Power and contestation in collaborative ecosystem-based management: The case of Haida Gwaii

The depletion of old-growth forests on Haida Gwaii as a result of decades of excessive logging poses a looming threat not only to irreplaceable biodiversity and habitat values but also to the indigenous Haida culture. This study examines the latest stages of a long-running conflict over the forests of Haida Gwaii, and the provincial government’s attempt to ameliorate it through collaborative ecosystem-based land use planning. In contrast to previous studies that have tended to regard collaborative planning processes in terms of either an idealised win-win outcome or the unavoidable government co-optation of opposition, this article explores both the problematic power relations found within the collaborative planning process as well as the opportunities presented by it to expand collective power and more effectively resist oppression and domination.

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