THE ENVIRONMENT AS A SPACE FOR POWER-RELATED DISPUTES

Offshore oil exploration in New Zealand: A clash between corporate interests, governmental agenda and indigenous peoples' rights

By

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Declaration form

The work I have submitted is my own effort. I certify that all the material in the Dissertation which is not my own work has been identified and acknowledged. No materials are included for which a degree has been previously conferred upon me.

Signed: Marta Moreno Ibáñez   Date: 22 May 2013

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Abstract

As new technologies are developed, the operations of extractive industries are increasingly affecting indigenous peoples' lands and natural resources. Thus, the environment has become an essential element in conflicts involving companies, governments and indigenous peoples. The main aim of this dissertation is to study, mainly through discourse analysis, how these different actors construct a particular concept of the environment to promote their interests. In concrete, the study focuses on the company Petrobras, the Government of New Zealand and the Māori people. The research is divided into two main sections. The first part consists of the analysis of the different concepts of environment elaborated by the actors, and these concepts are related to their particular interests. The second part analyses the specific case of Petrobras' offshore oil exploration in the Raukumara Basin, an operation that encountered strong opposition from Māori communities and environmental groups. From the analysis, two main conclusions are made. First, each actor shapes the concept of environment for its own purposes, and they all use the Science knowledge discourse, whose credibility is recognised worldwide. The Māori knowledge system is mainly used by the Māori themselves to promote their right to self-determination, and sometimes by the government in an attempt to establish a positive relationship with Māori. Two main themes were found throughout all discourses, which are the consideration of the environment as both part of each actor's identity and a resource for economic growth. All actors consider nature as an object which they can use at their will. The second main conclusion is that the environment has become a relevant space for power-related disputes. In the particular case of New Zealand, the conflict between the government and Māori is related to the long-lasting dispute between the country's sovereign rights and the right of Māori to self-determination.

Key words: environment, extractive industry, indigenous peoples, knowledge system, Māori, nature, New Zealand, Petrobras, political ecology, self-determination, sustainable development.

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1/ Introduction

1.1 Contextualisation

The paradox of the increasing number of legal instruments covering the rights of indigenous peoples alongside the growing marginalisation of most indigenous peoples requires a deeper analysis of the power regimes involved in neoliberalism reform and intensified capital-intensive resource extraction (Sawyer & Gomez, 2012b: 6). In concrete, dispossession processes deserve an especial attention since development and capitalism are intensely affecting land tenure and management worldwide (Nightingale, 2013). The operations of extractive industries are particularly affecting indigenous peoples' territories. As a result of technological developments, offshore oil exploration and extraction are becoming more and more common worldwide. Consequently, oil companies are progressively expanding their operations to the ocean, threatening indigenous peoples' sea-related livelihoods.

In this context, the environment has become an essential element in disputes involving transnational corporations, governments and indigenous peoples. Thus, the environment is playing an increasing role in power relations between stakeholders. According to Giddens (1979: 149), all power relations are two-way relations of autonomy and dependence, regardless of the existence of an unbalanced distribution of resources. In New Zealand, the government's economic agenda, which includes the promotion of the extractive industry in its territory, clashes with the interests of Māori, the country's indigenous peoples. While being a threat to their livelihoods, oil-related activities have also turned out to be a chance for Māori to discredit the government and claim their right to self-determination. This is so because the indigenous peoples' right to their ancestral land and natural resources have been recognised by the international community. In 2011, the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, James Anaya (2011: 12-16), expressed its concern about the fact that the Government of New Zealand had failed to consider rights over oil resources as the basis of redress packages in the Treaty settlement process. He also noted that the New Zealand law did not comply with international standards regarding indigenous peoples´ right to their traditional land and resources. As for the country's recognition of indigenous peoples'

rights, it is important to note that New Zealand has not ratified the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention 169 (ILO, 2012). The country rejected the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; however, it finally endorsed it in 2010 (NZ Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade, 2010).

1.2 Research purpose

The general aim of this dissertation is to analyse how the concept of environment is shaped by different actors so as to adapt it to their particular corporate, governmental and indigenous interests. In concrete, the dissertation is focused on the specific case of oil exploration by the oil company Petrobras in New Zealand, which was contested by Māori communities. The two main research questions are:

1. *How is the concept of environment constructed by Petrobras, the Government of New Zealand and Māori, and with what aim?*
   I argue that each actor elaborates a specific discourse on the environment in order to pursue his own interests. Rhetoric and thematic patterns throughout all discourses are of special interest.

2. *How is the 'environment' conjured to protect the actors' diverging interests in the specific case of Petrobras' oil exploration operations in New Zealand?*
   I argue that each actor makes use of its specific discourse on the environment to protect its particular interests.

These research questions are relevant for the human rights field as the environment has become a new space for claiming and contesting indigenous peoples' right to their ancestral lands and natural resources, and ultimately, their right to self-determination.

1.2 Dissertation structure

The dissertation starts with the 'analytical framework' section, which includes a literature review of political ecology, politics of knowledge and the link between

collective identity and environment. This is followed by a 'methodology' section, which describes the method that is used and how it is applied to answer the research questions. Then, the research results are explained in the 'findings' section, which is divided into two parts. The first one, which is related to the first research question, elaborates on the findings concerning the deconstruction of the concept of environment by different actors. I argue that each actor shapes the concept of environment according to their interests. The second part, which concerns the second research question, analyses how, in a particular case, the stakeholders evoke and use the concept of environment to promote their particular interests. I show how the environment has become a new space for power-related disputes; concretely the long-lasting conflict between the Government of New Zealand and Māori concerning the latter's right to self-determination. The results are summarised in the 'conclusion' section, which is followed by a 'recommendations' section. The 'bibliography' section contains a list of the reference material. Finally, the 'appendices' section includes additional relevant material.

2/ Analytical Framework

2.1 Political Ecology

Political ecology provides an adequate framework to answer the research questions. According to Blaikie and Brookfield (1987; in Bryant, 1992: 13):

> The phrase 'political ecology' combines the concerns of ecology and a broadly defined political economy. Together this encompasses the constantly shifting dialectic between society and land-based resources, and also within classes and groups within society itself.

Ecological issues are considered to be essentially social and political problems; therefore, they require the analysis of intricate economic, social and political relations (Neumann, 2009: 228 - 229). Among the various areas of research that have emerged within the field of political ecology, two of them are of particular interest for the dissertation purposes. One of them is concerned about how environmental problems are perceived and defined by different actors, and these narratives are analysed using discursive approaches (Peet & Watts, 2004: 13-14). Another area of political ecology research is the analysis of how environmental issues can lead to the emergence of social movements that link people across race, class and nationality (Nightingale, 2013).

Although the political ecology scholarship has mainly studied resistance in the South, environmental struggles are also present in peripheral locations in the North (Mackenzie & Dalby, 2003: 310). In a sense, indigenous peoples' territories in the North can be considered peripheral location. Indigenous communities are increasingly being involved in 'struggles that surround the meanings, control over and access to nature'. While they are considered to possess an inherent knowledge of nature that must be preserved, their land use practices are seen as backward by countries and development agencies, which are interested in promoting large scale projects (Nightingale, 2013).

2.2 Politics of Knowledge

One of the key subjects studied by political ecology is how different actors mobilise and contest knowledge about nature for political purposes (Nightingale, 2013). This is of especial importance, as some knowledges are more valued than others. The prestige of certain knowledge depends on who endorses it, or depending on what it serves for (Agrawal, 1995: 423).

2.2.1 The construction of knowledge

2.2.1.1 Systems of knowledge

Most political ecologists, while recognizing that a material world exists, affirm that our knowledge of the world is situated and mediated (Neumann, 2009: 229). Knowledge is 'a construction of a group's perceived reality which the group members use to guide behavior toward each other and the world around them'(Ericksen & Woodley, 2005: 89). A system of knowledge is a collection of propositions adhered to that are regularly used to claim truth (Feyerabend, 1987; in Reid et al., 2006: 11).

Among all knowledge systems, science and traditional ecological knowledge systems have received wide attention within the social sciences scholarship. The Encyclopaedia Britannica (2013) defines science as 'any system of knowledge that is concerned with the physical world and its phenomena and that entails unbiased observations and systematic experimentation', and that intends to find general truths and fundamental laws. However, science's claims of objectivity and universal nature laws have been questioned by several authors. One such author is Cronon (1996a: 51), who states that, although Western tradition considers 'nature' as a universal and objective reality, their vision of nature is influenced by western values and ethics. Haraway (1988) also challenges the assumptions of objectivity in science. She considers that rational knowledge emerges from 'situated knowledges', and defends the partiality of all observations, arguing that they are located and embodied. Haraway suggests that science should recognize this partiality and admit that the professed objectivity of science is simply not possible. Cronon and Haraway's questioning of the alleged universality and objectivity of science is of great relevance. Since knowledge is partial,

all knowledge systems are equally valid (Ericksen & Woodley, 2005: 89). Nevertheless, the truth is that science knowledge has become the dominant knowledge at a global and national level. As a consequence, the science knowledge system is widely evoked in different discourses to protect and support one's interests.

In spite of the dominant position of science knowledge in the current world, traditional knowledge plays an important role in specific locations. Traditional ecological knowledge has been defined as 'cumulative body of knowledge, practice and beliefs, evolving by adaptive processes and handed down through generations by cultural transmission' (Berkes, 1999: 8). It is firmly rooted in the past, and, although not necessarily, it may be indigenous. Traditional and local knowledge is often relational, in the sense that human attributes are ascribed to elements of the environment (Ericksen & Woodley, 2005: 90). In most indigenous cultures, if not all, the environment plays an essential role in creation myths and traditional narratives. As a result, indigenous peoples are often considered to live in harmony with nature. Indigenous knowledge is unique to a specific society or culture, and it is embedded in community practices, relationships and institutions. It constitutes the source for local decision-making in activities such as natural resource management and agriculture. Indigenous knowledge is fundamentally tacit, and cannot be easily codified (Woytek et al., 1998: 1).

The international community and the states have been increasingly interested in conducting studies about indigenous knowledge, especially in the development field. Traditional ecologic knowledge, with its holistic approach, has been considered as a complement to conventional science when dealing with complex environmental issues (Agrawal, 1995: 415). In concrete, the use of traditional ecological knowledge as taxonomic, spatial, temporal and cultural frames of reference has been highlighted (Tsuji & Ho, 2002: 347), and in a report about the role of indigenous peoples in biodiversity conservation, the World Bank (Sobrevila, 2008), stressed that they 'are carriers of ancestral knowledge and wisdom about this biodiversity'. However, indigenous technical knowledge on the environment is not always right, and, in several cases, it has been recently developed (Peet & Watts, 2004: 18).

There is an on-going controversy regarding the appropriateness of the division made between different knowledges. Despite seeming so dissimilar, science and traditional

knowledge systems do not differ as much as literature has maintained (Tsuji & Ho, 2002: 346). For clarification purposes, it is important to highlight that science knowledge is closely connected to western knowledge, and indigenous knowledge is a traditional knowledge.

Agrawal (1995: 418-427) defends that western and indigenous knowledge have been in close contact since the fifteenth century, therefore it is not justified to consider both knowledges independent and static. He argues that neither indigenous knowledge nor western knowledge is homogenous but we can find significant divergences within each, and that these presumed differing knowledges have several elements in common. Agrawal affirms that the main supposed differences between indigenous knowledge and western knowledge are epistemological and methodological, substantive, and contextual. First, while western knowledge is considered open, objective, analytical and systematic, indigenous knowledge is seen as closed, non-systematic and failing to comply with standards of objectivity and rigorous analysis. Second, western knowledge presumably focuses on obtaining an abstract representation of the world and keeps its distances from the local context, whereas indigenous knowledge seems to focus on activities related to people's livelihoods and, therefore, includes comprehensive information about such local elements as agriculture. Finally, while modern knowledge is allegedly detached from the daily lives of people, traditional knowledge is considered to be in perfect harmony with the lives of local people. These presumed differences, Argawal asserts, are untenable. Nightingale (2013) also rejects the possibility to establish a divide between scientific and indigenous knowledge, arguing that individuals can use different types of knowledges both deliberately and unconsciously.

2.2.1.2 Scales of knowledge

The construction of knowledge is also influenced by the selection of scales of knowledge. In the ecology field, 'scale' is defined as 'the spatial, temporal, quantitative, or analytical dimensions used to measure and study any phenomenon' (Gibson et al., 2000: 218). Ahlborg and Nightingale (2012) define 'scales of knowledge' as:

> …the spatial and temporal extent and character of knowledge held by
> individuals or collectives, public or scientific', and they include

'observational scale […] as well as the scale at which actors frame and present their knowledge.

All actors present multi-scalar knowledge, but they may express scale-dependent interests, and just mobilise this specific scale of knowledge (*Ibid.*). The idea of scales of knowledge is relevant when comparing and contrasting indigenous and western knowledge systems. Rather than assuming that indigenous and western knowledges are completely different, it is more adequate to acknowledge the existence of various domains and types of knowledges, which are based on differing epistemologies and logics. The objectives and interests behind a knowledge, as well as how it has been produced, determine how the knowledge is classified (Agrawal, 1995: 433). Given that the science knowledge system is widely considered more legitimate than other types of knowledge, individuals and organisations often support their arguments claiming that they are using a scientific approach to the issue at stake.

In the context of environmental assessments, the agenda for decision making often influences the choice of scale and the choice of knowledge, which at the same time influences which interests are mainly reflected in the results. Therefore, stakeholders can deliberately choose a scale or knowledge with the aim to adapt the outcomes of the decision making process to their interests. These interests can be, among others, the empowerment or disempowerment of certain groups (Berkes et al., 2006: 326-328). This is so because the politics of scale in environmental assessment not only determine how problems are described, but also who is recognized as a stakeholder (Lebel, 2006).

2.2.2 Discourses about 'nature'

Mackenzie & Dalby (2003: 309) have stressed the importance of ontological categories in conflicts that involve 'environmental' positioning. When environment-related conflicts arise, different actors elaborate particular conceptions of nature to defend their positions. This is a demonstration of the fact that what we call 'nature' is not an objective reality, but a human construction. On one hand, the ideas that we associate to the concept of nature are shaped by our culture and our socio-historical background (Cronon, 1996a: 25, 35). On the other hand, each actor shapes the concept of nature to adapt it to his particular interests. Taking into account the vast number of cultures,

social backgrounds and differing interests, it is evident that nature is a 'contested terrain' (*Ibid.*, 1996a: 51).

In conflicts concerning natural resources, the concept of environment is shaped differently by discourses emanating from actors with different political agendas. Nowadays, conflicts involving businesses, local communities and the government are widespread. Cases of local resistance against corporate extractive intrusion, which are of particular interest for the purpose of this dissertation, have received the attention of some authors.

Mackenzie (1998) analysed the discourses that were developed around the concepts of 'development' and 'sustainability' in the context of a dispute about a superquarry project in the isle of Harris, Scotland. She argued that the company elaborated a modernist and colonising discourse of sustainable development, which was contested by the member of the local community, who developed an alternative discourse of sustainability. The company's discourse was focused on progress and economic growth, positing employment against the environment, and it claimed possessing scientific knowledge about the area based on Western science and the assertions of nonlocal experts. The local people challenged the epistemology underlying the corporation´s argument, questioning the equating of the 'disembedding' of local identity with sustainability. They framed their own discourse in terms of community identity, supporting their arguments with resilient historical symbols of collective identity.

Another interesting study of local opposition to companies' operations was conducted by Mackenzie and Dalby (2003), who analysed two cases of local resistance to extractive corporate intrusion, concluding that community was reimagined and its boundaries rearticulated to serve certain political interests. Resistance of local groups focused on land claims and on drawing on symbols profoundly embedded in the past to reframe political debate.

A relevant element present in some discourses about nature is the idea of 'wilderness'. Throughout most part of history, the term 'wilderness' has had negative connotations. The need to categorise uncontrolled nature emerged when human started controlling it, and it was a way of establishing a division between the civilized and the wild. Since

modernity, wilderness became something valuable as the growing industrialisation and urbanisation was damaging nature (Warren, 2009: 254). Godfrey-Smith (2008: 310-312) has identified what he calls 'cathedral', 'laboratory', 'silo' and 'gymnasium' arguments to justify the conservation of nature. Wilderness is considered as a place for spiritual revival –cathedral–, an area to study biological systems –laboratory–, a genetic diversity store –sil'– and an area for recreational activities –gymnasium–.

Cronon (1996b: 79-80) has criticised the idea of wilderness, arguing that is cultural construction whose duality entails an unreal division between nature and humans. Other critics have asserted that conceptions of human-free wilderness are misanthropic as they exclude people from nature, considering them an inconvenient nuisance. In effect, most archetypal wilderness places are those uninhabited because their native inhabitants were forcibly removed, and indigenous peoples that have long inhabited wilderness areas are seen as 'savages'. As a consequence of its alleged misanthropy, the 'people-free wilderness' idea is accused of being created by a European colonialist elite that threatens indigenous peoples' livelihoods (Warren, 2009: 256-257). In spite of this, the idea of wilderness has been evoked by such diverse actors as governments, environmental groups and indigenous peoples. For governments, emphasising the wilderness of the country's landscapes is a way of attracting potential tourists, which has a positive impact on the country's economy. As for the environmental groups, the idea of an untouched nature is essential for the group survival as most of the quasi-religious values of environmentalists are grounded on the idea of wilderness (Cronon, 1996b: 80). Particularly in 'new world' countries, the protection of wilderness has become the main goal of environmental movements (Warren, 2009: 255). For indigenous peoples, wilderness is most of the times connected to their collective identity; however, sometimes they stress the idea of wilderness to promote tourism in their areas.

2.3 Collective identity and environment

The construction of a collective identity, based on a shared culture, has played an important role in indigenous peoples' struggles. The political dynamics of conflict are entrenched in the practices of community formation and the reproduction of national

and local political identities, therefore the symbols used in those conflicts may be part of the politics of other resistances (Dalby & Mackenzie, 1997: 101-102). For instance, In Cape Breton, the Mi'kmaq struggle against a company's operations was connected the issue of sovereignty as it was related to other multiple land claims of First Nations within Canada (Mackenzie & Dalby, 2003: 328). In struggles concerning the exploitation of their natural resources, indigenous peoples elaborate a discourse on the environment that stresses their distinct collective identity, thus relating the particular conflict to other, more general, struggles.

'Culture' is a controversial concept, and there is not a universally accepted definition of this term. Cohen's (1993: 195-199) work '*Culture as Identity: An Anthropologist's View'* gives an enlightening explanation of culture and how it is constructed. According to Cohen, culture is the product of interaction, which implies that people play an active role in shaping it. Culture implies difference in the sense that, rather than integrating individuals, it aggregates them. The vehicle of culture is the symbol, a pragmatic tool which acquires meaning through social processes, and symbols need to be imprecise so that a large number of individuals can adapt them to their wills. Given that ethnic identity is expressed by means of symbols, and ethnicity is a politicized cultural identity, it is evident that symbols play an important role in the politics of identity. The political expression of cultural identity is characterised by, on the one hand, apparently fixed attributes of ethnic identity at the collective level, and, on the other hand, an on-going reconstruction of ethnicity at the individual level.

Cohen (1985: 199) argues that the politicisation of cultural identity occurs when individuals realise that society's ignorance of their culture impacts negatively on them, their culture is marginalised, and they feel powerless in relation to the ones that are marginalising their culture. For indigenous peoples, who are often victims of exclusion and marginalisation from mainstream society, the pollicisation of their cultural identity has become common. Many indigenous peoples have recovered and reformulated traditional values and customs, transforming them in revitalized worldviews which are presented as indigenous and authentic (Niezen, 2003: 12). These recuperated traditions constitute the point of departure for political agency (Sawyer & Gomez, 2012a: 17), which is necessary for indigenous peoples to protect their rights as transnational corporations increasingly encroach on their territories with the approval of

governments. Thus, when confronted with an external threat, communities selectively recall the past to create collective identity (Mackenzie, 1998, Mackenzie & Dalby, 2003).

In environmental siting disputes, local communities are significantly shaped by opposition to the controversial project (Dalby & Mackenzie, 1997: 101). It is essential for these local communities to create a shared sense of collective identity. According to Cohen (1985: 21), the sense of community derives from 'the symbolic repertoire of a community', which conceals the differences that exist within the community and presents an appearance of similarity. In the case of indigenous peoples, one of the symbols that convey a sense of shared identity is their spiritual and deep connection with the environment. This may be so because, in addition to showing the world a sense of united community, indigenous peoples need to gain peoples' support. To obtain individuals' support, indigenous peoples have to articulate their traditions so that they fulfil the public's expectations of their wisdom, spirituality and respect for the environment (Niezen, 2003: 186).

Indigenous peoples' collective identity, like any identity, has shaped and modified throughout history. An important element that influences how this collective identity is shaped is the challenges that they have to face due to the globalisation phenomenon, which has increased the number of threats to indigenous peoples' rights and aspirations. At the same time, globalisation has enabled them to express their concerns in different international forums and obtain the sympathy and support of the international community and society. As we have seen, indigenous peoples need to satisfy the expectations of society to gain their support. Consequently, indigenous nationalism often embraces those fundamental values that are most appreciated by the nonindigenous people, and they have to articulate their traditions to fulfil the public's expectations (Niezen, 2003: 187). In order to raise worldwide awareness about their situation, and gain peoples' support, some indigenous communities have profited from the emergence of a global concern for the environment to articulate their claims in an environmentally-friendly way. On the one hand, they try to gain peoples' support through politics of shame. Indigenous peoples' success in their shame campaigns to protect their interests against governmental policies is mainly due to the fact that the public tends to see them as living in balance with nature (Niezen, 2003: 179). On the

other hand, indigenous peoples and environmental movements have partnered to protect their shared interests. For instance, in Mackenzie and Dalby's (2003: 329) study, Mi'kmaq activists in Canada linked their claim to land and sovereignty to the environmentalists' concern for nature, joining forces with them in their struggle against the quarry.

There are two problems related to indigenous peoples' effort to show their strong relationship with the environment. First, despite this façade of peaceful and environmentally-friendly community, the truth is that a strong sense of indigenous identity can also support unsustainable and unfair practices on traditional lands (Sawyer & Gomez, 2012a: 17). Second, this construction of indigenous collective identity as in harmony with the environment has a negative impact on indigenous interests. Indigenous peoples' deep attachment to ancestral lands emerges from histories of struggle rather than spiritual powers inhabiting the natural world. Throughout colonial and postcolonial history, indigenous peoples have endured dire experiences and suffering in the context of confrontations over governance (Sawyer & Gomez, 2012a: 15 - 16). The problem of emphasising the deep spiritual connection between indigenous peoples and nature is that:

> 'The belief that land is part of an indigenous essence […] makes this history of struggle invisible and erases the impact of indigenous historical agency on the processes of the present'(*Ibid.,* 2012a: 16).

3/ Methodology

The method selected for the research process is discursive analysis. In political ecology research, discursive analysis is relevant insofar as it serves to unveil how environmental issues are discursively constructed (Neumann, 2009: 229). These discursive constructions of the environment are then analysed in relation to the actors' particular interests so as to understand how these constructions contribute to achieving their objectives. In this dissertation, the relevant actors are Petrobras, the Government of New Zealand and two Māori tribes. Petrobras is an integrated energy company which is engaged in, among other things, oil and gas exploration and production. Māori are the indigenous peoples of New Zealand, and, the tribes Te Whānau-ā-Apanui and Ngāti Porou have been selected because they were affected by Petrobras' operations.

The research design is divided into two parts, which are the deconstruction of the concept of environment and the discourse analysis of the specific case. The first part, based on the idea that nature is a human construction (Cronon, 1996a: 25), analyses how Petrobras, The Government of New Zealand and Māori construct the concept of environment, and how these constructions serve to promote their particular interests. The data has been obtained from the actors' websites. It is important to note that Māori are organised in *rūnanga*, which can be defined as a tribal council, assembly or board (Māori Dictionary, 2013). Therefore, the *rūnanga* does not necessarily represent all rightful members of the tribe, but only those who want and are allowed to join the specific *rūnanga*. In the case of Petrobras and Māori, the data has been systematically collected through a specific sheet developed for this analysis. Both sheets (see 'Appendices') are divided into four sections, which are 'general overview', 'content', 'key terms associated with the environment' and 'observations'. The first section has been developed to collect information about the actor's knowledge system and its asserted relationship with the environment. The 'content' section includes two tables, one for the environment in general and other for oceans in particular. The tables serve to register whether the actor refer to the environment and the ocean as subjects or objects. The environment and ocean are considered subjects when actors recognise their gorgeousness ('wilderness') and the fact that they can be dangerous ('hazardousness'). They are considered objects when actors affirm that they can profit from their

exploitation ('resource') and that, through their actions, they can have a negative impact on them ('fragility'). The 'key terms' section also includes two tables, one for the environment and other for oceans. These tables serve to register key Science and Māori knowledge systems terms. The 'observations' section covers all other relevant information, which is not necessarily connected to the environment. Regarding Māori, in addition to discourse analysis, the method of documentary research has been used to collect information on traditional Māori culture. In the case of the Government of New Zealand, data collection was a challenge. A great number of ministries and governmental agencies carry out activities related to the environment, and, due to time and space restrictions, it was not possible to analyse all their websites. The websites selected for the dissertation were those of the Ministry for the Environment and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment. No specific sheet was developed to collect the data but key ideas and sentences were registered in a separate sheet. Consequently, the analysis of the government's discourse has been limited. More time is required to conduct a thorough discourse analysis of all relevant governmental websites.

The second part of the research design section looks at how Petrobras, the Government of New Zealand and Māori use the particular concept of the environment in their discourses regarding the controversy caused by Petrobras' oil exploration operations, which affected Māori's natural resources. This part is grounded on the idea that researchers can examine how the concept of environment is politically used in particular disputes by analysing how specific understandings of nature are embodied in political discourse (Dalby & Mackenzie, 1997: 99). First, through the method of documentary research, the general context of New Zealand's ocean governance and oil operation is explained. This is followed by an explanation of the specific case to be analysed. Then, a discourse analysis is conducted concerning the statements made by the Government of New Zealand, Te Whānau-ā-Apanui and Ngāti Porou. No public statement by Petrobras has been found, so the discourse analysis is focused on its 2010 Sustainability Report, which mentions a complaint by a Māori community.

As far as ethical considerations are concerned, one of the challenges in political ecology research is to be aware of how group self-identification is culturally constructed without forgetting the validity of local practices, historical narratives and meanings (Neumann,

2009: 233). Given that Māori identity is deeply connected to the environment, and this dissertation analyses how Māori construct the concept of environment to pursue their interests, it is inevitable to question whether this alleged deep connection to nature is genuine or is just used to create a sense of collective identity. While being critical, it is important to remember the validity of local narratives about the environment.

4/ Findings

4.1. Deconstruction of the concept of environment

In this section, I argue that the concept of environment is shaped differently by diverse actors for their own interests. Based on the idea of nature as a contested terrain (Cronon, 1996a: 51), I show how each actor constructs its own idea of the environment, and I compare these different constructions to find similarities and differences. Taking into account the context in which every actor operates, I analyse how these constructions serve to pursue specific interests with the aim of showing that each actor turns the concept of environment into, as Haraway (1988: 591 - 592) states, 'a resource for appropriation'. Although the analysis focuses on the environment as a whole, special attention is paid to oceans.

4.1.1 Systems of knowledge: Science vs. Māori

In order to develop a specific construction of the environment, every actor needs to base such construction on a system of knowledge. These systems provide specific ways of understanding nature, as well as specific terms which convey particular meanings associated to the environment. Nowadays, the Science knowledge system is so widespread that it comes as no surprise that all actors shape their discourses in scientific terms. Such terms as 'sustainability' and 'sustainable development', 'environmental security' and 'management' permeate the actors' discourses, although with different emphasis. The Māori knowledge system, on the other side, is an indigenous knowledge system that is mainly used by the Māori themselves and, sometimes, by the government of New Zealand.

4.1.1.1 Science knowledge system

From the discourse analysis, it is clear that all the actors tend to formulate their arguments using scientific terms, thus claiming that they are based on scientific knowledge. Due to its superiority over other types of knowledge, the Science knowledge system is used to add credibility to the actors' arguments as well as to justify

actions that would normally be rejected by the general public. A thorough analysis of the actors' discourses reveals several contradictions and incoherence between their assertions and their actual actions.

Companies' discourses are a good example of how the Science knowledge discourse is used to protect specific interests. When faced with local resistance against their projects, companies have been found to resort to 'science', which allegedly provides them with universal data, to support their operations (Mackenzie & Dalby, 2003: 317). Petrobras faces strong opposition at local and global levels due to its environmentally-unfriendly operations, such as oil and gas exploration and production. To defend its economic interests from criticism by the general public, and local opposition in particular, the company resorts to a scientific discourse. In its website, Petrobras presents itself as a company which is working for the advancement of science, mainly concerning environmental protection, rather than as a company whose aim is to obtain the maximum profit by conducting operations that are inherently hazardous to the environment. In a video, it tries to justify the pertinence of its business-related operations, arguing that they will increase our knowledge about those 'major questions for humanity' (Petrobras, 2011a). The company insists on the idea that they use innovative scientific solutions to preserve the environment, and stresses the fact that it encounters many 'challenges' (*Ibid.*), principally in relation environmental preservation. Instead of using the word 'risk', which would be more appropriate given the nature of their operations, Petrobras repeatedly uses the word 'challenge'. For instance, the company states that it is 'going increasingly deep and overcoming the challenge of producing oil in offshore fields' (Petrobras, 2013a). However, deep-water drilling is an inherently hazardous business (Graham & Reilly, 2011: 127), and, therefore, the real challenge is not offshore drilling itself but to conduct those types of operation without putting the environment at risk.

Companies are not the only actors whose activities face opposition but governments also face opposition when developing their laws and policies. The environment can be considered a public good, which means that the state is expected to provide it. Unfortunately for states, environmental management potentially conflicts with economic development, and, as a consequence, the states' role as steward of the environment may conflict with its function to promote economic growth (Walker, 1989:

32 - 35). The Government of New Zealand resorts to scientific language in an attempt to silence criticism concerning its economic and environmental policies. Among the National Science Challenges identified by the government are the increase in primary sector production while maintaining land and water quality, and understanding how marine resources can be exploited within environmental constraints (Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, 2013). Thus, by identifying natural resources exploitation as a scientific challenge, a threat to the environment is turned into an opportunity for scientific advancement. This 'scientific challenge' formulation of environment exploitation is just a strategy to cover the fact that natural resources exploitation, which can be detrimental to the environment, is a key area of the government's Business Growth Agenda (New Zealand Government, 2012). In this agenda, the government affirms its intention to 'apply the latest scientific knowledge to our resource use challenges' (*Ibid.:* 5). Given that different ministries are responsible for different operations concerning natural resources, the use of a scientific language is not limited to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's website, but it is also used in other ministries' websites, such as the one of the Ministry for the Environment.

The fact that Petrobras and the Government of New Zealand intentionally use the scientific knowledge discourse to pursue their interests seems logical, since the science knowledge system is dominant in our globalised society. However, the use of a scientific discourse by Māori may be more striking as they have their own indigenous knowledge system. From the analysis, it is clear that Māori use a science discourse at their will with the aim of increasing the credibility of their claims. In a world dominated by the Western knowledge system, Māori arguments need to be reformulated in western-knowledge terms, which include scientific concepts. In their websites, both Te Whānau-ā-Apanui and Ngāti Porou tribes elaborate part of their arguments using science knowledge terms, as we will see.

Some key scientific concepts, such as 'sustainability' and 'management', are used by all actors in their websites. These terms have become common in national and international forums that deal with environmental concerns, and they convey the idea of balance between nature exploitation and environmental conservation. The 'sustainable development' discourse is part of the process by which scientific knowledge is

articulated to serve capital accumulation. Through this discourse, nature acquires value as capital, and management and planning become mediators between individuals and environment (Escobar, 1996: 340).

Companies' operations are often incompatible with the preservation of nature. With the aim of furthering the corporation's interests, they use the 'sustainable development' discourse to make economic development and environment conservation compatible (Mackenzie & Dalby, 2003: 313-317). While Petrobras repeatedly refers to and mentions 'sustainability' in its website, its operations are inherently unsustainable. The company stresses its 'environmental responsibility', and affirms that it strives to achieve 'ecoefficiency' as well as 'reduce' its 'impact on the environment', including minimizing its impact on the oceans (Petrobras, 2011a). The company affirms its commitment to environmental preservation through compliance of international standards and support to several projects concerning environmental conservation. First, the company stresses that it follows the principles of the United Nations' Global Compact, that it has repeatedly been listed on the Dow Jones Sustainability Index, and that that most of their units worldwide are ISO 14001, which is the International Organisation for Standardisation's framework for environmental management systems (Petrobras, 2011b). The company annually releases a sustainability report, and has become member of other sustainable initiatives such as the International Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Association, Bonsucro, and the Roundtable on Sustainable Biofuels (First Peoples Worldwide, 2012: 23-24), and it has also joined the Global Reporting Initiative (Petrobras, 2011c). Second, its corporate videos, Petrobras (2011a) affirms that it is supporting various environmental projects such as the project Tamar and a biodiversity maps project. In its biomaps website, Petrobras (n.d.*a*) asks and answers the question that people often pose: 'Is it actually possible to explore and produce oil with respect for the environment? We have proved it is.' Nevertheless, it is hard to believe those claims given that some of the company's operations have resulted in oil spills. For instance, the company was recently fined with US$5million as one of its subsidiaries had caused an oil spill off Sao Paulo coast (AFP, 2013). In 2010, Petrobras' operations led to 57 oil leaks which amounted to 4,201 barrels of oil and derivatives, failing to comply with its 'maximum admissible limit' of 3,895 barrels (Reuters, 2011). These are just a few examples of damages caused to the environment

by Petrobras, but they prove that the company's allegations that its operations are respectful to the environment are dubious.

Like companies, governments also want to make economic growth and environment preservation compatible. However, contrary to companies, whose final aim is to increase their income, governments seek economic growth as means to gain their citizen's support and vote. Thus, they needs to satisfy environmentalists' expectations of respect for the environment, on one hand, and the citizens' expectations of economic development, on the other hand. This is why, to make these two expectations compatible, the government of New Zealand resorts to the concept of 'sustainable development' in its websites and governmental documents. The government emphasises that the exploitation of the country's natural resources, through adequate management and planning, can contribute to the economic growth of the country (New Zealand Government, 2012). According to the website of the Ministry for the Environment (2011), 'The sustainable development and wise use of these resources is important for a healthy economy'.

In the case of Māori, the idea of sustainability is strongly connected to the idea of indigenous people living in harmony with nature, and therefore, to the construction of their sense of community. Emphasising their ability to manage their own resources strengthens their collective identity, which is necessary to promote their self-determination. In their websites, Te Whānau-ā-Apanui considers the environment as something that can be managed, and Ngāti Porou uses the concepts of management and environmental sustainability. It is interesting to note that Te Whānau-ā-Apanui (n.d.*a*) uses the term 'environmental security', which is a way for the tribe to attract the attention of the international community. 'Environmental security' is a controversial concept and has been interpreted in different ways. The term was coined in the World Commission on Environment and Development's landmark report *'Our Common Future'* in 1987. Since then, environmental issues have been on the international agenda (Barnett, 2009: 553-554). The tribe argues that *mana* is relevant to ensure the preservation of nature for future generations, thus ensuring environmental security (Te Whānau-ā-Apanui, n.d.*a*). Thus, it connects *mana,* a Māori term, with environmental security, a Western term. This is an example of how different systems of knowledge are combined by actors to achieve their interests.

Within the sustainability discourse, it is interesting to note that all actors acknowledge the need to preserve the environment in the long term. For Petrobras, environmental conservation is needed for the sake of the Earth's future, a claim closely linked to growing environmental concerns. The New Zealand Government (2012: 5) asserts the need to preserve the environment for New Zealanders and future generations. Likewise, the Minister for the Environment (2013: 1) stresses the need to adequately manage the country's natural resources so as to meet the New Zealander's 'needs now and well into the future'. For both Māori tribes, this need to protect the environment is connected to their future generations (Te Whānau-ā-Apanui, n.d. *a*; Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Porou, 2013a), and this could be linked to their cultural survival.

4.1.1.2 Māori knowledge system

Māori often articulate their arguments and claims through Māori terms, and therefore, before analysing the concept of environment by Te Whānau-ā-Apanui and Ngāti Porou, it is essential to understand the fundamental elements and concepts of Māori culture.

Māori people refer to New Zealand as 'Aotearoa', which literally means 'the land of the long white cloud'. Māori and *Pākehā* –the non-Māori– have different terms to refer to geographical locations. Whereas *Pākehā* refer to the New Zealand largest islands as North Island and South Island, Māori know them as *Te-Ika-a-Māui* –the fish of Māui– and *Te Wai Pounamu* –the waters of greenstone– (Ka'ai & Higgins, 2004: 19-20). These differences in naming the landscape reflect the importance of nature for Māori, in contrast with the Western view which transforms nature in geography science's object of study.

Since language is central to the Māori worldview (Ka'ai & Higgins, 2004: 13), it is essential to understand the concepts expressed through *te reo Māori* –the Māori language– in order to understand the *Māoritanga* –Māori culture–. Māori have a holistic and cyclic worldview, in which every human being is connected to every being. *Whakapapa* –genealogical table– is a term that refers not only to the relationships between groups of people and the connections between them, but also to the connections between human beings and their universe. Thus, it interconnects *te taha*

kikokiko –physical aspects– and *te taha wairua* –spiritual aspects– (Ka'ai & Higgins, 2004: 13). For Māori, attachments to ancestral lands are strong symbols for determining tribal identity as they provide a sense of generational continuity (Panelli & Tipa, 2007: 456). Creation narratives are an essential part of Māori worldview as they convey norms that shape the way individuals live their lives. There is no creation myth that all Māori share but several groups of creation myths. In general, these myths reflect the relevance of genealogy and kinship relations for Māori, and they convey the idea that the physical world comes from the spiritual world, and it is deeply entrenched in it.

Māori social structure is grounded on *whakapapa*, and the main social groupings are *iwi* –tribe–, *hapu* –sub-tribe– and *whanau* –extended family– (Bourassa & Strong, 2002: 230). The *atua*, which are 'ancestors of on-going influence with power over particular domains', play an important role in the creation myths (Reilly, 2004). The *atua* are omnipresent in the Māori natural world. Among them, we find *Papa-tūā-nuku* in the land and *Tangaroa* in the sea and marine beings. Since the *atua* are part of nature, and *tangata Māori* –Māori people– inhabit the natural world, they are connected. The *atua* are the source of *mana* –authority, power, prestige– (Ka'ai & Higgins, 2004: 13-14), therefore land is a significant part of Māori *mana* (Williams, 2004: 50). *Mana moana* refers to sovereignty in the sea, and, for the pre-contact Māori, power over sea was considered an extension of control over land (De Alessi, 2012: 393).

Of importance for the dissertation, the word *ao tūroa* means nature. Māori use the word *whenua* to refer to land and placenta. Local people are *tangata whenua,* and the right to be responsible for land or natural resources is *mana whenua*. Māori are linked to land through *whakapapa* as they inherit *take* –resource rights– from their ancestors, and they are connected to certain places due to the presence of their ancestors (Williams, 2004: 50-52). Contrary to the European conception of land as a commodity and the idea of land ownership, the Māori traditional view is that the ethic involved in relation to land and water resources is *kaitiakitanga. Kaitiakitanga* refers to stewardship and guardianship over nature, and those who practise it are called *kaitiaki*. The protection and preservation of nature is essential as the *mauri* –life force– of natural resources must never be adversely impacted. The logic of *kaitiakitanga* involves a generation's obligation to leave their descendants with, at a minimum, as good a supply of natural resources as they had inherited from their ancestors. Natural resources do not only

include land, but also to water and other resources provided by nature (Williams, 2004: 50-52). As the Waitangi Tribunal (2011: 284) report asserts:

> "When Māori first encountered europeans, this world view came up against one in which land and resources could be bought, sold, divided, exploited, or preserved in a pristine state. Eventually […] the european view of the environment and how it should be managed came to prevail".

Although many Māori still maintain a traditional view of land and natural resources, some younger and urban Māori appreciate ancestral land in terms of its economic value (Williams, 2004: 59). Several authors argue that the arrival of Europeans has had an impact on Māori identity and social relationships. Frame (1999; in De Alessi, 2012: 390) argues that New Zealand may be experiencing a 'tragedy of the commodities', whereby privatisation state assets, including natural resources and public land, have forced Māori to claim these assets in terms of ownership. De Alessi (2012) argues that Māori have had to resort to a property-rights language in order to obtain legal access to fish, which has enabled capitalism to penetrate into their fishing practices. He affirms that the fisheries settlement has had an impact on the traditional Māori identity and social relations, compelling them to participate in the capital-asset management regime. Therefore, the current Māori may not have the same concept of their environment as their ancestors.

Despite the Science knowledge system being prominent in all the actors' discourses, the Māori knowledge system is used by the Government of New Zealand and Māori. The main strength of this knowledge system is that it is a powerful tool to formulate Māori claims in terms of human rights, recognised by the international community. Current international law includes a set of norms and procedures to challenge the legacy of the history of dispossession suffered by indigenous peoples (Anaya, 2000: 184), and recognises indigenous peoples' right to preserve and develop their culture and identity (Eide, 2006: 209). In order to have their indigenous rights recognised, indigenous peoples must show traditional occupation of and deep attachment to land and natural resources. Thus, indigenous discourse is 'a powerful source of self-determination aspirations' (Rata, 2011: 373).

Both Te Whānau-ā-Apanui and Ngāti Porou use Māori knowledge terms in their websites, which shows that, as most indigenous peoples, they have an interest in self-determination. Their discourse is mainly based on the Māori concept *whakapapa*, and they specifically stress their deep and ancestral connection to their land. Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Porou (2013b) affirms that it 'is committed to the restoration of Ngati Porou mana motuhake'[1]. Therefore, the tribe uses a stronger Māori discourse when referring to the environment than Te Whānau-ā-Apanui, stating their *kaitiakitanga* over *takutai moana* (Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Porou, 2013c) as well as their *mana moana* (*Ibid.,* 2013d).

At this point of the analysis, it is essential to dwell on the concrete right claims made by both tribes. In their websites, none of them seems to make strong assertions about the right to ocean but mainly to land. Several reasons could explain this emphasis over land as compared to ocean. First of all, it is obvious that it is easier to establish a connection to land, on which they have been living since a long time, than to the ocean, which they mainly use for fishing. Second, their right to land was recognised by Treaty of Waitangi, signed in 1840, which is considered the 'founding document' of New Zealand (Hayward, 2004: 151). The Treaty of Waitangi was drafted in English and translated to Māori, which led to disputes regarding how ownership and sovereignty were distributed between the Crown, which is the New Zealand Government, and Māori. The Treaty guaranteed Māori's 'full exclusive and undisturbed possession of their Lands and Estates Forests Fisheries and other properties'. However, the Māori version referred to possession as *tino rangatiratanga*[2], a word whose actual meaning is similar to sovereignty (Hayward, 2004: 156-158). Since the treaty explicitly mentions lands, it seems that Māori seem to have more legitimacy when defending their land rights than when defending their ocean rights. Third, their claims to land can serve to attract the international community's support to their struggles. Indigenous land rights, grounded on precepts such as cultural integrity and self-determination, are present in both conventional and customary international law (Anaya, 2004: 47). The UN Human Rights Committee has acknowledged that lands and resources are essential to indigenous peoples' survival, and, consequently, to indigenous self-determination

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[1] According to the Māori dictionary, *mana motuhake* 'separate identity, autonomy - mana through self-determination and control over one's own destiny'.
Māori dictionary. Available at: http://www.maoridictionary.co.nz
[2] According to the Māori dictionary, *tino rangatiratanga* means 'self-determination'.
Māori dictionary. Available at: http://www.maoridictionary.co.nz

(Anaya, 2004: 35). While Ngāti Porou explicitly states that it has an agenda for achieving self-determination, Te Whānau-ā-Apanui does not seem to show such an interest. This may explain why Ngāti Porou explicitly includes Māori living both outside and inside its tribal lands, whereas Te Whānau-ā-Apanui makes no such statement.

The Māori knowledge system is used by the Government of New Zealand with the aim of gaining acceptance among Māori. As the Ministry for the Environment (2013a: 7) states, nearly all Treaty of Waitangi settlements include some natural resource component, which shows that environmental-related issues are entrenched in Māori's rights claims. To deal with these claims, the government needs to recognise and understand the Māori knowledge system. From the analysis of the websites of the Ministry for the Environment and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, it seems that the Māori knowledge system is barely used in texts aimed at the general public, and only the Ministry for the Environment (n.d.) refers to the Māori knowledge system in publications addressed to Māori people. Therefore, it appears that, rather than genuinely acknowledging the value of the Māori knowledge system, the government only intends to gain Māori's acceptance.

4.1.2 Discursive themes

From an analysis of the actors' discourses on the environment, two main themes are identified. These themes are the idea of nature as a resource that can be sustainably exploited and consideration of the environment as part of the actors' identities.

4.1.2.1 Environment as a resource

All actors emphasise the idea that nature is an important source of economic growth, although they do so for different reasons. The discourses of capital and science are linked and articulated to reinvent the concept of nature, which acquires value in the eyes of capital accumulation (Escobar, 1996: 340-341). Companies need to persuade potential shareholders to invest in the company, and to convince clients that the company's services are among the best of the market. In its website, Petrobras stresses

the idea that nature is a resource for the production, distribution and trade of energy. In particular, the ocean is considered an important resource due to the oil reserves which they contain (Petrobras, 2013a).

Governments are also interested in exploiting nature to promote economic growth. In order to attract potential investors the government of New Zealand strives to show that the country is rich in unexploited natural resources. According to the Business Growth Agenda, the government 'will encourage [...] use of the country's diverse energy and mineral resources' (New Zealand Government, 2012: 19). The government also needs to persuade its citizens that exploiting the environment benefits them. The promise of employment creation is included in the 'sustainable development' discourse (Mackenzie & Dalby, 2003: 313-317), and this is how the Government of Zealand defends its economic policies. The government asserts that 'Our resource endowment […] underpins most of our economic activity and thousands of jobs for New Zealanders' (*Ibid.*: 5). In addition to that, the New Zealand Tourism (n.d.) website describes the country as '100% pure' with the aim of promoting its tourism industry. The website depicts the country's nature as unique, conveying a sense of wilderness. Nevertheless, since human presence is excluded from wilderness, there is no possibility of finding a sustainable human place in nature (Cronon, 1996b: 81). From the analysis, it is evident that the concept of 'sustainable development' is evoked by the government of New Zealand in an attempt to elaborate a discourse on the environment as a resource that is coherent with environmental protection.

Given the importance of economy in the globalised world, the promotion of economic development is also essential for the empowerment of Māori. To maintain their power, the tribal elites need to prove the rest of the tribe's members that they are making a good use of their resources. In its websites, Te Whānau-ā-Apanui (n.d.*b*) expresses its commitment to the tribe's economic development. Ngāti Porou affirms that nature is one of the resources from which Te Rūnanga O Ngāti Porou (2013d) wants to 'achieve an optimum return'. Furthermore, the tribe's website contains a section dedicated to tourism (*Ibid.,* 2013a), which is focused on 'developing a sustainable supply and demand for Ngāti Porou tourism within the rohe, in particular positioning Hikurangi

maunga as a key destination for international and domestic visitors'[3], and, Mount Hikurangi is considered as part of the tribe's 'Intellectual Property Rights'. It is interesting to note how Māori words – *rohe, maunga* – are integrated into a wider western discourse promoting tourism. The tribe's involvement in the tourism industry is further strengthened by the fact that they offer 'tour packages'. In short, there is a contradiction between the Māori tribes' traditional spiritual connection with nature and their use of nature as a resource.

It is important to highlight that the websites of Te Whānau-ā-Apanui and Ngāti Porou are managed by Te Rūnanga o te Whānau and Te Rūnanga Ngāti Porou, which is are the tribal authorities. The discourse about the environment that has been analysed corresponds to Māori with power and influence, not to those who are the most vulnerable. Despite the fact that the tribal authority of Te Whānau-ā-Apanui emphasizes its achievements in relation to economic and social growth since its conception, it is likely that non-powerful Māori do not enjoy such economic growth. It is tribal elites who are benefiting the most from New Zealand's public assets privatisation as closed-door negotiations between them and the government are common in Treaty settlements[4] (Rata, 2011: 365).

4.1.2.2 Environment as identity

In their websites, all actors, implicitly or explicitly, convey the idea that the environment is part of their identity. The scale of identity is different for each actor, with the company building a transnational identity, the Government of New Zealand building a national identity, and Māori building an indigenous identity. The assertion that nature is part of each actor's identity serves different purposes.

In the case of companies, it seems that identification of nature is the strongest expression of a company's intention to make environmental conservation and capital accumulation compatible in order to achieve its interests (Mackenzie & Dalby, 2003:

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[33] According to the Māori Dictionary, *rohe* means 'boundary, district, region, territory, area, border (of land)'.
Māori Dictionary. Available at: http://www.maoridictionary.co.nz/
[4] A Treaty settlement is an agreement between the Government of New Zealand and a Māori claimant group whose aim is to settle the group's historical claims agains the government.
Office of Treaty Settlements. Available at: http://www.ots.govt.nz/

313-317). Since Petrobras (2013b) is the seventh largest energy company in the world, and operates in 25 countries, the need to make its for-profit objectives compatible with environmental conservation is particularly high. In its website, Petrobras intends to convey the idea that the protection of and caring for the environment is part of the company's identity, and, consequently, deeply entrenched in its operations. Its Code of Ethics explicitly expresses a commitment to operate 'with social and environmental responsibility, contributing to environmental sustainable development' (Petrobras, n.d.*b*: 11). In its relationship with the environment, Petrobras stresses the idea of respect, preservation, dialogue and scientific knowledge. First, the company asserts that its respect for the environment has contributed to the corporation's growth. Second, it commits to the preservation of the environment, affirming the importance of producing energy without disregarding the Earth's future. Third, it stresses the need to engage in 'dialogue with nature', asserting that a project 'must reach consensual solutions with nature'. Fourth, the company emphasises that its workforce is passionate about the environment, which still holds many secrets from humanity, and that the research that the company is conducting will improve our knowledge about nature in general and oceans in particular (Petrobras, 2011a). This continuous insistence on the company's positive relationship with nature conveys the idea that nature is an important aspect of Petrobras' operations, and, therefore, part of the company's identity.

In relation to the Government of New Zealand, the environment is used as a source of national identity. This is so because New Zealand needs a common factor to link the two peoples that constitute the country, which are Māori and non- Māori. While governments normally resort to national history to create and consolidate national identity, New Zealand is a young country, and therefore, its history does not suffice to give a sense of national identity. Moreover, the relationship between Māori and non-Māori has often been conflictive. In such situation, the environment has turned out to be a common factor to consolidate a national identity. According to the Minister for the Environment (2013: 1), 'New Zealand's environment plays a unique role […] as being central to our sense of identity and well-being'. The website of the Ministry for the Environment (2011) explains that 'Being an island nation, the health of our ocean, our land and our people are inextricably linked'.

As far as Māori are concerned, showing that they have a deep and strong connection with the environment is crucial for two main reasons. First, in order to have their rights as indigenous peoples recognised, particularly the rights to land and natural resources, they need to prove that they have traditionally inhabited the lands, and that they have a deep attachment to their ancestral territories. Second, their spiritual connection to nature constitutes as a symbol of their collective identity. Ultimately, demonstrating that Māori are the legitimate indigenous peoples of New Zealand, and showing that they constitute a homogeneous community with a shared identity, is essential to claim the right to self-determination. Both Te Whānau-ā-Apanui and Ngāti Porou refer to the concept of *whakapapa* to express this deep and genealogical relationship with nature. In its website, Te Whānau-ā-Apanui (n.d.*c*) affirms that its founding ancestor received land from its relatives and through conquest, and his descendants took care of the land. Also, one of its tribal sayings establishes the connection between them and their land. The tribe asserts that they are 'living in balance and harmony with Te Ao Turoa' (*Ibid.*, n.d.*a*), the Māori word for nature.

Ngāti Porou appears to establish a deeper connection with the environment than Te Whānau-ā-Apanui. Te Runanga O Ngāti Porou (2013d) considers its members as 'People of this Land', who 'have been here since the beginning of time […] since Maui fished up Te Ika a Maui'. The tribe considers that several natural landscapes and features are strongly linked to their history, and are, consequently, part of their tribal territory. The deepness of Ngāti Porou's link to the environment is reinforced with its assertion that the 'distinct and solitary nature of our natural environment has shaped the personality and psyche of Ngati Porou'. It is interesting to note that Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Porou makes explicit that their *iwi*[5] members include not only *ahi ka*, the people who live in the tribal lands, but also *kei te whenua*, the people who live outside the tribal lands. Therefore, *kei te whenua* also enjoy a deep connection with the environment in spite of living far from it, and purportedly benefit from the tribe's economic achievements. Given the Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Porou's agenda for self-determination, it is reasonable that they want to include all the legitimate members of the tribe in Te Rūnanga.

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[5] According to the Māori Dictionary, *iwi* means 'extended kinship group, tribe, nation, people, nationality, race - often refers to a large group of people descended from a common ancestor'.
Māori Dictionary. Available at: http://www.maoridictionary.co.nz/

4.1.3 Objectification of the environment

From the analysis, it is clear that all actors consider nature as an object, a resource from which they can obtain benefit and which needs to be preserved. Their claims are based, totally or partly, on the Science knowledge system, which is part of the wider Western knowledge system. Western knowledge objectifies nature as a thing, turning it 'into a resource for appropriation' (Haraway, 1988: 591 - 592). The actors reduce nature to discursive production, using the concept of environment at their will to promote their particular interests. Although in some cases the actors seem to consider the environment as a subject, this is just a rhetoric tool to give a more humane impression of the actor's activities. For instance, Petrobras claims that is engaged in 'dialogue with nature', and it declares in a video, when referring to the Amazon, that 'you start to believe you are only a very small piece of that universe' (Petrobras, 2011a). However, it is clear from the company's activities that no dialogue with nature takes place.

The Governement of New Zealand also stresses the value of the country's nature. According to the Ministry for the Environment (2013), the country's ocean 'supports a wide diversity of plants, animals and food resources'. Rather than a real consideration of the environment as a subject, this assertion constitutes a way of stressing the importance of the country's nature for its economy.

As for Māori, there is a contradiction between Ngāti Porou's statement that the distinctiveness of their environment has an influence on the personality of the tribe's members, and the fact that the tribe wants to transform their environment into a 'key destination', which would entail the undermining of its solitary nature.

4.2 Environment: a new space for power disputes

In this section, I analyse a specific case to show how Petrobras, the Government of New Zealand and Māori evoke the concept of environment so as to pursue their particular interests. First, I describe the general context surrounding the issue, which includes ocean governance and oil drilling in New Zealand. Then, I make a short description of

the case to give the reader a general idea of the issue. Finally, I analyse how the environment is evoked by each actor to promote his interests.

4.2.1 Ocean governance in New Zealand

Given that New Zealand has jurisdiction over an ocean area which is more than 20 times the country's land area, and the equivalent of 1.2 percent of the earth's surface (McGinnis, 2012: 19), it is clear that marine resources are a fundamental part of New Zealand's economy. Surprisingly, the marine governance framework in New Zealand fails to follow international best practice in relation to marine resource development. The country approaches marine resource exploitation on a sector-by-sector basis, and it has a fractured framework of marine-related laws and regulations. As a result, New Zealand's marine governance framework is extremely fragmented. In addition to that, the country fails to comply with international standards concerning marine resource management and biodiversity protection (*Ibid.,* 2012: 17-18). However, the country presents itself at '100% pure' and prides itself on having '15,000 kilometres of beautiful and varied coastline' (Tourism New Zealand, n.d.).

In the case of the Exclusive Economic Zone,[6] the lack of marine governance is particularly evident. International conventions and treaties grant every state jurisdiction management of its Exclusive Economic Zone, and this includes the obligation to protect the marine environment (McGinnis, 2012: 18). In New Zealand, given that oil and gas have been found in several offshore locations (Ministry for the Environment, 2005: 2), it comes as no surprise that the lack of an adequate framework for marine governance has led to numerous disputes. Especially since, until recently, New Zealand legislation did not cover the management of environmental effects of several activities in the Exclusive Economic Zone, such as petroleum exploration (Ministry for the Environment, n.d.). In September 2012 the government enacted the Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf (Environmental Effects) Act, which is expected to come into force by the end of June 2013. This act provides for the management of the

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[6] According to the Ministry for the Environment, 'New Zealand's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) is the area of sea and seabed that extends from 12 nautical miles off our coast to 200 nautical miles'. Available at: http://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/oceans/offshore-options-jun05/html/page3.html (accessed14.05.13).

environmental effects which result from activities in the country's oceans. According to the Ministry for the Environment (2011), the objective of the act is to protect New Zealand's oceans 'from the potential environmental risks of activities like petroleum exploration'.

As far as Māori rights are concerned, there has been a long debate over the right of Māori to marine and coastal resources (McGinnis, 2012: 21). One of the latest developments in marine-related law was the enactment of the Marine and Coastal Area Act in 2011. This act raised much controversy, with NGOs such Amnesty International denouncing that it discriminated against the Māori (Amnesty International, 2001: 12).With the increase in oil production operations in New Zealand, Māori's natural resources are being negatively impacted on.

There is an on-going debate on the exploitation of New Zealand's petroleum resources. This national debate is part of and framed by the wider international debate regarding the risks and benefits oil extractive industries and the conservation of the planet. The world is currently undergoing two opposite tendencies, which are the promotion of economic development and environmental conservation. The oil industry is a key economic activity which has proved to be both a driving force for economic growth and for environmental destruction. The framing of this oil-environmental conservation debate in each country mainly depends on the position of the country in the international community and its aspirations, as well as on the power relationships established between the relevant national stakeholders.

At the international level, competition between states contributes to environmental change (Bryant, 1992: 19). In the global economy, extractive industries have become an extremely profitable activity. Oil prices are increasing and new extraction technologies are being developed, which has led to the emergence of new areas for commercial production (Whitmore et al., 2013: 4). For New Zealand, new opportunities for profitable offshore oil extraction have turned the country into an attractive location for oil drilling operations. The government, aware of this opportunity for economic growth, has affirmed that New Zealand wants to become a net exporter of oil by 2030, and has issued oil exploration permits for areas covering the majority of the country's coastline. In concrete, the Ministry of Economic Development announced earlier in 2012 the

proposal of 25 onshore and offshore blocks for competitive offer (Peace Movement Aotearoa, 2012: 7).

At the national level, this enthusiast promotion of oil drilling activities has encountered strong opposition from some sectors of the population, particularly environmental groups and Māori communities. Concern about the dangers of deep sea oil drilling increased in October 2011, after the running aground of the container ship Rena at Astrolabe Reef, off the North Island's East Coast, resulted in an environmental disaster. The oil spill had an adverse impact on the seashore and seafood gathering areas of Māori in the Bay of Plenty, including Te Whānau ā Apanui's (Peace Movement Aotearoa, 2012: 5-7). General public concern about offshore drilling is evident from the fact that environmental activists carried out protests against oil drilling during the third anniversary of the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico (Stuff, 2013a; Stuff, 2013b). This local fight is connected to the worldwide campaign against oil drilling carried out by environmental groups.

4.2.2 Petrobras' oil exploration in the Raukumara Basin

The Raukumara Basin is situated within the Exclusive Economic Zone. In June 2010, the Government of New Zealand granted the Brazilian company Petrobras a five-year oil and gas exploration permit in the Raukumara Basin, offshore from the East Coast of the North Island. The local Māori, Te Whānau-ā-Apanui and Ngāti Porou, denounced that they had not given their consent to the issuing of the exploration license, to which they were firmly opposed (Peace Movement Aotearoa, 2012: 4).

Te Whānau ā Apanui, Greenpeace, and other groups carried out a campaign against Petrobras' oil exploration early 2011 (Stuff, 2012). When Petrobras started a seismic survey, a small flotilla travelled to the area to protest against this activity. The government responded to this action by sending two navy warships and an air-force plane. The skipper of Te Whānau-ā-Apanui's fishing boat was arrested while he was fishing in the tribe's customary fishing grounds at a distance of approximately 1.5 nautical miles away from the deep-sea oil survey ship. This arrest happened the day

after the withdrawal of the exclusion orders that had been issued to boats near the survey ship the previous week (Peace Movement Aotearoa, 2012: 5).

Greenpeace and local *iwi* Te Whānau ā Apanui jointly lodged an application for a judicial review of that permit on environmental and Treaty of Waitangi and grounds, but their application was finally rejected (Courts of New Zealand, 2012). In the end of 2012, Petrobras returned its exploration permits in the Raukumara Basin. The company was reportedly facing several difficulties and had been recently obtaining poor economic results. The Prime Minister affirmed that Petrobras' retreat from the country was due to the company's domestic issues rather than the capacity to conduct deep-sea drilling operations or the Raukumara Basin activity prospect (The New Zealand Herald, 2012). However, Greenpeace saw the decision as a 'victory for Kiwis opposed to risky deep sea drilling' (Stuff, 2012).

4.2.3 Māori's right to self-determination vs. New Zealand sovereignty

The controversy raised by Petrobras' offshore oil exploration is a manifestation of the long-lasting power dispute between the Government of New Zealand and Māori. From the analysis, it is clear that the interests of the company were merely economic, and when the conflict arose, the company had to decide whether it was worth staying or it would be better to stop its operations.

Companies tend to frame their relations with indigenous communities in an 'ethical vacuum', where their initiatives regarding indigenous peoples are mainly aimed at obtaining a license to operate or to improve their public image (Crawley & Sinclair, 2003: 372). It is likely that Petrobras' decision to leave the country was due to the strong criticism by environmental groups and Māori communities. This issue was detrimental to Petrobras' reputation as the company prides itself on its social corporate responsibility, but the failure to carry out an adequate consultation with the affected indigenous communities showed otherwise. According to the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, Corporate Social Responsibility 'is the continuing commitment by business to contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as of the community and

society at large' (Watts & Holme, 1998: 3). However, in the Raukumara basin case, the Petrobras' operations posed a risk to the environment, which entailed potential negative consequences for the Māori communities' livelihoods. These communities expressed their disapproval of Petrobras' operations as they considered them detrimental to their quality of life. This is just one of the many cases where clashes between indigenous communities and oil industries have been reported. In order to address this issue, several handbooks have been written on best practices regarding oil operations affecting indigenous peoples. In general, these publications stress the importance of complying with law and good practices, while stressing the competitive advantage that results from establishing good relationships with indigenous peoples (Whitmore et al., 2013: 209). In these disputes, what is at stake is environmental protection and natural resources ownership.

The particular link between environmental protection and extractive operations is demonstrated by the existence of the International Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Association (IPIECA). The IPIECA (2012), of which Petrobras is a member, has released the guide 'Indigenous Peoples and the oil and gas industry: context, issues and emerging good practice'. Extractive industries launch this type of initiatives to show the general public that they are concerned about the potential adverse impacts of their operations. Nevertheless, companies use the language of social corporate responsibility to legitimize operations that have an adverse impact on communities and the environment (Benson & Kirsch, 2010: 45). Therefore, it is no surprise that the discourse of social corporate responsibility permeates Petrobras' discourse even though the company does not comply with its commitments. To clean its image, Petrobras mentioned this issue in its 2010 Sustainability Report under the heading 'Impact on Local Communities', and affirmed that Petrobras' Ombudsman's Office was considering a complaint by Māori community (Petrobras 2010). The report also affirmed that Petrobras was engaged in dialogue with the indigenous community, a dialogue that socially responsible company would have started prior to the beginning of its operations.

Whereas for companies the environment is just an element of their discourse on corporate social responsibility, for the Government of New Zealand and Māori nature is part of a long-standing tension between both actors. Since the signing of the Treaty of

Waitangi, there has been a deep and enduring conflict between New Zealand's sovereign rights and Māori's right to self-determination. Although the government has been progressively recognising Māori's rights as indigenous peoples, the latter have not achieved complete self-determination. Natural resources are at the core of this conflict as they are an essential element of both the government's economic growth and Māori's livelihoods. On the one hand, in a competitive world, and with new technologies being developed, the government has access to previously inaccessible natural resources which are essential to increase its economic competitiveness. On the other hand, Māori are more and more conscious of their rights as the international community is progressively recognising and promoting human rights, including indigenous rights. As a consequence, the government's aspirations clashes with Māori's aspirations, and the environment has become a battle field for power-related disputes.

In the case that has been analysed, Petrobras is just the actor that triggered the dispute between Māori and the government. This is clear after an analysis of the actors' discourses. For the Ministry of Economic Development (2010), Petrobras, a 'world leader in development of offshore drilling technology and production', was a symbol of the economic potential of New Zealand's economic resources. Te Whānau-ā-Apanui (2012) mainly focused on criticising the government rather than the company. It did not make a strong criticism to the company but rather asked it to leave their ancestral territories so that it would not become an accomplice of the government of New Zealand in the violation of indigenous peoples' rights.

The case of Petrobras' oil exploration in New Zealand is a good example of the environment as a space for power-related confrontations, where each actor uses the idea of environment for its own purposes. For indigenous peoples, conflicts between them and the government concerning natural resources constitute an opportunity to raise the issue of their right to be consulted and, by extension, the right to self-determination. At the same time, governments are reluctant to recognize indigenous peoples' right to self-governance as it would entail losing control over natural resources and territories (Niezen, 2003: 190). Given the current importance of the oil industry for the government, New Zealand is interested in maintain control over those resources, which are in several cases situated within indigenous territories.

The oceans have become an important element in Māori's aspirations of self-determination. In their statement against offshore oil drilling, Te Whānau-ā-Apanui (2012) clarified that the marine area is within the tribal territory. In several documents submitted by Ngāti Porou (2012) to the government, the tribe has repeatedly emphasised 'its kaitiaki (guardianship) role over Te Tai Rawhiti (East Coast) environment including its rohe moana (the ocean)' as well as its 'strong opposition to exploration and mining in its rohe'[7]. To counteract these claims, the Energy and Resources Minister used the rhetoric of national development to convince New Zealanders that Petrobras' operations would benefit them by 'bringing more jobs, more tax and royalty income, and most importantly, creating opportunities for long-term regional development' (Ministry of Economic Development, 2010). Governments often justify extractive projects in terms of 'national development', which is considered to supersede the right of indigenous peoples to free, prior and informed consent (Whitmore et al., 2013: 321).

Unsurprisingly, Māori whose territories where affected by Petrobras' operations did not agree with the government's view, and denounced that the government had not engaged in consultation process with them. This turned out to be a great opportunity for Māori to bring to the forefront the issue of their right to self-determination. As Bryant states (1992: 26), environmental change can facilitate political protest.

Te Whānau-ā-Apanui used the issue of Petrobras' exploration to develop a strong campaign against the government, a campaign that is part of the tribe's long-lasting aspiration to achieve self-determination. In its campaign, the tribe described the Māori people as powerless against the powerful and oppressive government. This campaign against the government was carried out through symbolic actions and statements. In relation to symbolic actions, the sending of two navy warships and an air-force plane by the government to protect Petrobras' operations benefited Māori campaign to discredit the government. The fact that the government used the military against its own citizens to protect the interests of a foreign company was criticised. This governmental action was seen as disproportionate, and contributed to the image of vulnerability attributed to

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[7] According to the Māori dictionary, *rohe* means 'boundary, district, region, territory, area, border (of land)'.
Māori dictionary. Available at: http://www.maoridictionary.co.nz/

the indigenous peoples. Moreover, the arrest of the skipper of Te Whānau-ā-Apanui's fishing boat was a symbolic event which demonstrated once again the powerlessness of Māori against the government.

In addition to that, Te Whānau-ā-Apanui's (2012) released a statement against Petrobras' operations, in which the tribe developed a discursive strategy that can be divided into two arguments. First, the tribe emphasized that the environmental risks posed by the company's activities were threatening their survival. In concrete, the tribe asserted that Petrobras' operations compromised the 'environmental integrity' of their ancestral territories and seas. The word 'integrity' shapes the concept of 'environment' in a way that emphasises the graveness of the situation, since the term 'environmental integrity' mirrors that of 'physical integrity', which is internationally recognized as a fundamental right. Second, Te Whānau-ā-Apanui stressed the link between the company's operations and the government failure to comply with the internationally-recognised principle of free, prior and informed consent. According to this principle, the government has the obligation to conduct consultations aimed at obtaining the free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples regarding activities that affect their ancestral territories. The principle of free, prior and informed consent is essential for the fulfilment of indigenous peoples' right to self-determination (Whitmore et al., 2013: 313 - 314). Therefore, by linking these arguments, the tribe wanted to demonstrate that the violation of their rights as indigenous peoples by the government threatened their survival, and it stressed the need of having their indigenous rights fulfilled, particularly the right to self-determination. Since the stronger the criticism, the stronger their expressed need for self-determination, they concluded that:

> the NZ Government […] continues to marginalise and threaten the survival of indigenous peoples throughout New Zealand, and when indigenous resistance to their policies and practices occurs the NZ Government uses the military, the police and other illegal methods of coercion to suppress indigenous rights." (Te Whānau-ā-Apanui, 2012).

As far as Ngāti Porou is concerned, the issue of Petrobras' oil exploration serves to support their arguments against some of New Zealand's laws. The tribe has addressed the Parliament several submissions criticising some aspects of draft bills and enacted bills, such the Marine Legislation Bill, the Crown Minerals Bill and the Exclusive

Economic Zone and Continental Shelf Bill (Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Porou, 2012). In these documents, the particular case of Petrobras' operations is mentioned as an example of their opposition to onshore and offshore oil drilling in their territory. The tribe profited from this situation to address the government through a document aimed at criticising the Exclusive Economic Zone Bill for failing to recognise Māori interests. Like Te Whānau-ā-Apanui, Ngāti Porou also establishes a link between the environment and Māori interests by concluding that 'appropriate protections for environmental and Māori interests' should be developed before promoting mining development.

When analysis the actors' discourses, it is important to consider the wider international context to acquire a deeper understanding of their discursive strategies. In these power-related disputes, both the Government of New Zealand and Māori want to obtain the support of the international community, and the society at an international level. For Māori, international lobbying may be more successful as lobbying by indigenous peoples is often faced with counter lobbying by the national government, who accuses them of threatening national prosperity with their claims. The usual threats to national prosperity are unemployment, lack of energy resources and loss of export revenue (Niezen, 2003: 185). As we have seen, the government mentioned the economic opportunity provided by Petrobras' operations.

Since indigenous peoples first achieved recognizance of their rights within the international community, it is no surprise that Te Whānau-ā-Apanui officially complained to the United Nations (The Māori Party, 2011). The politics of shame are used in international forums to raise the profile of a cause as official statements and judgments from highly-respected organisations add credibility to indigenous peoples' claims. The high media coverage of international meetings leads to the diffusion of their claims, which can have an impact on the government's initial reticence to negotiate (Niezen, 2003: 182-184). In its statement, Te Whānau-ā-Apanui emphasized that, through the attack to the environmental integrity of their territories, the government was violating their rights as indigenous peoples, particularly the right to be consulted and to free, prior and informed consent. At the end of the statement, they include a table with several articles from the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and a specification of how the government had violated those rights.

In addition to that, Te Whānau-ā-Apanui intended to attract the sympathy and support of environmentalists. First, the tribe presented itself in harmony with nature, and showed their commitment to environmental protection. In its statement, the tribe asserted that it was inconsistent with their worldview 'to unsustainably exploit natural resources to feed human greed', and, on the contrary, 'tribal law dictates that the tribe live in harmony with the environment' (Te Whānau-ā-Apanui, 2012). Second, Te Whānau-ā-Apanui also stressed the risk to the environment posed by Petrobras' operations. Indigenous peoples become local environmental activists in order to protect their lands, articulating environmental discourses with rights-based discourses. Local campaigners are often unable to protect their interests at the local level, therefore they tend to take their claims to the supra-local level by appealing to powerful national and international environmental NGOs. Their appeals will only be successful if their claims can be framed in terms of a salient national or transnational issue, and, if this is the case, local campaigns may be incorporated in the broader campaigns of environmental NGOs (Rootes, 2013: 97 - 98). Te Whānau-ā-Apanui succeeded in shaping its claims as a local environment claim that was part of Greenpeace's agenda, and the tribe established a strong alliance with this international non-governmental organisation.

Greenpeace focuses its campaigns on certain national environmental issues, and conducts centrally planned actions rather than supporting autonomous local campaigners. In cases where Greenpeace has supported local campaigns, it has ensured that those actions where part of their wider national campaigns (Rootes, 2013: 99). Since New Zealand's Exclusive Economic Zone is considered one of the world's main hot spots of threatened biodiversity (McGinnis, 2012: 19), Greenpeace is interested in protecting this biodiversity; all the more so because deep sea oil drilling is the target of one of its main campaigns. In brief, despite each Greenpeace and Te Whānau-ā-Apanui having different interests, the environment served as a strong link between them.

5/ Conclusion

At a general level, the analysis has shown how different actors elaborate a concept of the environment that will help them to achieve their objectives. With the growing importance of environmental issues worldwide, the environment has become a common space for power-related disputes. Government, companies and communities constantly produce, mould, shape and reinvent the concept of environment to adapt it to their particular agendas.

The Science knowledge discourse, whose credibility is widely recognised, is often invoked to support actors' diverse claims about nature. As the science discourse becomes dominant, even indigenous peoples, who have a distinct knowledge system, resort to scientific terms in order to claim their rights. Indigenous knowledge systems, such as the Māori knowledge system, are often evoked in relation to land and natural resources rights claims. Governments can also refer to indigenous terms when addressing to the country's indigenous peoples as a way of acknowledging their existence and expressing the government's intention to establish a partnership with them.

Despite actors having different aspirations, it is interesting to note that some themes permeate all their discourses. The analysis has shown that they refer to the idea of environment as part of their identity and as a resource for economic growth. Although they do so for different reasons, the fact that they all refer to these ideas suggests that the environment plays an essential role in the actor's construction of their public image. The use of the discourse on sustainable development by all of them serves to make compatible nature exploitation and environmental conservation in the case of Petrobras and the Government of New Zealand. For Māori, presenting themselves in harmony with nature serves to stress their collective identity as indigenous peoples, as well as to attract the sympathy of environmental groups and activists.

As we have seen, the analysis of discourses about nature in particular contexts enable us decode the underlying motivations behind them, and, ultimately, the core issues at stake. The analysis of the controversy raised by Petrobras' operations in New Zealand is

a good example of how those discourses about nature are mobilised by the actors in response to particular situations with the aim of furthering their goals. For companies conducting oil extraction operations, such as Petrobras, the environment is not just a resource for obtaining economic profit but it is also an essential element of its 'corporate social responsibility' rhetoric aimed at obtaining the general public's approval. For indigenous peoples, such as Māori, the operations of extractive industries in their territories are both a threat to their livelihoods and an opportunity to initiate political action, domestically and internationally, to claim their right to self-determination. For some governments, such as the Government of New Zealand, their natural resources are essential in the construction of national identity as well as a fundamental national asset to achieve economic growth. When environmental-related conflicts involving different actors arise, all these particular interests compete in the form of contrasting environmental discourses.

In addition to these general conclusions, the analysis has also revealed interesting information regarding the particular context of the long-standing tension between the Government of New Zealand and Māori. Disputes concerning natural resources are common in New Zealand due to the importance of nature for the construction of the national identity and the Māori collective identity, as well as for the national economic growth and Māori economic development. In this particular context, the ocean is progressively becoming the main focus of conflicts between the government and Māori. The reasons of this are that the country has a fragmented ocean governance, and the right of Māori to marine and coastal resources has been highly debated (McGinnis, 2012: 21). In this controversial context the clash between government's objectives and Māori's aspirations are especially evident. In order to increase the country's competitiveness, the government's agenda includes the promotion of oil extraction operations, which are becoming more affordable due to recent technological developments. At the same time, oil-related operations face opposition from Māori, who claim that their indigenous rights are being abused, particularly their right to decision-making.

In this context, different conceptions of the environment are endorsed by the actors. While the government, based on a discourse of sustainable use of natural resources, stresses the economic benefits that would result from Petrobras' operations, Māori, who

stress their deep connection to nature, claim their right to be consulted in those decisions affecting their ancestral territories and seas. These Māori claims are formulated in human rights terms to attract the international community attention and support. Therefore, an environment-related dispute triggers particular discourses on the environment, which, ultimately, are a tool for furthering the actors' interests. Whereas the government wants to stress national prosperity as way of asserting its control over the state, Māori profit from these conflicts to discredit the government and, thus, appeal to their right to self-determination. In conclusion, the environment becomes a battle field for power-related disputes as well as a weapon used by parties involved in the fight.

6/ Recommendations

This dissertation has found some issues of interest for future research. The increasing importance of environmental issues, such as the climate change, is opening new doors for political ecology research regarding the construction of the environment in power-related conflicts. An issue of particular interest is the especial alliance established between indigenous groups and environmental groups through converging discourses on nature. The alliance between Te Whānau-ā-Apanui and Greenpeace shows how some discourses on the environment can converge to promote shared interests. In this respect, it is important to highlight that, in the same way as indigenous peoples have evoked environmental conservation to protect their interests, Greenpeace has conjured indigenous peoples' rights to support the organisation's claims for environmental preservation worldwide.

In the particular case of New Zealand, the activities of the oil industry will likely lead to increasing tension between the government and Māori. According to ExxonMobil, there will be an increase in the contribution of oil and gas to the satisfaction of the global energy demand. While in 2010 oil and gas supplied around 50 percent of global energy demands, it is expected that in 2040 they will supply approximately 60 percent of the global energy demand, with a rising production of oil production from deep-water resources (ExxonMobil, 2013: 37-38). Given that one of the government of New Zealand's priorities for 2013-2016 is to build a more competitive economy (Ministry for the Environment, 2013: 5), the country will likely continue seeking foreign investment in its oil resources, and this will lead to increasing conflicts as the ancestral the Māori's ancestral lands and waters are threatened. Thus, the environment will become a more and more important aspect of Māori's struggles to have their rights as indigenous peoples fulfilled.

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8/ Appendices

8.1 Discourse analysis: Petrobras

1. GENERAL OVERVIEW

- **About the company:**
  - Mission: 'Operate in a safe and profitable manner in Brazil and abroad, with social and environmental responsibility, providing products and services that meet clients' needs and that contribute to the development of Brazil and the countries in which it operates'.
  - Value - Sustainable Development: 'We pursue business success under a long-term perspective, contributing to economic and social development and to a healthy environment in the communities where we have operations'.
- **Knowledge system:** Science → It stresses how they use innovative scientific solutions to 'preserve the environment'.
- **Relationship between the environment and Petrobras:**
  - *Respect for* the environment: **'**Our growth is directly related to our commitment to society and respect for the environment'.
  - *Preserving* the environment: for Petrobras, 'sustainable performance means 'producing energy without neglecting the future of the planet'.
  - *Dialogue* with nature: 'Your project, a gas pipeline, it must dialogue with nature; it must reach consensual solutions with nature. So you can have a sustainable insertion'.
  - *Scientific knowledge* of the environment: Their researchers, etc., are passionate about the environment: water, fish, the Amazon…. Petrobras insists on how little we know about the environment, particularly the marine environment, and stresses how its research work helps to learn more things about the environment.

2. CONTENT

			ENVIRONMENT
			Example Statement
Subject	**Wilderness**	X?	*(Video)* 'When you arrive there [the Amazon rainforest]and look at the size of it, its immensity, that amount of water, that amount of green[…] you start to believe you are only a very small piece of that universe, but you are capable of somehow answering a few things that are major questions for humanity'.

			*Note: They relate their awe for the environment with their research-related business operations.
	Hazardousness		
Object	**Resource**	X	'In order to produce, distribute and trade energy […], we seek the efficient use of natural resources and energy in our processes, operations and products.'
	Fragility	X	'With rational water and energy use […] we reduce our impact on the environment'

			OCEANS
			Example Statement
Subject	**Wilderness**		
	Hazardousness		
Object	**Resource**	X	'The biggest oil reserves are currently on the continental shelf, in deep and ultra-deep waters'.
	Fragility	X	*(Video)* 'The interest of the company is […]. minimizing to the greatest possible extent the impact, or the potential impact of our being here'

3. KEY TERMS ASSOCIATED WITH ENVIRONMENT

ENVIRONMENT		
Western knowledge system		
		Example Statement
Management		
Sustainability	X	'Producing energy without neglecting the future of the planet. That is our idea of sustainable performance'. 'We work in a sustainable manner to increase oil and gas production and reserves'.
Efficiency	X	'We seek the efficient use of natural resources' 'Our focus is on ecoefficiency'.
Environmental responsibility	X	'…environmental responsibility is part of our mission'
Reduce impact	X	'…we reduce our impact on the environment'

OCEAN		
Western knowledge system		
		Example Statement
Management		
Sustainability		
Minimizing	X	*(Video)* 'The interest of the company is […]. minimizing to

the impact		the greatest possible extent the impact, or the potential impact of our being here'

4. OBSERVATIONS

- Petrobras stresses that its work faces many <u>challenges</u>, particularly in relation to environmental preservation:
  - 'Petrobras' history is made by people who overcome challenges everyday'.
  - Oil and Gas Exploration and Production: 'Going increasingly deep and overcoming the challenge of producing oil in offshore fields'.

- Petrobras resorts to sustainable-related <u>international standards, principles and indexes</u> to prove that the company respects the environment:
  - 'We conduct our business pursuant to the Ten Principles of the United Nations' Global Compact'.
  - 'For the seventh consecutive year we have been listed on the Dow Jones Sustainability Index (DJSI), the most important global sustainability index'.
  - 'Nearly all of our units around the world are ISO 14001 (relative to the environment) and BS 8800 (relative to safety and health) certified'.
  - Petrobras has a 'Sustainability report' since 2007.

- Petrobras <u>supports environmental projects</u>, such as:
  - The project Tamar, whose aim is to protect turtles.
  - Biomaps project: Petrobras maps biological communities. It is interesting to note that in the biomaps section is written: 'Is it actually possible to explore and produce oil with respect for the environment? We have proved it is.'

8.2 Discourse analysis: Te Whānau-ā-Apanui

1. GENERAL OVERVIEW

- **Knowledge systems:** Māori and Science.
- **Relationship between the environment and Te Whānau-ā-Apanui:**
  a) Land obtained through whakapapa: The founding ancestor of the *iwi*, Apanui Ringamutu:
  - o Acquired land through familial connection.
  - o Won land through conquest.

  His descendants 'cultivated these lands, and put profits from whaling back into their community'. The tribal saying for the land is:

  'From Te Taumata-ō-Apanui to Pōtaka
  Whanokao is the mountain
  Mōtū is the river
  Whakaari is the volcano
  Apanui is the ancestor
  Te Whānau-ā-Apanui is the tribe'

b) Land as an asset: 'Te Whānau-ā-Apanui manages fisheries, forestry blocks and other successful ventures'.

d) In harmony with nature: Te Whānau-ā-Apanui 'is living in balance and harmony with Te Ao Turoa'. They want 'to ensure that present and future generations achieve environmental, economic, social, cultural and Political security'.

2. CONTENT

		ENVIRONMENT	
		Example Statement	
Subject	Wilderness		
	Hazardousness		
Object	Resource	X	'…invests in the development of local forestry and other industries'
	Fragility	X	'to ensure that present and future generations achieve environmental(…) security'

		OCEAN	
		Example Statement	
Subject	Wilderness		
	Hazardousness		
Object	Resource		
	Fragility		

3. KEY TERMS ASSOCIATED WITH ENVIRONMENT

ENVIRONMENT		
Science knowledge system		
		Example Statement
Management	X	Te Whānau-ā-Apanui manages[…] forestry blocks
Sustainability		
Māori knowledge system		
		Example Statement
Kaitiakitanga		
Whakapapa		
Mana	X	'actively maintaining and developing internal and external relationships (…) its Mana (…) to ensure that present and future generations achieve environmental(…) security'

OCEAN		
Science knowledge system		
		Example Statement

Management	X	'The Rūnanga successfully manages a fisheries operation'
Sustainability		
Māori knowledge system		
		Example Statement
Kaitiakitanga		
Whakapapa		
Mana		

4. OBSERVATIONS

1) The tribal authority stresses the successful management of the tribe's assets as well as the achievement of economic and social growth:

'Since the early 1990s the tribal authority (Te Rūnanga o te Whānau) has successfully managed a fisheries operation. It has also become increasingly involved in social services and other economic developments. Many of the large, incorporated land blocks are planted with pine to be harvested before 2025, and there is investment in other industries'.

2) The website's section 'About us' is actually a text from the 'Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand', whose author is the Ministry for Culture and Heritage Te Manatū Taonga.

3) A section of the website is dedicated to the protest against oil exploration.

8.3 Discourse analysis: Ngāti Porou

1. GENERAL OVERVIEW

- **Knowledge system:** Science and Māori.
- **Relationship between the environment and Māori:**
  a) Original habitants of the land: They call themselves 'People of this Land', and they 'have been here since the beginning of time (…) since Maui fished up Te Ika a Maui'.
  b) Tribal territory: Their tribal territory encompasses 'every mountain, river, bush, coastline, and fishing ground' which is linked to their history'.
  c) The environment affects their culture: The 'distinct and solitary nature of our natural environment has shaped the personality and psyche of Ngati Porou'.
  d) Intellectual Property Rights: They ask people to 'respect the Cultural Intellectual Property rights of Ngati Porou which prohibits unauthorised use and/or reproduction of photographs, videos, or images of Mt Hikurangi and the Maui Whakairo (carved sculptures) for commercial purposes without first obtaining written consent'.

2. CONTENT

			ENVIRONMENT
			Example Statement
Subject	**Wilderness**	X	'distinct and solitary nature of our natural environment'
	Hazardousness		
Object	**Resource**	X	'The runanga's seven key goals are to (…)support Ngati Porou whanau and hapu to achieve an optimum return on their assets and resources'
	Fragility	X	'We thank you for your assistance in the care and protection of our mountain for the enjoyment of future generations'

			OCEAN
			Example Statement
Subject	**Wilderness**		
	Hazardousness		
Object	**Resource**		
	Fragility		

3. KEY TERMS ASSOCIATED WITH ENVIRONMENT

ENVIRONMENT		
Science knowledge system		
		Example Statement
Management	X	'The runanga's seven key goals are to (…) support Ngati Porou development through sustaining an optimum return on Ngati Porou assets managed by the runanga'
Sustainability	X	The runanga's overarching principles, based on the Ngati Porou quadruple bottom line, are (…) environmental sustainability'
Māori knowledge system		
		Example Statement
Kaitiakitanga		
Whakapapa	X	'Whakapapa links us and provides the basis for our interactions with each other and our connection to the land and the many ancestors from whom we descend'
Mana	X	'Ngati Porou throughout the passage of time has retained, despite the odds their mana whenua, mana moana, mana tangata, and mana Atua, as evidenced by our position on the foreshore & seabed and the Waitangi treaty negotiations'

OCEAN		
Science knowledge system		
		Example Statement
Management		
Sustainability		
Māori knowledge system		
		Example Statement
Kaitiakitanga	X	'The runanga is reaching the final stages of securing Crown recognition of the Ngati Porou mana and kaitiakitanga of Ngati Porou hapu over their takutai moana'
Whakapapa		
Mana	X	'Ngati Porou throughout the passage of time has retained, despite the odds their (…) mana moana (…) as evidenced by our position on the foreshore & seabed and the Waitangi treaty negotiations'

4. OBSERVATIONS

1) Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Porou affirms that Ngāti Porou 'comprises a confederation of hapu' who have an 'agenda for self determination'. The Rūnanga 'is committed to the restoration of Ngati Porou mana motuhake'.

2) Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Poroumakes explicit that their *iwi* member include not only *ahi ka*, the people that live in the tribal lands, but also *Ngati Porou kei te whenua*, the people that lives outside the tribal lands.

3) They have a section focused on tourism, with their objective being: 'The current focus is developing a sustainable supply and demand for Ngati Porou tourism within the rohe, in particular positioning Hikurangi maunga as a key destination for international and domestic visitors'. They offer tramping information and tour packages.