law against Mapuche activists who have allegedly been involved in violent resistance against farmers, companies, and the state with alleged arson attacks on two key symbols of recent colonialism, the evangelical church and lorries carrying pine and

eucalyptus trees from commercial forests.<sup>5</sup> It should be stated that the violent acts have taken place around 300 km further north.

\*\*\*\*\*INSERT IMAGE I\*\*\*\*\*

Despite a history of unrest, the region is an area of outstanding beauty visited by many tourists, which has also seen the arrival of in-migrants who seek a new life close to nature whilst earning a livelihood from eco-tourism. Tourism and forestry are the main economic activities in the region. Lake Neltume is located 7 km downhill from the main Neltume village and 22 km from Puerto Fuy village. In total there are just over 2100 inhabitants in Neltume, under 400 in Puerto Fuy and around 1600 living close to the shores of Lake Neltume. The latter group is further divided into several sub-neighbourhood associations. Further details of each relevant community are outlined later in this section.

### *2.3.1 Enel's Central Neltume hydroelectric project*

Endesa Chile, a Spanish-owned energy multinational corporation (prior to takeover by Italian Enel in 2015), designed a Central Neltume project with an estimated cost of US\$781 million (Enel website, 2017). It consisted of transmission lines and a 490-megawatt hydropower dam that would divert water from the Fuy River, running it through the project's tunnel with turbines, and discharging it into Lake Neltume.

As this project would have considerably raised the water levels of the lake during the winter months, the plan was contentious within the Mapuche community. Lago Neltume forms part of a sacred complex for the Mapuche people due to its spiritual

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<sup>5</sup> See international press coverage  
[http://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias/2014/08/140801\\_chile\\_ley\\_antiterrorista\\_nc](http://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias/2014/08/140801_chile_ley_antiterrorista_nc)  
[http://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias/2013/01/130109\\_conflicto\\_mapuche\\_araucania\\_caso\\_werner\\_mckay\\_ch.shtml](http://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias/2013/01/130109_conflicto_mapuche_araucania_caso_werner_mckay_ch.shtml)

connections. In addition to the sacred nature of the lake itself, there is also a *Rehue*, or sacred altar, similar to the totem poles of some native peoples of North America, on the shoreline. The lake is the site of *Wüñoy Tripantü*, sacred ceremonies conducted by the Mapuche people to celebrate holidays including the new year and the winter solstice, and to connect with the spirit world along with other ceremonies including the *Nguillatun*. The hydropower project would also have flooded the community's cemetery, held sacred by Mapuche people; in their cosmovision, it must remain undisturbed to allow the deceased to enter the next world peacefully. In order to provide holistic background to Enel and the Neltume conflict, it is imperative to discuss a previous conflict Endesa experienced with a different Mapuche community 200km further north in the Alto Bío-Bío.

### 2.3.2. *Legacy of previous Endesa - Mapuche conflict at Ralco*

From the late 1990s through 2002, Endesa was the main protagonist in what was, until then, Chile's most well-documented environmental conflict with Pehuenche-Mapuche people. The then-proposed Ralco dam was slated to be built 300 km north of Neltume in Ralco in the Alto Bío Bío (Upper Bío Bío). In this case, resistance from the community and ecologists was overcome, the last remaining three Pehuenche sisters resisting were also obliged by the state to receive compensation payments and leave their land so that the Ralco dam could be built in 2004; around 600 people were resettled to different areas of the region.<sup>6</sup> The author of this article also conducted field research and interviews on the Ralco case one month prior to the first visit to Neltume, though such a comparison is beyond the scope of this paper.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://realey.de/blog/the-biobio-dam-construction-project-in-chile-the-endesa-and-the-impending-fusion-with-the-german-energy-corporation-e-on/>



The Ralco conflict is regarded as one of the critical events in the modern uprising, mobilization, organization and resistance of the Mapuche people against the Chilean state and industry in relation to how their territory is managed (Carruthers and Rodriguez, 2009; Barton et al., 2012; Susskind et al., 2014 and Martínez and Delamaza, 2018). The conflict remains engrained in the corporate memory of Endesa and its new owners, Enel. At the time, Endesa was strongly supported by the Chilean state in the persons of the president and police force, allowing the Ralco project to go ahead. It is noteworthy that Chile had not yet become a signatory to international treaties that protected the rights of indigenous peoples, such as ILO169, nor it did have environmental protection laws requiring community participation.

However, Endesa considers its CSR strategy at Ralco a success, and even invited the Neltume community to observe how its foundation operates in Ralco. The Pehuenche-Mapuche community and Endesa-Enel management work together on issues of sustainability. However, the Ralco experience also deepened divisions within the Mapuche movement, as well as damaging relationships between the Mapuche, the environmental community, and the state (Carruthers and Rodriguez, 2009). Overall, it can be levelled that Endesa's protagonism in the Ralco conflict is present in the collective memory of Mapuche people.

The project at Neltume did not turn out so well for Enel as at Ralco. After two public announcements by Enel during 2015 and 2016 about problems gaining community and state support for the project, and after having spent around US\$1 million on CSR community-related projects (according to an Enel management official), the corporation officially withdrew its project on the 31 March 2017. The company stated it would attempt

to redesign the project; however, on 30 January 2018 Enel announced it was permanently abandoning the Central Neltume project. Table 1 provides a detailed timeline of critical events and outlines the roles of key actors in the conflict from 2007–2018. To better explain the positions taken by community groups towards the hydropower project, the next section provides an overview of the main actors in this conflict.

\*\*\*\*\*INSERT TABLE 1 AROUND HERE\*\*\*\*\*

### **3.1. Case selection**

This case focuses on the different modes of resistance and engagement deployed by neighbouring indigenous communities within a new ruralities setting in southern Chile. It specifically focuses on three key neighbouring community groups located by Lake Neltume to examine how they resisted or collaborated with Endesa-Enel over its CSR initiatives. It also aptly serves in theorizing the concept of pragmatic community resistance because it involves different community groups who took varying positions ranging from complete resistance to collaboration with the multinational corporation. The example of Lake Neltume also allows us to dissect a rare example (Kirchherr et al, 2017) of where a multinational corporation decided to divest on the grounds of continued community resistance.

Further reasons that make this an intriguing case include Endesa-Enel's recent history of overcoming previous community and social movements opposed to its dam in Ralco, the original and in-migrant community that resides in Neltume as well as the recent corporate takeover by Enel. The arrival of new leadership with a different vision of doing

business and CSR in contexts of community resistance offers an additional level of interest. Beyond the uniqueness of the case, it also comes from the underreported country of Chile, a middle-income nation in Latin America often touted as the prototypical example of neoliberalism and free market policies.

### **3.2. Methodology**

This study employs an embedded single case study approach, using a qualitative research methodology. Edmondson and McManus (2007) argue that in less mature fields of research, where less is known (as is the case for empirical research in community resistance to business), more exploratory, qualitative methods would prove fruitful as opposed to the use of quantitative methods. Interviews were conducted with residents and activists on four different occasions (Table 2). As with many socio-environmental conflicts, significant amounts of relevant data are available from public sources on the internet, such as EIAs, video documentaries, audio interviews, media/NGO/corporate reports, and social media postings by community and activist groups. Table 3 provides an overview of the different sources that were consulted to develop a deeper understanding of the dynamics and timeline of the conflict.

The author first met and conducted interviews with activists at a meeting at Parlamento Koz Koz headquarters—located 55 km from Lake Neltume—in Panguipulli in January 2015. A second round of interviews in Panguipulli was conducted in May 2016 at a meeting of territories, including Lake Neltume, hosted by Parlamento Koz Koz. Here, the author interviewed a resident from Inalafken together with activists. In October of the same year the author interviewed activists involved in the conflict in the island of Chiloé for

another three-day gathering (500 km south) organized around Mapuche people's territorial defence and resistance to megaprojects.

The author then spent nine days in total (in January 2017 and February-March 2018) in the Neltume area, where he repeatedly interviewed 24 residents, including a local Enel management official. On the second visit, the Enel official had left the corporation, but agreed to travel to Lake Neltume to meet with the author for further conversations around the case study. The author also continued correspondence with two activists and a locally based Enel official (who left the company in late 2017), exchanging 16 emails with the latter for purposes of clarification.

The complete recorded interviews are more than 25 hours long. Interviews with community residents lasted from between just 15 minutes to over 180 minutes. Interviews were either coordinated, via contacts or by snowballing, where interviewees suggested other relevant people to meet; or opportunistically, by taking advantage of meetings on the main street, at the main grocery store, while hitchhiking, and at other local businesses.

The main purpose for the multiple follow-up email exchanges with the local Enel management official, and the repeat visit to Lake Neltume was for analysis sharpening and triangulation purposes with regards to the author's interpretation of the main story and theoretical ideas. The main guiding research questions during these interviews centered around, first, how the community, given its low levels of schooling and income, had managed to successfully resist the multinational energy corporation Enel (formerly Endesa); second, about perceptions of the role CSR and community engagement played in this context of conflict; and third, the reasons different community groups took contrasting approaches towards resisting and collaborating with the company.

\*\*\*\*\*INSERT TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*INSERT TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE \*\*\*\*\*

## 4. Data Analysis

\*\*\*\*\*INSERT FIGURE 1 AROUND HERE\*\*\*\*\*

### 4.1 Key actors at Lake Neltume

Figure 1 attempts to visualize the key protagonists in the conflict at the local, regional, national and international levels. The figure also includes the author’s own elaboration of a map of the Neltume territory (not to scale), which includes the three Lake Neltume groups discussed in this article. Figure 1 also shows the direction of the planned water flow for the proposed hydropower plant. The author validated this Figure with the former Enel management official whilst at Lake Neltume in March 2018.

*Community groups* – As shown in Figure 1, there are three community groups<sup>7</sup>—Valeriano Callicul, Inalafken, and Juan Quintuman—along the shores of Lake Neltume, all consisting primarily of Mapuche. Valeriano Callicul has a population of approximately 263 (Narváez, 2016), Juan Quintuman approximately 350, and Inalafken about 70 inhabitants (based on local interviewee estimates). It should be noted that there are additional Mapuche groups living beside the lake; however, they did not play prominent roles within this conflict and

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<sup>7</sup> It should be noted that another small indigenous community called Manuel Curilef was also involved in the conflict, however, is not considered for this study since it was not referred to by interviewees during field research.

are therefore not considered within this article. The Parlamento, which can be argued as being territorially constituted and a political base for Mapuche leaders (including from Neltume) is placed at the local scale despite being physically located 55km away in Panguipulli. Images II and III respectively show entrance signs to Valeriano and Juan Quintuman (the latter funded by Enel).

\*\*\*\*\*INSERT IMAGES I AND II\*\*\*\*\*

#### **4.2 Juan Quintuman and Inalafken – Where reformist and communitarian ruralities collide**

Juan Quintuman was an isolated community until Endesa arrived in 2008, according to interviewees. The community did not have any road access to the lake and beyond until Endesa created a gravel road from the lake to Upper Juan Quintuman. Interviewees mentioned how they were abandoned by the state, and therefore were grateful for Endesa's interventions, bringing access to roads, transport, energy and other services. Juan Quintuman is an inverted triangle because the community has fewer dwellers down by the lake; most of them live with their farm animals in the mountains directly above the lake. The community has just one holiday rental cabin business compared to several in Valeriano and Inalafken. Consequently, Juan Quintuman's residents also have much less contact with tourists; some interviewees agreed that these residents were financially poorer. The community leaders signed a protocol agreement with Endesa in 2008 and worked closely with the company around CSR-related projects (Table 1).

The reasons behind the creation of the Inalafken community are of significance to this article. Inalafken emerged from the adjacent Juan Quintuman in 2008 after Endesa began intervening there by offering social benefits to residents. A group of around 12 families within Juan Quintuman refused to engage with or receive direct benefits from Endesa, as they felt it would betray their position in opposing the hydropower project. As a result, this group of families splintered off and created its own indigenous community (in accordance with national Indigenous Law 19.253) called Inalafken, founded on a common identity of resisting any intervention by Endesa in their territory.

Inalafken also built strong ties with Mapuche rights organizations, whereas for the leaders of Juan Quintuman and Valeriano Callicul (Valeriano), these organizations were regarded as troublemakers and a threat to their relations with Endesa. The president of Inalafken repeatedly exclaimed to Endesa-Enel officials that the community was not dying of starvation or without beds to sleep on as in years before, and therefore did not need any social assistance from the multinational, as seen in videos (see references). Inalafken registered itself as an indigenous community with the Chilean state to demonstrate its differences with Juan Quintuman. It was possible to appreciate the difference between both groups during fieldwork at the lake. The Inalafken members had no visible sponsorship on their construction of new tourism cabins, or by their smaller arts and crafts stalls. The community always had a large Mapuche flag outside its properties with their indigenous community name on show. It was also evident that Inalafquen members exclusively followed their Mapuche faith and spirituality, therefore regarding nature and the lake as sacred unlike Juan Quintuman residents who in their majority are also evangelical Christians and regularly attend local church services. According the former Enel official it

was impossible to have dialogue or collaboration with Inalafken, this group always preferred to work with the Parlamento and Observatorio, to the contrary of Juan Quintuman.

An activist from the Parlamento highlighted the violent extent of internal conflict and divisions in the community as a result of the hydropower project. To the question of whether there was any repression from the company toward them he replied:

*Well, not directly by the company, but they confuse the community, divide it, play people against one another...I've been threatened with my life, up there by the lake some [Mapuche] brothers told me "we know who you are if you come back we'll put bullet in you..."* (Interview, member from Parlamento Koz Koz).

Three residents near Lake Neltume confirmed to me that they had indeed chased away and threatened this leader, as they felt he had no right to be in their territory meddling in their affairs. These critics of the Parlamento often referred to its leader as a communist who makes a living off conflict.

### **4.3 Valeriano – Where resistance gets pragmatic**

Valeriano is the first community group one encounters when entering the Lake Neltume area from the main road linking Panguipulli and Neltume/Puerto Fuy. Valeriano is located on the flattest terrain in the Lake Neltume area. Like Inalafquen it is also registered as an indigenous Mapuche community with the Chilean state, however, does not share the same strong indigenous identity. For example, the Valeriano leaders and residents are also Evangelical Christians. In fact, one former leader requested that I attend a service at church



in order to interview her later. Valeriano works more closely with tourists than the others, meaning they interact more with outsiders, mostly national but some international tourists. According to two interviewees, it is likely that tourists raise awareness among Valeriano locals around ecological issues, and around opposition to the hydropower project.

According to an Enel official, this community was the most important for the company, as it was vital to the operation of the project that they accept company infrastructure on their land. It is also important to note that only two residents in Valeriano own rental cabins for tourists; the rest of those who work with cabins do so as employees of absentee owners who spend part of the summer season by the lake. The main function of Valeriano residents with cabins is to administer and manage the day-to-day needs of tourists, as well as perform maintenance and gardening work. The current and previous presidents of Valeriano hold day jobs as employees for Santiago-based holiday cabin owners.

Interviewees from the community and company all agreed that at first the company was hugely welcomed locally. One local resident summarized this view:

*“When Endesa first presented themselves to us in 2004 at the Neltume gymnasium, telling us about their projects, employment and all the development and progress they would bring, they received in standing ovation!”* (Interviewee, Neltume).

Valeriano changed its position towards the hydropower project over the years, reflected by their election of presidents whose positions towards the company ranged from cordial (2008–12) to ambiguous: *“Valeriano changed its position after a change in leadership and its president, as, everything up until then had run smoothly between us and a large percentage of the community accepted the Project [hydropower dam]”* (Interview,

former Enel official). Three interviewees, including a former president of Valeriano, confirmed that the cabin owners who employed the current community president were placing pressure on him to oppose Endesa-Enel, as they felt their holiday homes and rental income would be threatened by the presence of a hydropower dam nearby. The following quote by a shopkeeper in Lake Neltume reflects the comments of other residents in explaining this change in attitude towards Endesa:

*“At first everyone loved the project, all excited about the benefits it would bring them, but as time passed, people started researching more about the impacts and became disenchanted.”* (Interviewee, Valeriano, Lake Neltume)

After acquiring Endesa in 2015, Enel launched a new sustainability policy, which the local company official referred to on three occasions as *“the new approach”* and one of *“shared value”*, inspired by the Ministry of Energy’s community dialogue and participation guide from 2014. This new approach can be understood as one of open dialogue, a relational approach. Capacity building and long-term benefits for the community form part of the key message, comparable to old proverb of *“teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime”* as opposed to giving him a fish so he eats for the day. However, parts of the community were vehemently opposed to the new sustainability policy, in short, they were interested in dialogue on the condition the company would provide direct and immediate material benefits without conditions:

*[W]ith the arrival of ENEL, we were looking for a more collaborative approach with [social] projects, with a focus on sustainability and shared value, this is when we proposed some projects, which were not accepted by the Valeriano Callicul community, since they always wanted to receive some sort of direct financial gain*

*(something the company would never do, as it was putting an end to this type of practice).....embedding the concept of shared value has been very difficult (something new and unknown for the communities) as well as trying change that mentality of receiving handouts that is engrained exists in small villages (Email excerpt by former Enel official).*

However, the president of Valeriano, also stressed the importance of dialogue with the company despite being against their project: *“you achieve things via dialogue...I did speak lots with Endesa, but in dialogue one always defends the right of their territory and they defend their company”* (Interview, President of Valeriano, Lake Neltume).

A former president of Valeriano later further explained on the topics of dialogue and payments: *“They had to pay us these bucks, which all companies have to pay due to the law and logic...well basically for invading our territory they need to pay up, but in the end they didn’t honour this”* I asked whether accepting money from the company could be considered betraying their principles, to which he replied *“it’s not selling out...no...we just saw the opportunity!”* The former president then explained how Endesa had only given the community around US\$75,000 and owed then another US\$85,000. I asked which law stipulates that a company should pay a community before even commencing work in their territory, to which he eventually exclaimed *“they owe us for their presence here, in the community, all the social conflict they caused amongst our families, that’s what we were charging them, it’s our right!...Yes dialogue....it has its price!”* (Interview, former Valeriano president).

From the perspective of an Enel official, the community of Valeriano, had a particular interest in dialogue on the condition they would receive direct economic benefits, as explained in these email excerpts:

*“[A]t the beginning of the project we (Endesa) used to interact with other people (from Valeriano) and give them lots of benefits, the company and our project was accepted by the then leaders, but later the new President came in around 2012 and he placed his family members into the community board, they all think a like, that’s when they decided to break off relations with Endesa, for a long time not even accepting benefits (just scholarships they received indirectly from the company)...in 2014 we proposed to restart the relationship with the President and proposed to work with a community infrastructure project around gastro-tourism to seek the development of community businesses, but it was never achieved, as I indicated earlier (the president wanted direct compensation), they still had a very conservative position towards Endesa...as I mentioned the president has more openness to dialogue, but as long as you put something on the table (\$\$), he does not believe in the development of initiatives, only direct benefits without any capacity building. (Email excerpt from Enel official).*

However, this strategy was known to corporate officials, one of whom denounced it referring to residents from Valeriano, Neltume village and Puerto Fuy. In the quote the official infers that CSR benefits should buy silence of an SLO from detractors:

*“For someone who receives benefits from us, it was illogical that they came out to protest, but many of those who participate in the demonstrations, receive the grants...so one day, I confronted one of them, I rebuked him, and said “if you have*

*a negative position, you should at least remain silent!”* (Interview, Local Enel official).

The former Enel official pointed to the potential underlying factor of the lakeside tourism cabin owners, who employ the President of Valeriano, as key in taking a pragmatic resistance stance. He explained that the owners of the rental cabins, concerned by the negative impact the hydropower project may have on their business, strongly exerted their influence over the Valeriano President. This, according to the former Enel employee, placed the local leader in a difficult situation; he had to show his opposition to the company but at the same time also wanted to accrue the material benefits on offer from Enel:

*[O]nce the president's boss with his children (they are from Santiago)... participated in a meeting between Enel and the community... the President's employers strongly pushed his opinions that the president and his friends should have with respect to Enel, this is why the current President was much more opposed to Enel's actions, but at the same time in favour of receiving monetary benefits... one local leader close to the Parlamento also used scare tactics on the President telling him if he didn't oppose Enel the community would turn on him* (Email excerpts from former Enel official).

When I quizzed the former Enel manager about the origins of this pragmatic form of resistance at Valeriano he referred to its internal politics and governance:

*[T]his all started when the new president came to power [in 2012], as with the previous president we had jointly created organizations within the community that worked with Enel and who accepted the Project [the hydrodam], so we can say that*

*the new president chose his board knowing well that they would follow his lead, and from that moment on they took this pragmatic resistance stance as you call it.*  
(Email excerpt from former Enel official).

During the first years of the conflict the Valeriano community facilitated space to Mapuche rights organizations (Parlamento and Observatorio) who wished to mobilize resistance against the company. However, with the change of leadership the stance towards these activists took a turn. Valeriano had a key protagonist in the resistance towards the company, a Mapuche cabin owner who held strong ties to the Mapuche rights organizations. This resident was obliged to forge links with Inalafken in order to provide space for the Parlamento and Observatorio to work at Lake Neltume. The current community president, however, regards these activist NGOs as “unwelcome” and “troublemakers” (Interview with Valeriano President). Though the current leaders at Valeriano showed (pragmatic) resistance to Enel, they also mistrusted the Parlamento, which is counter-intuitive as they both shared the same apparent objective in opposing the hydropower project:

*We don't work much with the people from the Parlamento, I don't really like the people from there, because they are very revolutionary, they are very political. That leader [states his name] is a man who does not know how to come to arrangements and deals, instead he is always looking for that hatred of fighting, to burn things, those guys think differently and they are looking for an alternative way of life...I never allowed that man [states his name] to enter our community because I was my own head and I was the person who always said “No” to the company, that man*

*from the Parlamento always came here and I saw him but I did not give him any more space because he comes and just destroys. (Interview, president of Valeriano, Lake Neltume).*

Here the president of Valeriano stresses the importance he attaches to a pragmatic and arguably paradoxical and ambiguous approach, where on the one hand he now opposes the ideological resistance of external activists toward the company, despite the fact he also opposes the installation of the hydropower project.

As mentioned, the main village of Neltume is located 7 km from the lake. This is the largest settlement in the area, where the main form of subsistence is eco-tourism centred around the local river, waterfalls and nature. Many of the locals are in-migrants who left the Chilean capital, Santiago, in search of a more ecologically friendly, less-stressful life, closer to nature. Although the residents in Neltume are almost all non-Mapuche, they do share many of the same ideals and values, especially around the importance of nature.

Local community residents mentioned the ease of attaining educational scholarship funding for school children, and funding of around US\$1000 for each local bed and breakfast or cabin operator for making improvements to their accommodations, whilst still being in opposition to the company's plans for the hydroelectric dam:

*They (Endesa) started off handing out child scholarships to anyone who has a child over 8<sup>th</sup> grade regardless of grade attainment, and they also offered home improvement grants for anyone offering accommodation to tourists of around 600,000 pesos each, anyone can get it for just a simple one-page proposal! This was great compared to applying for state benefits that are loaded with bureaucracy. In fact, my mum got one for our B&B even though we're against the dam*

*(laughs)...they do this to try and win our support, but they can never buy it, we'll take advantage of their generosity but we will never accept the dam, everyone else here did the same.* (Interview, owner of bed and breakfast in Neltume).

When quizzing one Valeriano resident about this pragmatic approach to resisting the company, the woman answered with a Chilean idiomatic phrase also used by other interviewees to explain this phenomenon, saying, “*People here just go to wherever the sun shines*” (Interviewee, Valeriano). The former Endesa-Enel manager summarized the Valeriano community as “unpredictable” in comparison to the others and the President as always “wanting to be on good terms with God and the devil.” Though it is not possible to speculate about any pre-planned strategy or intentionality of Valeriano residents with regards to resisting and engaging with Endesa-Enel, it is apparent that this community group took a distinctively different approach to Juan Quintuman (reformist new ruralities) and Inalafquen (communitarian ruralities). The more ambiguous and contradictory strategy of pragmatic resistance enacted by Valeriano and residents from Neltume and Puerto Fuy villages has not received attention within the literature, unlike the more collaborative and oppositional stances also seen at Lake Neltume.

There are different conflicting explanations of the root cause for Enel’s demise and the eventual withdrawal of the proposed hydropower project. The Parlamento, for example, attributes the exit of Enel to its own advocacy and activism, though it is also important to recall that the relevant state authorities were not approving Enel’s required legal permits and licences to operate. However, the former Enel employee explained that the government authorities were supporting the hydropower project until Valeriano also fully joined in the resistance with Inalafquen and the external civil society actors. According to the former



Enel official, the state authorities did not want to be seen lending support to the project when a significant new community group had joined the opposition. Nonetheless, Enel was not willing to concede to the monetary demands of Valeriano, and consequently withdrew the Neltume hydropower project. The following section discusses the findings of pragmatic community resistance, the conditions it requires to operate and the ways in which it relates to the literature on new ruralities.

## **5. Discussion**

In an attempt to go beyond explaining how an anti-dam movement succeeded in its resistance, this article examined the micro politics and paradoxical, ambiguous hybrid role of pragmatic resistance played by an indigenous rural community in southern Chile faced with the siting of a large hydropower project. Such pragmatic resistance it would seem, reflects the hybridity of culture present in postcolonial settings (Bhabha, 2012). The article partly addresses the call by Woods (2003; 2007) for research on the micro-politics of hybrid rural communities and protest. The case demonstrates the impacts of the CSR strategies employed by the multinational energy corporation on the social fabric of the community via the creation of further divisions (Caldeira, 2008). The empirical setting at Neltume, which reflects the wider socio-political scenario of the Mapuche people in Chile, also provides further insights into the underlying community dynamics of resistance within new indigenous ruralities.

The case study contributes by drawing our attention to how community resistance and engagement with project holders (business actors in this case) are not mutually exclusive within new ruralities, where new developments are either perceived as opportunities or threats to the rural identity (Hogan, 2004) and in this case to indigenous

identity. This case shows that indigenous rural community groups can play a seemingly paradoxical or hybrid role in contexts of new development projects, distinct from what is reported elsewhere in the literature.

At Inalafken, engagement with Endesa-Enel was off limits. It would have meant betraying their indigenous values that intertwine with a harmonious co-existence with nature and their desire for autonomy. It is worth remembering that Inalafken was formed by separating itself from Juan Quintuman due to the former's dismay at the latter's engagement with Endesa. The Inalafken community aligns much more closely to the concepts of communitarian (Kay, 2008) and progressive (Woods, 2003) ruralities. Juan Quintuman, on the other hand, overall shows tendencies of reformist realities, since the community was interested in poverty alleviation and participation in corporate-funded sustainable and entrepreneurship projects. This also implied that Juan Quintuman was accepting of the siting of the hydropower dam project, thus offering its SLO to Endesa-Enel.

This article's main contribution to knowledge comes from a third more hybrid group within the conflict that, whilst resisting the large project, also sought engagement with the company for economic benefits (a relational practice that can be attributed to the way Endesa had engaged with the group from the outset). Whilst Inalafken sought the support of external activists and matches a more traditional type of resistance to corporate development projects (such as the refusal to dialogue or negotiate with the project holder), Valeriano was against the presence of external activist allies of Inalafken in their territory (despite having accepted these groups initially during the conflict). It is worth restating the ambiguity in the stance of this hybrid group towards both the company and towards

activists. The President of Valeriano emphasized the benefits of dialogue with the company and, after initially accepting the Parlamento later rejected their apparent radical political stance. They were still able to resist the hydroelectric project their way, according to the Valeriano President. Valeriano's leaders viewed the presence of external activists as a threat to possible CSR benefits, if the company withdrew its hydro project rather than reaching an agreement due to such radical resistance. Furthermore, other external actors in the form of the recreational cabin owners allegedly also influenced the leaders of Valeriano in forming their anti-Enel stance. These differences amongst the community groups help to introduce the concept of pragmatic resistance as practiced by the Valeriano leaders, which can be described as a form of non-ideological, hybrid and paradoxical resistance, where negotiating with a company for benefits did not convert resistance to acquiescence.

The role of aspirational groups was also present at Lake Neltume, in the form of in-migrants, who in this case are businessowners (of rental tourist cabins). According a former Enel manager these cabin owners, who spend most of the year in the Chilean capital city, influenced their employees in taking a confrontational stance towards the proposed hydroelectric project. The presence of a hydroelectric dam beside Lake Neltume does not align with the touristic imaginary of these in-migrant cabin owners, and therefore they played a role in leading the Valeriano leaders to embrace a pragmatic community resistance stance towards the multinational energy corporation. In the following section I will proceed to outline the conditions necessary for pragmatic community resistance to successfully operationalize.

### ***5.1 How can pragmatic community resistance flourish or be stifled?***

In the context of this case, pragmatic community resistance refers to how challenger groups can play a seemingly paradoxical and ambiguous role by simultaneously engaging in CSR and resisting the incumbent (in this case, an energy company). Certain conditions external to the community in question such a resistance. A group with a history of collaborating with the incumbent (when it was Endesa) has a greater likelihood of success when implementing a pragmatic community resistance strategy. This was the case with Valeriano; prior to 2012, the community accepted and engaged with Endesa in exchange for direct economic benefits, in line with a philanthropical type of CSR.

The new president at Valeriano and his board, who entered power in 2012, changed the relationship with Enel from one of collaboration to one of pragmatic resistance. This is also explained by Enel-Endesa's change of CSR strategy from one of philanthropical handouts (during the period of Endesa) to one that strived for shared value or sustainable development as partners, excluding direct donations. Nonetheless, despite this change in relational strategy it would appear the wider Neltume community was by then opposed to the idea of the hydropower plant. In other words, it was too late for Enel to propose innovative community solutions.

The case also reveals how the agency of key actors was instrumental in leading to pragmatic community resistance. The role of this president is compromised by the fact he is salarian employee of in-migrant owners of tourist cabins near Lake Neltume, who were firmly opposed to Endesa-Enel. In a context that captures postcolonial hybridity (Bhabha, 2012) the Valeriano president who identifies as Mapuche as well as an evangelical Christian (like the majority in this community), has further material needs that the corporation offered to satisfy. The influence of external actors seems to be central to the

functioning of pragmatic community resistance at Lake Neltume as shown when the President of Valeriano was frightened by others into taking this position of resistance (and engagement behind the scenes).

A final consideration for understanding the drivers of pragmatic community resistance is the wider political-legal context. Though not the focus of this paper, the recognition of indigenous people's rights via the ratification of ILO169 by the Chilean state may have played a vital part in also understanding why Valeriano shifted from collaboration to resistance. It is worth recalling that the Neltume conflict was host to the first ever ILO169 consultation process in Chile that was adhered to by the state, corporation and community represented by the Observatorio and Parlamento.

This point also offers an avenue for further research to examine the extent to which, and how (indigenous related) legal-political policies influence pragmatic resistance and other conditions under which, pragmatic community resistance thrives. For example, does it always require two differently positioned neighbouring communities as was the case at Lake Neltume? Can such pragmatic resistance operate when neighbour communities also take a similar pragmatic resistance stance? Was pragmatic resistance an intentional strategy? In addition, how the mechanisms and operationalization of pragmatic community resistance differ in predominantly communitarian/progressive, reformist and aspirational ruralities would contribute to knowledge on rural development dynamics.

## **6. Conclusion**

The case shows that the application of sustainable community development policies by the state and business as prescribed by reformist new ruralities scholars within indigenous rural

settings can face severe opposition when affecting their livelihoods (Martínez and Delamaza, 2018) or other non-negotiable assets such as spirituality that go beyond financial values. Based on an indigenous rural setting at Lake Neltume, Chile this article has introduced a third concept of pragmatic community resistance, inspired in part by the postcolonial concept of hybridity. Pragmatic community resistance is defined here as non-ideological resistance, where engaging with the company for CSR-related benefits did not convert resistance to acquiescence. Based on fieldwork conducted in an indigenous Mapuche community in southern Chile, it offers further insights into the underlying mechanisms of indigenous rural community dynamics within settings that show characteristics of communitarian/progressive, reformist and aspirational ruralities.

This article also contributes to the literature on international rural social science the concept of pragmatic community resistance to communitarian (Kay, 2008) and progressive (Woods, 2003) new ruralities. However, it differs from the current understanding that resistance to new projects is absolute, and communities do not wish to engage at all with more powerful actors, such as companies (Bebbington et al., 2008; Martínez and Delamaza, 2018). The case study reminds us of the complexities and heterogeneity within rural indigenous communities. Neighbouring indigenous groups within a small community can take diverse positions regarding their own development ideals and practices. This case study has also highlighted the prominence of external actors in shaping community positions within indigenous rural territories between spectrum that include traditional resistance, pragmatic resistance and collaboration. The case shows that external actors can operate at different scales, at the macro (international law and advocacy), meso (territorially constituted human/indigenous rights activists; corporations) and at the micro

level (employers and community leaders) to influence within indigenous rural settings. Practitioners and scholars interested in understanding phenomena within rural (indigenous) territories are advised to take note of these territorial intricacies and privilege affected voices.

### **Funding**

This article was made possible due to the funding by European Union Marie Curie Individual Fellowship. Project number 707485

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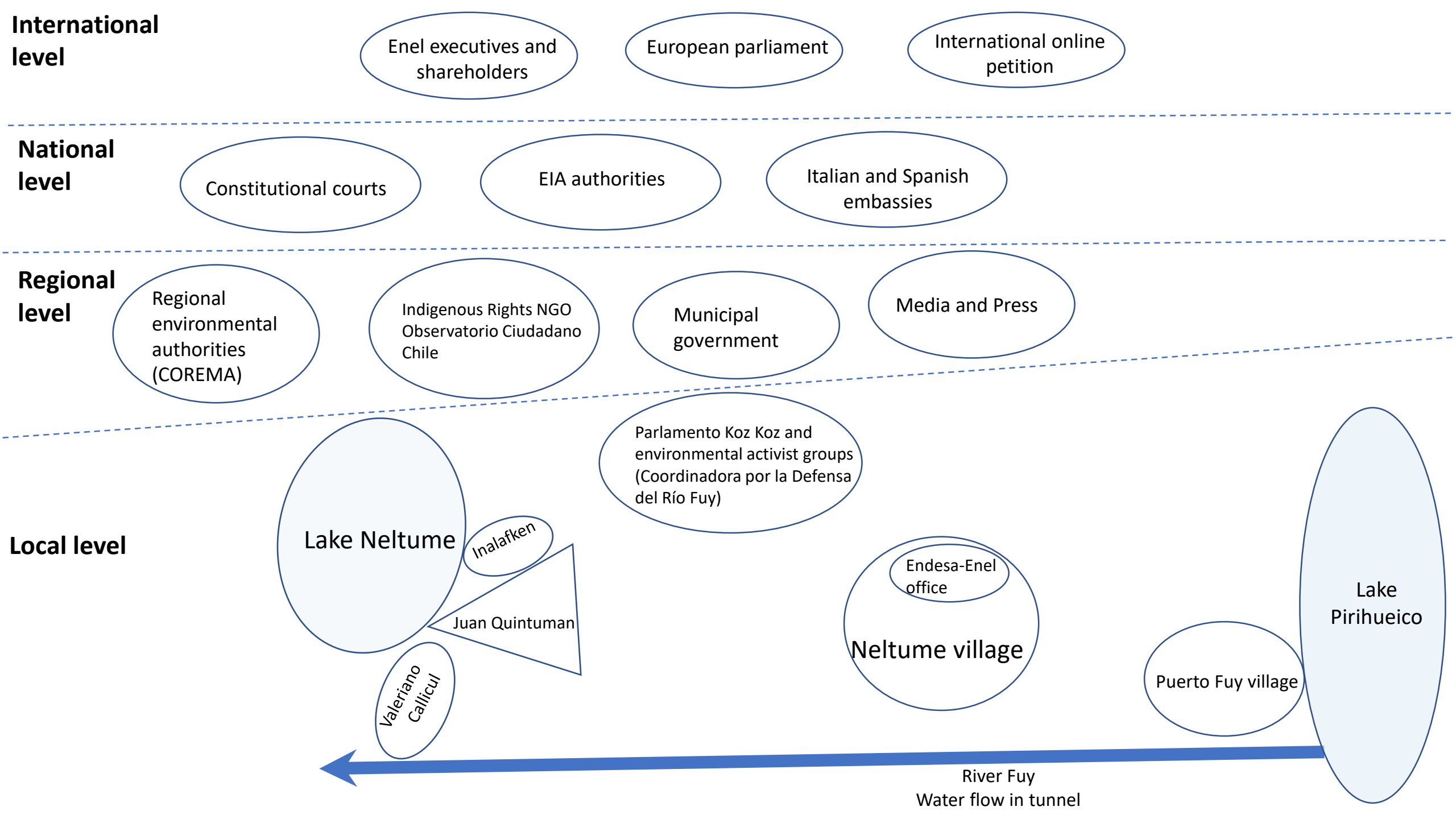
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**International level**

Enel executives and shareholders

European parliament

International online petition

**National level**

Constitutional courts

EIA authorities

Italian and Spanish embassies

**Regional level**

Regional environmental authorities (COREMA)

Indigenous Rights NGO Observatorio Ciudadano Chile

Municipal government

Media and Press

**Local level**

Lake Neltume

Inalafken

Valeriano Callicul

Juan Quintuman

Parlamento Koz Koz and environmental activist groups (Coordinadora por la Defensa del Río Fuy)

Neltume village  
Endesa-Enel office

Puerto Fuy village

Lake Pihueico

River Fuy  
Water flow in tunnel

Table 1 – Timeline of critical events in the conflict at Neltume (adapted from Bidegain, 2015, El Puelche newspaper and author’s field data)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Description of critical event</b>
2007–09	Endesa enters the Lake Neltume area, conducting minor work along the lakeshore. The company also attempts to create agreements with the Juan Quintuman community, which leads to internal community conflict. A smaller group from Juan Quintuman that refuses to engage with Endesa separates and forms the new community of Inalafken in 2008.
May 2009	The Regional Commission for the Environment (COREMA) of Los Ríos approves the construction of the Neltume prospecting gallery, the preliminary permit required before authorization for the full Central Neltume project. The Mayor of Panguipulli is critical of the process, as he was not consulted.
June 2009	Endesa commence work on their prospecting gallery and make CSR donations to communities. This is denounced as a strategy of co-optation and divide and rule by environmental NGOs in Panguipulli.
January 2010	Parlamento Koz Koz and other outsider activists arrive in Juan Quintuman for the community meeting; however, police refuse them entry after seeking advice from the community president. The activists file a lawsuit against the police.
February 2010	Endesa submits its Central Hidroeléctrica Neltume project to the environmental impact assessment (EIA) authorities.

March 2010	Parlamento Koz Koz activist is violently chased out of the community by Juan Quintuman leaders. The activist is forced to exit the area via a boat on the lake.
April 2010	The mayor of Panguipulli, Parlamento Koz Koz, and other NGOs meet with concerned residents from Inalafken, who speak of the unethical practices of Endesa in dividing the community and creating internal conflict.
December 2010	Endesa resubmits its EIA to environmental authorities after having been asked to make 500 modifications in October 2010.
January 2011	Inalafken residents reject the process of the community participation carried out by state authorities as part of the EIA process as they do not comply with ILO169. Regional authorities also reject Endesa's project in this month due to a lack of community acceptance for the project.
December 2011	Residents from Inalafken and Valeriano meet with representatives from Parlamento and other local activists to listen to lawyers from the Observatorio confirm that the state authorities did not consult the communities as required by ILO169.
May 2012	Parlamento, Lake Neltume residents, and other local environmental groups present a report to the environmental authorities highlighting the huge environmental and safety risks the community would face from Endesa's project. The report also included details of mobilization-related activities in Chile and abroad, including a trip by

	<p>one of Parlamento leaders to raise awareness of the case in Italy (helped by an anti-Enel Italian activist group) through meetings with Enel shareholders and European Union parliamentarians.</p>
June 2012	<p>Representatives from Lake Neltume, Parlamento Koz Koz and other NGOs met with the ambassadors from Spain and Italy in Santiago de Chile to deliver their report personally and to denounce the hydropower project. Representatives cited the fact Spain was a signatory of ILO169, and therefore should ensure its domiciled company Endesa respects this law, and also highlighted that the Italian state has a 30% share of Enel (who own Endesa).</p>
July 2012	<p>Endesa acknowledges its lack of oversight with regards to the cultural aspects of the Lake Neltume community. The company achieves an agreement with Juan Quintuman about moving the sacred ceremonial site further from the lake. Other community groups refuse to sign such an agreement. Parlamento Koz Koz activists denounce this agreement as blasphemy on television news.</p>
September 2012	<p>The activists start a change.org petition in Chile, Spain, and Italy for the annulation of the project. Members from Inalafken, Valeriano, Parlamento Koz Koz, and other NGOs sign.</p>
October 2012	<p>New president takes office in Valeriano; he soon decides to call off all relations with the company.</p>
March 2013	<p>The regional environmental authorities once more reject the project, citing the incompatibility with local development.</p>

May 2013	Another leader from Parlamento Koz Koz travels to Italy to present and raise awareness about the project and its potential impact to the community at the Enel annual shareholders meeting.
December 2013	The Chilean environmental authorities request a suspension of the EIA process whilst Endesa carries out a proper indigenous consultation process in line with ILO169. Endesa will be the first hydroelectric project to undergo the indigenous consultation process.
March-September 2014	Parlamento and Observatorio, along with Lake Neltume residents, challenge the hydroelectric project in the courts.
September 2014	Only two of the seven invited Mapuche communities agree to participate in the indigenous consultation (including Juan Quintuman). Inalafken and Valeriano refuse to take part
November 2014	A national court revokes Endesa's water rights at Lake Piriheico in response to a claim made by Puerto Fuy residents.
February 2015	One hundred people from Lake Neltume, Neltume, and Puerto Fuy march to demand the environmental authorities reject Endesa's project as it no longer has the necessary water rights.
June 2015	A critical period in the mobilization of resistance against Endesa. Concerned about the imminent start of work on the prospection gallery, community members from Inalafken, Valeriano and other communities together with Parlamento and other activist NGOs simultaneously block access to the lake at three entrance points. The protesters declare 'communitarian control.' Representatives of

	<p>CONADI (the indigenous affairs department of the Chilean government) decide to suspend the ongoing work by Endesa on the gallery after meeting the community resistance leaders.</p> <p>Days later, a group of community residents in favour of Endesa hold their own pro-hydropower march along the main road outside of Lake Neltume.</p>
July 2015	<p>Enel Green Power buys Endesa's hydroelectric business. New CEO explains internally his vision that the company will not create large-scale hydroelectric projects in the face of continued community resistance. This is contrary to how Endesa had approached new projects and community conflicts in the past (as affirmed by an Enel employee).</p> <p>During a visit to Lake Neltume, Enel CEO encounters negative perceptions of the company's planned project from local residents.</p>
August 2015	<p>UNESCO calls on the Chilean and Argentine governments to reject Endesa's project. After a senator from Chile brought the case to UNESCO's attention, the international organization declares that Neltume is located in a world reserve of the biosphere of temperate rain forests in Los Ríos, Chile.</p>
December 2015	<p>Enel announces it is withdrawing its project and will start from scratch with community consultations and a new project design.</p>
March 2017	<p>After over ten years in the community, with a US\$1 million spend on CSR and no energy generation, Enel formally announces its absolute</p>

	withdrawal from the community, citing problems with gaining legal and social licences.
January 2018	Enel finally permanently cancels the project.



Table 2 – Field research breakdown.

January 2016	May 2016	October 2016	January 2016	Feb-March 2018
Panguipulli – one afternoon	Panguipulli – 1 day	Island of Chiloé – 3 days	Neltume and Lake Neltume – 5 days	Lake Neltume and Panguipulli– 6 days
Three semi structured interviews with Parlamento leaders.	Two interviews with Parlamento leader and one with a Lago Neltume resident from Inalafken. Participant observation in four hour meeting with Mapuche representatives from nearby territories discussing the defence, control and management of their territories.	Two interviews with Parlamento leaders. involved in the Neltume conflict. Participant observation in 3 day cultural meeting about territorial defence for Mapuche people against megaprojects.	12 interviews with local community residents. Five from Valeriano (including current presidents). Two from Juan Quintuman. Five from Neltume village. One interview with local Enel manager (including 12 postinterview detailed email exchanges for clarification purposes). One interview with Head of Community Participation, Ministry of Energy (September, 2017).	12 interviews with local community residents. Five from Valeriano (including current and past presidents). Five from Juan Quintuman. One interview with now former local Enel manager. One interview with Head of Environmental Management of Panguipulli municipal government. Two interviews with Parlamento leaders.
Total duration 4 hours	Total duration 4 hours	Total duration 1 hour	Total duration 8 hours	Total duration 10 hours

Table 3 – Details of empirical archival sources consulted relating to the Neltume hydropower conflict

<b>Media Reports</b>	<b>Video Documentaries</b>	<b>Environmental Impact Assessment – containing 197 documents in total</b>
<p>“La victoria mapuche y ambientalista contra ENDESA en el lago Neltume”, El Ciudadano Newspaper, 12<sup>th</sup> March, 2016  <a href="http://www.elciudadano.cl/medio-ambiente/la-victoria-mapuche-y-ambientalista-contra-endesa-en-el-lago-neltume12-03-2016/03/12/">http://www.elciudadano.cl/medio-ambiente/la-victoria-mapuche-y-ambientalista-contra-endesa-en-el-lago-neltume12-03-2016/03/12/</a></p> <p>“Lago Neltume, paraíso bajo amenaza de Endesa”                      Periodismo Humano Newspaper, 2<sup>nd</sup> February</p>	<p>Central Neltume ¿un nuevo Ralco?  <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S1im6_fdY18">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S1im6_fdY18</a></p> <p>Lago Neltume: Kume Mogñen Tain Mapu Mew"                      by Felipe Hasen,  <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1dmtNoFnXE">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1dmtNoFnXE</a></p> <p>A</p>	<p>Chapter 11 of study titled “Information about agreements on environmental mitigation and compensatory measures for stakeholders. November 2010. 23 Pages.</p>

<p>2013</p> <p><a href="http://periodismohumano.com/sociedad/medio-ambiente/lago-neltume-paraiso-bajo-amenaza-de-endesa.html">http://periodismohumano.com/sociedad/medio-ambiente/lago-neltume-paraiso-bajo-amenaza-de-endesa.html</a></p> <p>“Indígenas contra Endesa: "No queremos más represas en la zona" El Diario.es, 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2014</p> <p><a href="http://www.eldiario.es/desalambre/represas-Endesa-conflictos-America-Latina_0_237626997.html">http://www.eldiario.es/desalambre/represas-Endesa-conflictos-America-Latina_0_237626997.html</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.elpuelche.cl">http://www.elpuelche.cl</a> - Ecologist online news source for Valdivia region of Chile – has 36 news stories covering Lago Neltume – Endesa-Enel conflict from March 2011 – March 2017. These</p>	<p>Ya no hay Compadres, by Proyecto Periodistas Carrere <a href="http://www.mapuexpress.org/?p=14195">http://www.mapuexpress.org/?p=14195</a></p> <p>Proyecto Hidroelectrica Neltume, by TVN (National Chilean TV)</p> <p><a href="http://www.tvn.cl/player/play/?id=1541847">http://www.tvn.cl/player/play/?id=1541847</a></p> <p>Neltume: cuerpos- territorios represados by El viaje de la Serpiente</p> <p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bkVmshqYhxQ&amp;t=36s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bkVmshqYhxQ&amp;t=36s</a></p> <p>Galería Central Neltume 1: Comunidades confrontan a Endesa Enel</p>	<p>Anthropological study of Lago Neltume and spiritual use of the lake and land.</p> <p>17<sup>th</sup> December, 2012.</p> <p>35 pages.</p> <p>Letter from communities to environmental authorities,</p> <p>17<sup>th</sup> December 2012.</p> <p>2 pages.</p> <p>Letter from communities to environmental authorities,</p> <p>28<sup>th</sup> March 2013.</p> <p>2 pages.</p>
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<p>stories served to understand the chronology and critical events of the conflict.</p> <p>“La victoria mapuche y ambientalista contra ENDESA en el lago Neltume” Terram.cl 12th March, 2016  <a href="http://www.terram.cl/2016/03/la-victoria-mapuche-y-ambientalista-contra-endesa-en-el-lago-neltume/">http://www.terram.cl/2016/03/la-victoria-mapuche-y-ambientalista-contra-endesa-en-el-lago-neltume/</a></p> <p>“Lago Neltume no será tocado por Endesa” Panguipulli Noticias 11th December, 2015  <a href="http://noticiaspanguipulli.cl/home/?p=1727">http://noticiaspanguipulli.cl/home/?p=1727</a></p>	<p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8cVyvKTWUdY&amp;t=30s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8cVyvKTWUdY&amp;t=30s</a></p> <p>Debate jurídico respecto a Consulta Indígena Central Neltume</p> <p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4MAvO8ypTRE">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4MAvO8ypTRE</a></p>	<p>Agreement protocol for Indigenous consultation in relation to Central Neltume project. 25<sup>th</sup> August, 2015.  72 pages.</p>
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<p><a href="http://www.radiomontecarlosur.cl/exigen-que-endesa-retire-proyecto-central-neltume-en-medio-de-procedimiento-irregular-en-sea/">http://www.radiomontecarlosur.cl/exigen-que-endesa-retire-proyecto-central-neltume-en-medio-de-procedimiento-irregular-en-sea/</a></p>		
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