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How Changing Imaginaries of Nature and Tourism Have Shaped National Protected Area Creation in Argentine Patagonia

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Chapter 4
How Changing Imaginaries of Nature and Tourism Have Shaped National Protected Area Creation in Argentine Patagonia

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Abstract   Even regions of the planet widely considered to be "remote" or "pristine" like Patagonia are actually dynamic social-ecological systems with interrelated local-international connections of discourses, practices, and institutions. Yet, their study and management often do not consider this complexity. In Argentine Patagonia's iconic landscapes, protected areas (PAs) represent a major human-nature relationship, and PA creation has been motivated by objectives ranging from geopolitical interests to biodiversity conservation. In this chapter, we employed the social imaginary framework to conduct an historical analysis of local, national, and international influences regarding the way nature and tourism are conceived and managed in national PAs. We evaluated the discourses (ideals, values, beliefs) and institutions (norms, rules, structures, stakeholders) involved in creating these PAs in Argentine Patagonia. The national PA system was legally formed in the 1930s, but initial efforts reach back as far as the early 1900s. We found that while the globalization of Patagonian conservation-based development has consolidated since the 1980s, local-international relationships extended over more than a century to co-produce these social-ecological systems.

Keywords   Patagonia · Human-nature relationships · Social imaginary · Tourism · Conservation discourse · Protected areas

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4.1 Introduction

The current magnitude and extent of global environmental change have led some natural scientists to posit a new geological epoch, the Anthropocene, whereby humans dominate planetary biogeochemical processes (Steffan et al. 2007). Social scientists and humanities scholars, however, have pointed out that the human species does not drive these novel conditions; rather, they are caused by specific social practices (e.g., burning fossil fuels) and actors (e.g., high consuming socio-economic groups; Dicenta and Correa 2021; Malm and Hornborg 2014). In this context, it has become increasingly evident that understanding and managing the world's multiple "environmental" crises (e.g., climate change, biodiversity loss, unequitable exposure to pollution, pandemic emergence) require better integration of these human and natural dimensions operating from local to global scales (IPBES 2019; United Nations 2015). As such, traditional environmental management models like protected areas (PAs) are being challenged, shifting away from conserving "nature for nature" or "nature despite people" toward more holistic versions of "nature and people" (Mace 2014; West et al. 2006).

These shifting academic and social-political paradigms also affect Patagonia. While in Western thought the region has been conceived largely as the "uttermost ends of the Earth" (Bridges 1948), in fact, it has been inhabited by diverse humans for at least 7,000 years (Morello et al. 2012) and non-human species for much longer (McEwan et al. 1997). Furthermore, in the 500 years since Europeans first reached the area, it has increasingly become a space of encounter, friction, and circulation of local to global ideas about the origins and futures of humans and nature (Moss 2008; Wakild 2017). In this sense, Patagonia can be approached both as a tangible location that has its own history and evolution and as a symbolic space that has powerfully produced meanings and representations beyond its geographic limits; together, these realms co-construct a dynamic and multi-faceted social-ecological territory.

As an ecological system, Patagonia displays stark biophysical gradients of elevation, topography, temperature, and precipitation that lead to sharply contrasting biotic communities (Oliva et al. 2020). In turn, this vast geographic expanse has

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occupied a privileged position in Western thought since the emergence of modern science during the eighteenth century, being studied and mythologized by numerous scientists, explorers, and travelers (Giucci 2014; Silveira 2009). For example, while Charles Darwin often disparaged Patagonia (and its people) as a site of "death and decay" and a "useless" territory "without habitation, without water, without trees," he fully recognized the impact this place had on him, "owing to the free scope given to the imagination" (Darwin 1889, p. 503). With the Argentine annexation of most of Patagonia in the mid-to-late nineteenth century, national knowledges reconfigured those visions to contest homogenizing colonial perspectives regarding Argentina's geography. Simultaneously, Patagonia became a key figure of "otherness" to construct a modern, postcolonial Argentine identity that put the urban and European descendants of the Buenos Aires capital at the center. Contrasting modern urban cities and citizens with the rest of the country, the North became a site of traditional rural peoples (Chamosa 2016), while Patagonia continued to be imagined as extensive uncultivated lands, represented as a "desert" ready to be filled, occupied, and optimized (Dicenta 2021; Navarro Floria 2002). Multiple forces and scales have continued to interact in the region, whereby elements of the "desert" for national colonization can today be recognized by its designation as one of the world's last remaining "pristine wilderness areas" for international conservation (Briones and Delrio 2007; Mittermeier et al. 2003). There is also an increasing interest in understanding the effects of global drivers of social-ecological change, such as transportation and telecommunications that "telecouple" Patagonia and the rest of the world, particularly via tourism (see Raya-Rey et al. 2017).

In this chapter, we examine how changing notions and values of nature and tourism have shaped the creation of PAs in Argentine Patagonia. Previous work has analyzed how parks and tourism have helped to affirm national values, especially during the first half of the twentieth century (e.g., Carreras Doallo 2012, 2016; Núñez 2014). Here, we expand that debate to explore how those values have shaped the natures of PAs and how those values have changed over time and in response to multi-scalar forces.

National PAs are considered one of the most successful environmental policies in the Americas, touted as a sustainable use of nature that provides multiple benefits for humans (IPBES 2018). Hence, while we recognize that other human-nature activities also occur in the region—forestry, livestock ranching, mining, fisheries, or urbanization—we were keen to explore changing social imaginaries of both nature and tourism in national PAs given their prominence as both a conservation and development strategy. Furthermore, it is well established that national PAs arose as a management approach in neo-European contexts (e.g., North America, Australia, western Europe) at the end of the nineteenth century, often seeking to exclude local communities or humans entirely from particular sites (Dicenta 2021; Fisk et al. 2021; West et al. 2006; Worster 1994). Yet, mainstream conservation is under contestation and now attempts to incorporate diverse peoples and multi-dimensional sustainability as a way to reconcile biodiversity conservation with human well-being and justice via the inclusion of people (IPBES 2019, 2022; Mace 2014). This study responds to these shifts and aims to analyze the local to global production of

discourses, practices, and institutions around nature and tourism that configure national PAs in Argentine Patagonia.

4.2   Methodology

We studied the creation of a variety of PAs, including national reserves (NRs), national parks (NPs), natural monuments (NMs), natural wilderness areas (NWRs), marine-coastal inter-jurisdictional parks (MCIPs), marine inter-jurisdictional parks (MIPs), natural military reserves (NMRs), and marine protected areas (MPAs). First, we created a database of legal instruments available in the Argentine *Sistema de Información de Biodiversidad* (https://sib.gob.ar) that pertained to the establishment of PAs, including transfers of lands to establish or add to PAs, changes in PA status, or PA management plans. For the purpose of delimitation, PA expansions or those with multiple legal instruments were only considered as "creation" when there was also a change in legal status (e.g., NR or NM to NP). These official documents were used to determine (a) reasons PAs were created, (b) visions of nature, (c) visions of tourism in relation to PA objectives or management, and (d) stakeholders and institutional contexts.

Then, we searched archives for historical documents from local (i.e., Ushuaia: *Museo del Fin del Mundo*, *Biblioteca Sarmiento*, *Biblioteca CADIC*; Punta Arenas: *Archivo del Instituto de la Patagonia*) and national (i.e., Argentina: *Biblioteca Nacional*, *Archivo del Museo de Ciencias Naturales Bernardino Rivadavia*, *Archivo Histórico Naval*, *Archivo Intermedio de la Nación*) repositories to investigate social-political contexts more broadly. Specifically, archives were examined for the themes of "national territories," "national colonization plans," "agriculture," "military reports on Tierra del Fuego," and "national parks." Similarly, academic literature searches were conducted in Google Scholar to incorporate secondary information sources, using combinations of keywords "Argentina," "Patagonia," "protected areas," "national parks," "conservation," and "tourism," and their Spanish translations, as well as the names of the PAs themselves. Other relevant references were gathered using a snowballing technique via reviewing citation lists from the originally identified literature.

Information from these sources was assessed using the social imaginary concept (Castoriadis 1993). Social imaginaries are defined as shared discourses and practices that reproduce a social group's values, norms, and beliefs (Taylor 2004) and have been used previously in Patagonia to study biological invasions (Archibald et al. 2020) and land use (Laterra et al. 2021). While they are subject to change over time or between social groups, social imaginaries are powerful systems that organize ideas and behaviors in particular times and spaces and orient individuals toward the collectively defined "normal," "reasonable," or "correct" behaviors, including political decisions.

As an analytical tool, we applied the social imaginary framework to understand how the "behavior" of creating PAs was based on particular "discourses" and "institutions" associated with nature and tourism, and how those discourses were also
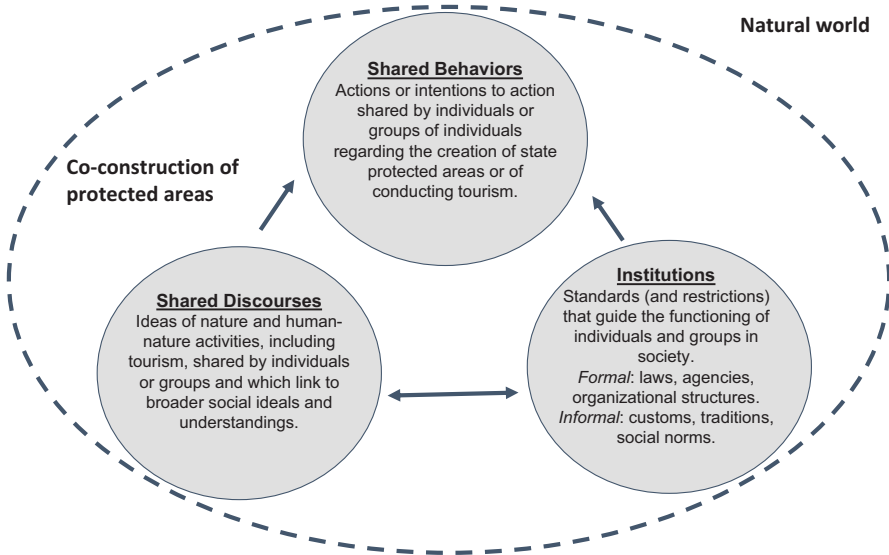
Fig. 4.1 Social imaginary conceptual framework

affected by local, national, and international contexts in different time periods. In particular, we examined: (a) the collectively held discourses that gave sense to and ordered ideas about nature and tourism; (b) the shared practices associated with managing and ordering nature conservation and tourism in particular ways; and (c) the formal and informal institutions (including stakeholders) that legislated and/or influenced conservation and tourism within Argentine Patagonian PAs (Fig. 4.1).

Our analysis looked for both ruptures and continuities in discourses, behaviors, and institutions. We compared and complemented each level of assessment with iterative clusters and themes detected in documents (i.e., grounded analysis, Strauss and Corbin 1990). We then created meta-categories around imaginaries of nature and tourism that helped to construct a chronological diagram to visually comprehend the dynamics influencing PAs. In each document, we identified and categorized the ideals and values that shape understandings of nature and tourism. Our analysis of nature's values drew upon Kellert's typology (1996) to create intermediate categories, which were then expanded to include other use values and later organized into instrumental, relational, and intrinsic values (Gale and Ednie 2020; Table 4.1). Regarding discourses in tourism, we focused on analyzing its conceptualization as mostly an elite privilege, a commercial enterprise, or a public/social endeavor. Finally, each category of nature's values was associated with a specific value justification: instrumental, relational, and intrinsic. Tourism was classified based on elite, commercial, and social values.

As part of the institutional analysis, we determined the organizational structures developed to administer PAs and tourism (e.g., creation of secretaries or directions and their placement into the ministerial organization). Finally, these data were related to a timeline of key ideas, people, events, and organizations. Attending to the ruptures in observed discourses, institutions, and behaviors, we categorized and

Table 4.1 Reasons to protect nature and promote tourism, as identified in the legal instruments that created national protected areas (PAs) in Argentine Patagonia and other supporting literature

Meta-categories	Description	Value justification
Nature ideals		
Utilitarian	Rational use, overexploitation, sustainable development, natural resources, forestry, tourism, sustainable development	Instrumental
Dominionistic	Delimitation (property), mitigate overexploitation, control fire	Instrumental
Geopolitical	Border security, military purposes, lands control over Indigenous peoples and foreigners	Instrumental
Aesthetic	Beauty	Relational
Moral	Social order, displacement of certain people, activities, definition of good behaviors and moralities	Relational
Education-scientific	Educational, scientific, awareness, environmental education	Relational
Cultural	Identity, practices, traditions	Relational
Historical	Archeological, paleontological, modern history	Relational
Spiritual	Connections to place that transcend physical experience	Relational
Ecological	Flora, fauna, species, biodiversity, ecosystem representation, habitats	Intrinsic
Tourism ideals		
Elite	High end, foreign models, exclusive hotels	N.A.
Commercial	Economic sector, mass infrastructure, promotion	N.A.
Social	Workers, vacation camps, unions, education	N.A.

periodized the social-ecological history of nature conservation and tourism in Argentine Patagonia, delimiting three social imaginaries related to efforts: (a) to incorporate the territory into a Euro-nationalist enterprise (Euro-nationalism); (b) to expand the notion of nationalism to explicitly include workers and some previously marginalized sectors (New Argentina); and (c) efforts to mitigate diverse environmental crises, which themselves change based on perspectives more aligned with orientations that exclude or include people from nature (Environmental Crisis).

4.3   Results

4.3.1   PA Creation in Argentine Patagonia

Table 4.2 summarizes our analysis of how ideas of nature and tourism manifested within PAs (i.e., NP, NR, NM, NMR, MCIP, MIP, NWR, and MPA) created in Argentine Patagonia from 1922 to 2021, as well as structural policies that shaped the management of these PAs. For each PA, primary and secondary sources were

used to determine date of establishment, ideas associated with nature and tourism, stakeholders responsible for the implementation of ideas, and references [national decrees and national laws]. The first section of the table presents the results for the national system general legislation and the second section presents results for specific PAs.

From 1922 to 2021, 25 national PAs were created in Argentine Patagonia (Table 4.2). During this time, two periods clustered most PA creation in Patagonia: 1930s–40s (*n* = 7) and 2000s–2010s (*n* = 10). The "gaps" between these periods, however, should be understood in the broader national context. For example, while in the 1980s–1990s there were no PAs established in Patagonia, 13 PAs were created in other parts of the country.

Table 4.2 Analysis of how ideas of nature and tourism manifested and structural policies that shaped the management within national protected areas (PAs) created in Argentine Patagonia from 1922 to 2021

PA actions	Created (modified)	Ideas of nature	Ideas of tourism	Institutional actors	Ref.
General legislation for the national system of PAs					
National Parks Direction	1934	Control hunting, fishing, timber, mining & fire, importance of beauty & scientific value	Promote & regulate conservation, research & tourism, designating land for tourism infrastructure	Min. Agriculture	2
General Administration of National Parks & Tourism	1945	Importance of beauty & natural values	Promote tourism, teach the nation, including workers; NPs as tourist attraction	Min. Public Works	3
National Parks Administration	1980	Prohibit extractive uses (except hunting & fishing exotic species & tourism), protect flora & fauna, importance of aesthetic, historical & ecological values	Promotes tourism as economic activity & provides appropriate infrastructure for visitors	Min. Economy, Sec. Agriculture & Livestock	14
Argentine natural reserve categories	1990, 1994	Conserve strict, wilderness & educational & scientific values for ecosystem representation	Visiting for educational & scientific purposes	NPA	16, 17

(continued)

Table 4.2 (continued)

PA actions	Created (modified)	Ideas of nature	Ideas of tourism	Institutional actors	Ref.
Argentine National System of Marine PAs	2014, 2019	Sustainable use, represent & protect ecosystems, biodiversity & geological elements, use for education & enjoyment in the present & future, promote research & education	No explicit mention	NPA, Sec. Environment, Sec. Science, Min. Exterior, Min. Defense, Min. Security, Min. Agroindustry, scientific & university organizations, NGOs	24, 25
Specific PA creation					
del Sud NP	1922	Control overexploitation, protect forests, conserve flora & fauna	Regulate tourism to not affect nature	Provisional director	1
Nahuel Huapi NP	1934	Define boundaries	No explicit mention	NPD	2
Los Glaciares NR (NP)	1937 (1945)	Define boundaries, mitigate overexploitation, importance of aesthetic, scientific & cultural values, conserve species	Promote tourism, public enjoyment & use, implement appropriate infrastructure (including workers & economic resource)	NPD, mentions "local population" support (GANPT, unions, companies & municipalities)	3, 4
Perito Moreno NR (NP)	1937 (1945)	Define boundaries, mitigate overexploitation, importance of aesthetic, scientific & cultural values, conserve species	Promote tourism, public enjoyment & use, implement appropriate infrastructure (including workers & economic resource)	NPD, mentions "local population" support (GANPT, unions, companies & municipalities in 1945)	3, 4
Lanín NR (NP)	1937 (1945)	Define boundaries, mitigate overexploitation, importance of aesthetic, scientific & cultural values, conserve species	Promote tourism, public enjoyment & use, implement appropriate infrastructure (including workers & economic resource)	NPD, mentions "local population" support (GANPT, unions, companies & municipalities in 1945)	3, 4

Table 4.2 (continued)

PA actions	Created (modified)	Ideas of nature	Ideas of tourism	Institutional actors	Ref.
Los Alerces NR (NP)	1937 (1945)	Define boundaries, mitigate overexploitation, importance of aesthetic, scientific & cultural values, conserve species	Promote tourism, public enjoyment & use, implement appropriate infrastructure (including workers & economic resource)	NPD, mentions "local population" support (GANPT, unions, companies & municipalities in 1945)	4
Laguna Blanca NR (NP)	1940 (1945)	Protect from disappearance, conserve flora & fauna	Promote tourism, public enjoyment & use, implement infrastructure (including workers & economic resource)	NPD (GANPT in 1945)	3, 5, 6
Petrified Forests NM (NP)	1954 (2012)	Define boundaries, importance of paleontological values, (ecosystem representation)	Public use	GANP, National Tourism Direction-Min. Transport & Social Tourism (NPA and Sta. Cruz Prov. in 2012)	7, 8
Tierra del Fuego NP	1946 & 1960	Define boundaries, allow grazing	No explicit mention	GANP, National Tourism Direction	9, 10
Lago Puelo NP	1971	Define boundaries	No explicit mention		11
Los Arrayanes NP	1971	Define boundaries	No explicit mention	NPS—Min. Agriculture & Livestock	11
Lihué Calel NP	1976, 2003	Importance of scientific-educational, archeological, cultural & ecological values	No explicit mention	NPS—Min. Agriculture & Livestock, La Pampa Prov.	12, 13
Right Whale NM	1984	Importance of aesthetic, historic, scientific & ecological values	Excludes all uses, except scientific & "visitors"	NPA	14, 15
Huemul NM	1996	Importance of aesthetic, historic, scientific & ecological values	Excludes all uses, except scientific & "visitors"	NPA, National Flora & Fauna Direction-Sec. Environment	14, 18

Table 4.2 (continued)

PA actions	Created (modified)	Ideas of nature	Ideas of tourism	Institutional actors	Ref.
Monte León NP	2004	Importance for global biodiversity conservation	No explicit mention in legal documents	NPA, Sec. Tourism-Sta. Cruz Prov., CLT, GEF	19
Punta Buenos Aires NMR	2008	Importance of military, scientific, cultural & ecological values	No explicit mention	NPA, Min. Defense, Chubut Prov.	20
Southern Patagonia MCIP	2009	Right to a safe and balanced environment (article 41, *National Constitution*), manage natural resources, biological diversity, representation of ecoregions, conservation and rational use of species and habitats, protect landscape/natural/cultural heritage, environmental education, promote sustainable uses, public use for spiritual/mental well-being	No explicit mention	NPA, Chubut Prov., CENPAT, WCS, GEF	21
Makenke MIP	2012	Public use, sustainable development, rational use, environmental education, physical/cultural/spiritual health, scientific monitoring/research, aesthetic, healthy/clean environment, biodiversity, preservation, conservation, habitat	Develop provincial tourism	NPA, Santa Cruz Prov., Puerto San Julián Muni., rural property holders, local population, environmental NGOs, scientific-technical institutions, municipalities	22

Table 4.2 (continued)

PA actions	Created (modified)	Ideas of nature	Ideas of tourism	Institutional actors	Ref.
Pingüino Island MIP	2012	Public use, sustainable development, rational use, environmental education, physical/cultural/spiritual health, scientific monitoring/research, aesthetic, healthy/clean environment, biodiversity, preservation, conservation, habitat	Develop provincial tourism	NPA, Sec. Tourism-Sta. Cruz Prov., rural property holders, local population, environmental NGOs, scientific-technical institutions, municipalities	23
Patagonia NP	2015	Define limits, protect flora and fauna (particularly hooded grebe), right to a clean and balanced environment, protect natural heritage, wilderness, unique environmental & landscape	No explicit mention	NPA, Min. Environment, Sta. Cruz Prov., FFF. text evokes art. 41, *National Constitution* and *Convention for Biological Diversity*	26, 27
Staten Island & New Year Archipelago NWR	2016	Sustainable development, scientific research, importance of historical, cultural & wilderness values (present & future), use & enjoyment, protect biological diversity	Tourism referenced in the TDF Prov. constitution & decree associated with the national PA	Min. Defense, TDF Prov. Sec. Environment, NPA, Min. Interior Min. Public Works, Min. Housing, Sec. Legal Affairs	28, 29

Abbreviations: National Parks Direction (NPD), General Administration of National Parks & Tourism (GANPT), National Parks Administration (NPA), General Administration of National Parks (GANP), National Parks Service (NPS), Conservation Land Trust (CLT), Global Environmental Facility (GEF), National Patagonia Center (CENPAT), Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), Flora & Fauna Foundation (FFF), National Scientific & Technical Research Council (CONICET), Tierra del Fuego (TDF)

References (*NL* National Law, *ND* National Decree): 1. ND 8.4.1922, 2. NL12.103/34, 3. ND9.504/45, 4. ND105.433/37, 5. ND63.601/40, 6. NL13.895/49, 7. ND7.252/54, 8. NL26.825/12, 9. NL12.103 T.O., 10. NL15.554/60, 11. NL19.292/71, 12. ND609/76, 13. NL25.755/03, 14. NL22.351/80, 15. NL23.094/84, 16. ND2.148/90, 17. ND453/94, 18. NL24.702/96, 19. NL25.945/04, 20. Protocolo Adicional n°1 ANP-Min. Defense, 21. NL26.446/09, 22. NL26.817/12, 23. NL26.818/12, 24. NL27.037/14, 25. NL27.490/18, 26. NL27.081/15, 27. ND838/18, 28. ND929/16, 29. ND888/19

During the study period, there was also an increase in the types and structures of PAs. The first PA (i.e., del Sud NP) predates the formal system and legal structure; it was created by presidential decree. Early on, a series of seminal PAs were created first as NRs and subsequently NPs upon establishing the more formal legal structure and associated procedures (e.g., Nahuel Huapi NP, Glaciers NP). Only one park expansion was also associated with a change in status several decades after its initial creation, whereby Petrified Forests went from a NM (1954) to a NP. This process began with land purchases in the 1990s but was only changed legally to a NP in 2012.

Beginning in the 1990s, PA conservation objectives became more diverse; new administrative structures appeared like "strict," "wilderness," and "education" reserves. Plus, there was a focus on unrepresented ecosystems, such as coastal and marine areas (e.g., MCIPs); however, fully marine PAs were only created beginning in 2018. Given that the 1994 National Constitution devolved to provinces the rights over "natural resources," novel legal structures also were created to incorporate these environments into the national systems, when provinces were not willing to cede jurisdiction to the national government (e.g., inter-jurisdictional coastal PAs).

The overall role of tourism in creating these PAs has varied from being an explicit reason to being implicit. It is often absent from the legal instruments for the specific PAs evaluated in this study, except for more recent cases. However, it is frequently cited in other related documents, such as the legislation establishing the mission or functions of the structures that administer PAs (e.g., NL12.103/34, 3. ND9.504/45). During the 1940s, there was an explicit emphasis on "social tourism." However, the legal instruments themselves do not allow much interpretation regarding the earlier or later periods, and it was necessary to return to secondary sources (see Fig. 4.2). Nonetheless, it is notable that tourism first entered into the national government organization structure as a part of the General Administration of Protected Areas and Tourism. Subsequently, tourism evolved and gained importance, becoming a national ministry in 2000. For a period of time, the National Parks Administration was a subordinate of this ministry, although legally, it has had an "autonomous" status since the 1950s.

4.3.2 Local-Global Connections in Argentine Patagonia

4.3.2.1 Euro-nationalist Imaginary

As evidenced by the writings of F.P. Moreno (1942), the initial idea of national PAs in Patagonia arose in the late 1800s and early 1900s, emulating the United States NP movement that began under the presidency of Ulysses S. Grant in 1872, with the designation of Yellowstone NP and expanded during the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt (1901–1909). Roosevelt and Moreno reveled in one another's company, when the two traveled together during the former US president's visit to the area that would become Nahuel Huapi NP in 1913 (Scarzanella 2002). The idea of
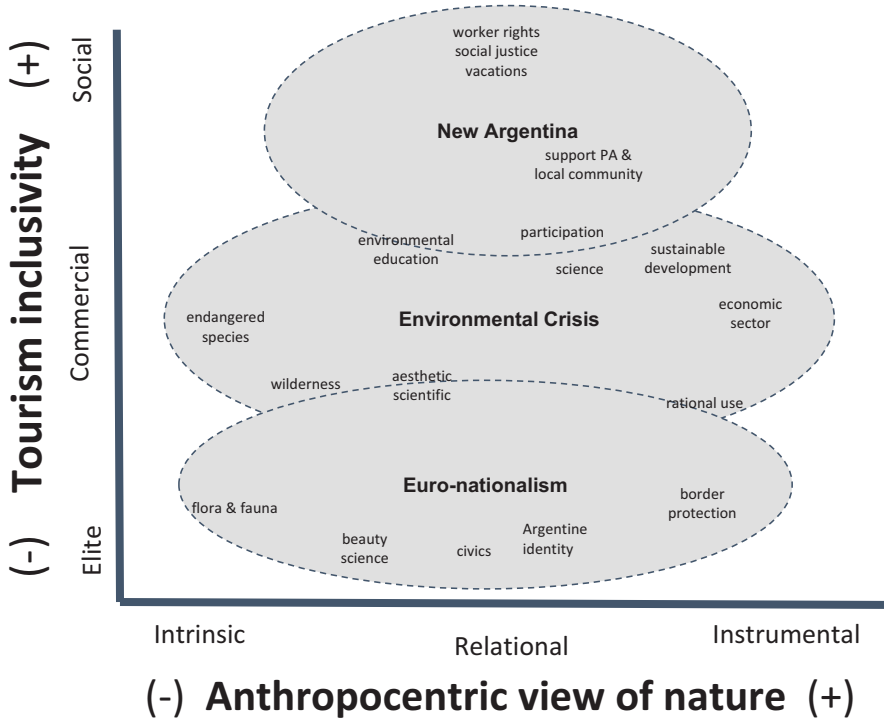
Fig. 4.2 Conceptual model of *Euro-nationalist*, *New Argentina*, and *Environmental Crisis* social imaginaries detected in official documents associated with Argentine national protected areas

conserving nature through parks was informed by international scientific under-standings and initiatives (e.g., creating museums and collections to exhibit biologi-cal and geological features) and by notions related to education and social concerns (e.g., the ideas of progress, nation-building, national identity, civic character; Fortunato 2005; Wakild 2017). These two concepts exemplify a duality that is per-vasive in Western thought, whereby nature is conceived both as a source of divinity and inspiration and as a wilderness to be mastered, civilized, and domesticated (Callicott 2008; Quijano 2000). This duality implies that nature is not just to be conserved by PAs but also "engineered" in many cases based on international (even global) standards of nature that promoted the introduction or prioritization of some (mainly European and North American) species or landscapes at the expense of oth-ers (Archibald et al. 2020; Dicenta 2021).

Valle's (1929) newsreel, *Por Tierras Argentinas*, illustrates early efforts to extend national sovereignty over this territory (Fig. 4.3a). Nature was portrayed as being national property, which extended from the tropical jungles to Antarctica. Nevertheless, the film highlighted that these areas, passed through a full range of European temperatures and that nature offered its various products, consistent with these temperatures. In keeping with the general tendency to create neo-European
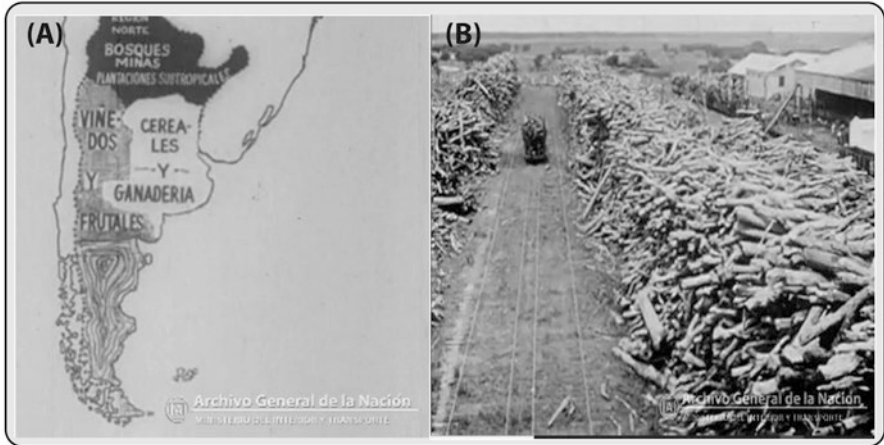
Fig. 4.3 Frames from Valle's (1929) newsreel, *Por Tierras Argentinas*

landscapes and species assemblages, Patagonia was associated with forest resources (Archibald et al. 2020). Images were also contrasted with the concept of zoos, an urban element of conservation. Through this metaphor, a modern kind of tourism was promised to citizens that would expand from Buenos Aires to the peripheries thanks to the construction of new roads and railways. When the newsreel's depiction of this future tourism addressed Patagonia, images focused on the native richness of industrial forestry (Fig. 4.3b).

This conceptualization of nature underpinned land management decisions during Europe's colonization of the Americas. This period was characterized by deep social inequalities and the power of a dominant White elite, including oligarchic families. While defending the postcolonial autonomy of the republic, these elite founders of the nation emphasized Argentina's European origins, while silencing its non-White citizens (Geler and Rodríguez 2020). Their power, however, did not go unchallenged; a series of events show the state's repressive reaction against change and contestation, including the "Infamous Decade," military coups, Indigenous genocide, and worker massacres (Bayer and Lenton 2010). The desire to live in and engineer a national space made of White and European subjects, or what Gordillo (2016) has called "White Argentina," was also a desire to live among "White animals" and landscapes (Dicenta 2021). The desire was also reflected in the creation of the first PAs, whose legislation did not mention the Indigenous peoples or others living in the territories and included mechanisms to regulate who could occupy lands, circulate, and conduct activities in the parks, and who could be evicted, criminalized, and fined. As evidenced by NL12.103/34's mandate to "evict intruders," while at the same time European immigrants could receive revocable settlement and grazing permits on those same lands (Picone et al. 2020).

The first Patagonian PAs were created as this social imaginary began to wane in political influence. Therefore, it is not cohesively reflected in the formal legislation and legal instruments analyzed in the previous section. We can place the creation of

del Sud NP (1922) and the initiation of Nahuel Huapi NP (1934) in this period, but subsequent formalization of these parks (1946) straddles the "New Argentina" imaginary. This difficulty of exact placement demonstrates the malleability of imaginaries and how their influences and affects are not discrete, but rather a continuum of dynamic, interacting forces.

4.3.2.2 New Argentina Imaginary

We also see this dynamism in an "elite" versus "inclusive" tension that played out in the conceptualization and operationalization of tourism. Beginning in the 1930s, tourism was seen as an emerging industry that would help the state's economy and geopolitical development interests, particularly in the area of Bariloche (Nuñez 2014). Overall, the initial tourism model in Patagonian PAs was imported from the Global North, with explicit reference and influence of the USA, Canada, Italy, and Switzerland (Torres 1954). Despite these "elite" origins, from its inception, tourism in PAs also had some recognition of its educational, civic, and patriotic functions. In his study of Patagonia, Sarobe (1935) built upon writings by North American engineer Bailey Willis, who had traveled around Patagonia to argue for social tourism, explicitly attacking the "elitist and colonialist" policies of the National Parks Direction. Under the leadership of Exequiel Bustillo, this agency promoted a vision for the Bariloche region as a European-style city for tourism, via elite hotels and summer homes (Navarro et al. 2012). In this elite tourism vision, nature was mostly conceived as an aesthetic resource for urban citizens in search of purity through contemplation and as a scientific resource for curiosity and exploration.

Simultaneously, this period's legislation permitted nature in PAs to be considered for other instrumental uses besides tourism, including hunting, fishing, logging, and mining (NL12.103/34). Overall, PAs were conceived as a management strategy for the national government to regulate and mitigate overexploitation of natural resources and to protect certain flora and fauna perceived as valuable due to rarity, autochthonous, or aesthetic values. In a mixed version of intrinsic and instrumental values, nature's aesthetic values and some native species were to be conserved, while simultaneously exploiting natural resources and promoting other introduced species (e.g., hunting and fishing exotic species, extracting timber). Plus, while there is little explicit mention of geopolitical interests in the legal instruments that created PAs in this period, these laws conceived of PAs as property, focusing a great deal of attention on their delimitation. Secondary sources also re-enforce this notion of PAs as "property" in a geopolitical sense to define borders with Chile, or in the case of Moreno's original vision, to create binational parks as a diplomatic strategy (Núñez 2014)**.**

The 1920s–1950s were marked by multi-scalar social-political processes affecting Argentina. Following the global market failures of the late 1920s and the post-World War II reconstruction efforts, national planned economies began to shape countries across Europe, the Soviet Union, and North America (Dinoto 1994). In Argentina, this international-level restructuring prompted modifications of the

Argentine state after decades of failed governments and military coups. There was a significant expansion of government purview, which included not just economic influences but also social and political aspects. Argentina's Justice Party consolidated under the leadership of President J.D. Perón, and placed a novel spotlight on workers' rights, bringing about further social protections and paid vacation. Chapter IV of the reformed 1949 National Constitution conceived property, including nature, as a resource "for" social justice and national development through the rational planning of a strong state (see *Constitución de la Nación Argentina de 1949* 2014). In this way, nature was portrayed as a resource for a "new" Argentina, based on modernity and democracy. Previously disposable workers became the central subject of the nation with the Peronist government, a welfare vision that also reconfigured notions of tourism, which became a social benefit for workers. Simultaneously, tourism also became a vehicle for social justice by teaching the national richness to every citizen and by expanding public access to nature, rather than restricting it to the elites. The "New Argentina" period further incorporated aspects of the previous imaginary and—like Moreno—Perón considered nature not only as a right but also as a "duty of knowing the fatherland" via its geography and environment. Nature tourism became a responsibility of Argentines to know their territory and become a fully nationalized citizen (Carreras Doallo 2012).

Indeed, a 1950 government manual (Anonymous 1950) presented projects for the nation's future, contrasting past injustices, misery, and uncultivated lands with the prospect of a new Argentina that would protect workers, children, senior citizens, and women. Within the worker's rights section, a page included the slogan, vacations for all who work (Fig. 4.4a). This page portrayed an image representing a past in which only urban and White citizens could enjoy natural resources, and a series of other images, representing the present (1950s), in which the ocean, the mountains, the country, the sun, and the purest air were for everyone. It promised that no one was excluded in the exercise of a real democracy that grants equality with respect to both duties and rights. In the 1940s and 1950s, many such images and initiatives were promoted in Argentina. For example, summer camps emerged for children and propaganda portrayed images of happy workers, packing their cars, and traveling to the mountains or the coast. Also, a family board game, *Rutas Nacionales,* was developed (Fig. 4.4b, photo: M. Dicenta); to win, the object was to reach as many Argentine destinations as possible.

Furthermore, to optimize every region's contribution to Argentina's economy, the rational extraction of nature became central to PAs and Argentine environmental legislation. For example, the Law for the Defense of Forestry Wealth (*Ley de Defensa de la Riqueza Forestal*, NL13.273/48) prohibited the devastation of forested land and the irrational use of forest products (Carreras Doallo 2016). During this period, protectionism also shaped Patagonian PAs, which would become sites for promoting civic values, but unlike in the Euro-nationalist vision, this "new" way of thinking about PAs would be more inclusive of broader swaths of Argentines. Central to the New Argentina imaginary was redefining who was considered the "public" for use and enjoyment of these sites. Explicit emphasis was placed on families and workers' right to vacation and a duty to engage in tourism as a vehicle

Fig. 4.4 Examples of materials used to socialize Patagonia in the 1940s and 1950s

for developing the PAs, local communities, and interior regions more broadly. The particularity of the model was its way of "synthesizing" the nation through its regions but also the intention to actively make it known to all social classes (Carreras Doallo 2012; Dicenta 2021). In 1941, the government institutionalized social tourism efforts with the National Tourism Direction. Additionally, paid worker vacations became law in 1945, and the encouragement to travel and explore the nation's territory led to more social tourism practices, opening tourism to the middle class (Carreras Doallo 2012; Picone et al. 2020).

As part of these social tourism practices, national PAs soon became a hot spot for Argentine working-class tourists (Picone et al. 2020; Rasmussen 2019). Indeed, in 1945, the National Parks Direction was fused with Tourism to become the General Administration of National Parks and Tourism under the Ministry of Public Works, whose Minister, Pistarini, had declared that:

> [w]e undertake tourism as a social goal. We want the masses to enjoy the beauties of the national parks so that in this way they will admire and love their fatherland more. The Ministry of Public Works can coordinate the transportation and soon will begin the construction of economical hotels. (Pistarini discourse, cited in Scarzanella 2002)

The incorporation of the NP system into Public Works further illustrated the emphasis on inclusive tourism for the working class, as well as the desire to utilize tourism as a national industry, especially through the development of hotels and transportation routes (particularly trains) to increase accessibility and use throughout the country (Carreras Doallo 2012). In 1951, the governmental tourism apparatus came to depend on the Eva Perón Foundation, while NPs transitioned back to the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (Carreras Doallo 2016). During this period, the system of national PAs was important to the second "Five Year Plan" as part of the country's broader planned national economic development (Carreras Doallo 2012). Additionally, tourism values were expanded upon in the 1960s, when new programs started to focus not only on recreational tourism but also on environmental

education and cultural tourism, further encouraging more visitation to PAs (Picone et al. 2020).

Nonetheless, the national myth of White exceptionalism did not come to an end with the socialist turn. Previous ideas from the Euro-nationalist period (e.g., genocide) were updated with softer mechanisms, including education, moralization, and assimilation policies. PAs at the time reflected the reconfiguration of older Euronationalist visions in socialist ideals with policies oriented toward silencing, evicting, and controlling the peoples who did not assimilate sufficiently. In this sense, PAs became a tool for the government to control and censor populations, to control foreigners, and to register who became sedentary and formed a monogamous family. It also became a way to control Indigenous territories, immigrants, political threats, and national borders with mechanisms other than war, military narratives, and guards.

4.3.2.3 Environmental Crisis Imaginary

Patagonia has long been part of the Western social imaginary as a "remote" or "desolate" place (Moss 2008). However, more recently, it has been at the forefront of global conservation and tourism discourse as one of Conservation International's designated areas of last remaining "wilderness areas" (Mittermier et al. 2003). Their criteria for this designation included an area greater than 10,000 km^2, with greater than 70% intact native vegetation, and population density of less than 5 persons per km^2. Patagonia is 147,200 km^2, with 95% intact native vegetation, and population density of 0.14 persons per km^2. This global status as one of the last areas of remaining wilderness, justifies both Patagonia's conservation (e.g., "we must protect it because there are so few left"), and also its use (e.g., "we must visit it while we can!"). It also can be leveraged by academics to obtain funding and recognition (Rozzi et al. 2012). In this way, Patagonia is "singularized" at an international scale, which can erode attention to local and national forces, values, and interests.

By the 1950s–1970s, the notion of *environmental crises* began to affect the international understanding of nature, based on factors like contamination increase, climate change, and biodiversity loss (Reboratti 2000a, b; Estensorro Saavedra 2007). This movement was affected by multiple factors, but in particular beginning in the 1950s, the emerging discipline of ecology consolidated, especially in North America and Europe, and to gain legitimacy, it focused on the quantitative study and management of nature (Golley 1993; MacIntosh 1986). At this time, ecology also initially rejected normative or ethical positions associated with advocacy (Callicott 2008; Fiege 2011; Worster 1994). However, by the 1980s, the new field of conservation biology consolidated within this academic domain, explicitly having a mission-driven focus to staunch the crisis of "biodiversity," a newly coined term that expanded conservation's purview from charismatic species to the "diversity of life" in all of its expressions (Meine et al. 2006).

Changing ideas of nature at the international scale were complemented by new environmental management strategies. In particular, a series of intergovernmental

meetings and programs arose that continue to this day. For example, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) was created in 1948 to help mitigate harmful human impacts on nature and has since played an influential role in standardizing and globalizing approaches to species conservation among its approximately 1,400 member states and organizations (Dudley et al. 2010). For example, in 1978, the IUCN created a typology of PAs that unified criteria, including ecological indicators like ecosystem representation. At the same time, thinkers "from the South" were also making local to global proposals with an explicit reference to humans in nature. For instance, in response to the "limits of growth" report (Meadows et al. 1972) that proposed reducing consumption at a global level based on purportedly "neutral" mathematical models to ameliorate the environmental crisis, the Bariloche Foundation in Argentina composed a multi-disciplinary team that recognized the need to incorporate normative and ethical dimensions of environmental decisions, including the ultimate goal of overcoming human misery in addition to nature conservation (Castro-Díaz et al. 2019). The local-to-global South-North connections are expressed by an early adoption of these integrated social-ecological ideas in PA management via the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Program's model for biosphere reserves, developed in the 1970s, that explicitly integrated human well-being with nature conservation via zoning of core, buffer, and transitions zones (Araya-Rosas and Clusner-Godt 2007).

Similarly, in 1972, the seminal Stockholm Meeting on the Human Environment was the first world conference to make the environment a major issue, beginning a globalized debate about a rational use of nature that would ensure its continued existence for current and future generations, but without questioning the precept that economic expansion was part-and-parcel of human well-being (Brundtland 1987). These ideas have become mainstreamed in multilateral instruments like the Convention for Biological Diversity, which was signed in 1993 and, in addition to recognizing nature's multiple values, calls for local participation, equitable access, and benefits sharing *vis-à-vis* biodiversity. Increasingly, there is an enhanced integration of issues highlighted by scholars from the Global South, such as equity, justice, and health, as seen in the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its associated Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations 2015; Castro-Díaz et al. 2019).

Environmental discourses from this period are based on ideas of "environmental crisis," where predominant academic disciplines and international approaches have held sway in the definition and valuing of nature largely from a "natural" perspective (e.g., ecological sciences). However, at the same time, these are not hegemonic influences, and the notion of "crisis" itself has responded to both local resistances and efforts to create more holistic and effective outcomes that conceive of the environment more broadly (Mace 2014). Indeed, today it is recognized that Indigenous peoples and local communities host the majority of the world's biodiversity, illustrating the importance of diverse human-nature interactions (IPBES 2019). Increasingly, the paradigm of "pristine" nature is disputed by alternative proposals that recognize humanity's role in niche construction, which refers to anthropogenic modification of environments (Ellis et al. 2010). For this reason, while this period is

characterized here as a response to the "environmental crisis," there is also an active transformation of what is understood as "environment" at local, national, and international scales (IPBES 2022).

In Argentine Patagonia specifically, we find an emerging expression of PAs that explicitly incorporate not only interjurisdictional legal structures (national-provincial) but also inter-institutional management strategies (co-management committees), including greater and broader participation (explicit recognition of local communities and other stakeholders). The outcomes of these approaches are seen in the creation and implementation of several PAs in Argentine Patagonia. For example, the coastal areas, including Southern Patagonia MIP and Monte Leon NP, were promoted under the aegis of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and with the active engagement of scientists. Newly created marine PAs were also an effort of the national government at the time to meet the Convention for Biological Diversity's Aichi Target 11, which entailed attaining protected status for 17% of terrestrial and 10% of marine national surface areas.

However, PAs in this period also express geopolitical objectives, as evidenced by the involvement of the Ministries of Defense, Security and Foreign Affairs in their co-management committees (Table 4.2). Furthermore, these efforts in the 1990s and 2000s were supported by academic and civil society organizations, such as the Forum of NGOs Dedicated to the Conservation of the Patagonian Sea and Areas of Influence, which brings together the efforts of more than 20 partner organizations from Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay (Foro para la Conservación del Mar Patagónico y Áreas de Influencia 2019). In this way, the more recent PAs display a broader understanding of nature and tourism but maintain many of the traditional values regarding instrumental use of these PAs for other purposes, such as military and economic goals.

4.4   Conclusions

Patagonia is not only affected by biophysical drivers but also social representations that are produced through the circulation of national and international ideas and their local encounters. This is especially evident when certain individuals or organizations obtain benefits by fetishizing the region both for its natural beauties or cultural singularities (e.g., aesthetic, ecological, or intrinsic values, Mittermeier et al. 2003; Rozzi et al. 2012), for its natural resources (e.g., livestock ranching, Caro et al. 2017; oil and gas exploitation, Hadad et al. 2021) and for tourism branding (Rodríguez et al. 2014). Today, the region faces unprecedented globalizing dynamics, but our analysis shows that these dynamics have been ongoing, albeit through different guises (imaginaries), for the past century (Fig. 4.5).

While in these PAs nature and tourism have been affected by international factors for over a century, not all drivers of social imaginaries are based on the Global North. Indeed, local and national efforts, and other international efforts emerging from the Global South, have also influenced particular management strategies. A
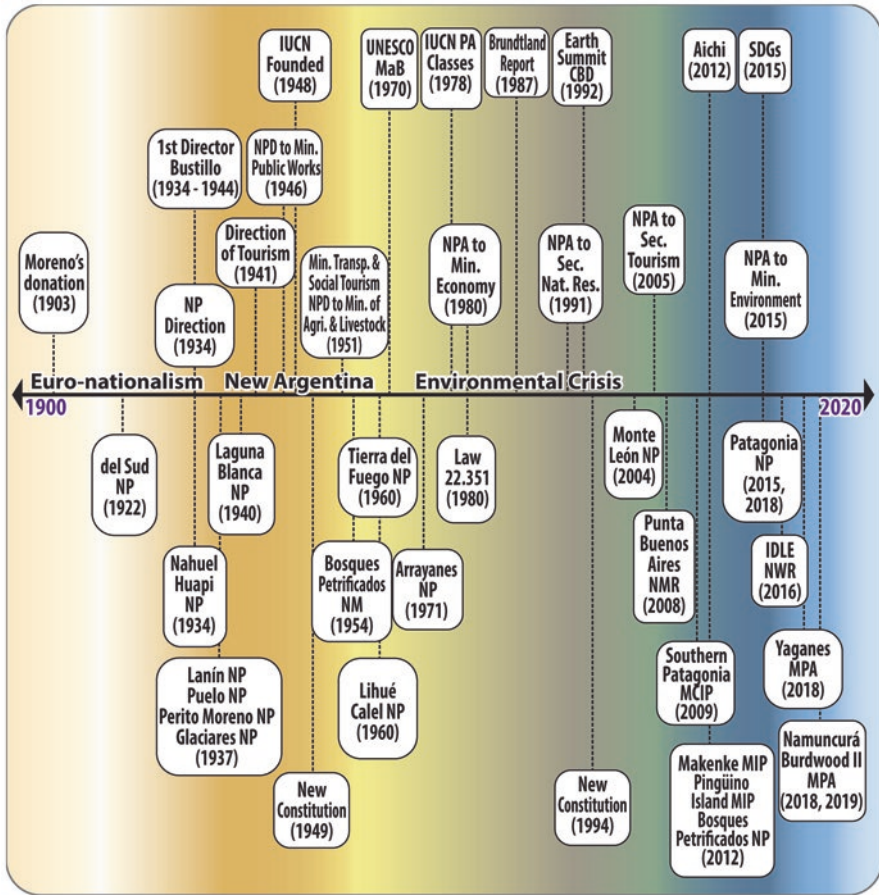
Fig. 4.5 A timeline of key events, legislation, and organizations help visualize the interacting dynamics that affect protected area creation in Argentine Patagonia

case in point is UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Program, which arose in the 1970s (Araya-Rosas and Clüsener-Godt 2007). Since the 1990s, globalized conservation based on "Northern" paradigms has been critiqued (and resisted) for often reducing nature to market-based solutions, cost-benefit analyses, and for imposing Western scientific values and top-down agendas over peripheral regions (Gudynas 2003). These agendas can displace local actors and—despite increased resources—not necessarily reach promised outcomes for local communities (Rodríguez et al. 2007). In some parts of Latin America, local communities have even been persecuted for denouncing that conservation often justifies land-grabbing and control over Indigenous territories (West et al. 2006; Trentini 2017; Nuñez et al. 2017), which has also been a concern in Argentine Patagonia (Martín and Chehébar 2001).

At the same time, PA co-construction based on local to global perspectives leaves room for addressing nature and tourism challenges in an inclusive way (IPBES

2022). Indeed, local participation and access and benefits sharing are principles inserted into Convention for Biological Diversity documents and today, equity and justice are part-and-parcel of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations 2015). Understanding national PAs' historical dynamics provides an amenable way to not only explore but also manage the complex, multi-scalar social-ecological system implied in the human-nature relationships both within the PA boundaries and beyond (e.g., Jax and Rozzi 2008).

PAs help illustrate the inseparability of social and ecological realities and their interactions. In this way, they teach us that nature and society are co-produced (i.e., "naturecultures," sensu*;* Haraway 2008). This approach complements more traditional interdisciplinary environmental research and management scholarship, which largely arose in the context of the natural sciences (e.g., Carpenter et al. 2009; Folke et al. 2011). It reinforces the fact that nature and society both have agency and are historically situated (Haraway 2008). Despite an increasing emphasis on integrating human and natural dimensions (Anderson et al. 2015), there is still a need for studies that avoid considering that the two are distinct domains or implying that nature is *merely* the product of social and cognitive representations, as if nature had no agency and history (Ingold 1993). Therefore, an in-depth exploration of how nature and tourism are co-creating PAs not only provides a vehicle to better understand Patagonia but also to conceptualize new approaches to conducting research. In this way, it should be possible to better engage the complex spatial and temporal dynamics that affect both nature and tourism and integrate the plural values at stake, and the multiple stakeholders and rightsholders involved (Mrotek et al. 2019; IPBES 2022).

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