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"Connecting Climate Social Adaptation and Land Use Change in Internationally Adjoining Protected Areas"

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The development of climate adaptation strategies to address social problems derived from climate change is pressing. Yet, in addition to providing means to minimise the impact of climate variability and change on livelihoods, climate adaptation strategies might exacerbate environmental change and cause negative social impacts. Systematic research has not addressed the impacts of adaptation on environmental change. In this paper, I focus on land use change as a specific type of environmental change and on three adaptation strategies: diversification, pooling and out-migration. I analyse the influence of adaptation strategies on land use change by drawing on interviews with the managers of 56 internationally adjoining protected areas in 18 countries in the Americas. The findings indicate that the impact of adaptation depends on the adaptation strategy people choose. When people out-migrate, land use change increases. Community elite control for decision-making, shorter distances between communities and markets and more communities in and around the protected areas also increase land use change. These findings show that adaptation can be a driver of further environmental change, and thus further study is needed to understand the likely impacts of adaptation on conservation. (Text from author's abstract)

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