



Mining and struggles around control over water in southern Peru

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outline

- introduction: why water?
- water governance in Peru
- water issues and conflicts around mining
- case studies: Moquegua and Tacna
- final remarks



introduction: why water?

- water markets and mining in Northern Chile
- scoping research in Peru
- mining uses *huge* amounts of water
- water's geographical unevenness
- water's flowing nature
- water's material and symbolic characteristics
- José de Echave: *all* mining conflicts involve water
- power relations underlying control of water shape *waterscapes*



water governance in Peru

- Ministries of Energy & Mines / Agriculture / Health
- local *Administrador Técnico de Departamento de Riego*
- allocation led by *agricultural* authorities
- *licencias* (administrative concession) needed for all uses - many unregistered (informal ≠ illegal)
- *licencias* allocated to land and not formally tradable
- debates around water markets (Chile) since Fujimori
- MEM: promotion development *and* regulation
- weak state capacity for assessment/monitoring, esp ATDR



water-mining issues

- quality (pollution, health)
- quantity
- headwaters / glaciers
- ecology / hydrology
- access / dispossession (informal rights respected)
- inconsistency between basin and administrative boundaries
- embedded in wider development issues linked to water





Cuajone – quality

- past performance: Ilo smelter, *Labor*, compensation
- community allegations of watercourse pollution and variation (colours, oily residues, aquatic life, crops)
- company produces its *own* data and technical studies
- ATDR and communities have no resources
- *Labor* tests found nothing
- complaints over lack of drinking water supply
- companies: *use not availability* – critical of farming methods
- co-option through technical assistance (loans)





Quellaveco – quantity

- copper mine cannot secure water: scarcity + allocation
- who *owns* water?
- water from Puno?
- reliant on groundwater but local opposition: scientific overlap
- cultural notions of groundwater and perceived impacts
- company planning dam and river diversion: win-win to counter downstream resistance due to irrigation project
- company ‘working with’ government for solution (infra)
- complex and varied local responses to mine development





conclusions

- controlling water is paramount for both mining companies and communities and thus becomes a key site of conflict
- water can be more complicated to obtain (*licencias*), and also transfers impacts beyond the mine site
- companies treat water as a technical / governmental issue and overlook its cultural dimensions
- these are more than conflicts over material water: conflicts over meaning, perceived rights, mode of development