

Geographical aspects and effects of Green Colonialism in Togo

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Abstract

Green colonialism is quite a new concept in scientific research, even if the term ‘colonialism’ seems to be a part of the past. The concept of Green Colonialism needs to be researched as it is closely linked to climate change and environmental protection. Previous research mostly focused on specific examples of Green Colonialism and most authors used their own definition of Green Colonialism. This thesis attempts to combine the different definitions into one and applying it exemplarily on two projects in Togo. To classify if a project might be Green Colonialism, a scheme and a decision tree is developed based on the established definition to allow for a consistent, comprehensible, non-arbitrary and reproducible classification.

The two analysed projects are a reforestation project by the German company *natureOffice* and the Nangbeto Dam project from the late 1980s to produce hydropower energy. The information for the analysis is gained by an intensive literature research. In addition, an interview with the project manager of *natureOffice* was conducted to gain even more, and direct information.

Based on the gained information the scheme and decision tree were applied. It showed, that both projects show traits of Green Colonialism, but ultimately could not be classified as Green Colonialism. The reforestation project fulfilled all green aspects of Green Colonialism, but did not meet any other criteria, because it includes all local stakeholders and support the socio-economic development of the local population. In contrast, the Nangbeto project did not fulfil the green aspects of Green Colonialism but showed traits of it in the financial and social aspects.

Key words: Green Colonialism, Togo, Nangbeto Dam, reforestation

Zusammenfassung

Grüner Kolonialismus ist ein recht neues Konzept in der wissenschaftlichen Forschung, auch wenn der Begriff „Kolonialismus“ der Vergangenheit anzugehören scheint. Das Konzept des grünen Kolonialismus sollte erforscht werden, da es eng mit dem Klimawandel und dem Umweltschutz verbunden ist. Die bisherige Forschung konzentrierte sich meist auf spezifische Beispiele des Grünen Kolonialismus und die meisten Autoren verwendeten ihre eigene Definition. In dieser Arbeit wird versucht, die verschiedenen Definitionen zu einer einzigen zusammenzufassen und diese exemplarisch auf zwei Projekte in Togo anzuwenden. Um zu klassifizieren, ob es sich bei einem Projekt um Grünen Kolonialismus handelt, wird ein Schema und ein Entscheidungsbaum auf der Grundlage der vorherigen Definition entwickelt, um eine konsistente, nachvollziehbare, nicht willkürliche und reproduzierbare Klassifizierung zu ermöglichen.

Bei den beiden untersuchten Projekten handelt es sich um ein Aufforstungsprojekt des deutschen Unternehmens *natureOffice* und das Nangbeto-Staudammprojekt aus den späten 1980er Jahren zur Erzeugung von Energie aus Wasserkraft. Die Informationen für die Analyse wurden durch eine intensive Literaturrecherche gewonnen. Zusätzlich wurde ein Interview mit dem Projektleiter von *natureOffice* geführt, um den Informationsgehalt zu erhöhen.

Auf der Grundlage der gewonnenen Informationen wurden das Schema und der Entscheidungsbaum angewandt. Es zeigte sich, dass beide Projekte Züge des Grünen Kolonialismus aufweisen, aber letztlich nicht als Grüner Kolonialismus eingestuft werden können. Das Aufforstungsprojekt erfüllte alle grünen Aspekte des Grünen Kolonialismus, erfüllte aber keine weiteren Kriterien, da es alle lokalen Akteure einbezieht und die sozioökonomische Entwicklung der lokalen Bevölkerung unterstützt. Im Gegensatz dazu erfüllt das Nangbeto-Projekt nicht die grünen Aspekte des Grünen Kolonialismus, zeigte aber Züge davon in finanzieller und sozialer Hinsicht.

Key words: Grüner Kolonialismus, Togo, Nangbeto Damm, Wiederaufforstung

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1 Introduction

Green Colonialism is a concept that is very recent and quite new in scientific research, even if the term 'colonialism' is associated with the past. It is a concept that needs to be discussed, as it is closely linked to climate change and environmental protection, some of the most pressing and controversial topics of our time.

It is a topic that is subject to distinct political controversies (WENDLER 2022). The countries of the Global North (e.g. European countries) are struggling to reduce their environmental footprint (EEA 2021) and their carbon emissions, failing to achieve their targets (CAN 2018). To reduce emissions, the Global North uses different strategies, often using the Global South for the reduction, for example via the voluntary carbon market (CARBONCREDITS.COM n.d.) or the *Clean Development Mechanism* (allows implementation of emission reduction projects in developing countries) (UNFCCC n.d.).

As a consequence, a lot of countries in the Global South and their indigenous communities are experiencing some kind of Green Colonialism. A new project, called 'Indigenous People of West Africa', in the Institute for Physical Geography at the Goethe University in Frankfurt under the direction of Prof. Dr. Jürgen Runge aims to analyse and critically evaluate the phenomenon of 'green colonialism', with reference to the Kabyè and the Peulh/Fulbe communities in Togo and Benin. This thesis has a broader approach, as it does not focus on specific ethnic groups, but on the whole country of Togo.

Togo is a country that was strongly influenced by various colonial powers in the past. First by the German Empire and then by France (CONRAD & O'HAGAN 2014). Nowadays the political and economic ties and the development cooperation between the two former colonial powers and Togo are close (MINISTÈRE DE L'EUROPE ET DES AFFAIRES ÉTRANGÈRES 2018, BMZ 2025). Germany supports many development cooperation projects. The *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* (short GIZ) currently has 22 active projects and programs with different focuses (GIZ 2025). The French equivalent to the GIZ, the *Agence Française de Développement* (short AFD), has 17 active projects and committed 428 million EUR between 2012 and 2022 (AFD n.d.). Through France the currency in Togo (CFA – "Communauté financière africaine") is stable as it is pegged to the Euro (HALLET 2008).

The aim of this thesis is to unite the various definitions of Green Colonialism made by different authors into one. Based on that, two projects will be analysed to determine if they might be classified as Green Colonialism. The thesis is structured in such a manner as to provide a response to the following two research questions:

- I. What is Green Colonialism?
- II. Can Green Colonialism be found in Togo today?

To answer these questions, intensive literature research and an interview are carried out. The literature research includes sources from 1905 up until today. A critical reflection on these sources is necessary as the information can be outdated or the topic could have been approached in an unobjective or biased manner, distorting the knowledge presented.

The definition of Green Colonialism developed in this paper is based on intensive literature research to allow a broad view of the topic with a clear definition. Based on the definition, a scheme and a decision tree are developed to analyse projects for Green Colonialism. It is used exemplary on two projects in Togo. One is a reforestation project by the German company *natureOffice*, which is part of the CO₂ certificate trading market. The second project is the Nangbeto Dam project, implemented in the 1980s.

To increase the available information, the project manager of the reforestation project by *natureOffice* was interviewed. The chosen method for the interview is a guideline-led expert interview as described by NIEBERT & GROPPENGIEßER (2014). Guideline-led interviews can be used to recreate knowledge in an open atmosphere while keeping structure (ibid.). In a warm-up phase the participants should get to know each other to create an open and relaxed environment (MEY & MRUCK 2007). To begin with the content-related questions a starting impulse is used to initiate a narrative-generating prompt (NIEBERT & GROPPENGIEßER 2014). This starting impulse should not be too introductory and not too general (MEY & MRUCK 2007). After that, the guideline and spontaneous questions ensure the flow of the interview (NIEBERT & GROPPENGIEßER 2014). At the end a debriefing should follow (MEY & MRUCK 2007). The guideline, created and used for the interview, is attached in Appendix A.

To ensure transparency a transcript of the interview was produced. The transcript of the interview for this study is not an exact verbatim reproduction of the interview, but a selective transcript. Incomplete or new started sentences and delay sounds were removed for a better understanding of the content. The transcript aims to present the interview as comprehensively as possible while not losing potentially important details. This method was chosen based on DRESING AND PEHL (2010). The transcript and a follow-up question via e-mail are attached in Appendix B1 and B2.

2 Definition of Green Colonialism

Green Colonialism has many different definitions depending on the author. The following is an attempt to create a generalized definition based on previous publications on this matter.

The expression Green Colonialism harbours positive and negative annotations. While the word “green” is nowadays perceived positive, especially regarding a green environment or green energy, the word “Colonialism” on the other hand has a negative connotation. The

“green” in Green Colonialism is used to describe the use of environmentalism and environmental policies in the context of colonial violence (SASA 2023).

Colonialism is defined as an exercise of power of a state or a state-like structure over a (indigenous) community, often based on armed violence. Colonialism is always territorial. The subjugated community is losing their political-diplomatic and international legal independence and becomes dependent on the colonising entity. These dependencies reach deep into the economy, politics, culture and social interests. The ruled and the ruling are strangers to each other in their political, economic, social and cultural differences. The goals of the colonising entity are unilateral and rarely are congruent with the interests of indigenous communities (TROTHA 2004).

In colonial times, there was an imperialistic attitude not only to people but even towards the environment. This behaviour led to environmental damages. The colonial occupation led to a fast ecological transformation in the occupied territories. For some, new forms of land management were welcomed, which were more interventionistic, and the first conservationist ideas occurred. This led to a new focus in science and a concept of environmental protection. With time, conservationism was deemed positive with an economic advantage as it was a sustainable way to secure, for example, timber or a good water supply. The structures of this conservationism were another tool to control disobedient subjects. The term “Green Imperialism” describes these proceedings (GROVE 1996). Green Imperialism can be understood as a predecessor of Green Colonialism.

During the colonial era the “white man’s burden” (BLANC 2022) was to civilise the African population in the colonies. This was supported by racist theories. Nowadays, the ecological burden, supported by environmental theories, is justifying the control over the Global South with the spirit of “the modern and civilized world must continue to save Africa from the Africans” (BLANC 2022: 22). Green Colonialism can be seen as an extension to that idea.

CLAAR (2022) defines Green Colonialism as the utilisation of EU-Africa relations and dependencies as means to combat climate change. These relations are often founded upon colonialism, racism and their present manifestations. HAMOUCHENE & SANDWELL (2023) describe Green Colonialism as the “[...] extension of colonial relations [...] to the green era of renewable energies [...]” (HAMOUCHENE & SANDWELL 2023: 30). This encompasses practices such as plunder, dispossession and the dehumanisation of others. Green Colonialism is accompanied with a transfer of socio-environmental costs onto peripheral communities. There is a prioritisation of the needs of one community over the needs of another. Colonial relations are characterised by the maintenance and exploitation of political, social and economic structures that perpetuate inequality, impoverishment, dispossession, exploitation and socioeconomic exclusion. The concepts of ownership and sovereignty are disregarded, and the ideologies of superiority and domination are obscured, while the plunder of resources, the privatisation of

common assets and the dispossession of communities is promoted, thus deepening undemocratic and exclusionary practices (HAMOUCHENE & SANDWELL 2023). The article of SANDSTRÖM (2024) states that Green Colonialism is defining to which extent the rights and welfare of indigenous peoples are affected by conservation goals. Green Colonialism also is used to “[...] include critical perspectives regarding policies that, under the guise of development, involves promoting and expanding practices like resources extraction and infrastructural development that implicitly rely on increased energy consumption” (SANDSTRÖM 2024: 127). These practices are justified by the need for a green transformation, while being questioned by indigenous communities that feel controlled by an ruling elite (SANDSTRÖM 2024).

Green Colonialism allows economic growth in the Global North that is dependent on the exploitation of resources, labour and land of the Global South. Especially green technologies depend on these resources. This is leading to an uneven development (CLAAR 2022). For a just transition from fossil fuel to renewable energy it is important to scrutinise power relations and hierarchies in the international energy system as renewable energy projects are used to consolidate occupation and deepening ties to the occupied territories with the complicity of international capital and companies (HAMOUCHENE & SANDWELL 2023).

The renewable energy transition, which is also included in the sustainable development goals (global sustainability goals for social economic and ecologic sustainable development (BUNDESPRESSEAMT 2025), is mostly funded by transnational capital and private funds. This often prevents local companies from profiting from the transition, as they are operating in capital poor financial environments and lack equal access to global capital markets. Foreign actors have better access to capital, technology and knowledge and therefore to a green economy compared to local actors, especially in African countries. The consequences of the limited access of local stakeholders are a reproduction of erstwhile colonial patterns with the advancement of technology being mostly in the hands of European cooperations. This allows asymmetrical relationships between countries of the Global North and countries of the Global South. The arising dependencies do not allow African economies to set their own priorities but forces them to react to foreign policies, like the *European Green Deal*. The *European Green Deal* was announced in 2019 by the European Union. It is a strategic initiative with the objective of achieving sustainable and environmental goals within the EU, while contributing to the global effort to combat the climate crisis as well. Foreign policies, like the *European Green Deal* and institutional frameworks are imposed on African countries, while the framework conditions in the African countries themselves can be vastly different. The countries of the Global South need to create their own policy space for economic development to make their own decisions (CLAAR 2022). The implementation and other political processes of the Global North can be seen in big infrastructure projects regarding renewable energy in countries of the Global South, which are funded by the EU or other donors. For example, destructive industries have been

relocated to the Global South in the last few decades while local marginalised groups are paying the price (CLAAR 2022).

To maintain the position of the subjugated communities in these colonial relations certain “tools” are used. These “tools” are mainly debt, free trade and structural adjustment programs that are implemented by multilateral financial institutions like the *World Bank*, which represents a significant external influence. A systemic exploitation is maintained by an imperialist economy, that is dependent on the plundering of resources and a transfer of wealth from South to North (HAMOUCHENE & SANDWELL 2023).

The growing necessity for a green transformation exerts pressure on the land that is acknowledged as the territory of indigenous peoples. Often development and resource extraction overshadow indigenous rights, and democratic processes have been observed to exclude indigenous perspectives. This leaves indigenous communities in a dilemma between a green transformation to combat climate change and potential disruptions to their livelihoods, their social structures and their well-being (SANDSTRÖM 2024). The missing involvement of local stakeholders and problems with poverty, landownership, destruction, militarisation of national parks and human rights violations in European led projects and programs are part of Green Colonialism. This missing involvement and the mentioned problems are reproducing the conditions of the colonial period (CLAAR 2022).

It is vital to consider, that Green Colonialism is also defined by a power imbalance. The industrialised countries are a powerful ‘centre’ surrounded by a ‘weak periphery’, represented by developing countries. These asymmetrical (power) relations already existed in colonial times. The underdevelopment of countries can be considered as a consequence of colonialism and imperialism with the result that development leads to a small number of international winners and many locals losing. An institutional bias between affluent and impoverished states aggravate these power relations (DORN 2022). Specifically indigenous peoples can be interpreted as a part of the ‘weak periphery’. They are suffering from climate change more than others, while being excluded from political decisions regarding climate change. Especially the exclusion from international decision-making bodies leads to a loss of sovereignty on an international level as they are dependent once more on others making decisions about their territories. This approach results in the prioritisation of well-intentioned environmental values over the values and needs of indigenous communities (PEARL 2024). Socio-ecologically destructive structures of exploitation are justified by the discourse on climate change. The commercialisation of climate change commodities is a necessity to current policies of climate change mitigation. The consequences are an alteration in access to land, forests and water and a decline of acceptance of environmental degradation and water consumption in favour of climate mitigation (DORN 2022). A systematic oppression and the maintenance of power imbalances in indigenous territories might be reinforced by mitigation efforts. This new form of exploiting and

dominating is a central part of Green Colonialism. An Eurocentric worldview is supported by the technocratisation of mitigation efforts which again reinforces the global power imbalances (RAMIREZ et al. 2024).

Green Colonialism also includes “green” land grabbing to acquire land and resources to meet environmental needs. It can occur in many forms. The creation of conservation projects might lead to the dispossession of indigenous peoples to gain their land and territories, or communal land is seized to produce biofuels. Another example of land grabbing is building solar or wind parks on the land of indigenous communities, sometimes even without their consent. Green land grabbing projects can be labelled as Green Colonialism as they do not respect indigenous communities and their territories (HAMOUCHENE & SANDWELL 2023).

The concept of Green Colonialism and green land grabbing is also connected to the concept of “green extractivism” as a green energy transition needs different raw material resources such as Lithium. The term “green extractivism” is used to describe extractivist activities, which are legitimised with the intention to facilitate a green energy transition. The needed resources for a green transition are mostly found in countries of the Global South. The growing demand for such resources puts pressure on land, ecosystems, livelihood and lifestyles. This can reproduce and aggravate already existing social-environmental inequalities. Furthermore a commercialisation of nature, the outsourcing of environmental costs and risk, and specific thought and action patterns are integral aspects of green extractivism (DORN 2022). More conflict lies between environmental instruments, preservation and protection and resource extraction via large scale mining projects if the mining area intersects with areas of cultural or ecological importance and traditional land tenure. These conflicts might be difficult to solve, especially if the mined resources are important to the green transformation (SANDSTRÖM 2024). The result of resource extraction without the consent of indigenous communities leads to an unevenness of energy transition. While the Global North mainly needs base minerals and rare earth metals like Lithium, Copper, Cobalt, Nickel and Graphite for manufacturing (e.g. for solar panels and batteries), most of these resources are found in the Global South (e.g. in Democratic Republic of Congo, Morocco, Bolivia or Chile). If it comes to mining in the Global South, the exploitation of workers and environmental destruction are no exception. The Global South is in a subordinate economic position, providing cheap resources and low-cost labour to industrialised economies, while simultaneously serving as a market for these industrialised high-technology economies (HAMOUCHENE & SANDWELL 2023).

Green grabbing also comes in the form of the creation of protected areas such as National Parks via the planting of rare tree species or the establishment of nature reserves. This kind of green grabbing can also be understood as Green Colonialism (SASA 2023). The idea of conservation is used as a means to prevent an environmental disaster such as climate change (KUMAR 2010). Nature is romanticised as wild or green havens, while indigenous memory is

written off (SASA 2023). Nature is understood without its inhabitants and is thus one of the driving forces behind the creation of protected areas such as nature reserves (BLANC 2022). The understanding of nature and its systems as wild and untouched does not allow for the comprehension that those systems are a result of generations of utilisation and cultivation by indigenous communities (SCHMITT & MÜLLER 2022). Thus, when conservation projects are implemented in the territories of indigenous people, it often happens without their proper consent, sometimes displacing indigenous peoples and leading to dispossession, violence and systematic discrimination against them (SANDSTRÖM 2024).

3 Togo

With a surface area of 56,790 km² (TOGO 2022) Togo covers 0,19 % of the African continent (INDEXMUNDI 2020). The small country with a north-south extension of 600 km and an east-west extension of 40 to 120 km stretches between latitudes 9° N and 11° N and longitudes 1° E and 1°20' E. The neighbouring countries are Ghana to the west, Benin to the east and Burkina Faso to the north (RUNGE 1990). The south of Togo connects to the Gulf of Guinea in the Atlantic Ocean with a coastline of 50 km (TOGO 2022). Togo's capital and government seat is Lomé (KOTHOR & LAWRENCE 2023).

Figure 1 provides an overview over its location.



Figure 1. Overview of Togo (own illustration)

3.1 Geographic Information

The relief of Togo is characterised by plains, with the Atakora mountain range dividing the plains from south-west to north-east. South of the Atakora mountains, the relief is dominated by hills and plateaus with deep ravines. Close to the coast the relief is homogenous. North to the Atakora mountains, a peneplain and smaller mountain ranges define the relief (TOGO 2022). The Atakora range is the result of the pan-African orogeny (ELICKI & BREITKREUZ 2023). The soils in Togo are iron rich tropical soils, ferralitic soils, hydromorphic soils and vertisols. Soil degradation and land erosion is high (TOGO 2022). In Figure 2 the relief is depicted in a map. The Atakora range can be easily identified by the brown colour.

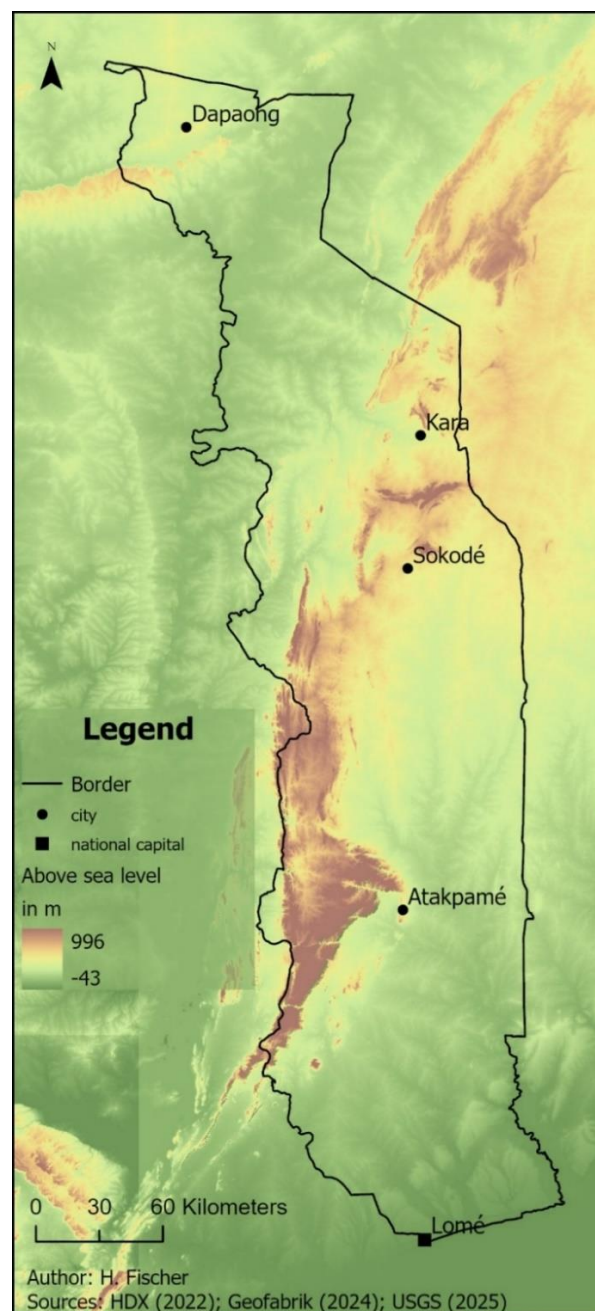


Figure 2. Relief of Togo (own illustration)

Togo's climate is classified as tropical, with averaged temperatures above 18 °C and dry winters. Notwithstanding this classification, parts of northern Togo experience a dry and hot climate (RUNGE 1990). After Köppen & Geiger (1936), Togo is experiencing an Aw climate in the South and North and an Af climate in between, describing a tropical rain climate with a dry season in the winter or a missing dry season. The climate can also be described as summer humid subtropic (SCHULTZ 2016). The average annual temperature in Togo is 27,1 °C. Depending on longitude, altitude, and land-use the temperature might differ. The omnipresent climate change makes Togo experiencing an increase in temperature and a decrease of precipitation (TOGO 2022).

Approximately 25 % of the country's surface area is used for agriculture, growing food crops like corn, sorghum, paddy rice, beans, tubers (yams, manioc), and legumes, with manioc dominating the food crops production. If cash crops are produced, it is mainly coffee, cocoa, and cotton. Roughly two thirds of Togo's populations livelihood depend on agriculture. In comparison, the fishing sector is of lesser importance, with industrial fishing at sea and small-scale fishing in rivers, lagoons, and lakes (ibid.).

Of similar size, forest covers a bit more than 24 % of the total land area. The forest areas mostly consist of protected areas to preserve ecosystems and areas that are protected because of tradition and sacredness. The existing forest can be identified as (semi-)deciduous forest, gallery forest, open forest, mangrove swamps, plantations, and wooded (and shrubby) savanna. This allows for a division into five different vegetation zones (ibid.). Figure 3 depicts the zones in a map.

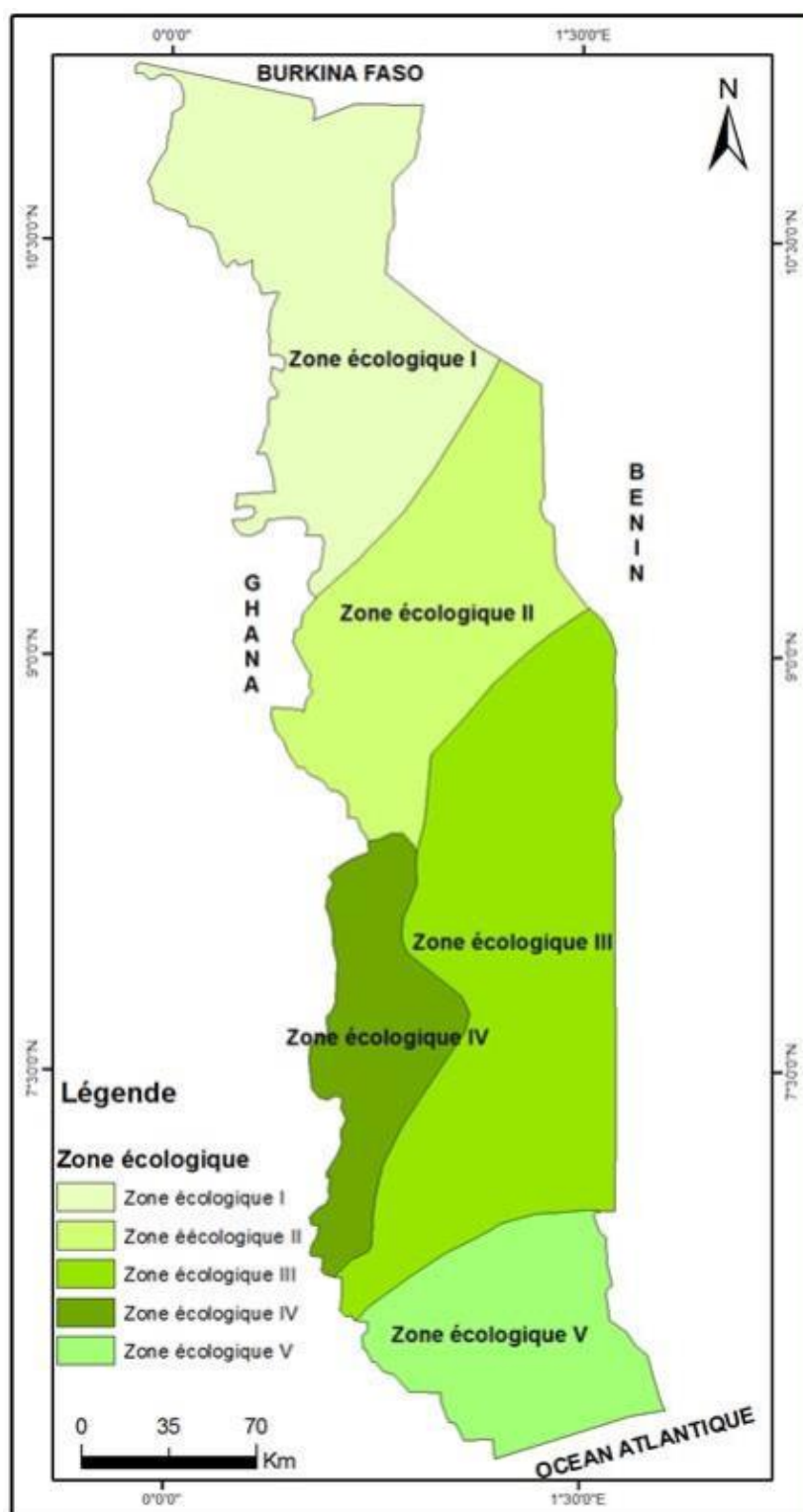


Figure 3. Ecological Zones of Togo (Togo 2022)

- Ecological Zone I: dry savannas of the northern plain
- Ecological Zone II: a mosaic of open, dense dry forests and mountain savannas
- Ecological Zone III: dense dry forests and Guinean savannas
- Ecological Zone IV: semi-deciduous dense forests of the South-West mountains
- Ecological Zone V: coastal dry zone, mosaic of forests, savannas, thickets, and prairies (ibid.: 14)

Although still an abundance of flora species can be found, there are also several species threatened with extinction or at least endangered by climate change. Especially the forest is vulnerable in that sense. As a counter measure, reforestation projects by the Togolese state and private reforestation projects are realised (TOGO 2022).

Togo had 9.3 Million inhabitants in 2023 (WORLD BANK 2023) with a population growth of approximately 2.3 % in the same year (GERMANY TRADE & INVEST 2024). The governing system can be described as a multiparty quasi-democratic republic, however ruled by one family since 1967. The primary language is French with other indigenous languages present throughout the country (KOTHOR & LAWRENCE 2023). With a GDP of an estimated 5,491 billion US-Dollars in 2023 (GERMANY TRADE & INVEST 2024), the biggest economic sector based on added value is services, followed by the industrial sector (BMZ n.d.). The industrial sector is dominated by mining (mostly phosphates and clinker) and food processing. Approximately 53 % of the Togolese population has access to electricity. Biomass (Charcoal and wood) is a main energy source, mostly used by individuals in their household, and contributed about 76 % of the national energy balance in 2018. In contrast to that, around 70 % of the national energy production is based on fossil fuels, while the remaining 30 % are produced through hydropower. The energy sector is under state control. In the last few years solar energy has been on the rise with an increase in solar power plants and private investors providing rural areas with solar kits and solar mini-grids (TOGO 2022).

3.2 History of Togo

This chapter will focus on the history of Togo. Togo has a complicated history with colonialism, with Germany colonising Togo first in 1884. After the First World War France took over, first as a mandate power and later, after the Second World War, as a Trusteeship. Considering Togolese history is inevitable to answer the research questions of this study.

3.2.1 Precolonial Times

The country we now know as Togo today, has a long history of human settlement, evident by rich archaeology sites (KOTHOR & LAWRENCE 2023). Prior to colonisation, Togo was involved in the slave trade between the 1500s and 1860s. The area was part of the so called "Slave Coast" (SEBALD 2013). The slave trade operated through ports just outside of today's Togo (CONRAD & O'HAGAN 2014).

During this time, the Togolese people kept to their subsistence agriculture and did not work in subsidiary industries to the slave trade (KOTHOR & LAWRENCE 2023). Around the 1820s, the slave trade receded in importance in favour of the trade with coconuts, palm-oil, and fishing (KOTHOR & LAWRENCE 2023, SOUMONNI 2009). The Afro-Brazilian elite, descendants of former slaves and slave traders, supported the trade between coast and inland financially. They

fought to keep Europeans out of their territory (e.g. Aneho). Over time, organised farms and complex market cycles were established, a development that built a foundation for the colonial trade and distribution that followed (KOTHOR & LAWRENCE 2023).

The first Christian missionaries arrived in 1847, before the territory of today's Togo became a colony under the German Empire. They laid the base for the independent Ewe Protestant church and a standardisation of the Ewe language (ibid.).

3.2.2 Togo as a German Protectorate

In 1881 a treaty of protection between a French consul and an important person of a clan, that is not specified in the literature, near Klein Popo was signed after the death of King G. A. Lawson II, before a new king was appointed. This protectorate was not published and was not officially seized, which was needed at that time to claim a territory as a colony, so in 1883 the new king, G. A. Lawson III, declared the treaty void and illegal. He decided on a new head of government, William Lawson, a British citizen from Sierra Leone (SEBALD 2013).

Trading companies from the German cities Bremen and Hamburg had outposts in West Africa since the mid-18th century (SCHWABE 1909) and felt threatened by these changes. They perceived the appointment of the new head of government as too pro-British and demanded the support of the German government. To protect German interests and solve conflicts between German trading agents and African potentates, warships were sent as outposts of the naval office. Such a warship reached Togo in February 1884. German soldiers stormed the city of Klein-Popo (today's Aneho). King Lawson III of Klein-Popo signed a treaty with the Germans. To ensure the treaty was kept, the German forces took two hostages. As soon as the Germans left, everything went back to as it was before the treaty. In the beginning of July 1884 negotiations were resumed, but they ended without success. A few days later, after setting the hostages free, Josef Nachtigal, a German General Consul, managed to negotiate a treaty of protection with King Mlapa III at Bagida Beach and it was signed on the 5th of July of 1884. The resulting protectorate reached from today's Lomé to just before Port Seguro on the coast. Both sides thought they had outsmarted the other (SEBALD 2013).

In 1885 the colonial territory was extended to Klein-Popo. This was achieved via an exchange with France. Germany got the coast from Port Seguro to Klein-Popo, while France got claims to Guinea. To move the colonial territory further inland, a four-kilometre-long border was laid in a right angle to the coast. With a new connection to the inland, trade was booming. The eastern border, 300 km into the backcountry, was negotiated in 1887 by German and French representatives and did not take the Indigenous tribes into account. The western border was expanded in an arrangement with the British in 1890 and cut through Ewe-territory (SEBALD 2013).

A German expedition north-westward in 1888 reached Yendi, a city in today's Ghana. During the expedition several treaties with local chiefs were concluded. On another expedition to Atakpamé and the mountains behind Atakpamé the station *Bismarckburg* was built. It was the base for further expeditions into parts of today's North Benin. Another treaty of protection was signed with the *Tschaudjo*-empire near Sokodé.

To make travel easier, especially for the advance into the backcountry, a road was built to reach Palimé. There, another station was built, called *Misahöhe* with a pass road over the mountains. Another German expedition to the North, signing treaties on their way, reached the Niger river near the city Say (SEBALD 2013).

Sometimes the treaties were bought with gifts (alcohol, fabrics, glass beads). The wordings of the treaties were kept relatively unclear in order to mask the real reason for their conclusion (KRONE 1990).

The stations served as bases for military expeditions, to break the resistance of indigenous people and were used for military training. They were local centres for the administration and the colonial economy as well, i.e. tax collection and control of roads and trade. More importantly for the indigenous population, the stations also disrupted the existing social and power structures (KRONE 1990).

Between Lomé and Palimé the people were subjected by the military and had to pay fines if they did not comply with German rules and commands (SEBALD 2013). The colonial rule was brutal and based on notions of racial superiority (CONRAD & O'HAGAN 2014).

Violence against the Togolese people was not uncommon, though threats of punishment were mostly enough to secure the people's future obedience. Nevertheless, the resistance against the Germans never fully stopped. The people took to easy and effective actions, like giving wrong geographical information or refusing to provide food to the colonial forces, as a means to resist. If it came to more active resistance, it was mostly spontaneous, and the Togolese people used the forest for attacks as they were inferior in weaponry. Despite that, Togo was seen as a "Musterkolonie" (model colony) by Germany (KRONE 1990).

Among the Ewe in the south there was no major uprising (CONRAD & O'HAGAN 2014). But a mercenary group was sent to North Togo to ensure subjugation there as people wanted to break free from the German colonial rule. Here, resistance was much higher than in the South and eventually it got so extreme, that the other colonial powers intervened, and France and Britain encroached in North Togo. Local chiefs felt obligated to sign treaties with everyone and all of the three colonial powers active in the area tried to realise their asserted claims. This led to negotiations in Europe, where the colonial borders were contractually stipulated between Germany, France and Britain. In these negotiations, the German Empire lost the territory at the Niger but gained the delta of the Mono River. Not only did the new borders separated tribes

and political units, but the German administration decided to separate the tribes within their borders with military force (SEBALD 2013).

To protect European companies from African competitors, corporate taxes and customs duties were established. A comprehensive administrative system was created (SEBALD 2013).

The colony had an inconsistent legal status. Although the colony was a part of Germany under international law, the laws of Germany did not apply. Instead, executives could make their own laws, regardless of the law code. Most of the power was held by the governor and his office. The governor was exchanged every few years, which brought changes of policies. Below the governor were the so called "*Bezirksamtmänner*", who had various competencies and were rarely controlled by the governor. Their power enforcement was quite aristocratic, and they insisted on their independence from the government. This led to very heterogeneous bureaucracies within the colony. Some German officials tried to restore local traditions or reference them in their ruling, so it would be less disruptive. These so called "native laws" were developed by legal experts. Still, a right to participate in the legal process remained inaccessible for the colonised (CONRAD & O'HAGAN 2014). The regime can be classified as racist and only German people were allowed to hold positions in the administration (SEBALD 2013).

The colony was self-financing, a concept that was kept by the French after World War I. The dominating exported products were palm oil, palm kernels, caoutchouc, and ivory (SEBALD 2013). The exported products stemmed from the existing native industry, with Ewe producers and merchants staying influential in the colony. Another influential party was the Afro-Brazilian Elite, who dominated and controlled the trade in coastal areas (CONRAD & O'HAGAN 2014).

To export those products, a landing bridge was built, as the currents of the Atlantic did not allow any other efficient way to load ships. The landing bridge opened in 1904. It was destroyed only a few years later, in 1911, by the sea swell. The repairs lasted a year, and it was rebuilt based on a French construction method (SEBALD 2013).

Another big infrastructural project was the railway from Lomé to Palimé. It took 20 years after the colonial occupation began to start the project. The reason for the delay was mainly the financial situation. The colony had to prove to the German Empire's government, that they could repay any financial aid from the Imperial Treasury. The railway took three years to be built and was finished in 1907. Another railway, along the coast, was built between Lomé and Klein-Popo in 1905 for the transport of goods. Later it was also used for public transport. The longest railway line was planned to connect Lomé to Mango via Atakpamé, Sokodé and Bassari. One goal of the project was to connect the coast to Banjeli, where a large iron deposit was found (SEBALD 2013). Some gold reserves were also found but they were never exploited (SCHWABE 1909).

The railway project was never finished as the colonial administration lacked sufficient funds. The tracks reached the village Agbonu in 1911 with an added branch line to Atakpamé in 1913. Only one third of the colony was connected by train (SEBALD 2013).

For the construction of the railways, houses, radio towers and stations of the administration, a lot of wood was needed. Forest experts of the time claim, that the vegetation of Southern Togo was once dominated by rainforest, but over time only little remained. To compensate the missing resource, wood was imported. This was a restriction, that was to be eliminated with a 25-year program of reforestations. It began in 1907 with one project at the bend of the river Haho. The reforestation was also meant to provide a protection against grass burns. Plus, it aimed for a cooler climate and more even water levels in rivers. Further reforestation happened near Sokodé, but was stopped because the planned railway would pass through the area. Close to Yendi another reforestation project took place. In addition to reforestation, forest reserves were created in 1912. In these reserves burning and cutting was prohibited. The reforestation was not very costly as the workforce consisted of tax workers. Tax workers were quite common. Instead of paying taxes, people could work a certain number of days for the administration. These reforestation and forest reserve projects matured over time and the French administration continued these programs (KNOLL 1978).

Before Togo was colonised, Christian Missionaries from different countries arrived in Togo. They did not purely act as missionaries, but also as teachers and ethnographic and linguistic researchers (KOTHOR & LAWRENCE 2023). So even before the colonisation, English was a known language as most of the missionaries were English-speaking. The Germans established the German language as the language of command. In many parts of the colony however, they decided to use translators instead of teaching German, which led to that the German population could not be understood. This changed slightly with the establishment of governmental schools. These schools aimed to train new translators and employees for the administration. A second school for further education was started in Lomé in the year 1911 to help with the education of future government employees. These governmental schools created a conflict between the administration and the missionaries, as the missionaries deemed teaching as part of their mission and the governmental school took that away from them. In the end, German never became the Lingua Franca in the colony (SEBALD 2013).

The presence of the German state was quite limited, as it was represented only by a few administrators. They mostly made sure that, economically, the territory was exploited. The most valuable asset of the territory was not the land, but the people as potential workers (CONRAD & O'HAGAN 2014). The exploitation of cheap labourers from North Togo was common. Development mostly happened in South Togo, while the North was neglected. This created regional and social differences, which are still visible after the end of colonisation (SEBALD 2013).

Shortly after the start of the First World War, a British peace envoy requested from the governor of Lomé the surrender of Lomé and the South of Togo peacefully within 24 hours. The Germans evacuated Lomé and Aneho and moved to Atakpamé and Kamina. The North of Togo was occupied by French forces. There were fights between the German forces and the British and French troops. A lot of German soldiers deserted. Ultimately, the German forces surrendered on the 26th of August in 1914, after just 20 days of resistance. France and Great Britain divided the colonial area at random and took over the administration (SEBALD 2013).

Figure 4 shows the borders of Togo as the German protectorate and the new borders following World War I. The shaded areas were the part that was taken under British administration, the rest was taken under French administration (FRIEDEMANN 1921).

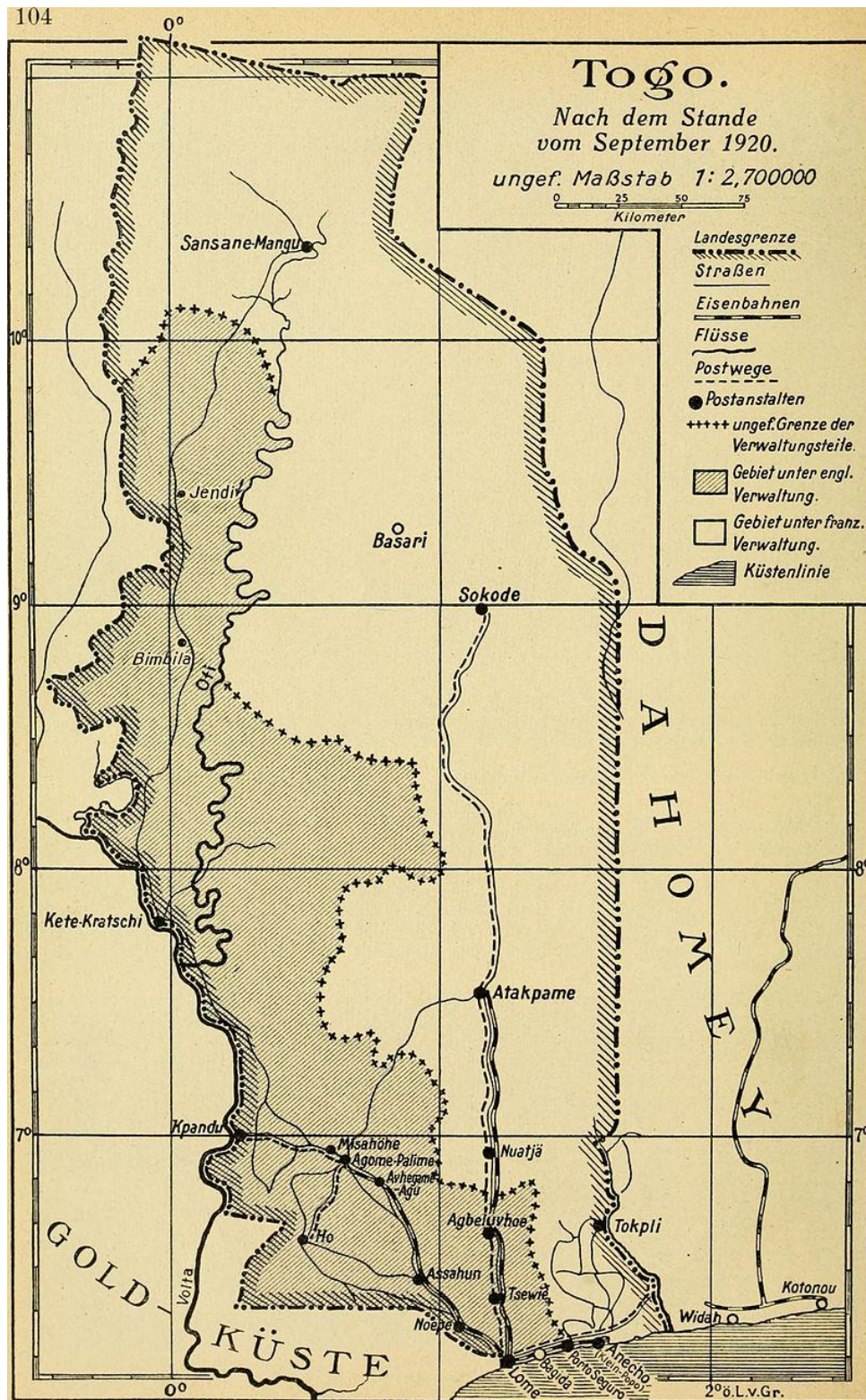


Figure 4. Borders of Togo in 1920 (FRIEDEMANN 1921)

3.2.3 Togo under French Administration

During World War I Togo was ruled as a condominium (AUTHALER & MICHELS 2014) and had to provide people, labour, food and other resources to France. The population decreased because of fighting, sickness, and famine. Anticolonial sentiment was fuelled by the effects of World War I (KRONE 1990).

All colonial territories were officially stripped from Germany at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 (CONRAD & O'HAGAN 2014). The treaty of Versailles stated, that one third of the former Togoland colony will be under British administration, while another two thirds will be under French administration (SEBALD 2013). The new boundaries were decided by a commission with explicit directions to not separate villages and the associated lands. Furthermore, inhabitants could choose to move to the corresponding other territory if they declared their intent no later than six months after the separation (COLEMAN 1956). The United Kingdom and France were to act as mandate powers, overseen by the League of Nation Mandates Commission (COLEMAN 1956). The British administered territory later became part of Ghana, which became independent in 1956. Accordingly today's Togo is the former mandate territory of France (CONRAD & O'HAGAN 2014).

The French mandate territory was controlled by the French Minister of Colonies and was never part of the Federation of French West Africa (COLEMAN 1956). France ruled indirectly by maintaining and delegating already existing (political) institutions. Via the new territories gained after the First World War, France wanted to reconstruct their economy, which had suffered from the war. An increase in economic output was expected of Togo. In line with the traditional French centralism, the administrative structure was hierarchical with the legislative and executive powers based in Paris. Segregation was an important part of the administration, as the legal system was based on the difference between the citizens and subjects. However, most German laws were still in place with an addition of international norms (AUTHALER & MICHELS 2014). The Togolese people did not have French nationality or owed allegiance to the French Republic, but as there was no Togolese citizenship, they were considered citizens of the French Union (COLEMAN 1956).

Under the French administration, centralisation increased, traditional chiefly authorities were reinforced, and the political authority of the Ewe-speaking elite was consolidated (KOTHOR & LAWRENCE 2023). The preservation of traditional chiefs and the integrity of the already existing authority systems was achieved by reducing disruptive influences and supporting a system of rule through the traditional authority system. This especially worked in the northern parts of Togoland, while the South had less centralisation and more dispersed authority. This difference was because of cultural differences within the population of Togoland, as Togo has a lot of different ethnicities with their own cultures. The difference between North and South was also caused by a much earlier and more consistent westernisation of the South. The French administration disregarded the traditional groupings and cultures of the Togolese people (COLEMAN 1956).

The administration by France as a mandate power can be seen more as a continuation of the colonial rule rather than a break with it. The German population kept some power, as they were landowners and big employers (AUTHALER & MICHELS 2014).

In the 1930s revolts against the administration started. As a counteract the *Cercle des Amitiés Française* party was formed that later turned into an independence party (KOTHOR & LAWRENCE 2023).

After the Second World War, it was decided by the United Nations, that the territories of the former German colonies were to be turned into trust territories with the eventual goal of sovereignty (SEBALD 2013). The UN-charter article 76 states the trusteeship is to “[...] promote the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the inhabitants of the trust territories [...]” and to respect human rights, fundamental freedoms and to guarantee equal treatment in social, economic, and commercial affairs (UNITED NATIONS n.d.). Over the years under the UN Trusteeship, three visiting Missions were sent to report on the situation in Togoland. The primary role of these mission was to determine the opinion of the general public toward the Trust Territories and the administration. The trusteeship was seen as temporary by the UN (COLEMAN 1956).

The French policies following the change in administration aimed to keep Togoland close to the French Union. There was fear, that Togolese independence could weaken the French Union. The administration believed, Togo would profit long-term from a Franco-African political system with a close relationship between France and Togoland. The goal to reach autonomy of the Togoland territory was introduced with new constitutional reforms, following repeated criticism by the United Nations. Furthermore, economic and social developments were added to the reforms. At the same time France strengthened its power in Togo by supporting pro French sentiments and hindering political components who were against the French presence in Togo. Opposition parties were oppressed by the traditional authorities. The police and the administration interpreted laws in extreme ways to take action against opponents of the administration (ibid.).

As demands for independence rose, the elected representatives of Togo requested in 1949 to end the UN Trusteeship by the year 1955. A unification of both Togolands as its own country or a merge with the Gold Coast were rejected by the administering authorities. The General Assembly of the UN concluded in December 1955, that the people of French Togoland shall be consulted on the matter of independence like British Togoland planned with their plebiscite. This led to the introduction of universal suffrage in Togoland and to the decision to hold a referendum. In the referendum the citizens could decide between a statute that would grant territorial, administrative and financial autonomy or the continuation of the Trusteeship. The referendum was not observed by the UN (COLEMAN 1956). The referendum took place in October 1956 and the people voted in favour of the new statute to end the Trusteeship. In the UN the perception prevailed that France moved to fast with the referendum within the political evolution of Togo (HORN 1958). The part of Togo under French administration gained total independence in 1960 (SEBALD 2013).

3.2.4 Togo after Independence

The first president of Togo was Sylvanus Olympio. His economic and social policies did not fulfil the expectations of the people. Especially demobilised soldiers, who wanted to enter the Togolese army, were unhappy as their request was refused. This led to a military coup just three years after independence, with the military renouncing the power to a civilian administration shortly after (HOUNGNIKPO 2000).

Another four years later, a second coup, benefitting from an uprising against the regime at that time, made Étienne Gnassingbé Eyadéma president (ibid.). He changed the distribution of economic resources and started a program that made ethnic identities more important. Through increased tourism and inflated export prices, Togo experienced economic success for a short time in the 1970s. From the onwards falling phosphate prices and international debt led to economic stagnation in the late 1980s, which laid the base for social and political disturbances (KOTHOR & LAWRENCE 2023).

Eyadéma lost the presidency for a short time in 1991 due to political protest. At the end of 1992 he was back in power though, using violence to restore his position. With every governmental change over the years a new constitution was adopted (ibid.).

Presidential elections continued during the time with Eyadéma always winning. The opposition contested the elections and boycotted them in 1999, which did not change the outcome (HOUNGNIKPO 2000). Until Eyadéma's death in 2005 several parties tried to challenge his authority. They were met with violence, leading to the murder and death of civilians, dissidents and rivals of Eyadéma (KOTHOR & LAWRENCE 2023).

After Eyadéma's death his son Faure Gnassingbé became president. With the offer to form a government of national unity, proclaim a democratic transition, and hold parliamentary and presidential elections, it could be argued that this is just a façade to appear democratic in order to secure the flow of foreign aid. There are still an ethnic and socioeconomic divisions, leading to nationwide protests of women against the power of the Eyadéma family. The discontent increased due to measures taken during the Covid-19 pandemic, like the introduction of curfews, and still continues (ibid.).

4 Green Colonialism in Togo today

Green Imperialism as a predecessor of Green Colonialism first appears in Togo in a reforestation program during the colonial time (see Chapter 3.2.2). The German colonial rule aimed not only to extract timber resources but to reduce floods and improve the climate via reforestation.

To determine whether Green Colonialism is present in Togo today, two different projects were chosen for analysis in regard whether they can be classified as Green Colonialism. The first project, *Project Togo* by *natureOffice*, was chosen, because of the reforestation aspect of the project. The reforestation in this project aims to compensate CO₂ emissions and to take part in CO₂-trading (NATUREOFFICE 2025d). The second project, Nangbeto Dam, was chosen, as hydroelectric power is as renewable, sustainable and climate friendly energy source (MET-GROUP 2025) and thus meets the green aspect of Green Colonialism. Figure 5 shows the location of both projects in Togo.

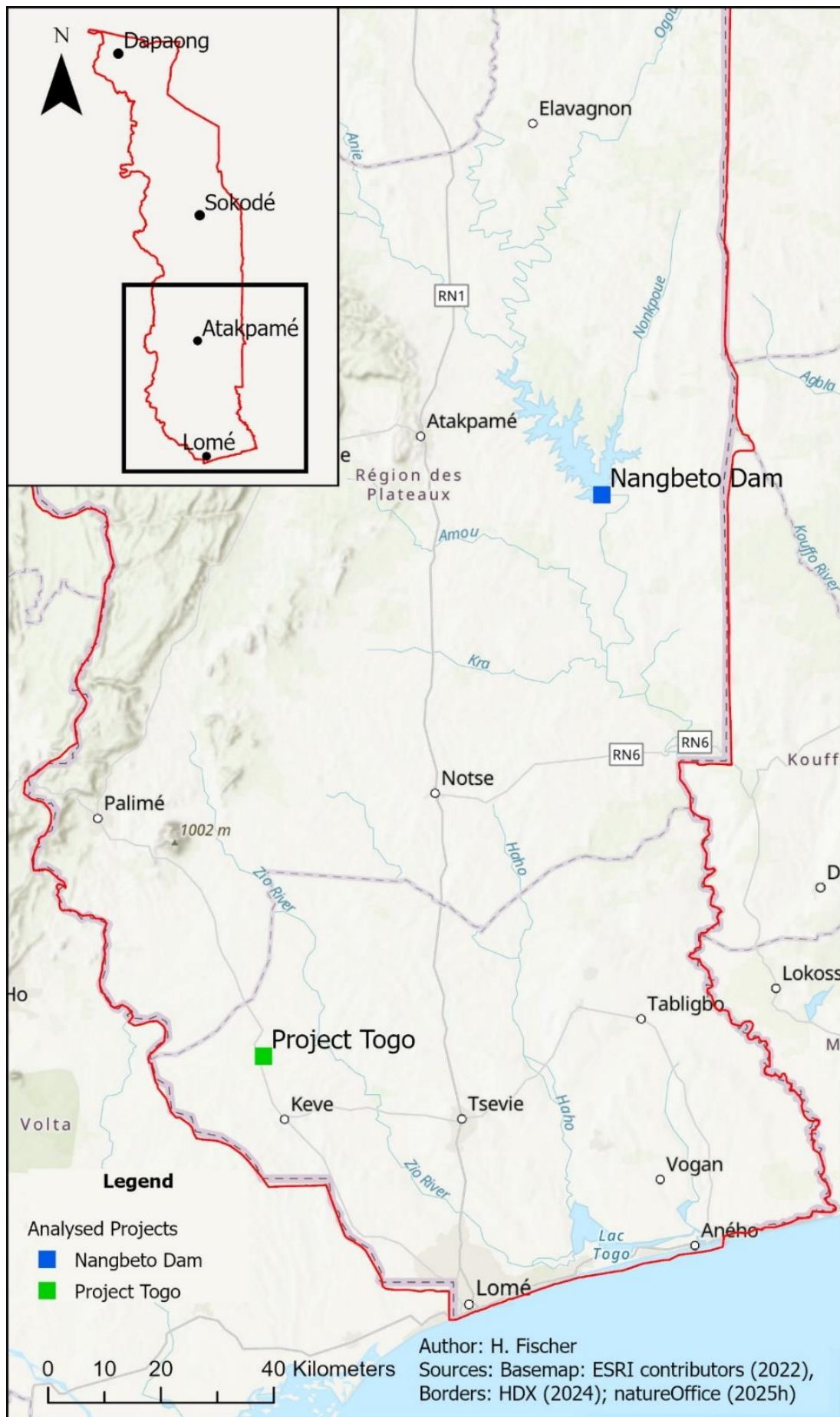


Figure 5. Location of the analysed projects (own illustration)

4.1 *Project Togo* by *natureOffice*

To gain insight into the first project, a brief introduction of the company behind *Project Togo* is important.

4.1.1 General information about *natureOffice*

natureOffice is a German company, active in CO₂ Management since 2008. They offer to analyse and reduce corporate greenhouse gas emissions, support companies to reach sustainability goals and consult in sustainability strategies. With their help, companies can create climate balance sheets according to international standards and are supported in identifying possible climate protection projects to compensate for emissions (NATUREOFFICE 2025d). These CO₂ balance sheets can be made for products, processes and whole companies. It allows for an analysis of their environmental impact. Software solutions to create balance sheets are also offered (NATUREOFFICE 2025c).

For a clear communication of climate balance sheets, sustainability goals, strategies, and transparency regarding CO₂ Emissions, *natureOffice* supports or creates sustainability reports and provides risk management consultancy. The implementation of new processes and systems to minimise cost, time, resources and the ecological footprint are also offered as services to support a change towards sustainability. These changes can be implemented through workshops and training courses for companies (NATUREOFFICE 2025i, 2025e).

To record emissions, a product carbon footprint or a corporate carbon footprint can be calculated. The product carbon footprint allows an assessment of the environmental impact of a product and lays the foundation for efficient use of resources. It is possible to only assess the footprint for the production of the product or to include its whole life cycle. A corporate footprint allows to form strategies to reduce or avoid emissions. Both carbon footprints follow international standards (NATUREOFFICE 2025f, 2025a).

If CO₂ compensation is needed, *natureOffice* offers various projects to achieve compensation (NATUREOFFICE 2025e). These projects not only aim to compensate CO₂ emissions, but also try to combat climate change, protect the environment, and promote quality of life. International criteria and standards must be fulfilled within the projects. The three leading standards are the *Clean Development Mechanism*, the *Verified Carbon Standard* and the *Gold Standard*. The projects of *natureOffice* include hydropower, wind and solar energy in India, solar energy in Mauritania, energy efficiency and clean drinking water in Malawi, energy-efficient ovens in Nigeria, climate and environmental protection management in Germany and reforestation in Uruguay and Togo (NATUREOFFICE 2025b).

The *Project Togo* was chosen for this study as a representation of reforestation projects with an economic interest in Togo.

4.1.2 Project Togo

“Project Togo” is one of many climate protection projects of *natureOffice* (NATUREOFFICE 2025g). In 2010 first ideas for the project came up and reforestation started in 2013 with the goal to fix carbon through the reforestation of natural forest. In the project’s duration of 30 years, 450,000 tons of CO₂ are to be fixed to create CO₂ certificates for trading. There are some considerations to expand the project duration, but that must be approved by the land-owners. As a bonus to the fixation, the forest can promote biodiversity, produce oxygen, serve as a dust filter, regulate the water regime, protect from erosion, and serve as a sustainable resource. These reasons, plus the strong impact of climate change on West Africa, makes reforestation in countries of the Global South important. Next to reforestation for carbon fixing, companies can donate whole forest areas (more than 1,000 trees), as a social and a political statement, to show support of biodiversity. Donated trees are mostly planted around the villages and can be a source of income and food, when fruit trees are planted. They can also strengthen the connection between the local population and nature (NATUREOFFICE 2025h).

The project is not only a reforestation project but also includes social and developmental projects in the villages close to the reforestation areas, as it became clear, that reforestation alone would not work over a long period of time. Other sub-projects include an improved water supply by filter systems and well construction, instalments of solar panels, first-aid workshops and other needed health improvements, an education centre to improve literacy, creating jobs via beekeeping, animal husbandry, and agricultural co-operatives. Furthermore, meeting houses, sanitary facilities, and sportsgrounds for the young population were built (NATUREOFFICE 2025g, LIEMERSDORF 2025a). The focus of this study will only be the on the reforestation part of the project.

To finance the project, CO₂ certificates are created through the project for trading. Another financial source is the voluntary CO₂ compensation market. Donations of trees by companies to create corporation forests are also used for reforestation. Companies can also finance or financially support other sub-projects, if they choose to, by providing money to *natureOffice*, which *natureOffice* then uses to realise, grow or start new parts of the project (LIEMERSDORF 2025a).

The project is located in the region of Agou, roughly 60 kilometres northwest of Lomé. Located around the village of Fokpo (see Figure 5), the earliest reforestation areas can be encountered (NATUREOFFICE 2025h). In general, the reforestation areas are quite coherent and very regional. They started small and grew the project and the areas over time (LIEMERSDORF 2025a).

The decision to realise the reforestation project in Togo was the result of a coincidence, that led to a connection between *natureOffice* and Togo. Another reason to realise a reforestation project in Togo is, that the country can profit, as wood is a heavily used resource, especially

as charcoal and construction material. At the same time forest areas are decreasing in Togo and there is a lot of fallow land. The project seems to be welcomed, as it brings financial aid to the villages that are involved in the project. Since the project was well received over the years, *natureOffice* is still present in Togo and has reforested around 1,000 hectares. (LIEMERSDORF 2025a).

The areas used for reforestation, are also a result of coincidence. People from Togo, who had a connection to *natureOffice*, knew communities which had fallow land and wanted these areas to be reforested. *natureOffice* took the opportunity and started the project in these communities. The land used for reforestation still belongs to the communities, and they decide what areas they make available to be used by *natureOffice* for a certain amount of time, which is 30 years. The reason for it being 30 years is, that it is an amount of time that allows a tree to absorb enough CO₂ to make a reforestation project reasonable. The provided areas are often large and contiguous (ibid.).

Locally, *natureOffice* is supported by a local NGO called *ecocent Togo*, not to be confused with *EcoCent e.V.*. The local NGO was established with the project and grew alongside with it. With direct agreements with *natureOffice*, *ecocent Togo* takes care of some of the project implementation in Togo. Ideas for projects or growth opportunities, changes or new sub-projects come from *natureOffice* in Germany, the local project management or the local population. The project manager, Tobias Liemersdorf, mentioned in the interview, that he always tries to include locals in the new ideas to gain their input, knowledge and agreement. Proposals for local implementation often come from the Togolese people, the local management team and villagers, as they have more experience on-site for what might work and what does not work. Some hurdles for the project were mostly, that the realisation of some ideas did not work out as planned. If this happened, the sub-projects could be changed, as the long duration of the project allowed time for changes. As there is a certain flexibility in the project, it allows for new things to be created and new ideas to form (ibid.).

For the reforestation a tree nursery, that is run by the *ecocent Togo*, is responsible for growing seedlings. Every year, around ten different species are grown. The decision which species are used, is based on experience, and trial and error. Some species are always grown, like *Khaya senegalensis* or *Ceiba pentandra*, as they are native and thus well adapted to the conditions on-site. A biodiversity study a few years ago on 700 hectares of the new forest has shown, that approximately 80 different large tree species can be found in the forest areas. A lot more different shrubs and other species were found as well. Some of the tree species were planted, others grew on their own (e.g. *Vitellaria paradoxa*). A big reason for that many species to grow is, that the forest areas are protected and allow for natural rejuvenation. The protection is one of the most important aspects of reforestation, as the forest would disappear without it because of natural causes (e.g. fire) or be used as a resource. The chosen species for

reforestation are not selected for their timber but might be used for their fruits, litter or their traditional medicinal use. Some species are chosen for their speed of growth, as it can store CO₂ at a faster rate. Others are chosen because of their contribution to nature conservation. The forest is not production orientated (LIEMERSDORF 2025a, 2025b).

The tree species used in the project are: *Afzelia africana*, *Albizia chevaleri*, *Albizia lebbbeck*, *Albizia zygia*, *Antiaris africana*, *Azadirachta indica*, *Ceiba pentandra*, *Erythrophloeum suaveolens*, *Gmelina arborea*, *Khaya grandifoliola*, *Khaya ivorensis*, *Khaya senegalensis*, *Leuceana leucocephala*, *Lophira lanceolata*, *Persea americana*, *Samanea Saman*, *Senna siamea*, *Terminalia ivorensis*, *Terminalia superba*, *Theobroma cacao* (LIEMERSDORF 2025b, NAMATI 2025). In Appendix C a compilation of all species, their preferred growing conditions, their maximal height, and the shade tolerance can be found. It also addresses, if the species is native to Togo. From the twenty used species in the reforestation project about half is non-native to Togo. The different demands for light and the varying heights allow for a forest with different strata with a high density of plants, an optimum utilisation of nutrients, and optimum photosynthesis. (NATUREOFFICE 2024)

The project also offers three to four internships per year for students with forestry and agricultural backgrounds and offers possibilities for research projects. Students from Togo and Germany have used the project to write their thesis, not only about the reforestation part of the project, but also about the social aspects of it (LIEMERSDORF 2025a).

Most of the population around the project benefits from it. It generates jobs (e.g. in the forest nursery) and additional income, even if people do not have a job within the project, as they can use some resources from the forest to gain additional income. Another benefit of the project are the social subprojects, with the idea, that help towards reforestation allows for help with social projects in the villages. However, there are also some negative effects, especially short-term. For example, some people earned a living by producing and selling charcoal or hunting, and because of *Project Togo* they can no longer do that. An additional challenge is the grazing of cattle herds owned by the ethnic group of the Fulbe. They are nomadic people and might drive the herd over the newly reforested areas as little open space is available. This can destroy the seedlings, and the area must be reworked. The interests of all the different people in the area around the project will always differ, so it is difficult to cover as many different interests as possible. Some envy by people, that do not benefit from the project, is inevitable, as many people live at subsistence level. Even villages close to the project are asking, "Why not us?". Some social sub-projects, like the education centre, try to include these people as well and there have been no conflicts so far (ibid.).

It is difficult to determine a clear number of people, who benefit from *Project Togo*. Depending on the time of year between 30 and 50 individuals actively help in the forest. In the cooperative that was formed, around 20 women are active but are joined by others sporadically.

The education centre offered training programs in different fields to approximately 150 to 200 people in 2024. Literacy courses consist of a few people but are slowly growing. All these people are Togolese. Even the on-site management of the project lives close by and consists of Togolese people and one person from Benin. The local NGO also consists of Togolese people. The exception of course, are the employees from *natureOffice* who work on the project (ibid.).

In the long run, the project should gain a certain independence from Germany and *natureOffice*. At the moment the project is dependent on international investments. The will and the manpower to continue the project without *natureOffice* is already there (ibid.).

4.2 Nangbeto Dam

Togo and Benin both have hydroelectric potential. The Nangbeto Dam uses some of this potential in Togo. The energy consumption, before the construction of the dam, was dependent on fuelwood and agricultural residue. Only 9 % of energy consumption was of electricity. Almost all the electricity (>90 %) was imported from Ghana, the remaining percentage coming from local diesel plants. An interconnected system is supplying both Togo and Benin with electricity. Approximately only 5 % of the Togolese population had electricity in 1982, when the project started. The demand for electricity was growing and the dam would make a major contribution to the amount needed to cover the new demand. The dam would also reduce the dependency on petroleum fuels and on imported electricity. An inventory of another project showed, that Nangbeto would be the most attractive hydro project economically, but it would need international co-operation. The construction of the dam aimed to reduce long-term cost of electricity supply, meet the increased demand for electricity, reduce fuel costs, strengthen the power sector institutions and improved sector efficiency. A feasibility study done between 1978 and 1980 showed, that power produced by the Nangbeto Dam would be a cheaper than thermal power. Nangbeto was confirmed to be the most economic site for hydropower by a hydropower inventory. In spring 1983 the project was appraised by a mission of the *International Development Association* and other project financiers, leading to credit negotiations (WORLD BANK 1984b).

The Nangbeto Dam is located on the Mono River, about 150 km upstream of its mouth into the Atlantic Ocean (see Figure 5). The dam is the only hydroelectric power station in the catchment of the Mono River (AMOUSSOU et al. 2014). With a height of 40 m and a length of 4.5 km (WORLD BANK 1998) the dam houses a powerhouse at the foot of the dam in the riverbed, that has two 31.5 MW turbines. 110 km of transmission lines connect the dam to the electricity network (WORLD BANK 1984b).

The lake that resulted from the construction of the dam covers an area of approximately 180 km² with a depth of 38 m (AMOUSSOU et al. 2014). Previously the area was covered by

fuelwood, that was removed to have good water quality, avoid economic waste, promote the fishing industry, and protect the power plant facilities. The removal was to be done by local companies, while the participation of the population on wood recovery was to be promoted (WORLD BANK & UNDP 1986).

The dam has a low retention ability during high water flows and flooding downstream of the dam still occurs (AMOUSSOU et al. 2014). THIAM ET AL. (2022) even argue that the frequency and intensity of floods below the dam have increased. Negative effects downstream were not expected prior to the construction (WORLD BANK 1984b).

The leading project implementing agency and project management was and is the *Communauté Electrique du Bénin*, which was founded in 1968 by Togo and Benin. It has “[...] a monopoly for generation and transmission of electricity from all installations built in Benin and Togo after the Treaty.” (WORLD BANK 1984b: 15). Among other things, they have exclusive rights to the development of all hydropower facilities in both countries, which makes them responsible for the Nangbeto project. Their financials have been steadily improving, and they covered the local costs of the project (WORLD BANK 1984b). It was agreed, that the structure of electricity tariffs must be adjusted according to the marginal cost of supplying electricity (WORLD BANK 1984c).

The project of the Nangbeto Dam is a collaboration between Benin and Togo. To finance the project, the *International Development Association* grants each country 14,100,000 Special Drawing Rights in various currencies, which is the equivalent to 15 million \$US, with a prevailing bank interest rate for 24 years. In addition, 84 million \$US was provided by co-lenders (WORLD BANK 1984b). An overview of the costs can be seen in Table 1. Approximately 14.75 % of the funding was from local sources. The *World Bank* was involved with the objectives to reduce the cost of electricity supply, meeting the demand for electricity, strengthening the electricity sectors institutions, and reducing the sectors dependencies on the respective governments for resources (ibid.).

Table 1. Costs of the Nangbeto project (WORLD BANK 1984b)

Estimated Cost: a/			
	<u>Local</u>	<u>Foreign</u>	<u>Total</u>
	-----	(US\$ Million)	-----
		Equivalent	
Hydroelectric development	6.2	58.3	64.5
Transmission	1.8	10.4	12.2
Resettlement and Environment	4.8	5.6	10.4
Engineering and Project Management	2.0	8.3	10.3
Studies	0.1	1.3	1.4
Technical Assistance	0.3	2.1	2.4
Training	0.2	2.4	2.6
Base Cost	<u>15.4</u>	<u>88.4</u>	<u>103.8</u>
Contingencies: Physical	1.3	6.2	7.5
: Price	<u>2.0</u>	<u>13.7</u>	<u>15.7</u>
Total Project Cost	18.7	108.3	127.0
Interest during construction	<u>1.9</u>	<u>10.7</u>	<u>12.6</u>
Total Financing Required	20.6	119.0	139.6
	=====	=====	=====
Financing Plan:			
	<u>Local</u>	<u>Foreign</u>	<u>Total</u>
	-----	(US\$ Million)	-----
IDA	0.1	29.9	30.0
Co-financiers	5.4	78.3	83.7
CEB	<u>15.1</u>	<u>10.8</u> b/	<u>25.9</u>
Total	20.6	119.0	139.6
	=====	=====	=====

The funding by the different co-lenders were provided on different terms and conditions. Coordinating the co-financing was done by the *International Development Association* (WORLD BANK 1984b). Table 2 lists the co-lenders and their respective financial contribution.

Table 2. Co-lenders and their additional funding (WORLD BANK 1984b)

co-lender	in million US\$
<i>Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa</i>	10
<i>Kuwait fund</i>	20
<i>African Development Bank</i>	6.9
<i>OPEC Special Fund</i>	8
<i>Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau</i>	16.6
<i>Caisse Centrale de Coopération Economique</i>	10.7
<i>Canadian International Development Association</i>	9.2
<i>United Nations Development Program</i>	0.8
<i>Fonds d'Aide et de Coopération</i>	1.5
<i>Communauté Electrique du Bénin</i>	25.9

The table shows that the co-lenders were mostly international development funds and organisations. The needed materials for the construction of the dam were preferably to be sourced from Togo or Benin as this would add value in these two countries. Contracts for the construction were to be put up for international competitive bidding (WORLD BANK 1984a). The German company *HOCHTIEF AG* won the bid for the construction (HOCHTIEF AG 2025).

Costs were saved in the construction due to better geological conditions than expected. The total required financial cost was approximately \$15 million less than calculated. While most undisbursed balances were cancelled, the *International Development Association*, the *Caisse Centrale de Coopération Economique* and the *Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau* permitted the funds to be used for other project-related things. The freed up financial resources were used to pave the road to Nangbeto, built housing for the construction workers at the dam site and computerise the *Communauté Electrique du Bénin* (WORLD BANK 1993).

After the project was agreed upon, the construction of the dam started in 1985 (AMOUSSOU et al. 2014) and the project was officially completed in 1992 (THOMAS 2002). It is a mutual property of Togo and Benin (THIAM et al. 2022). The acquisition of land for the project was the responsibility of the *Communauté Electrique du Bénin*, which was required to take all actions necessary to acquire land and rights in respect to land (WORLD BANK 1984a).

As Table 1 already showed, resettlement and environmental aspects were included in the project. The budget for resettlement also included compensation for the resettled. An environmental protection program and environmental and health protection studies were also part of the Nangbeto project. These were financed from the money of the *International Development Association* (WORLD BANK 1984b). The project was to take health, safety, ecological and environmental factors into account and a monitoring of the projects impact through construction and operation of the facilities on the environment were to be performed (WORLD BANK 1984a).

Togo's government agreed to prepare and implement programs for resettlement, compensation and environmental and health protection (WORLD BANK 1984b). It was imperative that these happen with due diligence and efficiency, utilising all requisite resources for these programs. The programs for resettlement and environment were to be reviewed by the *International Development Association* to their satisfaction (WORLD BANK 1984a). In addition the *Communauté Electrique du Bénin* formed a subdivision within the project management to implement health control programs, a program to ensure water quality by selectively removing vegetation cover, a program to reduce the impact of the project on the affected people, a program to care for rare and endangered animals affected by the program, and to explore the possibility of fish production in the newly created lake (WORLD BANK 1984b). They also were to assist Togo in the resettlement and environmental programs (WORLD BANK 1984a).

Approximately 10,600 people in 34 villages were affected and had to be relocated, which began in January of 1987 (WORLD BANK 1998). The resettlement was accomplished before the filling of the reservoir began (WORLD BANK 1993).

Some people only lost their houses and were only relocated a few kilometres and could continue to use their land. But most of the people lost not only their houses but also their land. They were relocated into host communities in five different resettlement zones northeast to the Nangbeto reservoir, ten to thirty kilometres away from their old villages. The host communities were never incentivised to accept the resettled people. Former villages were consolidated into fewer new villages based on their consent and their ethnic and linguistic similarities. This was cheaper, as less new infrastructure needed to be built. Other villages were isolated by the reservoir and needed new access roads, which prevented their resettlement. According to the World Bank report about experience with Involuntary Resettlement in 1998, there was no force, coercion, adverse incidents or hostile reactions (WORLD BANK 1998). Quasi-permanent homes, food aid and compensation for acquired houses were provided by the *Communauté Electrique du Bénin*, to allow the resettled to build their own homes corresponding to their needs. Other infrastructure that was created were schools, health clinics, and drinking water systems. To compensate for the inconvenience of the relocation and for the moving of religious items and ceremonies, \$222 were paid to each household. A direct compensation for land was not paid, as the people were not the legal owners of the land. The land is owned by the state and village chiefs distribute it to the people. There was a disagreement between people, whether the compensations and participation of the people in the project was adequate. A compensation for the loss of trees was also planned but was never executed (WORLD BANK 1998). The compensations for houses were only paid three years after resettlement, leading to people paying out of pocket or selling assets to build their houses (THOMAS 2002). The people were poorly informed about compensations and replacement process and were cut off from assistance with no explanation (WORLD BANK 1998).

The resettlement was seen as successful at the time, especially because the population was involved in the resettlement planning and implementation. Committees from each village supervised the resettlement, there were public meeting, and the resettled and host communities were consulted in the planning. They could participate in designing the resettlement program, the replacement houses and were able to provide input to the sites of new villages. Unfortunately, there was no follow-up by the responsible authorities and no monitoring or evaluation of the resettlement, although there was a resettlement officer employed (WORLD BANK 1998).

One of the future problems was, that land was only allocated to the resettled but was not formally given to them by their host communities. The land tenure was still in the hands of the local traditional chiefs. Often the allocated land did not match the size of the lost land. This

increased the land pressure (WORLD BANK 1998). An alternative to gain income would be fishing, which was prohibited most of the 1990s (WORLD BANK 1993). Nowadays the Nangbeto lake is a productive aquatic ecosystem, with a potential fishing production of 1,000-1,500 tons per year. Barbel and Tilapia are the most common fish species to be caught. There is no large-scale fishery, it is mainly artisanal fishery (GNIMASSOUN et al. 2022).

Another issue was brought by governmental instability in the 1990s. It caused, that services that were initially provided by the government stopped. Pumps for water supply broke prematurely, new water systems were not built and the resettled could not maintain them for long, as it was too costly. In addition, schools, clinics and medicines were no longer subsidised. Over time, the agricultural output, the per capita production, and income declined. The reasons for this are growing population and in-migration, leading to more intensive agricultural practices, causing soil exhaustion (WORLD BANK 1998). The facilities, that were created for the resettled, were one of the reasons for in-migration (THOMAS 2002).

Because of the missing monitoring and therefore missing information and the economic decline in the 1990s, it is difficult to determine whether the resettled are worse off than unaffected people (WORLD BANK 1998). It is safe to say, that the resettled did not profit in regard to the availability of power, as they did not have access to electricity before and after the project. Most of them did not even own electrical appliances or could not afford installation or their use as it was too expensive (THOMAS 2002, WORLD BANK 1998). Unfortunately, NGOs, who could have supported and assisted the affected people, were not part of the project as they were not allowed under the government of that time (THOMAS 2002).

5 Results and Discussion

For a consistent, comprehensible, non-arbitrary and reproducible classification, whether a project can be classified as Green Colonialism, a scheme (Table 3) was developed, based on the previous definition of Green Colonialism (see Chapter 2). The most important questions of the scheme are numbered from 1 to 6. These questions need to be answered in a specific way, in order to classify whether a project can be considered as Green Colonialism. The other questions of the scheme help with the classification if the previous questions could not be answered sufficiently. They give more insight, beneficiary for an easier classification. Some of the questions also aim to obtain more quantitative information.

The scheme is designed in a neutral way to reduce any potential bias by the person analysing the project. The answers of the scheme allow for a following objective evaluation takes place.

With the decision tree in Figure 6 assistance is given on what the answers to the first six questions mean in regard to the classification of Green Colonialism. It is important to

remember, that an unequivocal classification might be difficult. A lot of different aspects must be taken into consideration. It might well happen, that some answers point towards Green Colonialism, meanwhile other might lead to the opposite conclusion. A balanced consideration is required, as there are no clear-cut answers or a definitive outcome in any case.

The questions 7 to 13 of the scheme help to navigate the needed balance. If the questions 7-10 can be answered with 'yes', it is a sign of Green Colonialism. For the answers to questions 11 to 13a, the higher the number, the more likely it is a classification as Green Colonialism and the larger its impact is.

The scheme and the decision tree are used on the reforestation project, *Project Togo*, and the Nangbeto Dam project. Based on the answers, each project is classified if they can be considered Green Colonialism or not.

Table 3. Scheme to identify Green Colonialism

Short project description	
1. Does the project aim for environmental or climate protection?	
Yes ☐ No ☐	
2. Are there power asymmetries between the actors/stakeholders?	
Yes ☐ No ☐	
3. Were all stakeholders (especially the indigenous population, local stakeholders) involved in the decision-making processes?	
Yes ☐ only international investors, (foreign) government ☐	
4. Who is funding the project?	
only international investors, (foreign) government ☐ other ☐	
5. Who initiated the project?	
stakeholders in the Global North, (foreign) governments ☐ local population ☐	
6. Who is the major beneficiary of the project?	
7. Was there violence towards those affected?	Yes ☐ No ☐
8. Was there exploitation of those affected?	Yes ☐ No ☐
9. Was there racism towards those affected?	Yes ☐ No ☐
10. Was there socio-economic exclusion of those affected?	Yes ☐ No ☐
11. How many people were resettled?	
12. How much area/surface/landscape was altered? (in ha)	
13. Did “green” land grabbing occur?	Yes ☐ No ☐
13a. If yes, how much land/area is affected? (in ha)	

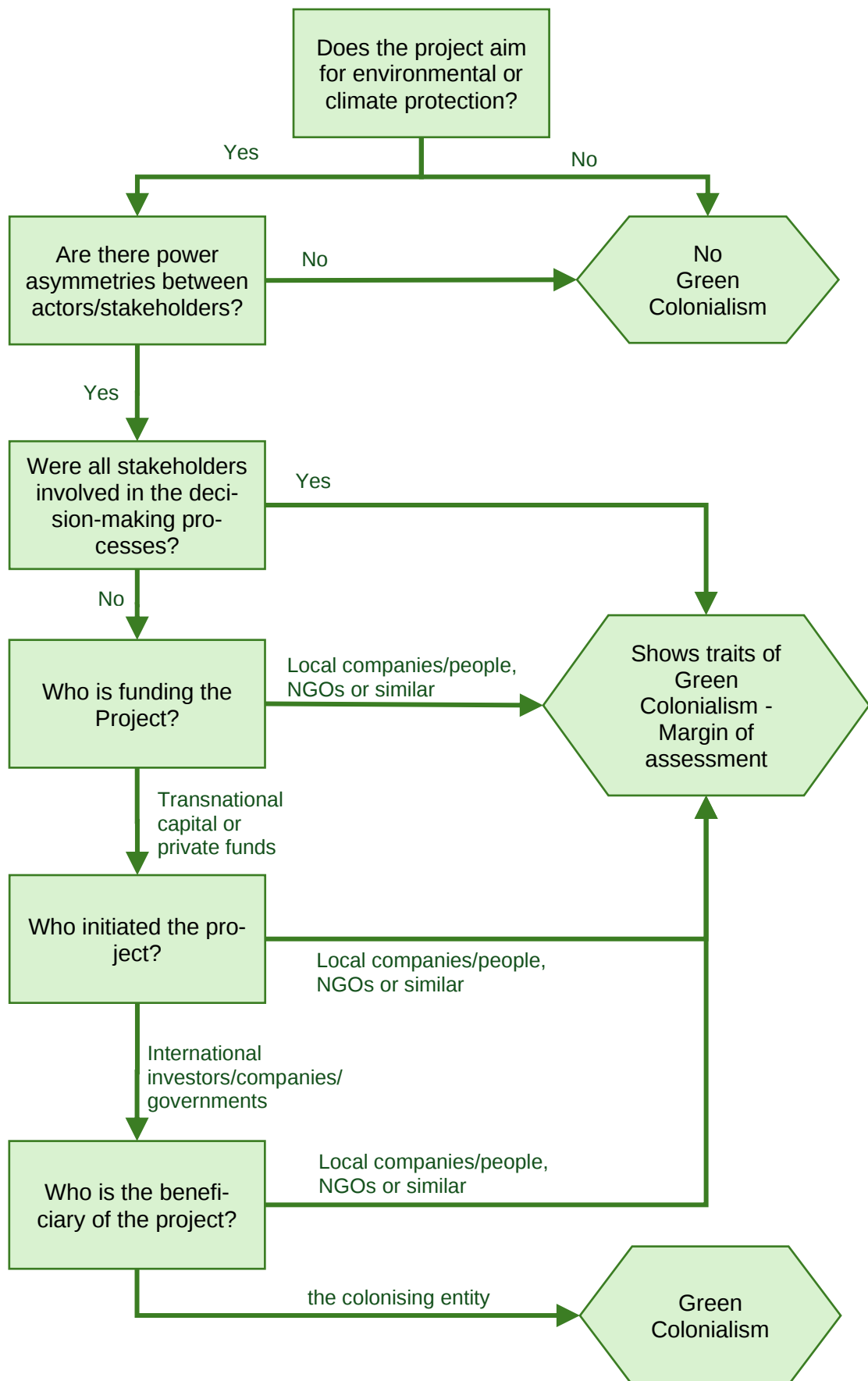


Figure 6. Decision tree to help classification (own illustration)

5.1 Project Togo

With the knowledge gained about the project via the *natureOffice* website and an interview with their project manager the scheme is applied to *Project Togo*. The following are the results.

Table 4. Scheme to identify if Project Togo can be seen as Green Colonialism

Short project description	
The <i>Project Togo</i> is a reforestation project near Keve, northwest of Lomé (see Figure 5), by <i>natureOffice</i>, a German company, active in CO₂ Management and carbon credit trading (NATUREOFFICE 2025d). Almost 1,000 ha forest have been planted. With the success of the reforestation project, some development projects have been included in <i>Project Togo</i> (LIEMERSDORF 2025a).	
1. Is the project aimed at/justified with environmental or climate protection?	
Yes ☒ No ☐ It aims to reduce CO₂ emissions and is used to create CO₂ certificates (NATUREOFFICE 2025g).	
2. Are there power asymmetries between the actors?	
Yes <input :<="" checked="" p="" type="checkbox"/> • money comes from <i>natureOffice</i> • ideas come from <i>natureOffice</i> (LIEMERSDORF 2025a)	No <input :<="" checked="" p="" type="checkbox"/> • areas of reforestation do not belong to <i>natureOffice</i>, they are made available by communities. • communities can contribute ideas (LIEMERSDORF 2025a)
3. Were all stakeholders (especially the indigenous population, local stakeholders) involved in the decision-making processes?	
Yes ☒ only international investors, (foreign) government ☐	
4. Who is funding the project?	
only international investors, (foreign) government ☒ other ☐ • mostly from <i>natureOffice</i> through CO₂ certificate trading • voluntary carbon offset market • customers of <i>natureOffice</i> who want to provide additional support to certain aspects of <i>Project Togo</i> (LIEMERSDORF 2025a)	

5. Who initiated the project?	
stakeholders in the Global North, (foreign) governments ☒ local population ☐ It was an idea of <i>natureOffice</i> (LIEMERSDORF 2025a).	
6. Who is the beneficiary of the project?	
<i>natureOffice</i> , their customers and the local population	
7. Was there violence towards those affected?	Yes ☐ No ☒
8. Was there exploitation of those affected?	Yes ☐ No ☒
9. Was there racism towards those affected?	Yes ☐ No ☒
10. Was there socio-economic exclusion of those affected?	Yes ☐ No ☒
11. How many people were resettled?	None
12. How much area/surface/landscape was altered? (in ha)	1,000 ha
13. Did “green” land grabbing occur?	Yes ☐ No ☒
13a. If yes, how much land/area is affected? (in ha)	

If no source is stated, the information is based on the knowledge presented in previous chapters.

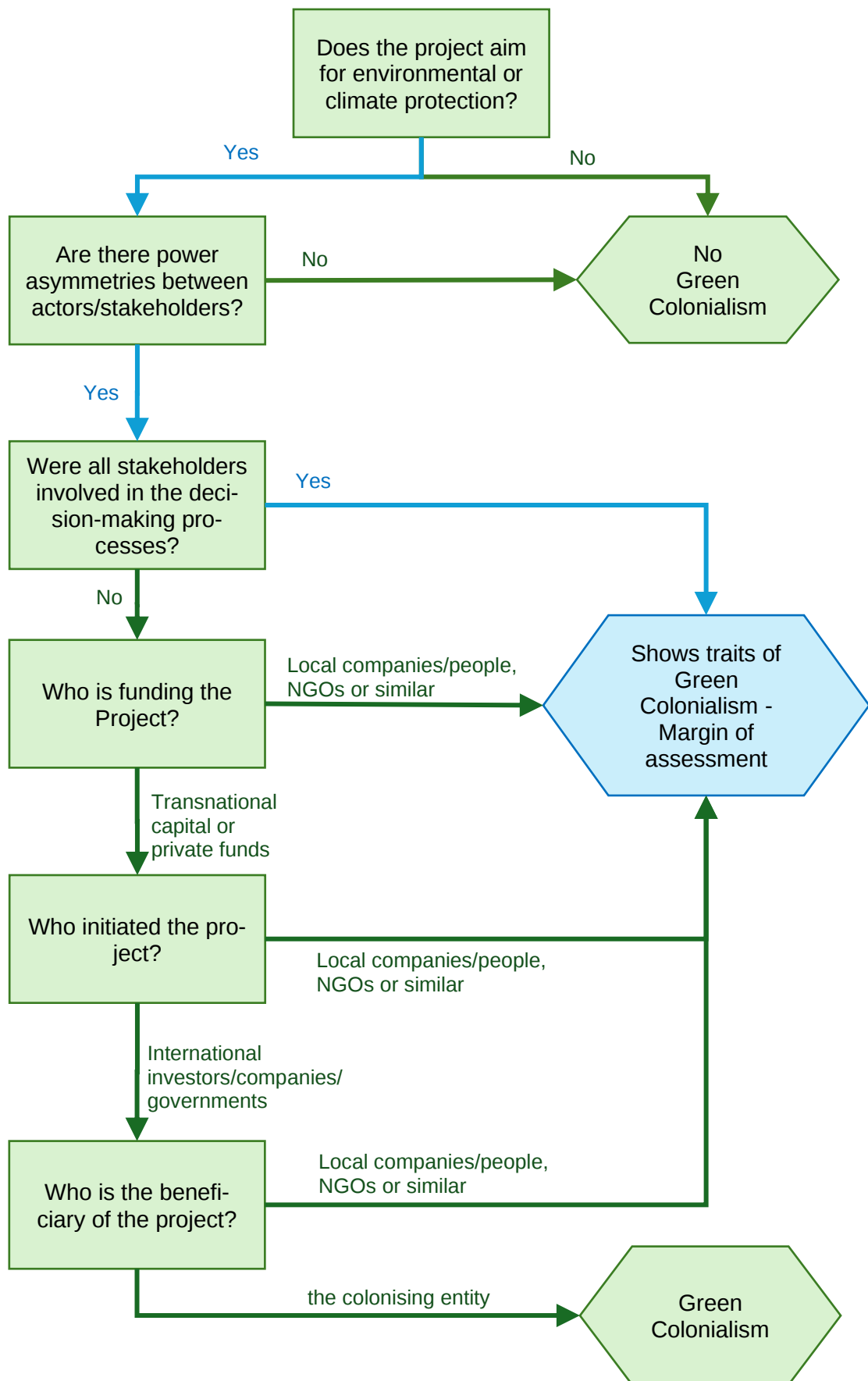


Figure 7. Decision tree for Project Togo (own illustration)

The green aspect of Green Colonialism is given, as the project is justified with and aims at climate and environmental protection. Thus, the first question can be answered with a definitive 'yes'.

For the power asymmetry, it is a bit more complex. While *natureOffice* has the authority to dispose the funds, the local population holds control over the land. They entitle *natureOffice* to use it. Both are sponsors in the project, however *natureOffice*'s influence is much greater as the project would not work without their funding (LIEMERSDORF 2025a). Power asymmetry is another important aspect of Green Colonialism (DORN 2022). While there is an asymmetry here, it is not as extreme as it could be, based on the following reasoning.

The decision-making process is quite inclusive. The ideas for the sub-projects do not only come from *natureOffice* but also from the local management of the project and the local population. For the implementation of the sub-projects the project manager relies on the input and knowledge from the people on-site (LIEMERSDORF 2025a). One of the main aspects of Green Colonialism is the exclusion of indigenous people to decision making (CLAAR 2022, PEARL 2024). *Project Togo* manages to include the indigenous communities in the project by giving them a voice and the ability to propose and realise own ideas within the project (LIEMERSDORF 2025a).

The reforestation is funded by international investors. Either through *natureOffice* or donations from business companies. *natureOffice* also initiated the project (ibid.) This kind of funding (transnational or private funds) is typical in Green Colonialism. (CLAAR 2022)

Many actors are benefitting from the project. It allows *natureOffice* to trade with CO₂ certificates, generating a profit. Other companies can use the project to compensate for emissions, but even as a social and political statement. The local population also benefits from the project as it generates additional income and supports them in social aspects, such as, for instance, drinking water availability, health improvements, and education. Conversely, some people also lost their previous income, as the project stopped them from doing their jobs (e.g. producing charcoal) (LIEMERSDORF 2025a, NATUREOFFICE 2025g).

There was no violence, exploitation, racism or socio-economic exclusion towards the people affected by the project (LIEMERSDORF 2025a, NATUREOFFICE 2024, 2025g, 2025h).

No people needed to be resettled for the reforestation. As of February 2025, the project has reforested 1,000 ha (LIEMERSDORF 2025a), altering the landscape of the area.

The dispossession of people is another characteristic of Green Colonialism, that is not happening within the *Project Togo*. In the project the used land is made available by the local communities by their own free will but not re-assigned to *natureOffice* (LIEMERSDORF 2025a).

Certain dependencies between *natureOffice* and the indigenous communities within *Project Togo* exist at the moment. These are mostly financial dependencies. Without the money

coming from *natureOffice*, the project could not be continued by the locals. The long-term goal of *natureOffice* is that the project could be managed and realised by the local population if, for whatever reason, *natureOffice* cannot continue with the project. Nevertheless, the dependencies remain into the foreseeable future. (LIEMERSDORF 2025a).

Based on the answers in the scheme, the decision tree in Figure 7 and the arguments in the previous text it can be argued, that Project Togo shows traits of Green Colonialism but cannot be classified as a strong form of Green Colonialism. There are slight power asymmetries and dependencies, especially in financial aspects, between *natureOffice* and the local population. However, the relations towards the locals, their inclusion and the lack of violence, exploitation, racism or socio-economic exclusion leads to the conclusion, that the project cannot really be classified as Green Colonialism. This is supported by the fact, that the local population benefits from the projects and their involvement in the processes of the project. This is contradictory to one of the most important aspects of Green Colonialism, which is impoverishment, discrimination, exploitation and exclusion of the local population (HAMOUCHENE & SANDWELL 2023), which is not given in Project Togo.

5.2 Nangbeto Dam

The project of Nangbeto Dam is well documented by the World Bank. The documents from the World Bank give a good insight into the project to answer the questions of the scheme.

Table 5. Scheme to identify if the Nangbeto Dam project can be seen as Green Colonialism

Short project description	
The Nangbeto is a hydroelectric power plant on the Mono River, funded by eleven different international lenders. The project started in 1985 and was finished in 1992. Because of the resulting reservoir, more than 10,600 people were resettled.	
1. Is the project aimed at/justified with environmental or climate protection?	
Yes ☐ No ☒ The main goals were to help meet the growing demand for electricity as well as reducing the dependency on petroleum fuels and on imported electricity	
2. Are there power asymmetries between the actors?	
Yes <input :="" <ul="" checked="" type="checkbox"/> • Money came from different international lenders (WORLD BANK 1984b)	No <input :="" <ul="" checked="" type="checkbox"/> • Leading project implementing agency is local (WORLD BANK 1984b)

3. Were all stakeholders (especially the indigenous population, local stakeholders) involved in the decision-making processes?	
Yes ☐ only international investors, (foreign) government ☒ The local population was only involved in the resettlement planning, not in the project itself.	
4. Who is funding the project?	
only international investors, (foreign) government ☒ other ☐ Different international lenders and the International Development Association (WORLD BANK 1984b) (see Table 2).	
5. Who initiated the project?	
stakeholders in the Global North, (foreign) governments ☒ local population ☐ Difficult to determine (either <i>Communauté Electrique du Bénin</i> (appointed a feasibility study in 1978) or by a Bank Group initiative(WORLD BANK 1984b).	
6. Who is the beneficiary of the project?	
<i>Communauté Electrique du Bénin</i> ; governments of Togo and Benin; no timely direct benefit for the local population.	
7. Was there violence towards those affected?	Yes ☐ No ☒
8. Was there exploitation of those affected?	Yes ☐ No ☒
9. Was there racism towards those affected?	Yes ☐ No ☒
10. Was there socio-economic exclusion of those affected?	Yes ☒ No ☐
11. How many people were resettled?	10,600 people (34 villages)
12. How much area/surface/landscape was altered? (in ha)	180 km ² plus the area of the dam
13. Did “green” land grabbing occur?	Yes ☒ No ☐
13a. If yes, how much land/area is affected? (in ha)	180 km ²

If no source is stated, the information is based on the knowledge presented in previous chapters.

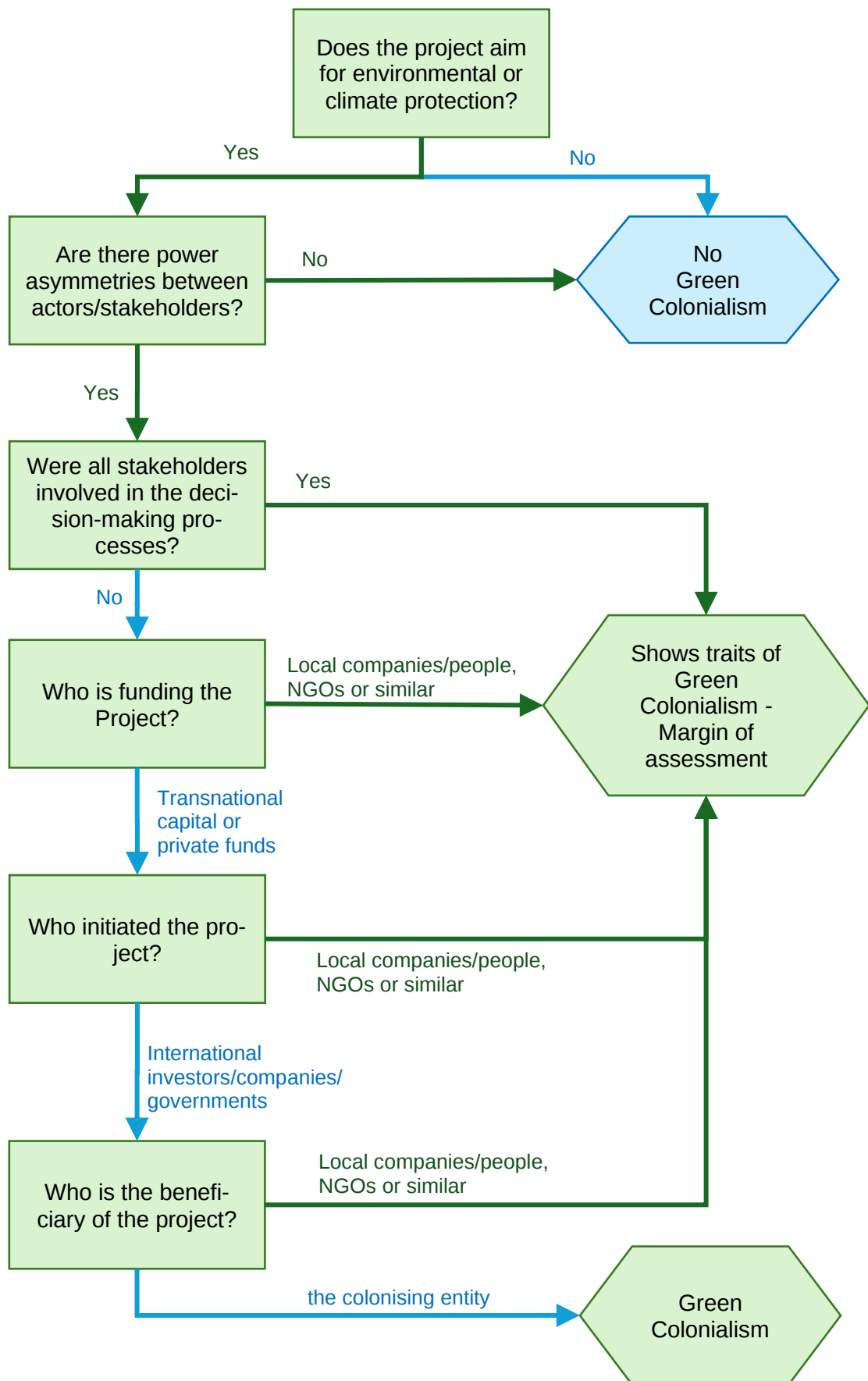


Figure 8. Decision tree for the Nangbeto project (own illustration)

A clear power asymmetry can be seen, as the project is dependent on international support, especially financially, which was already stated by the WORLD BANK (1984b). Without the international lenders, the project could not have been realised. The lenders used their influence to set terms and conditions. The company responsible for implementing the project, might be local, but they had to follow certain requirements set by the *International Development Association* (WORLD BANK 1984b), restricting their capacity for action.

Adding to the power asymmetry, local stakeholders were barely involved. Materials for the dam might have come from Togo and Benin, but the main construction contract was up for international bidding (WORLD BANK 1984a). Local population was not included in the site selection for the dam and were only later involved in the resettlement planning process. Here they were able to supervise the resettlement via committees, they could give their input in public meetings, and were consulted for the planning and designing of the resettlement program. (WORLD BANK 1998). Otherwise, they were excluded from international decision making bodies, another typical sign of Green Colonialism (PEARL 2024).

Funding for the project came mainly from international co-lenders and the *International Development Association*, with only 14.75 % of the cost contributed by local funds (WORLD BANK 1984b). The power asymmetry and the funding being mostly international is typical for Green Colonialism (CLAAR 2022), with the inclusion of multilateral financial institutions, like the World Bank being part of the project implementation (HAMOUCHENE & SANDWELL 2023).

Unfortunately, the sources did not provide clear information about who initiated the project. The site was already explored in the 1960s and was found promising (WORLD BANK 1993). However, it might have been the *Communauté Electrique du Bénin*, as in 1978 they appointed a feasibility study for the potential power plant. This was further supported by an inventory executed by consultants from the United Kingdom and Belgium that ruled Nangbeto as the most economical site for the first hydropower project. A World Bank mission and a World Bank initiative considered the project in 1980 and paved the way for the *International Development Association* and other lenders (WORLD BANK 1984b).

Shortly after the project was finished, Ghanaian energy was substituted by the energy from Nangbeto. However, the energy from Nangbeto was more expensive than expected and no economic advantages did materialise. Nevertheless, economic benefit still applied to the operation company (*Communauté Electrique du Bénin*) later (WORLD BANK 1993).

The benefits from the project were not shared with the local population. It can be argued that they were socio-economically excluded, as many people needed to resettle, and they had to restart their lives at a different place. They were not only forced to rebuild their homes, but also cultivate the farmland, that was given to them by host communities, but was never in their legal possession (WORLD BANK 1998).

Dispossession, pressure on the land of locals, disruption of livelihoods, social structures, well-being, and impoverishment are an important part of Green Colonialism (HAMOUCHE & SANDWELL 2023, SANDSTRÖM 2024) and can be seen in the project. After the resettlement, poverty and problems with landownership between resettled and host communities took place (WORLD BANK 1998), both a sign of Green Colonialism (CLAAR 2022). Another big part of Green Colonialism is the alteration of access to natural resources, such as land, water and forest (DORN 2022). All can be seen in the Nangbeto Dam project. The resettled lost their land and got smaller areas as they had before as compensation. They also lost access to nearby forests and the resources it provided, as forest was cut for the reservoir. They were never compensated for this loss. In addition to that, the access to water changed. Previously the Mono River was the main water source. After the resettlement, water pumps and wells were built, which eventually broke. The water supply was thus worse than before the resettlement (WORLD BANK 1998). Displaced people from dam projects in general mostly experience negative effects, not only losing land but also experiencing social and political disruption and impoverishment. A social disruption might be social exclusion as previous social networks are destroyed. The people lose their autonomy and their well-being might decline (WET 2001). Especially farmers, fishermen, herders and urban dwellers are affected by such projects (LASSAILLY-JACOB 1990).

The resettlement could also be seen as land grabbing, as the area north of the dam was needed for the reservoir. For HAMOUCHE & SANDWELL (2023) this would be another trait of Green Colonialism.

Following the decision tree from Figure 8, the Nangbeto Dam cannot be classified as Green Colonialism as the project originally did not aim for environmental or climate protection. It aimed to reduce the long-term cost of the electricity supply, meet the increased demand for electricity, reduce fuel costs, strengthen the power sector institutions, and improve sector efficiency (WORLD BANK 1984b).

However, in consideration of the arguments that have been presented, it can be argued, that although the Nangbeto Dam project is not Green Colonialism, it definitely shows traits of it. The shown traits can be classified as the aspects of Green Colonialism, that are part of the colonisation aspects. While the local population was not losing their political-diplomatic and international legal independence or were exploited, like it is typical for colonialism (TROTHA 2004), they lost in the form of dispossession, land pressure, disruption, access to natural resources and impoverishment, all signs of Green Colonialism (CLAAR 2022, HAMOUCHE & SANDWELL 2023, DORN 2022, SANDSTRÖM 2024). So, while there is no Green Colonialism, some form of colonial relation can be seen, some form of continuation of colonialism, that was described in the chapters 3.2.2 and 3.2.3.

6 Conclusion

The aim of this thesis to merge the various definitions of Green Colonialism into one was accomplished successfully. Green Colonialism can be summarised as environmental and climate change protection and mitigation efforts are enforced using colonial like relations and processes. These relations and processes are in return justified by environmental and climate change protection and mitigation.

The established definition of Green Colonialism was then applied to two examples to analyse if there is Green Colonialism in Togo. One of the examples is a reforestation project by a German company, active in CO₂ management. The second example is the Nangbeto project, where a hydropower dam was built in Togo in the late 1980s.

While the reforestation project of *natureOffice* met the green aspect of Green Colonialism, it mostly did not meet any other criteria that need to be fulfilled to classify a project accordingly. Especially the inclusion of the local population, locals providing the areas for reforestation and the associated social sub-projects showed, that the *Project Togo* does not enforce colonial like relations but rather tries to improve relations between all actors.

In contrast to this is the Nangbeto Dam project. The dam was not intended to serve primarily as a green energy source. It was built to meet the growing demand for electricity and would reduce the dependency on petroleum fuels and on imported electricity. Therefore, the green aspects of Green Colonialism are not met. Nevertheless, the project has other traits that are typical for Green Colonialism, mainly power asymmetries, exclusion of local stakeholders, funding from private and transnational funds, benefits being on the side of the 'colonising' entity, land grabbing and different social aspects. The latter mainly affected the local population by forcing them to resettle and thus dispossessing them, disrupting their livelihoods and social structures, and eventually leading to impoverishment. A pressure on the land of host communities and the resettled can also be seen.

In retrospect, the Nangbeto Dam project was not the best option to analyse Green Colonialism in Togo, as it was chosen from a today's perspective on hydropower as a renewable, sustainable and climate friendly energy source. The reasons were not in scope in the 1980s, when hydropower was more of an economic nature, targeting providing electricity as such.

The biggest differences between the two projects are their impact on the local population.

While most of the local population benefits from the *Project Togo*, a lot of local people lost in the Nangbeto Dam project as they were forced to resettle without having any benefit from the new energy source. Both projects show traits of Green Colonialism but ultimately do not fulfil all conditions to be classified as Green Colonialism.

While the analysis of the two projects shows, that while there might not be Green Colonialism in Togo today, it is safe to say, that just two projects are not sufficient to answer the

research question “Can Green Colonialism be found in Togo today?”. It is important to note that the analysed projects merely provide a preliminary indication of the matter in question. There are many environmental and climate protection projects in Togo that would need to be analysed to make a well-founded statement about this research question. This includes the establishment of nature reserves, projects by the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit*, the *Agence Française de Développement* or other organisations and companies.

For future analysis it is important to consider, in what time period the project was planned and implemented as that changes the perception of climate change and the need for mitigation and environmental protection.

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Appendix

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A Guideline for the Interview with Tobias Liemersdorf from *natureOffice*

Frage/Intervention	Erwartete Vorstellungen	Bemerkungen
Einstiegsimpuls		
Stell dich und deine Rolle im Unternehmen vor	Projektleitung „Project Togo“	
Wer hatte die Idee für das Projekt?	NatureOffice	
Part I – Flächen- und Gebietsauswahl		
Warum haben Sie sich für Togo entschieden?	Geringe Kosten	
Wie haben Sie die Gebiete/die Dörfer in Togo ausgewählt?		
Wie haben Sie die Flächen für die Aufforstung ausgewählt?		
Was war vorher auf den Flächen?	Ungenutzt/Brachland	
Wie viel Fläche wurden bisher aufgeforstet?	ha Angabe	
Welche Baum-/Pflanzenarten werden für die Aufforstung genutzt?	Kakao, heimische Mahagoni	Heimische/nicht-heimische Arten; Angepasste Arten; an Klimawandel angepasst?

Frage/Intervention	Erwartete Vorstellungen	Bemerkungen
Part II – Einbindung der Bevölkerung vor Ort		
Welchen Nutzen hat die Aufforstung für die Bevölkerung vor Ort?	Schatten- und Nutzbäume	
Wie viele Menschen sind durch das Projekt vor Ort betroffen?	3 Dörfer	
Welche positiven und negativen Auswirkungen hat das Projekt auf die Menschen vor Ort?	Mehr „Wirtschaftlichkeit“; Konfliktpotential mit nicht betroffener Bevölkerung	
Wer trifft die Entscheidungen im Projekt? Wer ist Entscheidungsträger?	Größere Entscheidungen bei NatureOffice, kleinere bei ecocent/Bevölkerung	
Part III - Finanzielles		
Wie wird das Projekt finanziert? - Abriss	CO2 Zertifikathandel	
Wie viel Geld fließt jährlich in das Projekt?	Je nach Wirtschaftslage im Zertifikathandel	Grobe Orientierung angeben, wenn keine genaue Angabe gemacht werden kann

Frage/Intervention	Erwartete Vorstellungen	Bemerkungen
Part IV - Sonstiges		
Wie ist die Verbindung von NatureOffice zu Ecocent	Ecocent als gemeinnütziger Verein für soziale Komponenten des Project Togo	Ecocent für sozialen Teil des Project Togo
Gab/Gibt es Probleme im Projekt?	Neid durch andere	Politisch, finanziell, durch die Bevölkerung vor Ort
Bis wann läuft das Projekt? /Wie lange läuft die Unterstützung? Was kommt danach?	Bis keine Flächen mehr verfügbar sind/es nicht mehr wirtschaftlich ist	

B1 Transcript of the interview with Tobis Liemersdorf from *natureOffice*

Date: 11.02.2025

Participating dialogue partners: Hannah Fischer (HF) and Tobias Liemersdorf (TL)

Vorgespräch zum Einstieg

HF: Dann gerne zu dir einmal, was du so machst. Vielleicht auch deine Rolle in NatureOffice und gerade das Projekt Togo.

TL: Okay, also ich bin auch eigentlich nur der Projektzuständige oder der Projektleiter von dem Projekt in Togo. Das ist auch meine Hauptarbeit. Mittlerweile habe ich auch so ein paar Aktivitäten in Deutschland, die es zusätzlich gibt im Aufforstungs- und im Waldbereich, aber ich bin so ein bisschen die Vernetzung zwischen NatureOffice in Deutschland und der Partnerorganisation, mit der wir schon von Anfang an arbeiten, und dann in Togo. Und bin auch mehrmals im Jahr in Togo, bin auch grad wieder meinen nächsten Aufenthalt dort am Planen. Normalerweise so zwischen sechs Wochen und drei Monaten, wenn ich dann nach da unten bin und habe auch eigentlich sehr, sehr viel, dann eher mit den Aktivitäten in Togo zu tun als mit den Sachen von NatureOffice in Deutschland. Das war es auch soweit. Es interessiert mich auch wie du auf Togo kommst. Aber ich wollte auch allgemein wissen was du dann genau machst.

HF: Vielleicht würde ich das hintendran stellen, nach meinen Fragen, um einfach methodisch das so ein bisschen erstmal rauszunehmen, wenn das für dich in Ordnung ist. Und danach erzähle ich dir gerne darüber was. Togo ist ja eher ein Land, was bei vielen Leuten nicht sehr bekannt ist. Und vielleicht da auch einfach die Frage warum Togo? Warum hat man Togo gewählt für dieses Projekt?

TL: Kein besonderes Ziel. Ich würde sagen eher Zufall. Es kam durch eine Zufallssituation einfach dazu, dass eine Verbindung zu Togo entstanden ist und das ist bis heute bestehen geblieben. Dadurch ist dann dieses Projekt in Togo entstanden. Das ist also, ich glaube, 2010 ist dann NatureOffice das erste Mal runtergegangen. Das war noch bevor ich für NatureOffice gearbeitet habe. Dann, 2012, fing das erste Aufforstungsprojekt an, dann 2014 kam ein Größeres dazu. Und damit sind so ein bisschen die Aktivitäten vor Ort gewachsen. Ich bin jetzt seit 2016 dabei, weil nach dem Forst wurden dann immer mehr auch soziale Projekte und landwirtschaftliche Projekte integriert. Ich komme eigentlich aus der Landwirtschaft und habe da unten dann damals auch für meinem Studium ein Projekt mitgeplant und seitdem bin ich da unten geblieben. Aber genau, warum NatureOffice in Togo ist. Es ist ein Land, was auf jeden Fall von Aufforstung profitieren kann,

weil man recht viel Holznutzen, immer noch für, bei uns nennt man das Köhlerwirtschaft, für Holzkohleproduktion hat, weil recht viele Menschen gerade im ländlichen Raum noch mit Holzkohle und Holz direkt die Küche betreiben und daher auch einfach sehr sehr viel abgeholzt wird. Und Jetzt gerade auch mit Holz als Material noch dazu. Es gibt sehr, sehr viele Brachflächen mittlerweile, wo früher mal Wald war und es ist einfach recht sicher, dass irgendwann auch die Menge an Wald immer weniger in Togo wird, das merkt man, das sieht man, das kann ich sogar von meiner Zeit dort beobachten. Und genau, daher das Projekt war dort glaube ich auch sehr willkommen, weil man einfach bei Togo, glaube ich, da auch recht froh ist eine finanzielle Unterstützung von außen auch teilweise für Aufforstung zu haben. Das ist zumindest was ich so vom Eindruck erzählen kann. Und genau das Projekt hat sehr gut funktioniert, nach uns hin, und es wurde sehr gut angenommen und deshalb sind wir bis heute dortgeblieben. Ist ja auch so, dass ist das eigene Projekt von NatureOffice, also geplant, gemacht von Anfang an von NatureOffice, also jetzt auch nicht von einem Partner geplant. Es ist ein Partner, der sich mit uns um die Ausführung vor Ort kümmert, aber das Projekt ist trotzdem von NatureOffice geplant und von Anfang an auch mit Leuten vor Ort in der direkten Planung ausgeführt worden.

HF: Also kam auch die ursprüngliche Idee für das ganze Projekt von NatureOffice.

TL: Ja

HF: Okay, und du hast ja auch schon Brachflächen und Ähnliches erwähnt. Wie hat man denn entschieden, wo jetzt aufgeforstet wird oder in welche Dörfer man geht, um das Projekt durchzusetzen? Weil Togo ist zwar kein Riesenland, aber es ist ja dennoch an vielen Stellen Potenzial da.

TL: Das auf jeden Fall. Das ist aber auch genauso zufällig entstanden. Das ist einfach durch Verbindungen da unten mit Menschen, die gesagt haben „Hey, ihr wollt doch was im Bereich Aufforstung machen. Ich kenne da eine Gemeinschaft, die haben eine Fläche, die hätten gern Wald dort, die würden sich über das Projekt freuen“. Und so sind eigentlich Projekte entstanden. Also gar nicht so mit durch das Land kämmen und sagen wir brauchen Fläche oder so. Wir haben keine Flächen, die in unserem Besitz sind. Also wir kaufen keine Flächen, sondern die Flächen sind alle für eine gewisse Zeit zur Verfügung gestellt. Und das ist bisher 30 Jahre immer gewesen, weil das so in etwa dann auch den Kalkulationen entspricht, in welcher Zeit Bäume welche Menge an CO₂ speichern. Wo man dann einfach sagt, welchen Zeitraum braucht man damit das Ganze auch Sinn macht. Und das sind einmal Dörfer, die das zur Verfügung gestellt haben, dann auch eine Gemeinschaft aus einem Dorf, die auch eine größere Fläche hatte und wir haben mittlerweile so um die 1000 Hektar Wald aufgeforstet, die aber alle recht zusammenhängend sind. Also das ist jetzt nicht so, dass wir über Togo verstreut überall kleine Flächen haben, sondern das ist alles sehr regional auf eine Region bezogen. Man hat ein Projekt im

kleineren angefangen, dann kennt man die Leute und dann wächst das Projekt daraus und da sind dann auch die Sozialprojekte einfach auch mit reingekommen, weil man dann gemerkt hat mit Wald aufforsten alleine bringt nichts, da muss noch mehr dazu. Und dann kamen peu à peu auch immer mehr Projekte drumherum, dann mit den Dörfern dazu, die dann halt auch um den Wald leben. Also wir haben eine Waldfläche, die von drei Dörfern zum Beispiel umgeben ist. Und da haben wir halt auch einen Großteil von den sozialen Projekten.

HF: Das heißt auch die Bevölkerung vor Ort entscheidet, wo dann die Aufforstungsfläche ist. Also es kommt allein von dem, was bereitgestellt wird vor Ort. Habe ich das richtig verstanden?

TL: Ja

HF: Okay

TL: Wir können es ja gar nicht irgendwie entscheiden und sagen, wir wollen da und da aufforsten, sondern das ist ja den Leuten vor Ort, denen ja auch die Fläche gehört und damit stellen sie die Flächen zur Verfügung und das werden dann oft sehr zusammenhängende große Flächen und genau deshalb kann ich mit Ja beantworten.

HF: Super. Und vielleicht auch gerade, wenn wir bei der Aufforstung nochmal bleiben. Gerade in den Tropen ist ja die Möglichkeit, sehr viele verschiedene Pflanzenarten und Baumarten anzupflanzen. Welche Arten nutzt ihr denn da für die Aufforstung oder wird vor Ort von der Bevölkerung genutzt?

TL: Also das Sollziel bei den Wäldern sind keine Nutzholzplantagenwälder, wie jetzt bei uns hier mit der Fichte oder auch in Togo, wie ist das mit Teakholz gibt. Also sowas haben wir nicht. Von Anfang an war es das Ziel, einen naturnahen Wald aufzubauen, das heißt eine Waldstruktur, die sich an ursprünglichen, natürlich entstandenen Waldstrukturen in Togo orientiert und zielt daher auf die lokalen, in Togo vorhandenen Baumarten zu nutzen. Die Baumschule, wird auch von uns selber betrieben, beziehungsweise von dem Partner vor Ort. Und da haben wir jedes Jahr so um die zehn unterschiedlichen Baumarten. Das hat sich so ein bisschen an der Erfahrung orientiert. Am Anfang hat man natürlich einfach ausprobiert, was für den Standort passt. Manche Arten haben sich selektiert und andere haben sich durchgesetzt. Und wir hatten vor Jahren mal so eine Biodiversitätsstudie, die einfach geguckt hat, was wir an Flora und Fauna im Wald haben und da kam es, glaube ich, auf ungefähr 80 Baumarten. Wir pflanzen ja und einfach dadurch, dass wir das Areal noch sehr, sehr stark schützen, hat man ganz viel natürliche Naturverjüngung, die auch dazukommt, die natürlich auch einen großen Teil von dem Ganzen ausmacht, weil Schutz ist einfach somit das Wichtigste bei den Aufforstungsprojekten, nochmal fast wichtiger als das Pflanzen selber, weil ohne den ist der Wald sehr sehr schnell wieder weg. Man sieht das an den ganzen Projekten in Togo und jetzt gerade so Feuer am Anfang von der

Pflanzzeit, aber auch natürlich Abholzung, dann auch wieder für Kohle und Ähnliches, das Wald dann auch sehr schnell oder kommender Wald auch sehr schnell wieder weg sein kann. Deshalb, so ich denke mal, was den Wald ausmacht, ist halt wirklich dieser sehr sehr intensive Schutz von der Fläche, fast schon wie ein kleines Reservat im Endeffekt.

HF: Wo du vielleicht auch grad sagst Reservat, werden teilweise vielleicht auch vereinzelt Nutzbäume irgendwie ausgepflanzt, damit auch einfach die Bevölkerung vielleicht da auch noch was für die eigene Versorgung hat? Oder wird der Wald danach auch komplett in Ruhe gelassen?

TL: Also die Baumarten, die wir einbringen sind zum großen Teil sicher auch Nutzbbaumarten. Ist ja wie bei uns auch die Eiche oder so ist ja in jedem Naturwald vorhanden oder die Buche in natürlichen Waldsystemen. Aber das ist ja trotzdem auch ein Nutzholz und deshalb auch ein Großteil, oder was heißt ein Großteil, aber ein guter Teil der Baumarten, die wir haben, hat natürlich auch das Ziel, schnell zu wachsen, deshalb sind die forstlichen Interessen und die für den Klimaschutz ziemlich ähnlich, weil man möchte natürlich auch so schnell wie möglich eine gewisse Menge an CO₂ über den Wald speichern und deshalb sind es einfach Baumarten, also zumindest zu einem relativen, schneller wachsen. Aber es gibt auch welche, die wirklich mehr als einfach nur diesen Naturschutz Ökologie Effekt haben sollen, die zum Beispiel dann an Standorten, wo ansonsten wenig wachsen würde, dann gepflanzt werden, die auch recht langsam wachsen, aber der Großteil sind schon schnell wachsende Baumarten. Daher also, dieser Nutzen wird in der Zukunft sicher da sein. Obwohl das Ziel von dieser Fläche schon eher eine Schutzfläche ist, die vielleicht in der Zukunft einen touristischen Nutzen hat. Also wir merken jetzt gerade, wir haben jedes Jahr auch Studenten von der Forst- und Landwirtschaftsschule aus Togo, die ihr Praktikum dort machen, auch schon recht viele Forschungen, die in diesem Wald stattfindet, weil es ein ähnliches Projekt, glaube ich, so in Togo nicht gibt. Es gibt also wirklich ein Naturwaldprojekt, was nicht wirklich produktionsorientiert ist, gibt es glaube ich sehr, sehr wenig im Bereich des Klimaschutzes. Zu mindestens in Togo kenne ich kein Vergleichbares.

HF: Also Nutzen nicht nur die direkte Bevölkerung vor Ort, sondern eben auch Leute, die extra, wie du sagst, Studenten, die anreisen, um sich das einmal anzugucken.

TL: Genau, also auch nicht weit weg die Forstschüler und jedes Jahr haben wir so drei, vier Studenten, die dann im Wald ihr Praktikum machen und auch immer wieder welche, die auch ihre Abschlussarbeit machen, mittlerweile halt auch viel aus Togo oder auch natürlich immer mal wieder Leute aus Deutschland, die dort jetzt Abschlussarbeiten verfasst haben. Das muss dann gar nicht immer über Wald sein, es kann auch über andere Bereiche, auch soziale Bereiche sein, aber jetzt in Togo ist es auf Forst bisher beschränkt,

wovon die Abschlussarbeiten und Uniarbeiten gemacht wurden. Und jetzt benutzen? Das war ja so ein bisschen die Frage, wie der Nutzen für die Bevölkerung von dem Ganzen ist. Da ist einfach das Ziel einmal, dass der Wald auch Arbeitsplätze generiert. Jeden Tag sind Leute aus dem Dorf im Wald auch mit aktiv. Also wir haben in der Baumschule jedes Jahr so um die 100.000 Bäume, die da herangezogen werden. Das sind alles Leute aus den Dörfern drumherum, die dort arbeiten. Bei den Pflanzungen sind es alles Leute aus den Dörfern drumherum. Jetzt, in der Trockenzeit, wo der Wald geschützt werden muss sind das alles Leute aus den Dörfern, die auch beim Schutz der Fläche helfen und daher ist einfach auch ein großes Interesse von den Dörfern, dass der Wald Arbeit, also Zusatzeinkommen, generiert. Also das sind alles keine Leute, die fest dort im Wald angestellt sind, zumindest nicht zu einem großen Teil, sondern der Großteil von den Dörfern ist einfach die Möglichkeit, dass sie über den Wald Zusatzeinkommen generieren können. Die meisten Leute haben natürlich trotzdem noch den Beruf. Und was kann ich dazu noch sagen? Und dann natürlich einfach die Projekte, die jetzt über den Wald entstehen, wo das natürlich auch Teil unserer Sensibilisierung ist, zu sagen „okay, wenn ihr uns helft, den Wald zu schützen, dann können wir über den Wald euch helfen Projekte in den Dörfern zu installieren“, das ist am Anfang recht viel auch für Infrastruktursachen, aber mittlerweile halt noch mehr, zum Beispiel Kooperativenunterstützung, Aufbau von Kooperativen, Schulungszentrum, was wir aufgebaut haben, was sich auch immer mehr entwickelt, wo kleine Schulungen für die Leute aus den Dörfern angeboten werden, Alphabetisierung oder Erste Hilfe Kurse oder ähnliches, aber auch ein bisschen einkommensgenerierende Aktivitäten, wie zum Beispiel, dass die Leute schauen, dass sie als Gruppe quasi Anfragen stellen, ob man sie in bestimmten Einkommensbereichen unterstützen kann. Zum Beispiel eine Kooperative, die Öl produziert oder ähnliches.

HF: Du hast ja jetzt sehr viele positive Effekte aufgezählt. Denkst du, es gibt auch Sachen, die sich vielleicht eher nicht ganz so positiv auf die Bevölkerung auswirken.

TL: Also ich würde jetzt sagen, auf lange Sicht gesehen sicher nein. Weil der Wald hoffentlich zu einem angenehmeren Mikroklima führen wird vor Ort. Es ist in Zukunft auch in 30-40 Jahren, kann es eine Holzressource in einer nachhaltigen Art und Weise sein. Aber klar, es gibt auch auf kurze Sicht natürlich zum Beispiel die Leute, die Geld über Holzkohle lange Zeit verdient haben, die sagen „Ja, warum können wir das nicht weitermachen? Das war für uns ein gutes Einkommen, die Holzkohle in die Hauptstadt zu verkaufen“. Natürlich, man hat immer mehrere Parteien, auch in den Dörfern hat man Leute mit unterschiedlichen Interessen und da gibt es immer Leute natürlich die die sagen „für mich persönlich hätte das jetzt keinen positiven Effekt“ und dann halt eher einen Nachteil, zum Beispiel wenn sie darüber vorher ihr Geld verdient haben. Klar gibt der Wald dann auch die Möglichkeiten, auf andere Art und Weise ein Zusatzeinkommen zu erwirtschaften.

Aber jetzt zum Beispiel im Bereich Holzkohle oder Leute, die halt von der Jagd gelebt haben in dem Bereich, also das heißt gelebt haben, wie dem Hauptjäger, glaube ich jetzt nicht, dass es die dort gibt, aber den Leuten, die damit auch Geld verdient haben, dass sie die vorhandene Wildpopulation erlegt haben und das dann an der Straße verkauft haben. Das sind natürlich so Punkte, die jetzt über diesen Schutzstatus rausfallen. Das ist aber ja bei jedem Naturschutzprojekt, was es gibt, dass es da auch natürlich immer unterschiedliche Interessen gibt und das auch gar nicht immer einfach ist, alles unter einen Hut zu bringen. Und das versuchen wir irgendwie so ein bisschen. Dann gibt es das Nomadenvolk der Fulbe vor Ort, die mit ihren Rindern normalerweise gerade über so Freiflächen dann viel ziehen und das, weil sie sonst recht wenig Zugang zu Flächen haben. Wo man auch schauen muss, wie man das managt, weil wenn die am Anfang über eine Fläche ziehen, wo man gerade gepflanzt hat, dann ist das Ganze ziemlich schnell hin. Und das ist natürlich auch nicht einfach, diese ganzen Interessen unter einen Hut zu bringen und das Ganze auch, ich sag mal, dass man halt mit den Leuten spricht und überlegt, gibt es denn eine Lösung wie wir irgendwie alle zusammen mit dem Projekt eher in eine positive Richtung gehen. Aber man schafft das glaube ich nie, jeden da wirklich mit reinzubringen.

HF: In einem eurer YouTube Videos ist auch erwähnt worden, dass es auch teilweise zu Konflikten zu anderen Dörfern in der Nähe kommt, die kein Projekt haben, die das alles mitbekommen und da so ein gewisser Neid auch entsteht zu den Projekt Dörfern. Hast du das auch irgendwie schon mal mitbekommen?

TL: (...) Klar. Sicherlich hat man auch immer dann Dörfer in der Nachbarschaft, die sagen „hier, warum macht ihr das denn nicht bei uns?“ Und wir natürlich auch so unseren Fokus ein bisschen jetzt gerade auf das legen, was einfach existent ist, die Strukturen, die wir schon aufgebaut haben. Wir schon versuchen auch die Dörfer drumherum so ein bisschen mit einzugliedern. Jetzt zum Beispiel, wie mit der Idee mit dem Schulungszentrum, dass man einfach sagt, daran können Leute aus der ganzen Region teilnehmen, wenn man jetzt Alphabetisierung oder ähnliches anbietet und die landwirtschaftliche Schulung. Aber kommt natürlich immer die Frage „Ja, warum nicht bei uns?“ Oder wenn dann halt ein Infrastrukturprojekt, also wir einen Brunnen irgendwo gemacht haben oder ein Versammlungshaus gebaut haben, ja, da kommt sicher auch die Frage, „ja, warum macht ihr das dort und nicht bei uns?“ Also das ist sicher existent. Zu Konflikten hat das bisher nicht geführt. Aber Neid ist einfach auch immer, wenn Leute wirklich auch am Existenzminimum oft leben. Ob das Neid, oder einfach auch dass das Denken ist, ja warum haben wir die Möglichkeit dafür jetzt nicht.

HF: Vielleicht noch mal, um ein bisschen absolute Zahlen zu schaffen. Könntest du etwa einschätzen, wie viele Leute jetzt vor Ort von den Projekten profitieren?

TL: (...) Das ist so eine Zahl, die müsste ich mal genau nachschauen. Das das hängt auch immer so ein bisschen von Jahreszeit ab, wie viele Aktivitäten einfach stattfinden. Also da würde ich mich jetzt echt ungern auf eine Zahl oder einen Prozentsatz festlegen. Wir haben, klar den Forst, wo permanent in der Rotation quasi Leute aus den Dörfern drumherum einfach dran arbeiten, damit so viele Menschen wie möglich einfach durch den Forst oder durch das Hauptprojekt erreicht werden. Das sind zwischen 30 und 50 je nach Jahreszeit und die wirklich jeden Tag im Wald aktiv mithelfen. Wir haben vor Ort ein ganz festes Team. Die auch nicht direkt im Projektort leben, sondern ein paar Kilometer weg und von dort aus das Projekt managen. Das sind alles Leute aus Togo, außer einer Person, einer kommt aus Benin, aber alles lokale Leute. Ich bin so der Einzige, sage ich mal, von außerhalb. Oder wir haben Leute, die jetzt bei so einem bestimmten Projekt entweder als Studenten oder so was mitmachen. Aber jetzt zu den Leuten aus den Dörfern. Also wir haben auch so viele unterschiedliche Projekte mittlerweile drumherum aufgebaut. Da ist eine Schafzucht, wo Leute drin arbeiten, die für das Dorf bestimmt ist. Es gibt eine Kooperative, da sind um die 20 Frauen drin aktiv, wo aber noch viele andere mitmachen aus dem Dorf. Das Schulungszentrum, da hatten wir jetzt gerade letztes Jahr, also bestimmt also für weit über 100, ich denke eher so 150-200 Leute Schulungen angeboten in unterschiedlichen Bereichen. Das ist natürlich dann immer wieder nur so in Schüben. Dann wird eine Schulung angeboten, die Alphabetisierung, das ist was, was eher aus Zufall entstanden ist, aber was auch sehr gut funktioniert, das ist eine kleinere Zahl, aber die halt das ganze Jahr immer weitermachen. Da sind jetzt auch noch mehr Leute dazugekommen, deshalb würde ich mich sehr ungern jetzt auf eine Zahl festlegen, aber es ist schon auf jeden Fall eine große Zahl, die die mit dem Projekt irgendwie in einem Zusammenhang steht oder auch direkt vom Projekt profitiert.

HF: Du hast ja auch gerade die ganzen Projekte außerhalb vom Forst noch ein bisschen genannt und da vielleicht auch mal eine Frage, wie wird das Ganze denn überhaupt finanziert? Weil gerade das Schulungszentrum zu bauen oder so, das ist ja schon ein gewisser Aufwand und auch ein finanzieller Aufwand damit verbunden.

TL: (...) Also das ist was, das ist halt nicht mehr mein Bereich. Ich kümmere mich um die Gelder, die dann vor Ort vorhanden sind und um die Umsetzung, nicht um die Generierung der Gelder. Deshalb wie gesagt, dieser Bereich, was in Deutschland passiert, das ist halt nicht mehr ganz mein Bereich, aber es kommt sicher aus unterschiedlichen Bereichen. Also einmal über die Aufforstung, das ist ja über Zertifikate direkt, über den freiwilligen Kompensationsmarkt. Dann ist aber auch natürlich viel dann aus diesem generierten, was dann auch noch mal zusätzlich in ein Projekt gesteckt wird, was als sinnvoll angesehen wird. Alles, was im Endeffekt nötig ist, um auch für den Wald, sage ich mal, den Schutz zu schaffen, gar nicht den Schutz, das Sensibilisieren der Bevölkerung für

das Waldprojekt, aber halt auch einfach um Einkommen in den Dörfern drumherum zu generieren, wo einfach dann auch noch mal Geld drüber in das Projekt geleitet wird. Das ist dann ja quasi aus dem, was eben auch über Zertifikate und anderes einfach generiert wird, weil das das Projekt von NatureOffice ist. Und dann gibt es natürlich Sachen, die über Kunden einfach kommen, dass Kunden noch mal zusätzlich was machen wollen, dass Kunden sagen „Ja, das Projekt interessiert mich super, das habt ihr angestoßen und da möchten wir irgendwie euch noch mehr drin unterstützen“. Und das sind dann auch Bereiche, wo dann Kunden quasi Geld zur Verfügung stellen, damit wir die Dinge dann vor Ort auch so umsetzen können oder dann vergrößern können oder auch ein neues Projekt aufbauen können. Genau.

HF: Wenn wir noch mal beim Finanziellen bleiben. Du hast ja auch gerade gesagt, du managst dann mit dem Geld, was dir dann zur Verfügung steht. Und ich weiß nicht, ob du das beantworten darfst oder überhaupt kannst, um mal zu sagen, wie viel Geld da jährlich so eingesteckt wird.

TL: (...) Da möchte ich jetzt auch keine Zahl sagen, also dafür habe ich es jetzt so auch als Zahl gar nicht im Kopf, da würde ich höchstens was Falsches sagen. Kann ich nicht sagen.

HF: Habe ich mir fast schon gedacht. Aber ich habe gedacht, ich probiere es mal. Du hattest ja auch erwähnt einmal, du managst das Projekt und auch Leute vor Ort. Wenn es dann im Projekt zu irgendwelchen Entscheidungen kommt, wer trifft denn da die Entscheidung? Macht ihr das mit der Bevölkerung vor Ort zusammen oder kommen auch manchmal eher von euch als Manager für das Projekt irgendwelche Entscheidungen? Wie läuft es da ab?

TL: Entschuldigung, ich war jetzt so ganz... noch einmal bitte

HF: Du hattest erwähnt, du managst das Projekt und es gibt auch vor Ort noch eine Gruppe, die das so ein bisschen managt und da einfach die Frage, wenn ihr für das Projekt irgendwas entscheiden müsst, wer trifft diese Entscheidungen?

TL: Okay, also das ist glaube ich schon das Coole an dem Projekt, was wir haben, dass das eigentlich halt (...) Ich bin so ein bisschen die Verbindung zwischen Deutschland und Togo, auch der Kommunikationskanal einfach hin und her, aber auch das Team, was wir vor Ort haben, mit dem wir jetzt von Anfang an, also wir haben Leute, die sind von dem ersten Baum, den wir in Togo oder von den allerersten Aktivitäten, die wir in Togo machen, dabei. Das ist zum Beispiel auch unser Förster, der ist von ganz Anfang an dabei, der war jetzt sogar mal in Deutschland gewesen und (...) ich versuche eigentlich immer sehr stark, auch wenn die Idee aus Deutschland manchmal kommt, das auf jeden Fall so in Togo zu besprechen und zu fragen „Hey, was haltet ihr davon? Denke das macht Sinn oder möchtet ihr das irgendwie,...? denkt ihr, das funktioniert so einfach nicht und das müssen wir anders machen?“. Deshalb klar, Ideen kommen auch aus Deutschland, aber ich denke

mal, was die Umsetzung vor Ort angeht, das kommt zu einem ganz, ganz großen Prozentsatz aus Togo. Also weil wir da auch ein sehr fittes Team haben, die die Ideen selber entwickeln und die natürlich auch die Erfahreneren sind. Also ich bin jetzt seit etwa acht Jahren in Togo und ich kenne es wohl, denke ich mal für jemanden aus Deutschland, sehr gut. Aber mir ist auch klar, dass bestimmte Dinge, dass ich die auch nicht verstehe, weil ich bin nicht in der Kultur groß geworden und da ist es recht sicher, dass da meine Kollegen dann vor Ort einfach auf jeden Fall die sind, die da am besten Bescheid wissen. Deshalb, also ein ganz großer Prozentsatz kommt auf jeden Fall, was die Umsetzung angeht, aus Togo.

HF: Vielleicht noch mal wo du sagst Team vor Ort, du hattest ja schon mal eine Partnerorganisation erwähnt. Wer ist das?

TL: „ecocent Togo“ heißen die. Das ist ein Partner, der, der einfach mit uns zusammen gewachsen und entstanden ist und mit, also ein Team, mit dem wir von Anfang an zusammenarbeiten und die mittlerweile auch ihre eigene Organisation aufgebaut haben und sich in direkter Absprache mit uns um die Umsetzung dann vor Ort kümmern. Das ist die lokale NGO, die mit uns entstanden ist.

HF: Okay. Vielleicht noch ein bisschen allgemeiner zum Projekt. Du bist ja jetzt auch schon ein bisschen länger dabei. Seid ihr irgendwann mal auch auf irgendwelche Hürden oder Probleme oder irgendwas gestoßen, die ihr da bewältigen musstet?

TL: (...) Ganz viele. Also, klar, so Projekte sind immer ein Rauf und Runter. Mal funktionieren Dinge sehr gut, mal funktionieren Dinge auch gar nicht, auch so irgendwas, was Entscheidungen oder Projekte angeht. Es gibt ganz viele Projekte, die legt man an und merkt „Oh, das funktioniert gar nicht so wie gedacht“. Aber das ist halt das Coole bei uns, dass wir jetzt nicht wie so eine größere, staatlich finanzierte Organisation aufgebaut sind und irgendwie Projekte auf drei oder fünf Jahre planen und wenn das dementsprechend dann nicht funktioniert, dann müssen wir das Projekt quasi abbrechen. Sondern wir haben halt die Möglichkeit, Projekte zu verändern. Und das ist halt dann auch gut, dass es nicht einfach nur von Deutschland aus geht mit Ideen, so muss das umgesetzt werden, sondern dass es einfach Leute vor Ort gibt, die sagen, hier das funktioniert so nicht, das müssen wir anders machen und dann ändern wir es halt. Und es gibt ganz viele Projekte, die anders angefangen haben, als sie heute sind und wo man einfach gesagt hat, „okay, so macht es keinen Sinn, aber anders kann es Sinn machen und funktionieren“ und dann ändern wir das halt. Und das geht auch gar nicht immer irgendwie von uns aus, dass wir sagen das muss geändert werden, sondern das meistens das entsteht manchmal von ganz alleine. Also auch Projekte entstehen von ganz alleine. Ich habe eben über die Alphabetisierung gesprochen. Wir hatten eine Kooperative, die wir unterstützt haben. Das ist eine Frauenkooperative. Und die stellen rotes Öl her und Seifen und anderes. Da ist

die Sekretärin ausgetreten und dann hatten sie keinen mehr in der Gruppe, der wirklich fit im Lesen und Schreiben war und hatten dann uns gefragt, ob man nicht irgendwie einen Lehrer fragen kann, helfen kann zu bezahlen kann, dass sie irgendwie die Grundkenntnisse im Lesen und Schreiben bekommen. Und dann hatten wir das als Idee aufgebaut. Da hatten wir eh schon die Idee so ein bisschen auch Schulungen anbieten. Manchmal entstehen Projekte einfach auch so durch Situationen und dadurch, dass man auch, also ich zumindest, viel vor Ort bin, aber auch mit mir auch von Zeit zu Zeit andere Leute von Natur Office vor Ort waren. Dadurch kann man auch dann immer recht gut reagieren und überlegen „Ja, cool, das ist eine gute Idee, dann machen wir das so“. Jetzt bin ich, glaube ich, ein bisschen abgedriftet vom ursprünglichen Punkt, den ich jetzt sogar ein bisschen vergessen habe. Aber ich denke mal es gibt eine ganz gute Idee, dass das halt nicht irgendwie alles feste Strukturen sind und Dinge ganz fest geplant sind, sondern dass einfach vieles aus Situationen heraus entsteht. Und das ist, glaube ich, so ein bisschen das, was das Projekt auch unterscheidet, dass wir das machen können, dass wir die Freiheit dazu haben, so mit Projekten umzugehen.

HF: Ja, vielleicht auch gerade was das angeht, die Projektlaufzeit, dass ihr eben diese Flexibilität habt, dass es vielleicht auch mal länger geht. Für wie lange ist denn das Projekt geplant?

TL: Wie gesagt, das Aufforstungsprojekt ist derzeitig auf 30 Jahre berechnet, kalkuliert, vorgesehen. Es gibt aber auch Überlegungen, das noch auszudehnen auf einen größeren Zeitraum. Das muss natürlich auch wieder alles in der Absprache mit denen passieren, die die Flächenbesitzer sind. Aber 30 Jahre ist der aktuelle Zeitraum für den dieses Waldprojekt gerechnet wurde.

HF: Vielleicht auch da gerade irgendwie anschließend, wenn ihr jetzt auch sagt „okay, es hört jetzt nach 30 Jahren auch auf, auch die soziale Projekte“, gibt es dann irgendwie auch die Idee zu sagen, wir geben jetzt allen vor Ort das an die Hand, dass sie das selbstständig weiterführen können?

TL: (...) Das ist auf jeden Fall ganz großes Ziel, deshalb haben wir auch von Anfang an zum Beispiel unterstützt, dass sich vor Ort eine eigene Organisation aufbaut, die das auch lokal managt und das das Ganze nicht von Deutschland aus zu 100 % gemanagt wird und gesagt wird, hier so und so, das muss umgesetzt werden. Und irgendwann kann ja immer was passieren. Wären wir nicht da und dann löst sich das ganze Projekt vor Ort auf. Also derzeitig ist auf jeden Fall ganz stark Ziel, dass das Projekt vor Ort auch eine gewisse Unabhängigkeit hat. Klar, das es aber ganz viele Projekte gibt, die finanziell einfach auch in gewissem Maße abhängig von den Geldern sind, die das ganze ermöglichen. Aber zumindest können wir sagen, dass unser Projekt vor Ort auf jeden Fall den Willen und die Manpower hat, das auch umzusetzen, selbst wenn wir nicht da wären. Klar,

finanziell braucht das Projekt da auf jeden Fall auch die Unterstützung aus Deutschland.

Aber Ziel ist, das Projekt so gut wie möglich unabhängig zu gestalten.

HF: Okay, damit wäre ich für das, was ich für meine Arbeit brauche, hier am Ende.

Nachgespräch zum Abschluss

B2 Mail history with Tobias Liemersdorf with further questions

Von: Hannah Fischer

Datum: Dienstag, 18. Februar 2025

An: Tobias Liemersdorf

Hallo Tobias,

ich bin gerade dabei die Informationen, die ich von dir in unserem Gespräch bekommen habe auszuwerten. Dabei ist mir aufgefallen, dass ich zu zwei Dingen nochmal eine Rückfrage hätte.

Das erste betrifft die Artenzusammensetzung in den aufgeforsteten Flächen. Könntest du mir genauer sagen, welche Arten in der Baumschule angezogen werden für die Aufforstung? Und du hattest eine Biodiversitätsstudie erwähnt, in der 80 verschiedene Baumarten gefunden wurden. Kannst du mir sagen, auf welcher Fläche (Flächengröße) diese 80 Arten gefunden wurden?

Das zweite betrifft noch mal die Finanzierung. Du meinstest, du hättest keine genauen Zahlen, wie viel in das Projekt für Togo investiert wird. Könntest du mich da gegebenenfalls an jemanden weiterleiten, der mir dazu was beantworten könnte?

Noch eine Frage, die aber nichts mehr mit dem Gespräch und meiner Abschlussarbeit zu tun hat. Aktuell versuchen wir in unserem Projekt zu den Konflikten zwischen den Fulbe und der ansässigen Bevölkerung herauszufinden, zu welchem Zeitpunkt sich Fulbegruppen/-familien wo befinden. Du hattest erwähnt, dass Fulbe an euren Projektflächen vorbei- oder auch durchziehen. Kannst du etwa einschätzen, wann die Fulbe in der Nähe der Projektdörfer sind?

Tut mir leid, dass ich nochmal so viel nachfrage. Ich freue mich über jede Antwort, die du mir geben kannst.

Ich hoffe das Transkript ist angekommen und alles passt.

Viele Grüße

Hannah

Von: Tobias Liemersdorf

Datum: Dienstag, 19. Februar 2025

An: Hannah Fischer

Hallo Hannah,

Danke für das Transcript. Ich habe mal drübergelesen und das sollte von den Infos so passen. Die Sätze sind natürlich teilweise sehr durcheinander, aber es dient ja auch nur als Aufschrieb zu dem Interview.

Zu deinen Fragen: Wir haben Baumarten wie zum Beispiel „*Khaya senegalensis*“ und „*Ceiba pentandra*“, die wir jedes Jahr mit in der Baumschule haben, weil es lokale Baumarten sind, die sehr gut an den Standort angepasst sind. Allgemein haben wir aber jedes Jahr so um die 10 verschiedenen Baumarten in der Baumschule. Das wechselt auch immer mal wieder, wenn wir mal eine Baumart ausprobieren wollen. Baumarten die wir letztes Jahr in der Baumschule hatten waren z.B. *Antiaris africana*, *Khaya grandifoliola*, *Khaya senegalensis*, *Albizia zygia*, *Albizia lebbeck*, *Azadirachta indica*, *Erythrophloeum suaveolens*, *Senna siamea*, *Lophira lanceolata*. Was auch viel auf der Fläche verstreut vorkommt ist z.B. *Vitellaria paradoxa* (was wir in Deutschland für das Produkt Sheabutter kennen). Daraus könnte in der Zukunft mal ein soziales Projekt mit einer Kooperative entstehen, die zum Beispiel Sheabutter verarbeitet und verkauft. Des weiteren haben viele der Baumarten einen traditionell-medizinischen Nutzen und werden auch heute schon von Leuten aus den Dörfern genutzt.

Die Biodiversitätsstudie wurde auf einem Großteil der Flächen durchgeführt (etwa 700 ha). Die etwa 80 Arten beziehen sich aber nur auf größere Baumarten, insgesamt wurden wesentlich mehr Busch und andere Pflanzenarten gefunden.

Bezüglich deiner zweiten Frage kann ich dir leider keine Information geben. Ich frage dazu nochmal nach, aber ich glaube nicht, dass wir solche Informationen so weitergeben.

Wir würden uns freuen, wenn du uns die Arbeit am Ende auch mal zum lesen schicken kannst. Wir sind sehr gespannt auf das Ergebnis der Arbeit.

Zu der Frage über die Fulbe-Nomaden (Fulani): Dazu kann ich nochmal meine Kollegen in Togo fragen. Ich weiß, dass einige von den Fulbe in unserer Region, teils

ansässig in der Region sind. Das heißt teilweise gehen auch die Kinder in die Grundschule vor Ort und ein Teil der Familie lebt auch fest in den Ortschaften oder in der Nähe der Ortschaften. In den größeren Ortschaften verkaufen sie dann auch den typischen Käse (Wangash oder Wagashi). Zu bestimmten Zeiten kommen aber auch Fulbe mit ihren Tieren aus Ghana in unsere Projektregion (da wir recht nahe an der Grenze zu Ghana liegen). Ich denke, dass ist oft in der Trockenzeit, wenn das Futter knapp wird und weniger verfügbare Flächen existieren (das müsste ich aber nochmal nachfragen). Viele Fulbe-Leute sind auch angestellt, um auf größere Rinder-Herden aufzupassen. In vielen Regionen gibt es auch einen „Chef de Fulani“ der für die einzelnen Gruppen vor Ort zuständig ist. Das sind alles keine überprüften Infos, sondern nur Infos die ich in der Zeit mitbekommen habe.

Viele Grüße,

Tobias

C Plant species used for reforestation in the last year in *Project Togo*

Name	native to Togo	Tree-classification	Height	Ecology	Shade tolerance
Afzelia africana	yes	leguminous tree	up to 40 m in forests; 15-18 m in savanna	humid and dry forests, especially forest-savanna borders or semi-deciduous forest in more humid regions; wide adaptation to climatological conditions; fairly fire resistant	tolerates light shade when young
Albizia chevaleri	no*		1,5-12 m	drier savanna region	
Albizia lebbeck	no		15-30	semi-evergreen vine forests; can withstand long, hot, dry periods and cold winters	
Albizia zygia	yes	deciduous tree	09-30 m	in lowland semi-deciduous forest and evergreen forest; in West Africa most common in secondary forest in a semi-deciduous forest zone	light demanding
Antiaris africana	yes	deciduous tree	up to 60 m	from wet evergreen forest to dry deciduous forest and wooded grasslands; common in secondary forest	non-pioneer light demander
Azadirachta indica	no	usually evergreen tree	up to 15 m	lowland tropics (in natural conditions does not grow gregariously); in Africa in evergreen forest and in dry deciduous forest	require large amount of light; tolerates heavy shades during the first few years
Ceiba pentandra	no	deciduous tree	up to 60 m	in moist evergreen and deciduous forest, dry forests, gallery forests; as pioneer species in secondary forests and riverine forests	
Erythrophloeum suaveolens	yes	leguminous tree	up to 25 m	in moist semi-deciduous forest, gallery forest and wooded grasslands; absent from evergreen forest	

Name	native to Togo	Tree-classification	Height	Ecology	Shade tolerance
Gmelina arborea	no	deciduous tree	up to 40 m	variety of forests (tropical semi-evergreen; sub-montane; very moist teak forests; deciduous, sal and dry teak forest); Syzygium parkland and low alluvial savanna woodland; moderately frost hardy; classifies as a long-lived pioneer	light demanding but can tolerate some shade
Khaya grandifoliola	yes	deciduous tree	up to 40 m	in (moist) semi-deciduous forest: in savanna usually along a watercourse; sometimes gallery forest and lowland forest	needs sun for regeneration
Khaya ivorensis	yes	evergreen or deciduous tree (depending on the climate)	up to 60 m	in moist deciduous forests (1600-2500 mm rainfall: 2-3 months dry season) and evergreen forests; often along watercourses	survives in shade, open canopy needed for good growth
Khaya senegalensis	yes	evergreen tree	up to 30 m	in riverine forests and in savanna woodlands	moderately shade tolerant
Leuceana leucocephala	no	evergreen tree	up to 20 m	thrives in marginal areas with extended dry seasons, but with a humid or subhumid climate; needs warm temperatures, poor cold tolerance	
Lophira lanceolata	yes		up to 16 m	in wooded savanna, often grows gregariously on fallow land at the edge of forests; fire tolerant when established	
Persea americana	no	evergreen tree	up to 20 m	lowland tropical climate and relatively frost free areas of the subtropics	

Name	native to Togo	Tree-classification	Height	Ecology	Shade tolerance
Samanea Saman	unclear	evergreen tree	up to 40 m	in a range of conditions, not well adapted to long dry seasons	
Senna siamea	no*	evergreen tree	up to 18 m	in a range of conditions, particularly suited for lowland tropics with a monsoon climate; maximum dry period should not exceed 4-8 months; susceptible to cold and frost	high light requirements
Terminalia ivorensis	no*	deciduous tree	up to 50 m	most common in the transition zone between humid semi-deciduous forest and evergreen forest; sometimes found in rain-forest conditions, but is mainly a tree of seasonal forest zones; vulnerable to fire	
Terminalia superba	yes	deciduous tree	up to 50 m	in moist semi-deciduous forest and evergreen forest or in tropical high secondary forest areas with a dry season of 4 month; most common in disturbed forest; fire sensitive; withstands occasional flooding	light demanding
Theobroma cacao	no	semi-deciduous tree	Up to 10 m	in understory; in wet humid tropics	needs shade when plant is young

* but native to Ghana and other countries close to Togo

Data by (CIFOR-ICRAF n.d., PROTA n.d.)

Eidesstattliche Erklärung (Affidavit)

Ich versichere hiermit an Eides statt, dass ich die vorliegende Arbeit selbständig verfasst und keine anderen als die angegebenen Quellen und Hilfsmittel verwendet habe.

Alle Stellen und Textpassagen, die wörtlich oder sinngemäß aus veröffentlichten Quellen oder anderen fremden Texten entnommen sind, sind als solche kenntlich gemacht. Ebenso wurden alle Abbildungen, sofern nicht selbst von mir erstellt, mit entsprechenden Quellennachweisen versehen.

Diese Arbeit wurde noch nicht, auch nicht auszugsweise, für eine andere Studien- oder Prüfungsleistung verwendet.

Frankfurt am Main, der 30.04.2025



Hannah Fischer