

**Economies of Plunder:**

The Case of Rosewood Extraction and Indigenous Rights in Southern Belize

**MPP Professional Paper**

In Partial Fulfillment of the Master of Public Policy Degree Requirements  
The Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Affairs  
The University of Minnesota

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May 6, 2014

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*Christopher Zempel*

**Abstract**

New middle income countries in the Global South are leveraging established neocolonial structures of dependence to extract raw resources from other countries in the Global South. In Belize, China’s demand for tropical hardwoods has come face-to-face with an indigenous land rights movement. Using the extraction of rosewood from Belize as a case, this paper explores the following questions: (1) What do new patterns of neocolonial extraction look like? (2) Who are the actors at both ends of the relationship? (3) What tools have indigenous communities used to protect their economic and self-governing rights? and (4) Have they been successful?

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## Introduction

Although there is considerable variation in detail, there is remarkable consistency in the history of resource exploitation: resources are inevitably overexploited ...the larger and the more immediate are prospects for gain, the greater the political power that is used to facilitate unlimited exploitation (Ludwig et al., 1993).

In 2004, 2007, and 2010 the Maya movement of Belize<sup>1</sup> secured favorable decisions from courts of Belize and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) for the Maya community's right as an indigenous people to communal ownership of land based on their long use and occupation, since pre-invasion times. According to Chief Justice Abdullah Conteh, the Maya have resided in Belize "since time immemorial" (2007). In 2009, the United Nations released a report on the "State of the World's Indigenous Peoples." The report states "while indigenous peoples have, since 2002, experienced increased recognition of their environmental rights at the international level, translating this political recognition into concrete advances at the national and local levels remains a major challenge" (2009, pg. 108). Although the Maya have successfully won every case in court by leveraging the international human rights framework<sup>2</sup>, natural resources are still extracted from their land for the benefit of outsiders. Starting in 2010, rosewood was extracted from the forests of southern Belize, specifically from land owned by the Maya communities in the Toledo District, for export to China. The extraction of rosewood is striking for two reasons. The first is that the Maya movement was founded specifically to

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<sup>1</sup> Belize is a small country. At about twenty three thousand square kilometers, it is about the size of the US state of Massachusetts (see Map 1 in the Appendix). The country is located in Central America on the Caribbean coast and bordered by Mexico and Guatemala (The World Factbook: Belize, 2014). Belize, a member of the British Commonwealth, is divided into administrative districts governed by a unitary parliamentary government not unlike Great Britain. The population is about 340,000 with a per capita income of US \$8800 (2013 US dollars). About 10.6% of the people are indigenous Q'echqi' (Kekchi), Mopan, and Yucatec speaking Maya. Of the roughly 30,000 Maya living in Belize, 18,000 or 60% of them live in the administrative district of Toledo, the southernmost district of Belize. The Maya comprise about 60% of the 30,000 people living in Toledo (Belize Demographics Country Profile 2013, 2014).

<sup>2</sup> See the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, ILO 169, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, The American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Organization of American States Charter.

combat the theft of resources from Maya land without their collective permission. The second is that the extraction began *following* a court case not only recognizing the right of all Maya communities in Toledo to collective land ownership and granting them collective title under the Belizean Constitution, but also ordering the government to cease any activities on Maya land that does not have the permission of the Maya community. Extracted rosewood, for the most part, ends up in China.

This study uses ethnographic field research conducted in Belize from June to August 2013 to explore how new middle income countries from the periphery use established neocolonial structures of dependence for their economies of extraction. These structures, under the guise of free-market capitalism, are based on relationships with beginnings in European imperial colonization. The Western European colonizers existed in the original core<sup>3</sup> and their former colonies in Latin America, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Africa were and continue to be in the periphery. The more economically developed and wealthy core countries colonized the periphery, first using direct political and military control, to extract raw resources for manufacture and consumption in the core. Following the dissolution of formal political control of the colonies, these structures of extraction have not only survived but have indeed thrived under a system of economic colonization known as neocolonialism (Carmody, 2011). Although nations in the core continue to extract resources from the periphery using the structures of dependence, new middle income countries from the periphery are now also using the structures of dependence to extract resources from other nations in the periphery (Carmody, 2011). This study aims to answer the following questions: (1) What do new patterns of neocolonial

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<sup>3</sup> The nations of Western Europe continue to comprise the core in addition to European successor states including the United States, Australia, and Canada as well as Japan, which is not a European successor state. These nations are generally referred to as the 'Global North' with the countries of Latin America, Africa, and Asia generally referred to as the 'Global South'.

extraction look like? (2) Who are the actors at both ends of the relationship? (3) What tools have indigenous communities used to protect their economic and self-governing rights? and (4) Have they been successful?

The case of rosewood extraction can not only be understood using Pádraig Carmody's new patterns of neocolonial extraction, it exemplifies it (2011). First, a natural resource is being extracted for manufacture elsewhere. Second, elites from "elsewhere" collude with elites in Belize to extract the resource. Third, the non-elite classes in Belize, represented in this study by the Maya, are worse off while the Belizean elites are better off, generating increased inequality within the country. Fourth, the non-elites are superexploited to extract the rosewood. Fifth, the extraction takes place by a new middle income country from the Global South. The ethnographic study describes the performance of the old dependency structures of center and periphery with these new actors: Chinese business interests, the center, and Belizean elites, the center within the periphery, colluding to extract rosewood for manufacture in China to meet China's domestic demand for rosewood products. To extract the rosewood, the elites in Belize exploited the Maya for labor, to the detriment of the Maya. It is also important to note that, although the court cases did not prevent the exploitation of the Maya or their resources, it did change the pattern of exploitation. In the 1990s the government awarded contracts to foreign companies, directly plundering resources without including the Maya. For the extraction of rosewood, a domestic company exploited the Maya to extract the wood from their own land, sidestepping the court order against awarding contracts or concessions for resource extraction from Maya land.

### **Theoretical Framework: The New Structures of Dependence**

In 1970 Theotonio Dos Santos published a seminal piece on the new structures of economic dependence. He argued that the economies of poor nations depend on the extraction of resources from those nations by rich nations. Furthermore, as argued by Johann Galtung (1971), in his piece on the structures of imperialism, these mechanisms were not only economic but social: elites in both rich nations and poor nations collude in the extraction of natural resources. The elites in rich countries are the core of the core while the elites in the poorer countries are the core of the periphery (1971). This process created underdevelopment and further poverty.

Not only have these dependency mechanisms not been remedied in the last forty years, they have in fact become more refined. Carmody (2011), studying resource extraction in Africa in the 2000s, argues that new middle income countries from the Global South, the periphery, are taking advantage of the existing structures of dependence. Although Carmody (2011) focuses on China's neocolonial extraction in Africa, he also argues that China is not the only new middle income country extracting resources in Africa; India, Brazil, Russia – the BRICs countries, as well as Malaysia and Turkey are also extracting natural resources from Africa (2011). Furthermore, these countries have the advantage of not having to adhere to the Global North's, neoliberal ideology nor seek to enforce the normalizing and standardizing of international trade, environmental, and human rights norms (2011).

This new body of work, exemplified by Carmody, signals more complex patterns of economic extraction and dependence, and with new actors. Most importantly, it signals South-South exploitation that is riding on the Global North's hegemonic neoliberal policies, which decreased the barriers to trade in nations of the Global South. The neoliberal trade structure services the neocolonial economic structures of economic extraction and thus of dependence. Both the 1970s dependency movement and more contemporary analysis are critical of the

macroeconomic structures of trade. Carmody (2011) argues that China, in particular, by refusing to challenge the hegemonic policies of the Global North, exemplifies the success of these new middle income nations in leveraging the structures of dependence to meet their growing demand for resources.

This study in Belize describes the struggle that the Maya are in, as non-elites in a periphery nation, with the current economy of extraction and dependence. It explores these structures of dependence with the added component of a struggle for economic protection and of economic self-governance via their seeking and claiming human rights law protection. Dependency and human rights provide the framework for exploring why resources are still being extracted for the benefit of outsiders from Maya land in southern Belize. The Maya are leveraging the human rights argument to counter the structures of dependence in search of economic social justice and autonomy.

### **Methods: Field Research in Belize**

I conducted ethnographic field work in Belize, living in Punta Gorda in the Toledo District from June through August 2013. The field work comprised of interacting with the community in Toledo to collect data on the extraction of rosewood through observation and by conducting a series of semi-structured interviews. Visiting Toledo helped me to understand the context surrounding the activities of extraction and how they intersected with daily life. I found Toledo to be very ethnically diverse for having such a small population. The diversity included people who identified themselves as Maya, Garifuna, Creole, Mennonite, Hispanic, Chinese, and East Indian. There were also a number of expatriates, conservation volunteers, and tourists from the United States and Europe. English is the official language but the people of southern Belize speak many languages. These languages included Mopan Maya, Q'eqchi' Maya, Spanish,

Garifuna, and Creole. Although I only speak English, language proved to be a minor barrier since most people spoke English as well as one or more additional languages.

Punta Gorda, the largest town in Toledo, was home to people from all of the aforementioned groups, although the Maya principally resided in villages inland from the coast<sup>4</sup>. I had the privilege of spending a substantial amount of time with leaders from the Maya community in many different contexts. I was able to observe and participate with actors from the Maya movement and the Maya institutions of governance, as well as observe daily life for these individuals. I experienced the denial of access Maya community leaders now face when attempting to enter the Sarstoon-Temash National Park<sup>5</sup>. I was present for the reading of the Appellate Court decision in July 2013 on the Maya land rights case in Belize City. I observed a general assembly for the whole Maya community of Toledo at the Julian Cho Technical High School to discuss the implications of the July Appellate Court decision. I handed out books and interacted with Maya families as part of a scholarship program for Maya children to attend secondary school<sup>6</sup>. I participated in numerous informal conversations regarding indigenous rights and their meaning for the Maya community. Interactions like these informed my choices for interviewees and contributed to the knowledge used in analyzing the interview data.

Aside from my observations and the many informal conversations that take place while conducting ethnographic fieldwork, I conducted 17 semi-structured elite interviews with key informants (Wholey, 2010). Each respondent was chosen for his/her connection to or knowledge of commercial rosewood extraction. Most of the interviews took place in Toledo. The

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<sup>4</sup> For more information regarding the geography of the Maya “homeland” see *The Maya Atlas* (1997) compiled by the Toledo Alcaldes Association and the Toledo Maya Cultural Council.

<sup>5</sup> Land still under use by Maya community members for their subsistence living but which is contracted out to American Capital Energy for the extraction of oil. This land is Maya land that the government turned into a national park before contracting its use to American Capital Energy.

<sup>6</sup> This scholarship program is administered by the Julian Cho Society (JCS).



interviewees were chosen using the snowball method and were selected from three broad categories: (1) Maya community leaders, (2) experts from environmental conservation non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and (3) employees of the government of Belize. Fourteen of the seventeen interviews were with men, two interviews included groups of three men and all of the interviews were with adults of working age (18 – 64). Nine of the seventeen interviewees were members of the Maya community. Two of those interviewees were experts from environmental conservation NGOs as well. Four interviews were with experts from environmental conservation NGOs who were not members of the Maya community. Three interviews were with employees of the government of Belize. Each interview was conducted in private and the identity of each respondent is anonymous to reduce the risk of harm from participating in this study. Permission for the use of the information collected during each interview was gained verbally to further reduce the risk of the interviewees being revealed. Each respondent, except two, gave their permission for the interview to be audio recorded for later analysis.

I approached additional government employees and environmental conservationists for an interview, but they either refused to discuss rosewood, in the case of the government employees, or failed to respond to my requests for an interview. In Belize, it is common knowledge that government employees who speak against the position or behavior of the government can result in job loss and reduction in future opportunity from the government, whether that is in the form of government employment or receipt of government services. Also, as detailed below, the government has adamantly opposed the recognition of land rights and has

facilitated the illegal extraction of rosewood in Toledo. Therefore I can assume, despite assurances of anonymity<sup>7</sup>, government employees did not want to be interviewed.

Each interview was conducted using an interview guide (see Table 2 in the Appendix). The interview guide was designed to be an outline for each interview and not a uniform questionnaire. The interview guide and question design followed an inductive approach per the exploratory nature of the study. To respect the time of each interviewee and avoid “interview fatigue” (Wholey, 2010) I had to apply judgment in determining which questions to ask each respondent based on the information provided to preceding questions and the interviewee’s background in conservation, the Maya communities, or the government of Belize. Not all questions were designed to be presented to all respondents. Rather, the guide was designed to leverage the type of knowledge of each respondent based on my knowledge of events and relationships during the design and field work phases of the study.

## **The Case of Rosewood Extraction**

### *The Maya and their Struggle for Land Rights*

Starting in 2010 rosewood has been extracted from the forests of southern Belize for export to China. Rosewood only grows between the Monkey and Sarstoon Rivers<sup>8</sup> in the Toledo District. It has been predominantly extracted from land owned and occupied by the indigenous Maya communities as well as some from land under conservation.<sup>9</sup> However, individuals outside of the Maya community contest the ownership rights of the Maya by proclaiming the

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<sup>7</sup> Although the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the University of Minnesota waived its oversight of this study in May 2013, the study was carried out in accordance with the requisite IRB guidelines for human subjects research.

<sup>8</sup> The Monkey River coincides with the border between Toledo and Stann Creek Districts. The Sarstoon River is the southern border between the Toledo District and Guatemala (see Map 2 in the Appendix).

<sup>9</sup> Land under conservation is either under direct protection of the Forestry Department or under a conservation partnership between the Department of Forestry and a non-governmental conservation organization.

land as owned by the government or land under a private concession.<sup>10</sup> Although there are private concessions on Maya land granted by the government without the permission of the Maya community, concessions were not granted for the specific extraction of rosewood. Individual perceptions of who owned the land where the rosewood grows differed between those who are members of the Maya community and those who are not. Even experts from environmental conservation NGOs supported the view that it is the government and not the Maya who owns the land. Though alarming, this is not surprising given that the conservation organizations that operate in Toledo partner with the government to manage protected areas of forest and reef and receive a portion of their funding from the government of Belize along with their license to operate.

The Maya have been struggling for recognition by the government of their right to collective ownership of the land. Julian Cho and the Toledo Maya Cultural Council (TMCC)<sup>11</sup> led the struggle in the 1990's in response to the granting of logging concessions to Malaysian companies and contracts for oil exploration to American companies.

The 1990s were a tumultuous decade in the Toledo District of southern Belize as export-oriented neoliberalism became Belize's de facto development strategy... This complemented a vigorous search for new exports, which have led to an expansion of resource extraction, particularly in fisheries, timber, and agriculture. When the Ministry of Natural Resources sold... logging concessions in Toledo..., the neoliberal development model collided with an indigenous movement... called simply "the Maya movement" (Wainwright, 2008, pg. 2).

Prior to the invasion of the British, Belize was inhabited by the Maya "since time immemorial" (Conteh, 2007) and estimated to have had a population of over one million people,

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<sup>10</sup> A concession is a lease to work a parcel of land for the purpose of resource extraction such as timber and oil or for agricultural cash crops such as cacao and citrus. These concessions are granted by the government on land considered to be national or crown lands by the government. The term crown land is a holdover term from when Belize was a British Crown Colony denoting lands owned by the government.

<sup>11</sup> The movement was later continued under the Julian Cho Society (JCS) and the Maya Leaders Alliance (MLA) in partnership with the Toledo Alcaldes Association (TAA), a representative body of the traditional Maya village leaders, the Alcaldes.

three times the current population. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century the area around the Belize River was colonized by British privateers and loggers (Thomson, 2004). The colonizers' primary purpose was the extraction of timber resources. Timber extraction remained a paramount interest throughout Belize's time as a British colony. A few of the more notable timber resources extracted included logwood, mahogany, cedar, and rosewood. After extraction, these raw resources were shipped back to Great Britain for manufacturing. After political independence in 1981, Belize continued to rely on an economy of extraction, awarding logging concessions to Malaysian companies and contracts for oil exploration to US companies in Toledo throughout the 1990s (Wainwright 2008).

When the British government in Belize City colonized the Toledo district, there were 10 reservations of land set aside for the Maya. The colonial government made this decision on behalf of the Maya, without their consultation or consent. Ownership of the reservation land remained with the government. The land the Maya lived on then did not necessarily coincide with these reservation boundaries and as of 1997, over half of the population lives in villages outside of the reservations (Maya Atlas, 1997). The government has claimed ownership over all the land where Maya villages are located, including the reservations (Maya Atlas, 1997). The lack of land rights, the logging concessions, and the exploration for oil, led to the organization of the Maya movement under the leadership of Julian Cho, a leader and a teacher within the Maya community, and the Toledo Maya Cultural Council (TMCC) (Wainwright 2008). The Maya movement was formed to secure a homeland in Toledo to encompass all of the land the Maya live on and use, regardless of the boundaries of the reservations. The movement was formed to seek equal protection under the laws of Belize for the communal ownership of land (Maya Atlas,

1997). The Maya movement has resulted in four major victories in both Belizean court and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR)<sup>12</sup>.

In 1998 the Toledo Maya community of Belize petitioned the IACHR claiming the state had violated their human rights as enshrined in the American Declaration. Six years later, in 2004, the IACHR concluded that the government of Belize had indeed violated Article II and Article XXIII of the American Declaration. The government of Belize violated “the right to equality before the law, to equal protection of the law...to the detriment of the Maya people, by failing to provide them with the protections necessary to exercise their property rights fully and equally with other members of the Belizean population (Article II, American Declaration, 1948; IACHR Report, 2004, pg 53, para 195). Article II of the American declaration states: “All persons are equal before the law and have the rights and duties established in this Declaration, without distinction as to race, sex, language, creed or any other factor.” The latter was violated by the government failing to recognize the communal property rights of the Maya people by granting resource extraction concessions to third parties on “the lands that they [the Maya] have traditionally occupied and used” (IACHR Report, 2004, pg 53, para. 193 and 194).

Article XXIII of the American Declaration states: “Every person has the right to own private property as meets the essential needs of decent living and helps to maintain the dignity of the individual and of the home” (American Declaration, 1948). The IACHR recommended the state of Belize provide title or otherwise protect the communal property rights of the Maya people as well as abstain from any acts that would violate the use, enjoyment, value, or existence

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<sup>12</sup> The IACHR is an organ of the Organization of American States (OAS), which was born out of the First International Conference of American States in 1890 and is the world’s oldest regional organization (*OAS: Who We Are*, 2014). The OAS was founded upon four main pillars: democracy, human rights, security, and development. The IACHR is the organ within the OAS “whose mission is to promote and protect human rights in the American hemisphere” (*OAS: IACHR: What is the IACHR?*, 2014). The principles which guide the IACHR are found in the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man (American Declaration).

of Maya communal property, including abstaining from issuing resource extraction concessions without the free prior informed consent of the Maya.

Before petitioning the IACHR in 1998, the Maya had filed claims with the courts of Belize regarding the violation of their rights. However, at the time of the publication of the IACHR report in 2004, the Maya had still not had their claim heard in Belizean court. So, in addition to the violation of Articles II and XXIII, the IACHR concluded that the state of Belize had also violated Article XVIII, the right to a fair trial, for failing to allow access to the courts of Belize, to the detriment of the Maya people, for the protection of their rights. After more than ten years of petitioning the courts of Belize, in 2007 the Maya were finally able to have the merits of their claim of human rights violations against the government of Belize heard in a Belizean court (Conteh, 2007). Chief Justice Abdulai Conteh agreed with the conclusions of the IAHR declaring that the Maya hold "...collective and individual rights in the lands and resources they have used and occupied according to Maya customary practices and that these rights constitute "property" within the meaning of...the Belize constitution" (Conteh, 2007, pg. 65 para. 136a). As remedy, Chief Justice Conteh ordered the government to issue title in consultation with the Maya and in accordance with their customary law. He also ordered that any entity, including the government, need to obtain the "informed consent" of the Maya community before embarking on any activity that affects the "existence, value use or enjoyment" of Maya land (Conteh 2007, pg 66 para. 136d). This meant that the issuance of a concession by the government of Belize for resource exploitation on Maya customary land would now need the free, prior, and informed consent of the Maya community.

Although the Maya had clearly been victorious in 2007, the Maya had to immediately file another claim against the government. The government had interpreted the Maya victory in the

2007 decision as applying narrowly to only a few Maya communities which were listed in the case as claimants rather than the broader Maya community as a whole. In 2010 the Chief Justice again handed down a ruling on the rights of the Maya to their indigenous rights to collective ownership of their land and resources. Not only did Chief Justice Conteh confirm his position from the 2007 decision, but this time he explicitly applied it broadly to all Maya communities (Conteh, 2010).

While the government did not contest the court's decision in 2007, the government did take issue with this decision and filed an appeal (Sosa, 2013). The appellate court handed down their decision in July of 2013 just days before the courts were to hear a claim by the Maya accusing the government of contempt of court for not obtaining their free, prior, and informed consent for oil exploration on and oil extraction from their collectively owned land. The contempt of court claim was based on the injunction Chief Justice Conteh had placed on activity on Maya land without their "express permission". However, before the contempt of court claim could be heard, the appellate court handed down its decision. The decision confirmed the conclusions of both the 2004 IACHR and the 2007 and 2010 Belizean Supreme Court decisions in that the Maya do collectively own their land based on their indigenous rights and customary use of the land and resources.

However, the July 2013 court decision lifted the injunction against activity on Maya land. This meant that although the Maya have rights to their land, the government does not need to obtain their express permission to issue resource exploration and extraction permits, concessions, or licenses for activity on Maya land (Sosa, 2013). According to the court, the government of Belize has to recognize the indigenous rights of the Maya communities but does not have to protect them. The overturning of the government's duty to protect the rights of the Maya makes

the possession of those rights hollow and clearly violates Article II of the American Declaration. Article II provides for the equal protection of the rights of all persons before the law. This Appellate court decision declares the Maya have rights but that the rights are not equally protected as are other citizen's rights (non-indigenous citizens) in Belize.

By making this decision, the court opens a crater in the human rights law protecting the Maya community. At first glance, the decision appears to protect indigenous rights but in-depth examination of the ruling shows the crater. The decision was made in such a way so as to save face in the court of international opinion; it was a veneer decision that claims to uphold indigenous rights but is completely lacking in substance. The court, by failing to uphold international human rights norms and laws, has removed itself as an impartial arbiter of social justice, favoring elites who have an economic interest in the Maya, their land, and their resources being left without equal protection by the government. Although the protections granted by the courts in earlier cases were insufficient in protecting the Maya from exploitation, they are necessary steps on the path to economic autonomy and social justice. Maya community leaders have expressed concern that resource extraction has actually increased since the first court victory in 2004, so it is worrying to consider the impact this unfavorable ruling will have on the level of theft of their resources.

In addition to the crater created in Belize's human rights law by the most recent court decision, the evolution of the legal struggle for land rights by the Maya is important in understanding the extraction of rosewood for two additional reasons. The first is that the court decisions leading up to the start of rosewood extraction for export in 2010 seem to have changed the behavior of elites in terms of how they interact with the Maya community regarding resource extraction. Rather than a company being awarded a concession or contract for extraction on



Maya land, as occurred with logging companies in the 1990s, the Maya are exploited for their labor directly to extract their own resources to sell on the market. This is explored in more detail later in the paper.

The second is the unintended consequences from the human rights victories on the relationship between the Maya community and their land. Before the land rights court decisions, which recognizes communal ownership of the land and its resources by the Maya community, the Maya relied on a system of reciprocity rather than ownership. The system of reciprocity was based on usufruct; if a family or individual was using or intending to use a piece of land or resource, other members of the village would have needed to ask for permission to use it instead. The court decisions in favor of the Maya community based on their indigenous rights changes the land and resources from a reciprocal system based on use to a market system based on property ownership. Although the property regime is communal rather than individual, it is still starkly different from a system where there was no property.

The communal system of ownership has facilitated the Maya to not only exploit themselves individually for labor to extract rosewood (discussed later in the paper) but to exploit each other as a community, creating a tragedy of the commons (Hardin, 1968). Before having their indigenous rights to communal ownership granted by the courts, the Maya would not have cut rosewood from land being used by another member of their village or any other village. The unintended consequence of communal ownership is that it has provided the Maya, individually, an incentive to forego the traditional usufruct system of reciprocity. Under the communal ownership regime, the community as a whole decides how to use the land and resources, whereas before decisions could be made individually or between individuals. For fear of the Maya leadership telling them how to use their resources under the new regime, individuals have an

incentive to extract as much value from communally owned resources as quickly as possible. Currently there is a demand for raw rosewood, providing a market to obtain some of the value. This regime also creates a divide between the Maya leadership and individuals in the community. Prior to the land victories, Maya leadership institutions were there to simply express the will of the community based on their traditional law. After the court decisions, the leaders find themselves potentially in a position of management of communally owned resources.

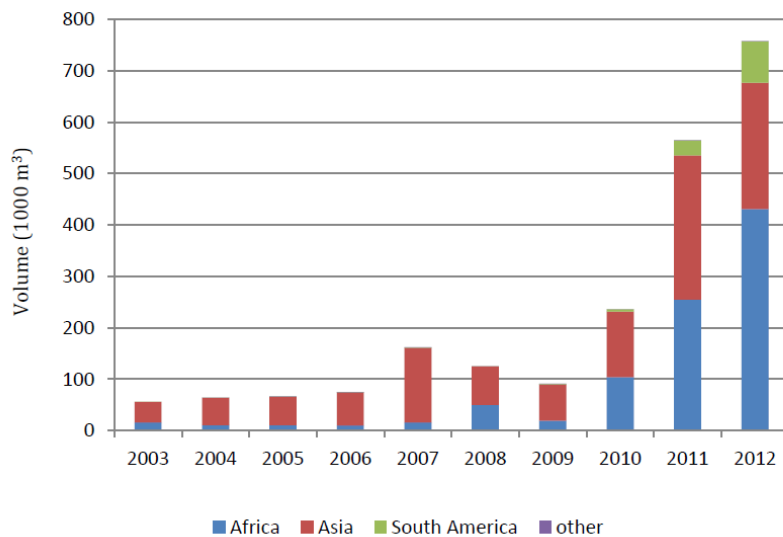
These unintended consequences of the human rights legal framework have real consequences for the Maya community. Prior to the legal victories, the Maya system existed outside of the western system of land as property. After the victory, although they have communal ownership rights rather than individual, the Maya community finds itself within the system of land as property.

#### *South – South Extraction*

The rosewood that has been extracted since 2010 was imported by China. From decades of meteoric economic growth, China has become the dominant importer in the global trade of tropical hardwoods, accounting for more than half of the world's tropical hardwood imports in 2012 (Wenbin and Xiufang, 2013). Wood products are significant industries in developing countries because they are labor and resource intensive and, as of 2006, China is the world's largest exporter of furniture (Carmody, 2011). Almost 50% of China's timber needs come from international sources to meet, in addition to international demand, a growing domestic demand for hardwood products. The increasing domestic demand is due to Chinese domestic economic stimulus policies that have had the effect of a construction and housing boom. Rosewood in particular, used in the manufacture of furniture, has seen a dramatic climb in import volume, averaging 180% annual growth since 2010. Combined with a change in tariff policy on raw

rosewood timber imports<sup>13</sup> and a reduction in stock from traditional sources, the increased demand for rosewood has increased the number of countries of origin, to include countries in Central and South America, for raw rosewood timber imports (see Figure 1) (Wenbin and Xiufang, 2013). Between 2010 and 2012 China reported importing more than 2.6 million board feet (6213 m<sup>3</sup>) of rosewood from the forests of southern Belize (CoP16 Prop. 62, 2013)<sup>14</sup>.

**Figure 1: Rosewood Imports Continent of Origin from 2003 to 2012** (Wenbin and Xiufang, 2013, pg. 5)



Rosewood is valued in China because of its historical and cultural significance dating to the 10<sup>th</sup> century. It was used by the emperor’s families in the Ming and Qing dynasties. The Chinese market divides the 33 officially recognized species of rosewood into two main categories based not on quality or rarity but rather cultural preference. The first category, or collectable class, can fetch from US \$354 to US \$4,717 per board foot (BF). The second

<sup>13</sup> This policy had placed nations that China imported rosewood from but did not share a border with, including Gabon and Madagascar, at a competitive disadvantage to nations China does share a border with, including Vietnam and Laos. After the policy was repealed in 2008, sources of rosewood outside of Southeast Asia became relatively more competitive.

<sup>14</sup> China recognizes over 30 species of rosewood, and there are at least two species growing in Belize, although *D. stvensonii* is the more common in Belize.

category, or ordinary class, is valued from US \$3.54 (Wenbin and Xiufang, 2013) to US \$118 per BF, which varies according to species and country of origin (*Dead Wood*, 2011).

Not only has the volume imported to China increased dramatically over the past few years, the price of rosewood across all species has as well. From 2005 to 2012, the market price of the collectible class of rosewood rose over 10,000%. Over the same period some ordinary class species had prices rise by as much as 1,500%. The increases in import volume and price for rosewood in China have been driven largely by domestic demand for rosewood furniture and decorations, which in turn derive from China's stimulus package that favored the real estate sector (Wenbin and Xiufang, 2013). Because of the increased domestic demand, the growth in the import of raw rosewood is in spite of the 'great recession', which had decreased China's rosewood exports "such that export volumes in 2012 were only 4% of the export volume in 2001" (Wenbin and Xiufang, 2013, pg. 13) with only the equivalent of 0.01% of imported rosewood logs being exported as furniture. Although international demand has slumped for rosewood furniture, Chinese domestic demand is expected to grow in the future (Wenbin and Xiufang, 2013).

Increasing the ease of market entry by new supplier countries, China's lack of environmental sustainability requirements provides no incentive to rosewood exporters to follow sustainable practices when extracting and exporting, demonstrating China's unwillingness to enforce international environmental norms (Wenbin and Xiufang, 2013). Figure 1 demonstrates that the commercial extraction in Belize, which started in 2010, coincides with the period of increased demand in China as well as when China began importing rosewood from South America (Central America was included in the category for South America).

*The Social Structure of Rosewood Extraction*

The inequality that exists between the developed nations in the center and the dependent nations in the periphery is recreated within the nations of the periphery because the socioeconomic and political structures within an economically dependent nation are shaped by its dependence (Dos Santos, 1970). In terms of the stratification of Belizean social structures, the Maya occupy the lowest position, which is reflected by the Maya community having the highest concentration of poverty in Belize – 41% of people in the Maya community live on less than US \$720 a year (Wainwright, 2008). Not only is the wood being extracted from Maya land against international law, Maya customary law, and the Maya land rights court decisions, the individuals themselves are doubly exploited in typical neocolonial fashion.

The rosewood is cut primarily by poor, young Maya men. The Maya were paid \$1.00 to \$2.50 per board foot of cut wood. Economically, the price they receive per board foot is minimal, signaling these men do not possess more valuable alternatives for their time. These men are not confused about the low price they are receiving for their labor; they lack a better option. Everyone above the Maya in the rosewood value chain is getting the labor for almost free. To extract the rosewood, these Maya men go into the jungle, often many miles, and cut the rosewood trees down with a chainsaw. They then shape each tree into square logs known as a flitch by shaving off all of the bark of the tree. This process wastes about an inch of the actual wood on each side. After shaping the log they then have to haul each flitch out of the jungle either by hand, using nothing but rope made from the bark of another tree, or sometimes with the help of a mule, a horse, or a bicycle. This is an arduous process as rosewood is extraordinarily dense and heavy, weighing as much as 64 pounds per cubic foot. It has to be hauled through dense forest to reach the road. Once at the roadside, the logger contacts the local non-Maya buyer to come pick up the log or logs. From there the buyer hauls the wood back to his lumber

yard where he fills a shipping container to sell to one of a few individuals or companies with an export license. The Maya men who extracted rosewood for commercial export were encouraged by both the local lumber buyer and the forestry officers to extract the wood. The Maya are the periphery of the periphery.

The collusion between governmental elites and the beneficiary of rosewood extraction is obvious from the familial nepotism displayed in the issuance of the export licenses and exemplifies the process of periphery elite collusion in extraction. Experts from the local conservation NGOs and Maya community leaders alike expressed concern that not only were these elites capable of such open familial favoritism but that it was at the behest of the Chinese that the Vega Company holds an export monopoly on rosewood. The Maya rosewood extractors then contacted on behalf of the neocolonial colluders who are responsible for the facilitation of the export of the valuable hardwood. Although as many as three export licenses had been granted by the government of Belize for the export of rosewood prior to the rosewood logging moratorium of 2012, it is common knowledge that the rosewood was sold to one company, the Vega Company. The Vega Company is owned by German Vega, brother to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Natural Resources Gasper Vega. It was Gasper Vega's Ministry of Natural Resources that was responsible for the issuance of export licenses. After paying the Maya \$1.00 to \$2.50 per board foot for the rosewood fitches, the Vega Company sells the wood to China for \$12.00 to \$15.00 per board foot. The exact price received by the exporter varies depending on the source of the information. On average the exporter receives 671% more than the Maya logger does on average. The de facto monopoly held by the Vega Company and the familial connection between the owner and the Deputy Prime Minister defines rosewood extraction in Toledo. "It is a sophisticated type of dominance relation which cuts across nations,

basing itself on a bridgehead which the center in the Center nation establishes in the center of the Periphery nation, for the joint benefit of both” (Galtung, 1971, pg. 81). It is important to note here that although the rosewood is being extracted for export to China, the Chinese business interests are nearly invisible in Belize. Rather than a Chinese company extracting the rosewood, the collusion of elites happens from afar. Simply put, the Chinese collude with Belizean elites for more than access to exploit the rosewood; the Belizean elites also carry out the exploitation on their behalf.

**Table 1: Price Received per Board Foot<sup>15</sup>**

	US Dollars	% Difference over Maya	% Difference over Exporter
Maya (Average)	<b>\$1.75</b>	-	-
Exporter (Average)	<b>\$13.50</b>	<b>671%</b>	-
Average for Sawn Rosewood	<b>\$25.97</b>	<b>1384%</b>	<b>92%</b>
US Lumber Yard	<b>\$70.00</b>	<b>3900%</b>	<b>419%</b>
Maya Rosewood Carvings	<b>\$42.67</b>	<b>2338%</b>	<b>216%</b>

Although the elites in Belize are better off than before the extraction of rosewood, to the detriment of the non-elites, they still receive less value for the wood than it is actually worth on the world market. The exporter receives 671% more money per board foot than the superexploited Maya laborer does on average for the extraction of rosewood. The average sawn lumber price for rosewood is 1384% more than the Maya receive and 92% more than the exporter receives. The price per board foot of Honduran rosewood from Belize at a US lumber yard retails for 3900% more than the Maya receive and 419% more than the exporter. This

<sup>15</sup> The Maya were paid between \$1.00 and \$2.50 per board foot. \$1.75 is an average. These numbers were based on interviews with Maya community leaders, conservation workers, and employees of the government. The exporter reportedly received from \$12.00 to \$15.00 per board foot although these numbers came only from an interview with a government employee and a newspaper article that had quoted the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries, and Sustainable Development. The average price for sawn rosewood, \$25.97, came from the application for the inclusion of Honduran rosewood to be included on CITES Appendix II. The US Dollars per board foot for the Maya rosewood carver came from one interview with a rosewood carver and since rosewood carvings are not sold by the board foot, it was an estimated price based on his sale of rosewood carvings and how much wood it takes to make a carving (Source: Author).

evidence demonstrates that it is still the elites in the center nations who benefit the most from the structure of neocolonial extraction, rather than the colluding elites in the periphery nation (Galtung, 1971). The final line in Table 1 demonstrates the value of rosewood if value is first added locally before being sold. Despite the fact that a rosewood carver does not sell it by the board foot, using an estimate, he receives 2338% more per board foot than the Maya extractor does and 216% more than the exporter. Although fetching the best price per board foot in Belize, the rosewood carver still yields less for his value added work than raw rosewood timber yields in the United States.

Jo Rowlands argues that “‘power over’ is wielded primarily by men over other men, by men over women, and by dominant social, political, economic, or cultural groups over those who are marginalized” (1995, pg. 101). The neocolonial extraction economy is a system where the elites, or dominant group, leverage their power over the marginalized to extract natural resources for their own benefit (Dos Santos, 1970) and the more valuable the desired resource, the more power is leveraged to extract it (Ludwig et al., 1993). Local buyers and forestry officers, on behalf of the Vega Company and Minister of Natural Resources, leveraged their ‘power over’ the Maya into extracting rosewood from Maya land. To superexploit the labor of these Maya men, the land rights court cases were twisted and used. They were encouraged to cut to take advantage of what they had gone to court for. According to multiple leaders within the Maya community, individual men within their community were approached by the forestry officers and businessmen saying,

“You have gone to court and have asserted that you have rights to these lands and the resources on them and you have the right to log and make some money from



the rosewood. Nobody can stop you. Isn't this what you fought for? Don't you have authority over these lands?"

The use of their 'power over' the Maya community by elite interests in rosewood extraction was acknowledged by people outside the community as well, "people (the Maya) were easily persuaded to cut rosewood." According to a few Maya leaders, when they tried to enforce their customary laws and the laws of Belize by stopping illegal extraction, confiscating the wood, and holding the loggers for questioning, the local forestry officers and the police undermined their authority. The police and department of forestry would go to the village, release the loggers and confiscate the wood. The rosewood was still exported, however the cutters and the village the wood came from received no compensation for the wood.

There were a few villages where Maya institutions of governance became actively involved in the management of rosewood extraction for export. One such community along the southern highway, led by a competent and strong-willed Alcalde, managed to control the amount of wood cut. She divided the trees equally among men in the community and ensured that the trees cut were the ones further back in the jungle rather than the easy to access ones near the village. She also ensured that the community itself made a profit to use in a community funded project and that they received top dollar, relatively speaking, at US. 2.50 per board foot. Finally, she was active in protecting the village's rosewood from being cut and stolen by outsiders. This village serves as an example of what the inclusion of the Maya into forest resource management can accomplish. This village's members' and this leader's behavior regarding rosewood extraction stands as an outlier and an example.

#### *Economic Extraction and Local Use*

The neocolonial political economy is one of resource extraction. The economy of extraction ensures the local population benefits little from their resources (Carmody, 2011).

Prior to the mass extraction of rosewood for the benefit of others, the Maya community enjoyed the use of rosewood for local purposes. The Maya have used and continue to use rosewood for corner posts in constructing their homes and farm buildings, for fences, for coals in cooking, and for carvings sold to tourists. According to the Maya, they value it for its ability to resist decay from the hot, humid, and wet climate as well from insects. A Maya rosewood carver valued the wood for the same reasons it is sought after by the foreign market, for its beautiful color, smell, and grain pattern. The problem with cutting the wood for export, according to the Maya and conservationists, is a lot of the rosewood that could have been used for these local subsistence purposes has been now been cut down, especially the mature trees near roads and villages. Trees near villages and roads were targeted first because of ease of transport out of the forest to the local buyer. These also would have been the trees held in reserve for future buildings and other local uses. Rosewood, as with many hardwoods in the tropics, takes an extremely long time to grow. With the depletion in the more easily accessible natural stock<sup>16</sup>, the Maya need to go further into the forest to find rosewood for their homes. If they are unable to find rosewood for their home construction, they will have to rely on a substitute timber material. According to the Maya community, those substitutes are either inferior, requiring structures to be rebuilt more often, or are just as hard to acquire as the now scarce rosewood. The short term cash increase from participating in the extraction of the rosewood by men in the Maya community is dwarfed by the loss of the resource for these local uses. A non-Maya conservationist captures it best, “even if the villagers demanded more money, they would be better off this year, maybe they could send another kid to school this year, but where will the money come from next year when the wood is gone?” In addition to the violation of the indigenous rights of the Maya, the political

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<sup>16</sup> The Belizean submission to CITES for Appendix II protection for rosewood provides an estimate of a 13% reduction in natural stock between January 2010 and March 2012 alone (2013).

economy of extraction has cost the Maya community a resource that has a long history of use by the community and that will take a long time to replace.

### **Conclusion: The New Structures of Dependence and Implications for the Efficacy of the ‘Boomerang’ Pattern**

“I suspect it is ‘power to’ that the term ‘empowerment’ refers to, and it is achieved by increasing one’s ability to resist and challenge ‘power over’” (Kelly, 1992 as cited in Rowlands, 1995, pg. 102). Htun and Weldon (2012) found, in their comprehensive global study on the changes in policy on violence against women by country, that international and regional treaties have the most influence on changes in domestic policies where strong domestic feminist movements are present and active. Domestic activists work closely with international organizations to increase pressure on their governments to enact domestic change. Keck and Sikkink (1998) articulate this phenomenon as the “boomerang” pattern. While international organizations apply pressure, domestic activists can leverage the international conventions and treaties to raise awareness in greater society regarding human rights and norms, providing a basis for legitimacy for the domestic movement. If domestic activists encounter a “blockage” by their government to their movement, using international treaties and conventions, they can leverage international pressure through powerful transnational alliances. Similar to the Maya of Belize, Arturo Escobar describes the need for international alliances in the case of displaced Afro-Colombians regarding palm oil cultivation by outsiders on their communally owned land. He argues that, “Many of the decisions that affect the black communities are made at the international level... This is why demands directed solely to the national government fall short”

(2008, pg. 265). This international pressure shames the government in question on the world stage for nonalignment with international norms.

The path to empowerment taken by the Maya movement can also be described as the boomerang pattern. When the government of Belize, both the executive/legislative body and the courts, failed to engage the Maya movement in the 1990s, an international avenue was sought for recourse through the IACHR. In direct response to the ruling of the IACHR in 2004, even though the commission has no sovereign authority in Belize, the domestic courts picked up the Maya land rights claim and ruled in their favor in both 2007 and 2010.

However, the rosewood trade with China may have lessened the efficacy of the boomerang pattern in Belize as evinced by the 2013 Appellate Court decision (Sosa, 2013)<sup>17</sup>. China, in its extractive trade relations in Africa, pursues a policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of its trade partners (Carmody, 2011). International shaming is supposed to isolate the offending nation's government, hurting its relations and standing within the international community. China's lack of enforcement of international norms in its trade relations bypasses the isolation intended for the offending nation, providing a viable trade partner that accepts the offending behavior. This may have the effect of undermining the boomerang pattern in countries that extract their resources for export to China.

The Appellate Court decision on the Maya land rights case is a reversal in the progress of conformity of Belizean policy to international human rights norms. It is no coincidence that this decision was handed down days before a lower court was to hear a claim by the Maya that the government had, in contempt of court, breached their duty to protect the rights of the Maya. This decision, releasing the government from its duty, destroyed the basis of the Maya claim of

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<sup>17</sup> This decision overturned the 2007 and 2010 court decisions regarding the government's duty to refrain from any action or activity on Maya land without the express permission of the Maya community and to provide equal protection of the rights of the Maya to collective ownership of their land under the Belizean Constitution.

contempt of court. It has had the broader effect of creating a crater in Belize's human rights policy conformity. As Belize and other economically dependent nations increase their trade with new middle income nations such as China, that do not seek to enforce international norms, the boomerang pattern may be undermined for domestic movements that rely on the leverage of international treaties and conventions. The implication for the Maya movement is that the impact their transnational allies have on domestic Belizean policy is reduced. The reduction in efficacy of international pressure on normalizing and standardizing Belizean human rights policy opens the way for the structures of dependence to continue or increase the exploitation of the Maya by elites from Belize and elsewhere.

Whether the boomerang effect is indeed weakening in the face of the new structures of dependence or the Appellate Court decision (2013) is an isolated setback, the Maya movement is presented with an obstacle. To overcome this obstacle, a few questions need answers: (1) How strong are domestic alliances of the Maya Movement? (2) Who else can the Maya partner with domestically? (3) What other international partnerships can the Maya seek for support, with both new and existing relationships? and (4) One Maya village implemented a management plan for the extraction of rosewood based on Maya self-governance practices, strong individual leadership of the Alcalde, and Maya knowledge of the forests and their future needs as a village for rosewood. How can this process be replicated across villages for all resources on Maya land?

Conservation organizations may provide an avenue of domestic and international partnership. The United Nation's report on the *State of the World's Indigenous Peoples* (2009) asserts indigenous and environmental conservation organizations make for a natural alliance, it also recognizes these alliances have yet to manifest. In Belize, although environmental conservation organizations are closely partnered with the government, there may be opportunity

for collaboration on mutually held goals such as the sustainable development of natural resources in Toledo. However, the environmental organizations need to approach the partnership as just that, a partnership with equal respect for knowledge other than their own in managing resources. Only through respect of Maya knowledge of their land, its biology and biological processes, and their community goals can this partnership be meaningful for the Maya movement.

Another possibility for domestic and international partnership is through the Ministry of Forestry, Fisheries, and Sustainable Development (MFFSD). Due to the politics of the land rights case, a direct partnership is very unlikely. However, the Maya community and MFFSD have at least one similar goal in preserving natural resources in Toledo. Without working directly together, the Maya community and MFFSD can work in parallel to achieve those similar goals. The first opportunity for this parallel partnership is the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) Appendix II<sup>18</sup> regulation. By petitioning CITES the boomerang pattern can be used to describe the efforts of the MFFSD in acquiring international partners to put pressure on the Belizean government to conserve rosewood in response to the

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<sup>18</sup> Honduran rosewood was added to the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) Appendix II during the 16<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Bangkok, Thailand on 16 March 2013 (Notification to the Parties, 2013). The species in the form of logs, sawn wood, veneer sheets, and plywood is subject to CITES Appendix II oversight. Honduran rosewood was listed in Appendix II for fear that without protection the commercial stock of the species will be completely wiped out by 2033 (CoP16 Prop. 62, pg. 4). CITES recognizes that plant and animal species are intrinsically valuable as well as having increasing economic value. The convention seeks to balance the protection of economically valuable yet ecologically scarce species by providing national governments the support of the international community for the protection of listed species. The convention is divided into three appendices. When an Appendix II species is to be exported, documentation from a scientific authority (such as the University of Belize) is required stating that the “export of the species will not be detrimental to the survival of that species” (Convention Text). There also needs to be documentation from the management authority of the state ensuring the species was acquired “in contravention of the laws of that state for the protection of flora and fauna” (Convention Text). Additionally, the species will need documentation that it will be shipped in a way to minimize the risk of injury or damage. CITES requires the complicity of the state of origin of the listed species in order for it to effectively protect the listed species from overexploitation. Elements within the government of Belize, specifically the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries, and Sustainable Development, requested the listing of rosewood on CITES.

failure of domestic policies.<sup>19</sup> The MFFSD Minister's effort to conserve rosewood runs parallel to a portion of the Maya land rights movement attempting to conserve resources on Maya land in Toledo. The Maya movement can use CITES and the international pressure it provides in addition to the international human rights treaties and conventions, both domestically and internationally, to increase the efficacy of the boomerang pattern for the Maya movement.

Additionally, the Maya can petition the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ). The Maya are currently planning to petition this court to overturn the decision by the Appellate Court, to return to the rulings from 2007 and 2010. The CCJ is the highest ranking court in Belize and although it is outside of Belize like the IACHR, unlike the IACHR the CCJ decisions are more than merely aspirational; the decisions from the CCJ have the force of law in Belize (The Caribbean Court of Justice, 2014). As an institution that occupies a unique position that is both external to Belize (and therefore Belizean elites) and yet able to rule with the force of law, the CCJ may provide favorable recourse for the Maya, similar to the decisions from 2007 and 2010. Petitioning the CCJ to fix the crater in Belizean domestic human rights law for the Maya community is a necessary next step for the Maya movement to ensure continued legal legitimacy within Belize. However, even if the Maya receive a favorable decision from the CCJ, the decision is likely to prove insufficient to end resource extraction from Maya land on its own.

There is evidence that resource preservation can also be achieved with the partnership between an external organization and an indigenous population. This can be achieved as long as the external organization is committed and all members of the indigenous community directly benefit (Zimmerman et al., 2000) and those using the resources are given adequate decision

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<sup>19</sup> In 2012 the MFFSD announced all rosewood extraction for export to be illegal indefinitely. However, this moratorium failed to end rosewood extraction. Although there was an injunction against the government for the extraction of resources from Maya land, it does not prevent the Maya from extracting those resources. 2012 moratorium was to end all rosewood extraction, whether on Maya land or not, no matter who was cutting it.

making power to sustainably manage their resources (Drijver, 1991). One village did create a management plan, as discussed above, based on the knowledge and goals of the members of the village. Finding partners to help facilitate the Maya replicating this model across all villages is an avenue to protect their resources from the bottom up, to compliment the top down approaches discussed above.

Finally, finishing what was started with the *Maya Atlas* (1997) clearly identifying, recording, and demarcating the boundaries of all the land used and occupied by the Maya of Toledo. This would facilitate the titling process (if the opportunity for titling arose) as well as facilitate the generation of resource management plans. This information would be useful not only for the land rights legal defense but for current and prospective international and domestic partners in protecting and managing the resources of the Maya.

The new structures of dependency challenge the gains made by the Maya community in achieving the recognition and protection of their rights in Belize. The extraction of rosewood exemplifies these structures, showing how Chinese elite interests, from afar, leverage Belizean elites to exploit the Maya and their resources, eroding the efficacy of the boomerang effect. However, awareness of this erosion is the first step in overcoming it.



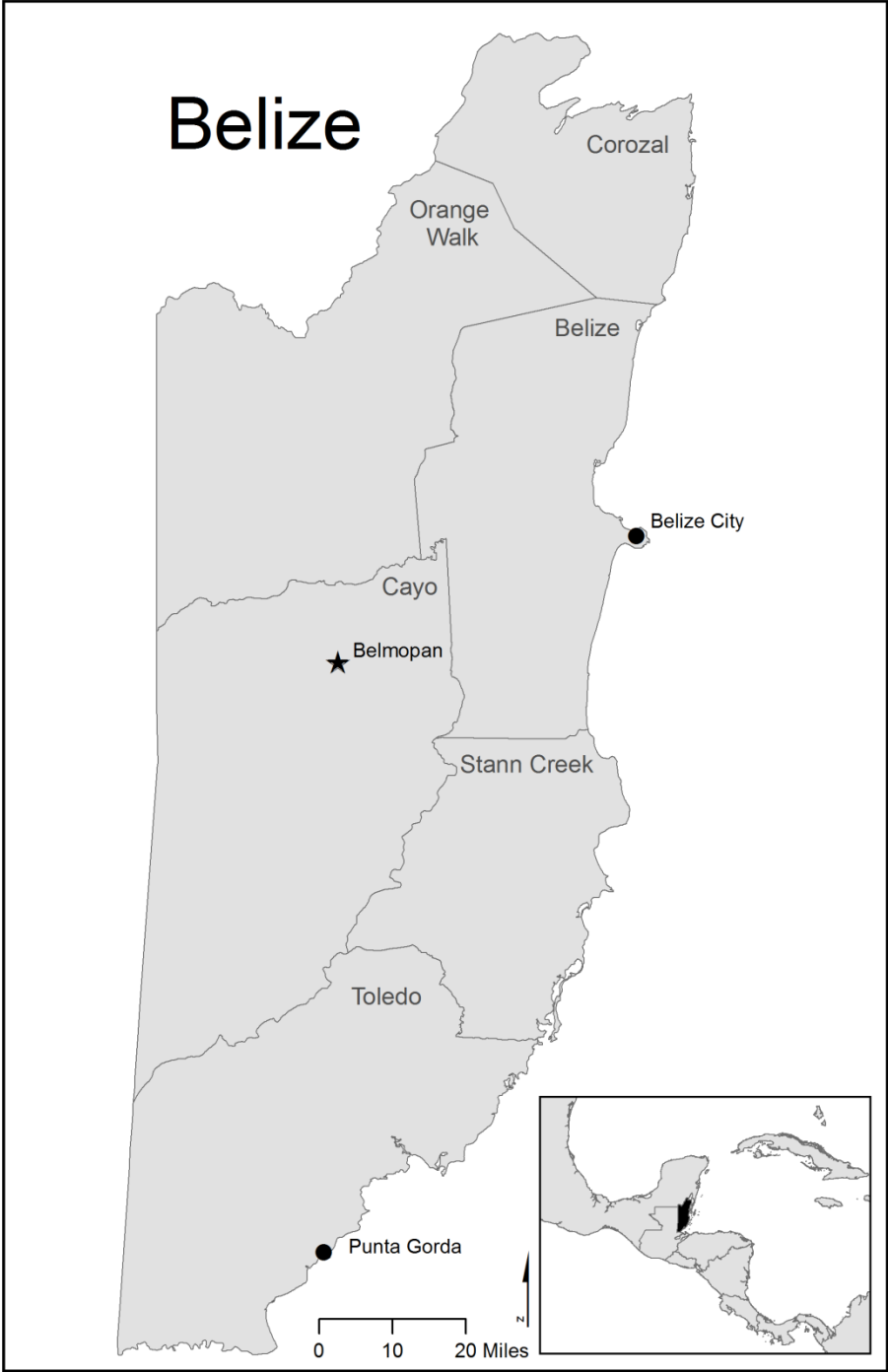
## Appendix

**Table 2: Semi-Structured Elite Interview Guide**

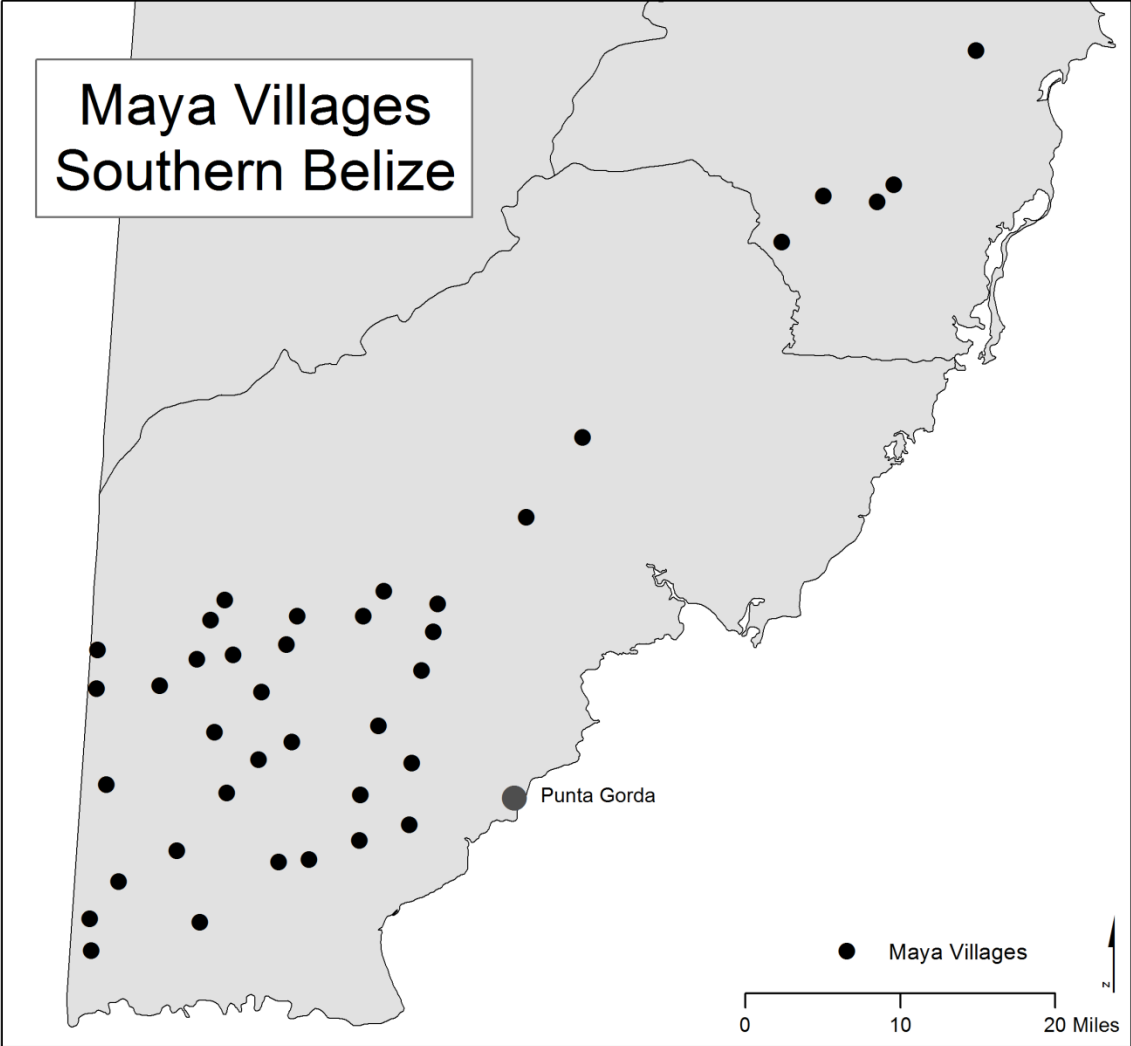
(Source: Author)

Domains	Questions
<b>Define why there is an issue with rosewood</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is rosewood and why is it important?</li> <li>2. Can you describe for me the current issues with rosewood? <i>Prompt with environmental, economic, and social inquiry. How do we know?</i></li> <li>3. Can you walk me through what rosewood is used for locally?</li> <li>4. Can you help me to understand how rosewood is logged and exported?</li> <li>5. What makes rosewood so valuable and how could that value be captured locally by processing locally? What prevents this from happening?</li> <li>6. Is rosewood a relatively recent issue and what role has it played historically? <i>Colonization, post independence, Maya land struggle?</i></li> </ol>
<b>Define where this is happening (Land Rights)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Who owns the rosewood?</li> <li>8. Who owns the land on which the rosewood grows?</li> <li>9. Who should benefit from the sale of rosewood if it is to be sold?</li> <li>10. How could the government partner with the Maya in sustainable harvesting of rosewood to the benefit of both parties? Why has this not been proposed?</li> <li>11. Are some areas easier to protect than others?</li> </ol>
<b>Define who is involved</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12. Who is responsible for the issues with rosewood that you mentioned? <i>Which groups are perpetuating the issues and how do we know?</i></li> <li>13. Who are the supporters of the current policies and who are against the policies? Why?</li> <li>14. Who bears the weight of current policies? <i>Income loss, enforcing compliance, opportunity loss, complications in other parts of society?</i></li> <li>15. Who loses and who wins by complying or disregarding current policies?</li> </ol>
<b>Define what are the current policies and how are they failing</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16. What are the current government policies on rosewood?</li> <li>17. What do you think of the current policies? <i>Moratorium, regulation, taxation, corruption, sale of fitches?</i></li> <li>18. Do you see the policies as being beneficial and/or effective?</li> <li>19. What and who does the government consider important when making policy on rosewood? Are markets competitive for rosewood and how have rosewood policies effected the price of rosewood?</li> </ol>
<b>Define how the issue(s) can be solved</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20. What would you propose to solve the rosewood issue? <i>Current Ideas, historic ideas, new ideas, bolster current policies? What are the barriers/facilitators to these ideas?</i></li> </ol>
<b>Define how support can be built for alternatives</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>21. How can support be built for your ideas? Who would support them? Who would be against them? Why?</li> </ol>
<b>Questions?</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>22. Anything else I should know that I have not asked?</li> <li>23. How was this?</li> <li>24. Are you willing to meet again if need be?</li> </ol>

**Map 1: Map of the Districts of Belize**  
(Source: Author)



**Map 2: Map of Maya Village Locations in Southern Belize**  
(Source: Author)



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