

In the name of the environment: The political economy of socio- environmental conflicts in Altiplano mining areas of Bolivia

Leonith Hinojosa
TCD Andes Research Programme
SED - University of Manchester
leonith.hinojosa@manchester.ac.uk

Mining in Bolivia

- Bolivia 'a mining country'
- After the collapse in 1985, since the 1990s revival and expansion
- A neoliberal policy framework favourable to private investments, but limited increase
- Mining effective increase only when international prices rise
- Establishment of big companies in rural areas are followed by 'environmental' and 'socio-environmental' conflicts

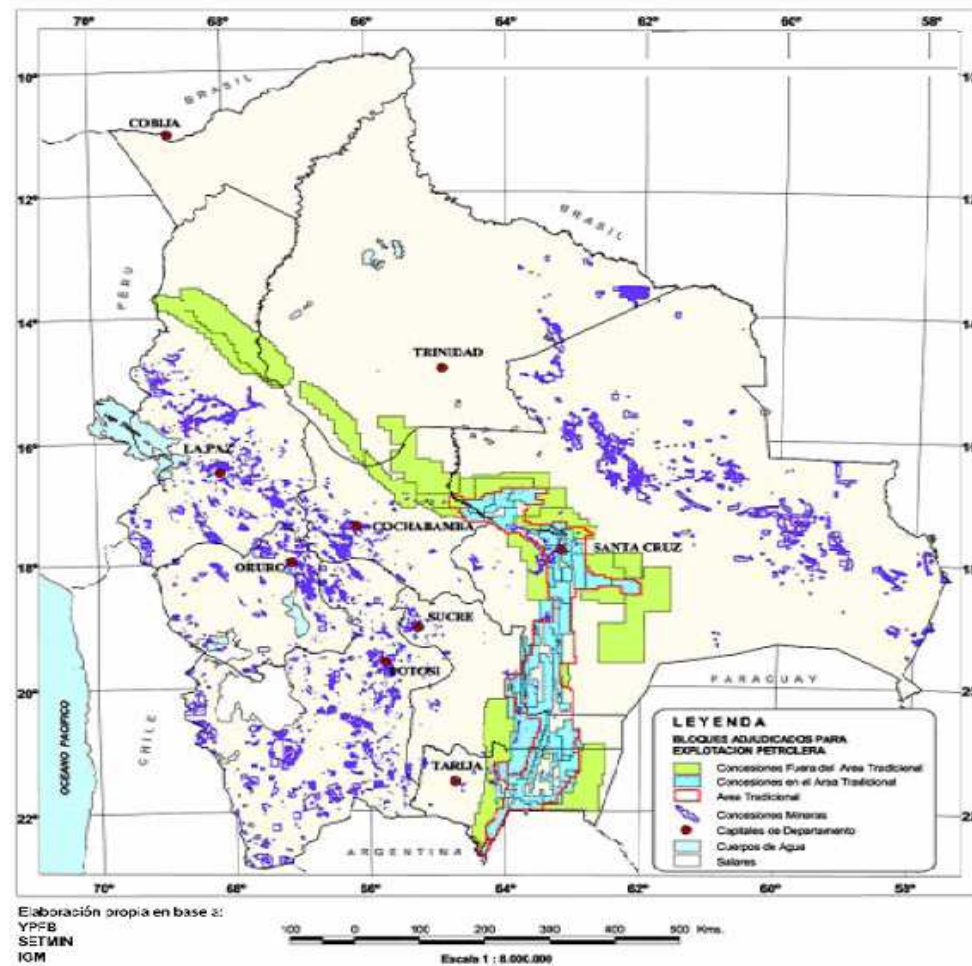
Macroeconomic participation

Year	Percentage of GDP			Percentage of National Exports			Percentage of Public Investment (PI)			
	Mining	Hydro carbons	Agriculture	Mining	Hydro carbons	Agriculture	Mining	Hydro carbons	Agriculture	PI funded by royalties
1990	5.9	4.3	15.4	42.7	23.7	13.2	0.5	32.1	8.4	
1991	4.5	3.4	15.5	39.8	26.9	10.0	1.0	28.0	8.0	
1992	4.4	2.9	14.4	48.9	17.3	6.1	1.0	22.0	6.8	0.0
1993	3.2	2.0	14.7	47.3	12.7	6.5	0.9	19.7	5.9	0.0
1994	4.0	0.9	15.2	39.0	9.5	9.5	1.2	20.3	3.2	0.0
1995	4.8	1.2	14.9	43.2	12.9	10.5	1.2	11.0	3.3	0.0
1996	4.6	1.3	14.2	36.9	10.9	12.0	0.9	9.1	3.3	0.0
1997	4.3	2.1	14.9	39.3	8.4	13.8	0.7	4.9	4.5	0.0
1998	3.6	1.9	12.6	32.8	7.3	9.3	0.7	0.5	10.4	4.7
1999	3.4	2.0	13.3	28.2	5.3	8.7	0.7	0.5	7.8	4.4
2000	3.4	3.2	13.0	28.8	12.1	7.6	0.5	0.0	9.0	3.2
2001	3.1	3.3	13.3	25.1	22.4	4.0	0.3	0.0	9.2	4.3
2002	3.1	3.4	13.0	25.2	25.2	4.5	0.5	0.0	9.2	5.6
2003	3.2	4.3	13.4	22.0	30.1	5.6	0.6	0.0	8.2	6.6
2004	3.4	6.0	13.4	20.2	37.6	5.8	0.2	0.0	8.2	7.3
2005	3.5	6.3	12.2	19.4	47.7	6.1	0.5	0.0	10.2	13.0

Macroeconomic participation

	Mining GDP	Mining Exports	Investments			Volumes of production			
			Public	Private	FDI	Zinc	Tin	Gold	Silver
1990	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1991	103.3	87.4	274.0	116.2	142.2	129.0	107.3	68.9	104.0
1992	105.0	92.9	354.0	115.6	256.4	143.6	106.3	44.4	112.5
1993	113.7	93.8	303.3	93.8	195.4	125.3	96.4	146.7	125.9
1994	113.7	107.4	389.3	101.2	263.9	107.7	101.3	213.3	112.5
1995	125.3	125.2	418.7	56.8	509.0	148.3	85.8	235.6	129.0
1996	119.2	117.2	344.0	52.7	648.3	150.1	80.6	213.3	116.2
1997	119.5	122.5	243.3	26.8	1295.9	155.6	86.5	228.9	116.2
1998	118.9	106.7	245.3	2.4	1557.0	156.3	71.2	266.7	124.4
1999	113.2	97.4	262.7	2.7	1533.3	146.1	77.7	222.2	123.8
2000	114.9	104.2	197.3		1263.2	152.8	84.2	217.8	141.2
2001	111.3	83.4	138.7		1331.0	136.7	69.8	239.0	131.9
2002	111.4	85.1	181.3		1515.9	136.5	76.6	217.7	148.4
2003	112.2	90.6	190.7		860.3	140.1	95.0	180.8	150.2
2004	103.1	112.1	76.7			142.0	105.0	119.1	132.9
2005	115.0	133.5	100.7						

Mineral and hydrocarbons concessions in Bolivia, 2001



- Not many changes in mining areas, extension, minerals
- But changes in ownership:
 - Big private transnational companies & 'big' national miners
 - State (Comibol)
 - Mining 'cooperatives'
 - Workers
- Changes in mines ownership imply:
 - changing power relationships
 - difficulties to identify the polluters
 - conflicts of interest
 - new actors: i) rural (non-miners) population
ii) NGOs

Conflicts

- Labor conflicts
- Environmental conflicts
 - competition for access to natural resources
 - pollution and contamination – threats to livelihoods
- Political conflicts
 - competitive uses of the rural territory
 - access and control of the resources generated by extractive industries

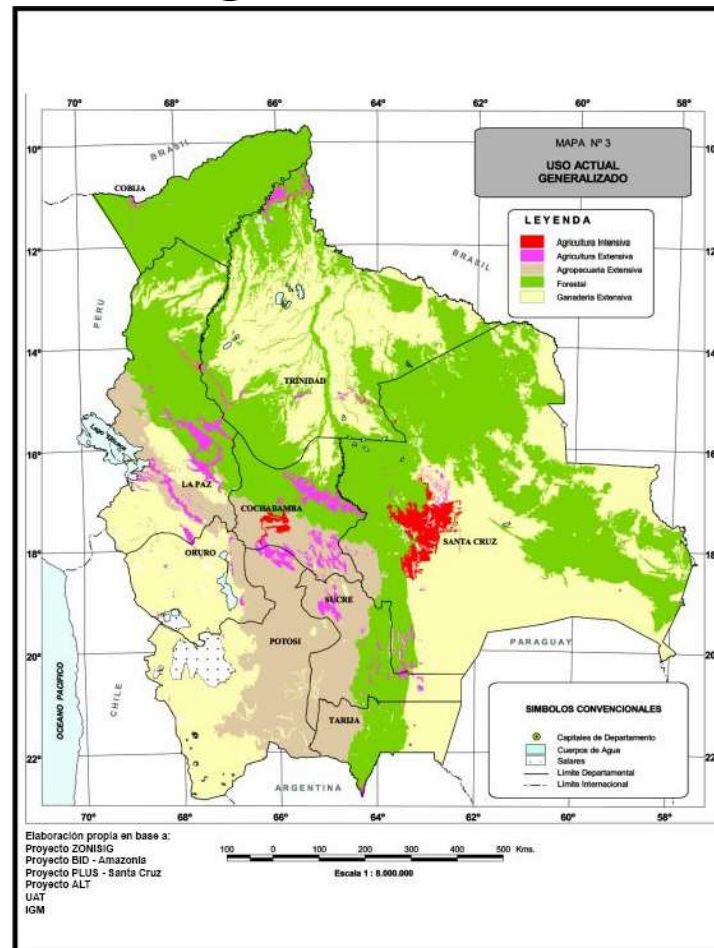
Environmental conflicts

- Quite recent
- International concern for the environment and environmental problems (Summits,, institutions, resources ...)
- New agenda for governments, international cooperation, NGOs
- Referents (e.g. the oil spill in Oruro)
- The environment as an instrument to claim for economic and social rights

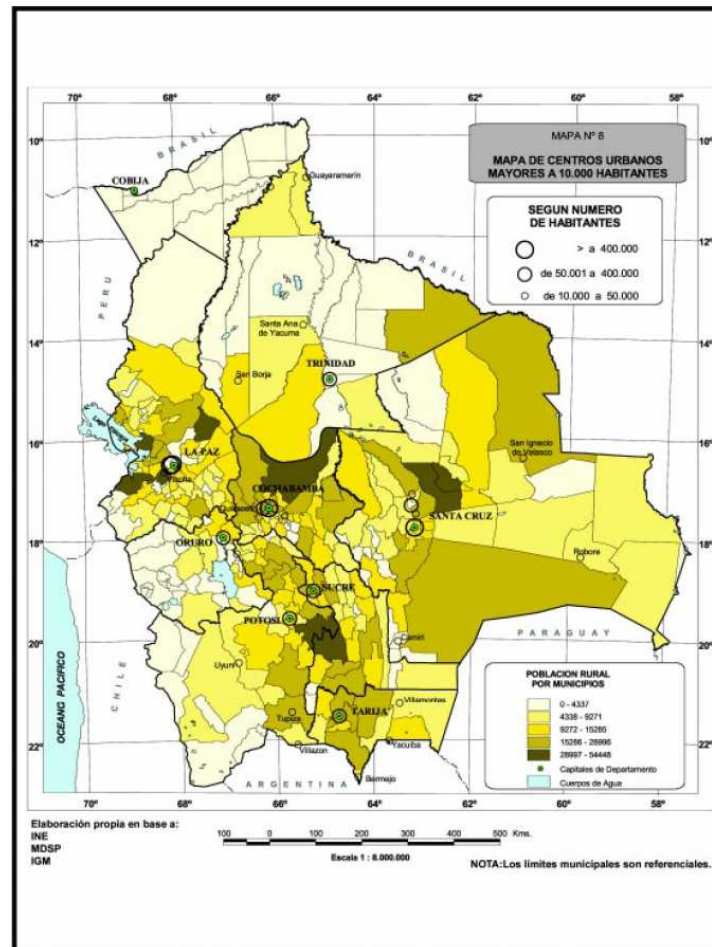
Structural factors

1. Scarcity and poverty of non-mining resources in rural areas
2. Economic priorities in people's livelihoods
3. Institutional land issues
4. Territorial aspects
5. Asymmetrical relationships between and inside civil society organisations
6. Knowledge gaps

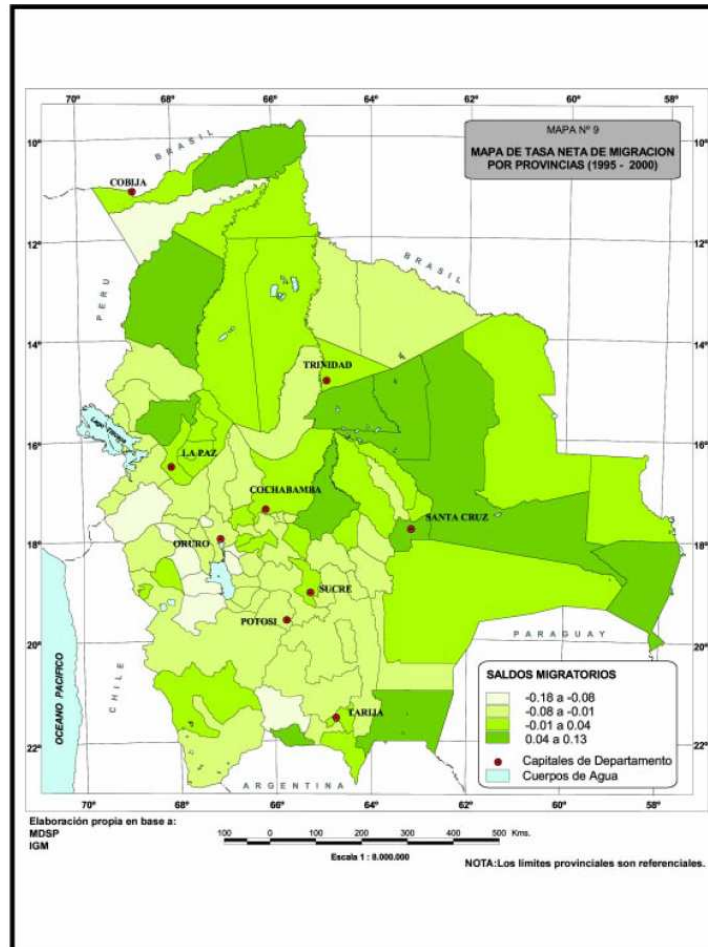
Current use of soils (extensive livestock and high-altitude agriculture)



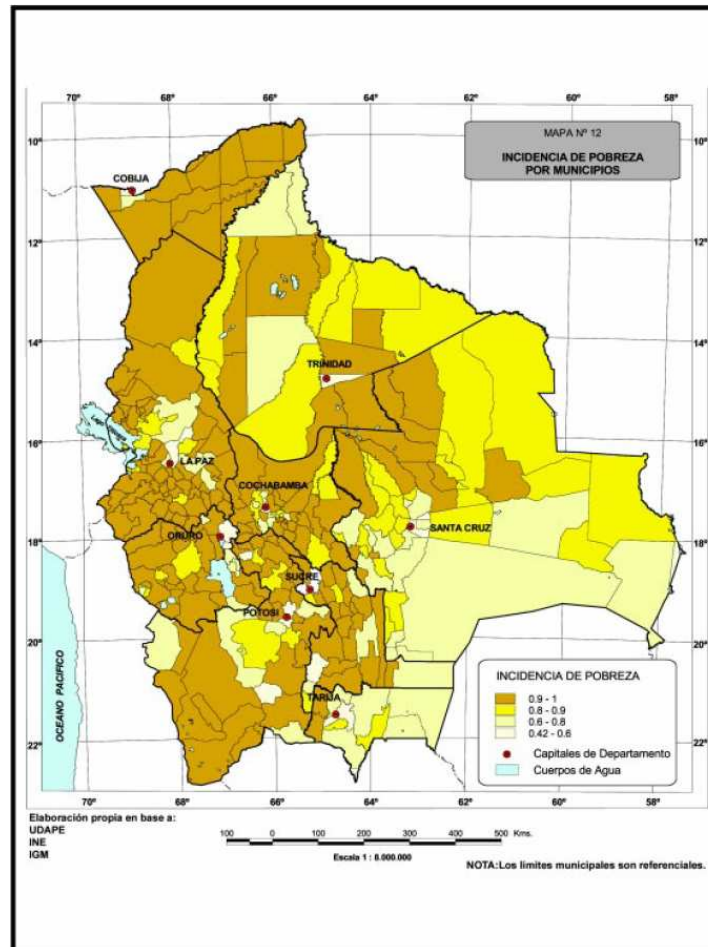
Population density and urban centers



Migration



Poverty



Final remarks

- Contrasting developments (economic growth, revival of EI, political struggles, social and indigenous movements)
- The 'environmental' and 'socio-environmental' distinction:
 - optimal uses of the rural territory?
 - geographical balance between wealth creation and people's rights to self-determination?
 - governance models to diminish the occurrence of conflicts?
 - roles for external agents such as the NGOs