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"From Myths to Rules: The Evolution of Local Management in the Amazonian Floodplain"

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de Castro, Fabio. "From Myths to Rules: The Evolution of Local Management in the Amazonian Floodplain." *Environment and History* 8, no. 2 (May, 2002): 197–216. doi:10.3197/096734002129342648 . Local management systems (LMS) are dynamic, locally crafted institutions whose set of prescriptions regulating resource use are created in different stages of the users' existence. The complex relationship between these types of institutions and their environment (both local and external) provides an opportunity to analyse human responses to social and ecological changes through time. This paper focuses on historical analysis of the local management of the Brazilian Amazonian floodplain, which is divided into three distinct periods of floodplain occupation—Amerindian Period, Migrant Period, and Caboclo Period. Each period reflects a management pattern based on different types of resources, groups of users and individuals who managed the system. The analysis reveals that local management systems in this region encompass three rule types—ecological, cultural, and political—according to the source of incentives that influences the prescription. An increased focus on political prescription to limit entry and to monitor rules has taken place more recently in order to cope with the faster pace of environmental change in the region as well as to lower the consequent transaction cost among new actors. The fishing accords, for example, combine politically oriented goals of resource control with ecologically oriented goals of resource conservation. The historical dimension of LMS is fundamental to unravelling the connections between new sets of prescriptions and old management systems. Due to the system complexity, the consonance of both goals should be held as an empirical question rather than as an assumption. All rights reserved. © 2002 The White Horse Press

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