

Dr. Esther Leemann

Department of Social Anthropology and Cultural Studies (ISEK), University of Zurich

Andreasstrasse 15, AND 5.08, CH-8050 Zurich, Switzerland

esther.leemann@uzh.ch

OrcidID: 0000-0002-4811-3106

PUBLICATIONS

Peer reviewed articles and book chapters (selected)

- 2026 (in revision) Care Through Cultivation: Swidden-Forest Relationships as Care Practice. Invited paper for Special Feature 'Forests and Care', *People and Nature*.
- 2025 Concealed Contradictions: Sustainable Development Goals and Indigenous Land Dispossession in Cambodia. *International Journal of the Commons* 19(1), pp. 413-430.
- 2024 Indigenous collective land titling and the creation of leftovers: Insights from Paraguay and Cambodia. *Journal of Agrarian Change* 24(1), e12561, pp. 1-24. (co-authored with Tusing, Cari).
- 2023 Time as the Enemy? Disjointed Timelines and Uneven Rhythms of Indigenous Collective Land Titling in Paraguay and Cambodia. *Land* 12(8), pp. 1620-1636. (co-authored with Tusing, Cari).
- 2022 Anthropologist on the advisory board: Contributions and dilemmas of anthropological engagement in knowledge production, Special Issue 'Anthropological Engagement in the International Sphere', Larsen, Peter; Bleeker, Mô; Hertz, Ellen; Käser, Isabel; Leemann, Esther; Mossman Riva, Susan; Schapira, Raphael; Schulz, Yvan, *Tsantsa* 27, 108-129.
- 2021 Who is the community? Governing territory through the making of 'indigenous communities' in Cambodia. *Geoforum*, 119, 238-250.
- 2017 Giving up Fallows and Indigenous Swiddens in Times of Global Land Grabbing. In: Cairns, Malcolm (ed.) *A Growing Forest of Voices*, Earthscan, UK. (co-authored with Nikles, Brigitte).
- 2015 Persisting Power Structures, Leadership Capacities and Socio-economic Inequality in Post- disaster Resettlement. In: *Sustainable Post-Disaster Reconstruction: From Recovery to Risk Reduction*, i-Rec online publication.
- 2012 Introduction. In: Duyne Barenstein, Jennifer and Esther Leemann (eds.), *Post-Disaster Reconstruction and Change: Communities' Perspectives*. Boca Raton: CRC Press, Taylor & Francis Group. (co-authored with Duyne Barenstein, Jennifer).
- 2012 Communal leadership in post-Mitch housing reconstruction in Nicaragua. In: Duyne Barenstein, Jennifer and Esther Leemann (eds.), *Post-Disaster Reconstruction and Change: Communities' Perspectives*. Boca Raton: CRC Press, Taylor & Francis Group.
- 2011 Housing Reconstruction in Post-Mitch Nicaragua: two Case Studies from the Communities of San Dionisio and Ocotál. In: Miller, D. and J. Rivera (eds.) *Community Disaster Recovery and Resiliency: Exploring Global Opportunities and Challenges*. Auerbach, Taylor and Francis LLC.

Working papers and other publications

- 2025 The Original of National Parks. A Tourist Experience. Visual essay for the multimodal website 'An Ethnographic Multimodal Journey Through Yellowstone National Park and the Wind River Reservation'. <https://anthropology.cuso.ch/yellowstone/05-the-grand-canyon-of-yellowstone>
- 2025 Hiking, Fishing and Chasing Animals. Wilderness Tourism in Yellowstone. Visual essay for the multimodal website 'An Ethnographic Multimodal Journey Through Yellowstone National Park and the Wind River Reservation'. <https://anthropology.cuso.ch/yellowstone/02-bears>
- 2025 Buffalos on the Road. Visual essay for the multimodal website 'An Ethnographic Multimodal Journey Through Yellowstone National Park and the Wind River Reservation'. <https://anthropology.cuso.ch/yellowstone/19-buffalo>

- 2025 Switching Sides. Anthropology of Anthropologists. Visual essay for the multimodal website 'An Ethnographic Multimodal Journey Through Yellowstone National Park and the Wind River Reservation'. <https://anthropology.cuso.ch/yellowstone/04-standing-ground-squirrels>
- 2025 American Wild West Aesthetics. Visual essay for the multimodal website 'An Ethnographic Multimodal Journey Through Yellowstone National Park and the Wind River Reservation'. <https://anthropology.cuso.ch/yellowstone/12-cowboy-hats>
- 2023 Disappearing Swidden Fields in Zomia: Fruitful Sites for Epistemologies. In: Leemann, Esther and Sutter, Rebekka. Working in the Field. Five Reflections on Doing Fieldwork in Agrarian Fields. ZANTHRO Working Paper No 16, p. 37-62 (co-authored with Sutter, Rebekka).
- 2023 Working in the Field. Five Reflections on Doing Fieldwork in Agrarian Fields. [Zanthro Working paper No. 16](#), p. 3-62 (co-edited with Sutter, Rebekka).

PRESENTATIONS

Invited talks and conference presentations (selected)

- 2026 *Inclusive Imaginaries, Exclusionary Realities: Conservation, Concessions, and Indigenous Land Titling in Cambodia*. POLLEN Conference 'Diverse Origins, Multiple Futures: The Stories of Political Ecology', Barcelona, 2.7.2026
- 2026 *Care Through Cultivation: Unexpected Acts of Forest Care*. SAA 2026 Annual Meeting, Fribourg, 2.7.2026
- 2025 *Fields of Haunting: Plant Relations as Wake Work in Cambodia's Transforming Indigenous Landscapes*. AAA conference 'Ghosts', New Orleans, 22.11.2025
- 2023 *When housing provokes a scandal: Of Indigenous aspirations and donor expectations in times of transition*. AAA/CASCA conference 'Transitions', Toronto, 18.11.2023
- 2023 *Countering Stereotypes: Anthropology in Swiss Classrooms. Summer School 'Critical Sustainability Engagements. Anthropological Perspectives on Theory and Practice'*, 13-16 June 2023, Centro Incontri Umani in Ascona, 14.06.2023
- 2022 *Troubled ways of relating: Humans and More-than-humans in land struggles*. Introduction to the panel, co-organized with Catherine Scheer, EuroSEAS 2022, Paris, 1.7.2022
- 2021 *Collective land titling as conservation? Indigenous titling, forest loss and agrarian change in Cambodia*. RAI conference 2021 on Anthropology and Conservation, online, 27.10.2021
- 2021 *Disappearing Swidden Fields, Persisting Social Landscapes*. Annual Meeting of the SAA-SEG-SSE 'Re-viewing the field: Contemporary debates and approaches to fieldwork', online, 23.04.2021
- 2020 *Exploring land's meanings: Reflections on methodological challenges of translating indigenous territorialities in Cambodia*. RAI 2020 conference on Anthropology and Geography: Dialogues Past, Present and Future, online, 18.9.2020
- 2019 *Land's meanings: Reflections on challenges of research on communities displaced by large-scale plantations in Cambodia*. Panel 'Land Relations in Flux: New Land Investments and Precarity'. Discussant: Tania Li, CASCA/AAA 'Changing Climate' conference in Vancouver, 23.11.2019
- 2018 *Who is the community? (Re)constitutions of belonging for the sake of indigenous land titling in Cambodia*. POLLEN Conference, Oslo, 22.6.2018
- 2017 *Who is the community? Governing territory through the making of 'indigenous communities' in Cambodia*. Invited talk at the Workshop 'Ethnogovernmentality in the 21st century: Governing territory and resources through ethnicity and community', Copenhagen, 13.11. 2017
- 2016 *Communities' Perspectives on Policies of Exclusionary Development and Displacement in Cambodia*. Presentation at the Political Ecologies of Conflict, Capitalism and Contestation Conference 2016, Wageningen, 8.7.2016

OUTREACH

(selected)

- 2026 *From Colonial Extraction to Collective Rights in Nicaragua: Indigenous Feminist Visions of Justice*. Panel discussion with Anexa Alfred Cunningham (representing Lottie Cunningham Wren, 2020 Right Livelihood Laureate) as part of the Sustainability Now! Lecture Series 2026, UZH May 21.
- 2025 *Conservation and Indigenous Land Titling in Conversation*. Hybrid Symposium and Workshop, co-organized with Cari Tusing, University of Zurich, June 12-13.
- 2025 *People, Land and Culture: Indigenous Perspectives on Sufficiency*. Panel discussion with Joan Carling (2024 Right Livelihood Laureate) as part of the Sustainability Now! Lecture Series 2025, UZH April 10.
- 2022 *Troubled ways of relating: Humans and More-than-humans in land struggles*. Panel co-organized with Catherine Scheer, EuroSEAS 2022, Paris, June 1st.
- 2021 *Re-viewing the field: Contemporary debates and approaches to fieldwork*. Panel organized, Annual Meeting of the SAA-SEG-SSE ‘, online, April 23rd.
- 2021 *Anthropological Perspectives on Collective Land Titling as Conservation: Opportunities and Challenges*. Panel co-organized with Cari Tusing, RAI-Conferencce ‘Anthropology and Conservation’ online, October 27.
- 2019 *The Last Refuge*. Film screening and public discussions, with invited guest Neth Prak, January 9, Stattkino, Luzern and January 13, Houdini, Zürich.
- 2016 *Mirr*. Full-length ethnographic documentary film on development induced displacement. Production and script. World premiere: November 2016