

Edited Book Project

Invitation for Chapter Contributions

Edward Elgar Research Handbook on Corruption and the Environment

Book Outline

The study of corruption and the environment is a relatively new subfield of corruption studies, but one that is attracting growing attention. Existing scholarship provides important insights of the correlations between corruption and environmental outcomes, with profound implications for human security and the future wellbeing of populations. Yet empirical investigation of the causal pathways connecting corruption with environmental destruction is still in its infancy. Explicit multi-disciplinary, transboundary, and historical studies are often lacking, while the theoretical and conceptual apparatuses used to study corruption and the environment are fragmented and underdeveloped. There has been a tendency to consider the endogenous origins of corruption in African, Asian, and Latin American settings, to the detriment of exogenous transboundary factors and the study of Western contexts.

This handbook invites contributions from established and emerging critical and decolonial scholars from around the world on corruption and the environment, and innovative measures for addressing it. It offers a platform for scholars engaging with new theoretical and conceptual debates, innovative multi-disciplinary methods, multi-level case analysis, and empirically grounded critiques of conventional approaches to environmental corruption. We acknowledge corruption in natural resources is an established field of study. However, we aim to shift attention beyond how to mitigate resource corruption's effects on economic development to focus, more broadly, on how current development models depend on environmental destruction often linked to corruption along transboundary value chains. The volume will ask whether a fundamental rethink of development along post-growth lines is needed for more societally and environmentally just anti-corruption outcomes to emerge.

Book Structure and Contributions Sought

The handbook will be structured in four parts, with an introduction and a conclusion by the editors. We invite contributions for chapters in each of the four parts of the book addressing different subtopics in corruption and the environment. The handbook is intended to deepen theoretical, conceptual, and empirical engagement with the origins and impacts of corruption and the environment, situated in a transboundary and multi-scalar understanding. We seek explanations of the way individual cases are shaped by larger national and international structures and systems, as well as by the materialities of natural resources and societal norms regarding environmental stewardship and standards of living. Finally, we invite grounded critiques of existing approaches to tackling corruption and the environment, and discussion of where new solutions might emerge.

The **introduction** will give the reader a foundational overview of corruption and the environment. This will include establishing definitions, key concepts, acknowledging core texts, as well as laying out the variety of types of environmental corruption that occur and what is known about their impacts. Having established this knowledge, it will continue by iterating the focus of the handbook – on emerging critical and decolonial scholarship from around the world. The introduction will conclude by providing a brief overview of the layout of the handbook, covering the main contributions to each part.

Part I: *Explaining Corruption and the Environment* will focus on recent and emerging theoretical and conceptual debates regarding the origins of environmental corruption and its distinction from environmental crimes. The purpose of this part is to highlight that conventional theories of corruption give scant attention to the environment, including natural resource

commodities' contributions to economic, social, and political organization. Yet scholars in disciplines ranging from green criminology to political ecology and political economy are grappling with fundamental questions about the materiality of natural resource consumption and trade, and what this means for societal organization in a decolonized world, including corruption. We welcome chapter contributions featuring different aspects of these theoretical and conceptual debates.

Part II: *Nature as a Playground for the Corrupt* will focus on recent and current empirical cases of corruption and the environment that illustrate and dissect the ways in which material values gained from nature feed corruption, rent-seeking, and power-retention in different regime types, and the critical impacts these have on society and nature. The intention is to make plain the systemic character of the challenges involved in addressing corruption and the environment. We welcome a wide range of geographic and sectoral cases and hope to balance attention to patterns in liberal democracies as well as authoritarian and hybrid regimes, including discussion of eco-authoritarianism. We particularly encourage contributions that are firmly rooted in their socio-political and historical contexts and within the global political economy.

Part III: *Opportunities for Corruption in Nature's Crisis*, acknowledges and addresses the huge interest, and investments made, in tackling the triple crises of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. Policy frameworks, financing models, and programmes are being designed and elaborated to manage energy transitions and pursue conservation imperatives. Yet these frameworks depend on high levels of public and private competence and integrity to function as intended, often in industry settings prone to corruption. In this part we particularly welcome contributions that examine neoliberal environmental approaches to managing the triple environmental crisis, such as carbon offsetting, and the diverse opportunities they provide for corruption and other societal ills, such as human rights violations. Chapters are encouraged to take a transboundary and multi-disciplinary lens to cases considered.

Part IV: *Towards Socially and Environmentally Just Anti-Corruption* seeks chapters addressing how environmental corruption is being, and could be, tackled in a range of settings. Averting environmental harms is not the focus of most anti-corruption efforts. We know too little about the effects of interventions that attempt to tackle corruption and the environment, and authoritarian approaches are on the rise. Critical research on socially *and* environmentally just anti-corruption policies, interventions, and practices, is only just emerging and needs galvanizing. This section welcomes contributions that consider the state of anti-corruption when it comes to the environment and society. It offers a space to suggest areas where future efforts should be targeted to promote more socially and environmentally just outcomes.

The **conclusion** will summarize the central arguments that emerge from the four sections of the handbook. The contributions will be considered as they relate to the current state of the field of studying corruption and the environment, and advancements that still need to be made. In doing so, the editors will make suggestions as to means for furthering the study of corruption and the environment, particularly relating to gaps and emerging areas of concern or debate.

How to Contribute

Please submit chapter abstracts by 9th June, 2025, to David Aled Williams (aled.williams@cmi.no), Rebecca Dobson Phillips (r.j.s.dobson@sussex.ac.uk) or Rosa E. Loureiro-Revilla (rosa.loureirorevilla@cmi.no).

Abstracts shall include:

- a) A tentative chapter title;
- b) Names and affiliations of all authors;
- c) Short author biographies;
- d) A brief description of the chapter (300-400 words);
- e) A brief indication of the section of the book being contributed to.

Draft chapters shall be submitted by September 1st, 2025, with final chapters due on December 1st, 2025. Chapters will be a maximum of 8,000 words and will be peer reviewed.

Note: The editors have signed a contract with Edward Elgar Publishing for the handbook and contributor contracts will be established with all confirmed contributors.

About the Editors

David Aled Williams, Principal Adviser (U4) and Senior Researcher, Chr. Michelsen Institute, Norway

Aled researches the uneven politics of natural resource-driven economic development, particularly corruption, neoliberal environmentalism, hyper capitalist growth, Indigenous Peoples' rights, green energy transitions and inequality. He is author of the monograph *The Politics of Deforestation and REDD+ in Indonesia: Global Climate Change Mitigation* (Routledge 2023). His research has been published in *The Journal of Development Studies*, *Energy Policy*, *Environmental Impact Assessment Review*, *Annual Review of Environment and Resources*, and *Energy Research and Social Science*. He is also co-editor of two edited volumes (Edward Elgar Publishing): *Corruption, Natural Resources and Development: From Resource Curse to Political Ecology* and *Corruption, Grabbing and Development: Real-World Challenges*. He holds a PhD in International Development from SOAS University of London and an MA in International Relations from the University of Kent. Prior to joining the institute sector, Aled worked as a policy researcher at the Transparency International Secretariat in Berlin.

Rebecca Dobson Philipps, Lecturer in Corruption Analysis, University of Sussex, UK

Rebecca's research focuses on corruption, integrity, and public standards with an emphasis on relationships of power. Her doctoral thesis (2024) developed an original framework for conceptualizing corruption through the lens of power to encourage coherence in the discipline and develop a more emancipatory approach to anti-corruption. Rebecca has worked in a sustained way on the relationship between corruption and environmental politics. A current research project explores how environmental groups re-interpret liberal democratic politics, including political concepts such as corruption, justice and public good. Rebecca holds a PhD in Politics from the University of Sussex and an LLM in Law and Development from the University of Warwick. Prior to entering academia, Rebecca worked as a researcher and writer for a range of national and international organizations. She collaborated on projects across Europe, Asia, and Africa, and has had long involvement in corruption research and anti-corruption work at the Transparency International Secretariat in Berlin and with the UNCAC Coalition in Vienna.

Rosa E. Loureiro-Revilla, Senior Adviser (U4) and Researcher, Chr. Michelsen Institute, Norway

Rosa's work is focused on illicit financial flows (IFFs), corruption and environmental organized crime. Her research focuses on the networks and structural conditions that facilitate the generation and use of dirty money, the impact this has on sustainable development, and how multi-disciplinary approaches can help to prevent and combat IFFs. She conducts research on anti-money laundering systems, beneficial ownership transparency, the role of financial and non-financial enablers, asset recovery, and the role of development agencies in generating sustainable solutions to corruption and IFFs. Prior to joining the institute sector, Rosa worked at the Transparency International Secretariat in Berlin and at Innovations in Poverty Action in Mexico City, as well as in several Peruvian government agencies. Rosa holds an MPhil in Criminology from the University of Cambridge and an MA in Public Policy from PUCP Lima.